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## SC clears Gateway jetty construction plea

### Jetty planned near Gateway

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court of India has dismissed a plea challenging the construction of a new passenger jetty and terminal near the iconic Gateway of India in South Mumbai, effectively allowing the ₹229 crore infrastructure project to proceed. A bench comprising Chief Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice K. Vinod Chandran rejected the appeal filed by petitioner Laura D'Souza, who had contested the Bombay High Court's July 15 verdict upholding the project. The apex court ruled that the matter falls within the policy domain of the government and does not warrant judicial intervention.



The proposed jetty, spearheaded by the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB), will span approximately 1.5 acres in the sea and be located nearly 280 metres from the Gateway of India, adjacent to the Radio Club. The project blueprint includes parking for 150 vehicles, VIP lounges, waiting areas, an amphitheatre, ticket counters, and administrative offices. The jetty itself is designed in a distinctive tennis racquet shape, supported by stilts in the sea. Opponents of the project had raised concerns about potential traffic congestion and disruption to local residents and heritage aesthetics. However, both the Bombay High Court and the Supreme Court found no legal grounds to halt the development, emphasizing that infrastructure planning and execution are matters of executive discretion. With the legal challenge now resolved, the MMB is expected to move forward with construction, which aims to enhance passenger transport.

## Trump claims India offered zero tariffs, slams trade ties as unfair and one-sided disaster

### India sold massively, U.S. faced steep tariff barriers

**New Delhi:** U.S. President Donald Trump has reignited debate over U.S.-India trade relations, claiming that India has offered to eliminate tariffs on American imports. In a post on Truth Social, Trump described the gesture as "too late," and criticized the bilateral economic relationship as a "totally one-sided disaster" that has persisted for decades.



Trump alleged that India has long imposed some of the highest tariffs globally on U.S. goods, effectively limiting American companies' access to the Indian market. "They have now offered to cut their tariffs to nothing,

but it's getting late. They should have done so years ago," he wrote.

The remarks come amid heightened tensions following the Trump administration's recent decision to impose a 50% tariff on Indian exports to the United States. This includes a 25% reciprocal duty and an additional 25% levy targeting India's energy and defense trade with Russia. India has not officially confirmed Trump's claim regarding zero tariffs.

## Rahul warns explosive revelations on vote theft

**Patna:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has issued a bold warning to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), claiming that his party is poised to release a "hydrogen bomb" of revelations concerning alleged vote theft ("vote chori") that will severely damage Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public standing. The statement was made during the concluding rally of the Congress-led 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Patna, a 1,300-km campaign aimed



at highlighting electoral irregularities in Bihar. Addressing a large gathering of supporters and INDIA bloc allies, Gandhi asserted that the revelations would expose systemic manipulation of electoral rolls

and voter disenfranchisement. "Have you heard of anything bigger than an atom bomb? It is a hydrogen bomb. BJP people, be ready. A hydrogen bomb is coming. People are soon going to find out the reality of vote chori," he said. He added that once the information is made public, "Narendra Modi ji will not be able to show his face to the country". Gandhi cited alleged instances of vote theft in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

## Tejashwi brands Bihar CM corruption symbol

### Yadav spoke at Patna's Voter Adhikar rally

**Patna:** Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav launched a scathing attack on Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, accusing him of presiding over a deeply corrupt administration and likening him to the "Bhishma Pitamaha of corruption." The remark was made during a rally in Patna marking the conclusion of the Congress-led 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' campaign.



Yadav's statement was part of a broader critique of the ruling coalition in Bihar, which he described as a "double engine sarkar" where one engine—the Chief Minister—is inactive, and the other is mired in corrupt practices. He alleged that the Nitish Kumar-led government has been involved in multiple irregularities and

should refrain from commenting on corruption-related issues. In a veiled attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Yadav further accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), in coordination with the Election Commission, of attempting to "finish democracy" in Bihar. He claimed that the special intensive revision of electoral

rolls was being manipulated to disenfranchise voters and undermine democratic processes. "The Bihar CM is not in a conscious state of mind. People will throw his government out of power in the upcoming assembly polls," Yadav declared, positioning himself as the chief ministerial candidate of the INDIA bloc ahead of the 2025 Bihar elections.

## Four held for assaulting YouTuber in Kerala

**Todupuzha:** Four individuals have been taken into custody in connection with the alleged assault on YouTuber Shajan Skaria, owner of the popular Malayalam channel 'Marunadan Malayali'. The incident occurred on Saturday night near Mangattukavala in Idukki district, prompting swift action from local police and the Cyber Cell. According to the First Information Report (FIR), the accused blocked Skaria's vehicle, physically assaulted him, and attempted to strangle him—an act described by police as a premeditated attempt to murder. Skaria sustained minor injuries and was admitted to a private hospital in Thodupuzha for treatment.



The investigation revealed that one of the accused had posted a threatening message on Facebook prior to the attack, which was later deleted. Us-

ing digital forensics, the Cyber Cell traced the suspects to Bengaluru, where they were apprehended and are now being transported back to Kerala for further legal proceedings.

Skaria has alleged that the attack was politically motivated and orchestrated by members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), specifically naming Mathew Kollampilly and Shiyas as key figures behind the assault. He claimed the group acted under party directives, describing the incident as an "attempt to murder". Police have registered a case under multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

## Delhi alert as Yamuna swells

**New Delhi:** The Yamuna River surged past its official danger mark in Delhi early Tuesday morning, prompting high alert across the capital and triggering emergency flood preparedness measures. According to the Central Water Commission, the river was recorded at 205.80 metres at the Old Railway Bridge (ORB) by 8:00 AM, surpassing the danger threshold of 205.33 metres.

The sharp rise in water level is attributed to heavy rainfall across northern India and substantial discharge from upstream barrages. Officials confirmed that 1.76 lakh cusecs of water were released from the Hathni Kund Barrage in Haryana, along with 69,210 cusecs from Wazirabad and 73,619 cusecs from Okhla Barrage.



# Saving Nah, Bugun, Meyor: Arunachal's race to keep its dying languages alive

**Itanagar:** Arunachal Pradesh, home to one of India's richest linguistic landscapes, is witnessing an urgent push to preserve its endangered tribal languages—Nah, Bugun, and Meyor—each spoken by fewer than 2,000 people. With younger generations increasingly shifting to Hindi and English for education and daily communication, elders and linguists fear the irreversible loss of ancestral knowledge embedded in these native tongues. In Upper Subansiri district,



72-year-old Chakiap Bai sings lullabies in Nah to his granddaughter, who responds in Hindi. "Our children understand Nah, but

they do not speak it. If they stop speaking, the songs of our ancestors will fall silent," Bai said, voicing a concern echoed across remote vil-

lages. Similar anxieties are felt in West Kameng's Singchung area, where Bugun elder Sarita Phinya recalls ceremonial chants once central to community life. Her grandchildren, however, are more familiar with Bollywood music. In response, local youth have begun recording folk songs and stories using mobile phones, turning digital devices into cultural archives. In Anjaw district's Kaho village, farmer Dising Meyor described the death of his father as the loss of an unwritten book.

# Assam reports 15K deaths, 36K accidents

**Guwahati:** Assam has reported a total of 36,800 road accidents and 15,163 fatalities between 2019 and 2023, making it the most affected state in the northeastern region, according to the latest data released by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. The state witnessed a 10.1% increase in fatalities from 2022 to 2023, underscoring a worrying trend despite national efforts to improve road safety. Assam also ranked sixth in fatality rate nationwide in 2023, with 7.56 deaths per 100,000

population, significantly above the national average of 5.30. In terms of accident severity defined as the number of persons killed per 100 accidents—Assam stood at 44.4, placing it 15th among Indian states. This figure is well above the national average of 36, indicating a higher likelihood of fatal outcomes in road crashes within the state. The report also highlights that while some northeastern states saw a decline in accidents in 2023, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tripura recorded increases.

# Meghalaya HC: Capture, vaccinate biting dogs

**Shillong:** The Meghalaya High Court has issued a directive mandating the capture, vaccination, and observation of stray dogs identified as aggressive or having bitten individuals. The order was passed in response to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) highlighting the increasing threat posed by such dogs in public areas, particularly in Shillong. A division bench comprising Chief Justice IP Mukerji and Justice W Diengdoh emphasized that dogs exhibiting biting behavior must be medically

attended to and vaccinated before any consideration of release. The court underscored that premature release of these animals could endanger public safety, citing recent incidents of unprovoked attacks resulting in serious injuries. The bench also noted that while similar matters are pending before other High Courts and the Supreme Court, the situation in Meghalaya is uniquely severe and warrants distinct judicial attention. Accordingly, the Registrar General of the Meghalaya High Court.

# Ahead of Sept 22 BTC polls, Kokrajhar bans firearms, loudspeakers, rallies

**Kokrajhar, Aug 30:** In preparation for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections scheduled for September 22, the Kokrajhar district administration has announced a series of prohibitory measures aimed at maintaining law and order. The District Magistrate has issued an ex-parte order banning the carrying of licensed firearms, use of loudspeakers, and public rallies across the district. The directive, issued under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Surak-



sha Sanhita (BNSS), 1973, came into effect on August 28 and will remain in force until the completion of the electoral process. The order is part of a broader effort to ensure peaceful and

fair conduct of the polls in a region that has historically witnessed political unrest and ethnic tensions. Exceptions to the firearms ban have been made for police personnel, army

and paramilitary forces deployed on election duty, and sportspersons affiliated with the National Rifle Association of India, provided they present valid documentation. Individuals directly affected by the order may apply for rescinding, modification, or exemption during the enforcement period. The administration emphasized that these measures are necessary to prevent disruptions, safeguard public peace, and uphold the integrity of the electoral process.

# No law prohibits women from working at night in Nagaland, clarifies official

## Women allowed night shifts in Nagaland with safety, consent

**Dimapur, Aug 30:** In a significant clarification aimed at dispelling public confusion, Nagaland Labour Commissioner S.L. Wati Aier has confirmed that there is no law currently in force in the state that prohibits women from working during night hours. The statement was issued in response to misinterpretations surrounding Section 20 of the Nagaland Shops & Establishments Act, 1986, which addresses the employment of women during night shifts. Commissioner Aier stated that, notwithstanding the language of the Act, women may be engaged in employment beyond



7:00 PM and before 6:00 AM, provided specific safeguards are met. These include obtaining the voluntary and written consent of the woman employee and ensuring adequate safety measures such as secure

transportation, proper lighting, and workplace security. The clarification also emphasized that all relevant labour laws must be strictly followed, including provisions related to working

hours, overtime, rest intervals, and weekly holidays. The notification, approved by the competent authority, is effective immediately and applies across all establishments governed by the Act. The announcement has been welcomed by various stakeholders, including women's rights advocates and industry representatives, who view it as a progressive step toward inclusive employment practices. It reinforces the right of women to participate in the workforce across all shifts, subject to safety and consent, and marks a move toward greater gender equity in Nagaland's labour landscape.

# Nagaland assembly's 7th Session begins

**Kohima:** The seventh session of the 14th Nagaland Legislative Assembly (NLA) began on Tuesday and will sit for two days. After a one-day recess on 3 September, the session is scheduled to conclude on 4 September. Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio is expected to make an obituary reference to the passing of Nagaland Governor La. Ganesan, while NLA Speaker Sharingain Longkumer will pay tribute to former Assembly member Nungsangyapang. The House will deliberate on key issues on the first day, including the Prohibition of Satanic Worship in Nagaland and unemployment. The Secretary-in-Charge of the NLA will report on the Governor's assent to sev-



eral bills. Chief Minister Rio will introduce two new bills: the Nagaland State Finance Commission Bill, 2025, and the Nagaland Flood Plain Zoning Bill, 2025. He will also present a copy of the Nagaland Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Rules, 2024, as amended by the 2022 rules. Other reports are also expected to be tabled during the session. The session will run for two working days, with a recess scheduled for September 3 and the concluding session on September 4.



## Not Just Fragrance, How to Choose an Air Freshener That Elevates Your Home Décor

By Vinit Mhamunkar, Head, Industrial Design, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd.

As India prepares for the festive season, homes come alive with colour, lights, and elaborate décor. Walls are repainted, furniture is polished, and flowers brighten every corner. Yet, amid this visual transformation, there's one invisible design element that is often overlooked which is: fragrance. Fragrance is more than a pleasant add-on. It sets the mood, influences emotions, and shapes how guests experience a space. Research shows that scent is tied most closely to memory, meaning a fragrant home lingers long after the lights are switched off. This makes fragrance as vital a décor element as flowers, drapes, or centrepieces.

### Shapes and Colours That Blend with Your Décor

Modern fragrance devices are no longer just about functionality—they are crafted with aesthetic appeal in mind to enhance contemporary living spaces. Today's consumers prefer designs with soft curves and sleek, minimalist forms, moving away from ornamental or overly decorative models. Subtle, muted colors such as pastels, greys are especially popular, as they harmonize with modern interiors without overpowering the room. A well-designed air freshener doesn't just add a pleasant scent; it naturally complements your style, making the space feel more inviting and thoughtfully curated. Ultimately, fragrance devices are being embraced as an integral design element that elevates both the mood and the visual appeal

of the home.

### Vanilla: The Trendsetter Fragrance of the Season

This festive season, vanilla is leading the way. Once dismissed as "basic," vanilla is now at the heart of the global "gourmand fragrance" movement as it is warm, indulgent, and comforting. It strikes the perfect balance between familiarity and modernity, making it an ideal festive choice.

Pairing vanilla with florals like jasmine or roses can create an inviting ambience in living rooms, while fresh aquas or citrus blends add energy to dining areas. Vanilla doesn't just smell festive; it feels celebratory, indulgent, and timeless.

### Choosing The Right Air Freshener For Every Room

Just as every room in a home serves a different purpose, the choice of fragrance can be tailored to enhance its mood, whether it's creating warmth for gatherings, calm for rest, focus for work, or subtle indulgence for dining.

- **Living Rooms:** Warm notes such as vanilla, sandalwood, or amber create an inviting and indulgent setting for gatherings
- **Bedrooms:** Calming florals like lavender and rose help promote rest and relaxation
- **Work Corners:** Fresh aquas and citrus fragrances sharpen focus and add vitality
- **Dining Spaces:** Subtle gourmand notes such as vanilla or cinnamon complement festive meals without overpowering them

part of spatial design, homes can achieve harmony between what looks good and what feels good.

### Effortless Hosting with Technology

Festivities also mean a packed calendar of hosting, cooking, and entertaining. Modern fragrance devices make this effortless. Automated sprays and app-enabled diffusers ensure consistent fragrance, always keeping homes guest-ready without constant monitoring.

Design-led devices such as a Matic and aer Plug not only fit into décor seamlessly but also offer a reliable way to maintain ambience through back-to-back gatherings. For busy hosts, that means one less thing to worry about.

### Beyond the Festival Window

What's striking is that consumers no longer see fragrance as seasonal. Increasingly, devices remain in homes year-round, becoming part of daily living. This reflects a larger cultural shift: fragrance is now a design staple, not just a festive indulgence.

Décor is no longer only about what meets the eye. As Indian homes become more design-conscious, fragrance is stepping into the spotlight as the invisible element that ties it all together. Lights may dazzle and flowers may fade, but a fragrance that lingers warmly in memory ensures that a home is remembered long after the celebrations are over.

This festive season, style your space not just with what people can see—but with what they can feel.

## Tata Digital emerges as leading credit enabler on ONDC with 1 million loan applications

**Guwahati:** Tata Digital has taken a commanding lead in democratizing access to credit through its early adoption of the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC). In just under three months, the company has facilitated over one million personal loan applications, recording the largest share of disbursements and users on the ONDC Network. As one of the first and largest buy-

er platforms for financial services on ONDC, Tata Digital's loan marketplace on Tata Neu now hosts 14 lending partners, including two integrated via ONDC. This multi-lender structure ensures transparency, flexibility, and competitive pricing for salaried professionals, self-employed individuals, and first-time borrowers. The platform has witnessed strong traction in categories

like gold loans, reflecting evolving consumer preferences. "Our participation on the ONDC Network signals Tata Digital's commitment to democratizing financial services and serving underserved segments," said Gaurav Hazrati, President, Financial Services, Tata Digital. Vibhor Jain, Acting CEO and COO of ONDC, added that the platform is enabling a seamless, inclu-

sive, and responsible credit ecosystem. In Guwahati, analysts note that digital lending innovations are reshaping the local market by empowering small traders, retailers, and households. With increasing demand for easy, paperless loans, Tata Digital's ONDC-led credit offerings are expected to strengthen Guwahati's fast-growing consumer and business ecosystem.

## SBI, Flipkart launch cashback credit card



**Guwahati:** SBI Card, India's largest pure-play credit card issuer, has joined hands with homegrown e-commerce giant Flipkart to launch the Flipkart SBI Credit Card, offering a host of cashback benefits across online shopping and services. The card was launched in the presence of SBI Chairman Challa Sreenivasulu Setty and SBI MD Ashwini Kumar Tewari.

The co-branded card is designed to provide 7.5% cashback on Myntra spends and 5% cashback on Flipkart, Shopsy, and Cleartrip. Customers will also enjoy 4% cashback on select brands including Zomato, Uber, Netmeds, and PVR, along with 1% unlimited cashback on other eligible spends. The card comes

with a joining and renewal fee of ₹500, welcome benefits worth ₹1,250, and a fee reversal on annual spends above ₹3.5 lakh. In Guwahati, the card could accelerate digital payment adoption, especially among youth and working professionals. With rising appetite for e-commerce in Assam's capital, demand for fashion, electronics, and travel bookings via Flipkart and Myntra is expected to see a boost, supported by attractive cashback options.

Flipkart CEO Kalyan Krishnamurthy said the move aims to "democratize access to formal credit," while SBI Card MD & CEO Salila Pande termed it a step towards a "rewarding and seamless payment experience."

## Bandhan Bank begins 10-year CSR push for inclusive growth

**Agartala:** To commemorate its 10th anniversary, Bandhan Bank has rolled out a series of major CSR initiatives aimed at advancing healthcare, education, and environmental sustainability across India. The Bank plans to plant 1 lakh trees in 10 states, support the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission in establishing the Sister Nivedita Heritage Museum & Knowledge Centre in Kolkata, and donate 10 fully equipped ambulances to enhance emergency medical access. The plantation program, spanning states including Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karn-

taka, and Madhya Pradesh, will integrate agroforestry and social forestry practices to boost climate resilience, biodiversity, and livelihoods. The Sister Nivedita Heritage Museum & Knowledge Centre initiative focuses on empowering women through education and skill development, highlighting the Bank's commitment to social upliftment. Ambulances will be distributed across Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat, West Bengal, Odisha, Telangana, Punjab, and Delhi to improve healthcare delivery in underserved areas. In Agartala, local stakehold-

ers have welcomed Bandhan Bank's CSR programs, emphasizing their potential to strengthen healthcare infrastructure and promote environmental sustainability. Businesses and communities anticipate long-term benefits from tree plantation projects and enhanced access to emergency medical services, boosting public confidence in regional development. Partha Pratim Sen-Gupta, MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank, said: "Our focus remains on inclusive growth, sustainable practices, and women's empowerment. These initiatives marking a decade of impactful service.

## Sebi clears 13 IPOs

**Mumbai:** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has approved initial public offerings (IPOs) for 13 companies, including prominent names such as Urban Company and Imagine Marketing, potentially enabling primary issuance worth Rs 15,000 crore in the coming months. Imagine Marketing, the parent of Boat headphones and smartwatches, filed its draft documents via the confidential route in April, marking its second attempt at going public after withdrawing its earlier IPO application in 2022. Urban Company, backed by Tiger Global and Accel, is targeting a Rs 1,900-crore.

### ICICI Bank hosts business engagement session in Agartala, highlights Tripura's growth vision

**Agartala:** ICICI Bank recently organised an engagement session in Agartala, bringing together key stakeholders to deliberate on the ease of doing business and the role of financial institutions in driving economic growth in Tripura.

The session was attended by Apurba Roy, Secretary of Finance, Government of Tripura, and senior journalist Sanit Debroy, while Surendra Nidar, General Manager (Officer in Charge) of the Reserve Bank of India's Agartala office, participated



ed virtually. Speaking at the event, Roy spoke about the need for a business-friendly ecosystem to accelerate development in the North-east, particularly Tripura.

He noted that private banks play a vital role in boosting commercial activity, supporting government banking, and ensuring delivery of essential financial ser-

vices. He further outlined strategic recommendations for private banks to align their operations with Tripura's Vision 2047, advocating innovative solutions and inclusive banking practices. Nidar assured RBI's commitment to working closely with the state government to facilitate the rollout of schemes aimed at social and economic development. Meanwhile, Debroy highlighted the transformative role of banks in fostering social reform and contributing to nation-building.

### Alcatel partners BSM to expand Assam retail



**Guwahati:** Alcatel has announced a strategic partnership with BSM Ventures, a leading distribution house in Assam, to expand its offline retail network in the North East. The move reinforces Alcatel's commitment to delivering innovative, reliable, and accessible products backed by strong after-sales support and warranty. BSM Ventures, led by Binoy Kumar Agarwala, has built a reputation for enhancing regional visibility for global technology and lifestyle brands. With a robust retail ecosystem and proven expertise, the firm is expected to play a pivotal role in maximizing Alcatel's offline reach and consumer accessibility across Assam and beyond. "At a time when disposable

income is rising in the North East, this collaboration will help us strengthen Alcatel's presence and create new opportunities for growth," said AtulVivek, Chief Business Officer, NxtCell India (Alcatel). AnshRathi, COO, NxtCell India, added that the partnership marks a milestone for Alcatel's India journey while paving the way for further expansion into other states. In Guwahati, the tie-up is seen as a timely move to meet growing demand for affordable yet dependable consumer technology. As Guwahati consolidates its position as a major retail hub in the North East, Alcatel's increased offline presence is expected to intensify competition and widen choices for consumers.

### GST Council meet eyes rate rationalisation



**New Delhi:** The 56th Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council meeting, scheduled for September 3-4 in New Delhi, is set to discuss one of the biggest tax overhauls since the GST regime was rolled out in 2017. An officers' meeting on September 2 will lay the groundwork for the two-day deliberations.

The GST Council is responsible for making recommendations on tax rates, exemptions, and compliance measures under the GST framework. The meeting will be chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and attended by finance ministers from all states and Union Territories, as well as senior officials from the Centre.

Decisions need to be taken by consensus or weighted voting (Centre has 33 per cent, states collectively 67 per cent).

### Flipkart expands supply chain ahead of Big Billion Days 2025 sale

**Bengaluru:** Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, today announced a significant expansion of its supply chain infrastructure to strengthen festive readiness for The Big Billion Days 2025. The expansion spans 35 lakh sq. ft. and enhances delivery capabilities across 21,000+ pincodes, with new fulfilment centres and last-mile hubs in Varanasi, Patna, Manesar,

Ranchi, Ghaziabad, Agra, and Agartala. The newly operational facilities include a 2.0 lakh sq. ft. centre in Varanasi generating 3,600 jobs, a 4.5 lakh sq. ft. cornerstone in Patna serving over 1,000 pincodes, and a state-of-the-art 140-acre Regional Distribution Center in Manesar creating 10,000 jobs. In the Northeast, Flipkart has launched its first grocery fulfilment centre

in Agartala with a dispatch capacity of 5,000 orders daily. The expansion also covers Guwahati, Singur, and Saidham, strengthening last-mile reach. With 2.2 lakh seasonal jobs created and nearly 400 micro-fulfilment centres established across 19 cities, Flipkart reaffirmed its commitment to delivering inclusive, fast, and affordable festive shopping experiences across Bharat.

### Manipal Hospital EM Bypass boosts Mizoram healthcare with neurosurgery, robotic cancer treatment services

**Aizawl :** Manipal Hospital EM Bypass, Kolkata, is emerging as a key player in the Eastern and North-Eastern healthcare market by providing cutting-edge neurosurgery and robotic cancer treatments to patients from Mizoram. The hospital's latest interventions, highlighted at a press conference by Dr. Harsh Jain, Senior Consultant – Neurosurgery, and Dr. Abhay Kumar, HOD – Urology, Surgical Oncology & Robotic Surgery, underscore the integration of technology with surgical expertise to improve patient outcomes. Notable cases include a



37-year-old with acoustic neuroma and a 31-year-old woman with a large spinal tumour, treated using neuronavigation, intraoperative neuromonitoring, and minimally invasive microsurgery. Robotic-assisted procedures for prostate cancer and complex urological condi-

tions have reduced recovery times, enhanced precision, and minimized patient trauma, establishing Manipal as a preferred destination for high-end healthcare in the region. Aizawl is witnessing a surge in demand for specialized healthcare services, with increased

patient inflow boosting local pharmacies, diagnostic centers, and allied medical service providers. The trend reflects growing consumer confidence in accessing world-class treatment locally, offering new growth opportunities for healthcare providers and associated businesses.

By combining advanced clinical care with market-oriented outreach, Manipal Hospital EM Bypass is driving healthcare sector growth in Mizoram, setting benchmarks for technological adoption and patient-centric service delivery in the North-East.

### L&T Semicon eyes IPO milestone

**Mumbai:** L&T Semiconductor will consider an initial public offering only after crossing \$500 million (about Rs 4,400 crore) in revenue, chief executive Sandeep Kumar said in an interaction with FE. He did not specify a timeline for the listing. "We would do an IPO when our revenue crosses \$500 million, and that is expected to take a while," Kumar said. The semiconductor arm of Larsen & Toubro is nearing two years of operations. It is pursuing a fabless model with no immediate plans to establish fabrication (fab) or outsourced semiconductor assembly and test.

### TCS extends partnership with Tryg in 7-year deal worth \$640 million

**Mumbai:** Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Tuesday announced that it has expanded its strategic partnership with Tryg, a leading Scandinavian non-life insurance company operating in Denmark,

Sweden and Norway. The deal, worth €550 million (about \$640 million), has been extended by seven years. It is one of the largest deals the company has announced in recent times. As part of the agreement,



TCS will work with Tryg to simplify and standardise

operations across its three major markets and drive technological transformation to accelerate the company's growth.

TCS will deploy its suite of AI and cloud solutions across Tryg's entire IT

landscape to augment delivery capability, automate core processes and enhance customer experience. Johan Kirstein Brammer, group CEO, Tryg, said, "We are simplifying our IT landscape.



## Simba wins silver, bronze at World Beer Awards 2025

**New Delhi:** Simba, India's pioneering craft beer brand and part of Saltborn's premium portfolio, proudly announces its international success at the World Beer Awards 2025. Competing with leading global breweries, Simba achieved Silver for its Simba Wit (Belgian-style wheat beer) and Bronze for Simba Stout (Stout & Porter

category). The World Beer Awards is one of the most respected competitions in the brewing industry, with entries judged through blind tastings by a global panel of experts. These accolades reaffirm Simba's commitment to brewing excellence, innovation, and quality. Commenting on the achievement, Ishwaraj Singh Bhatia, Co-Founder



and COO of Simba Beer,

said, "From the very beginning, our mission has been to put Indian craft beer on the global map. These awards validate our dedication and passion." A vibrant hub for youth culture and nightlife in Northeast India, Simba's recognition is expected to generate heightened consumer interest. Industry observers note that the city's café

and pub landscape is rapidly expanding, with demand for premium and innovative craft beer on the rise. Simba's global success is likely to strengthen its presence in this market. Saltborn continues to expand its lifestyle offerings through Simba Beer and ZigZag Vodka, championing authenticity, craftsmanship, and modern innovation.

## Sebi tightens intraday trading rules

**Mumbai:** India's markets regulator late on Monday issued fresh rules for monitoring intraday positions in equity derivatives. The Securities and Exchange Board of India has been reassessing the rules for equity derivatives after it temporarily banned US high-frequency trading firm Jane Street from the Indian markets, saying some of its trading strategies were manipulative and left retail investors with losses. The new framework, which will take effect from October 1, sets an intraday net position limit of ₹5,000 crore (\$571.39 million) per entity in index options, compared with an end-of-day limit of ₹1,500 crore (\$171.42 million). Gross intraday exposure has been capped at ₹10,000 crore (\$1.14 billion), applied separately to long and short positions, according to Sebi's statement. Stock exchanges will monitor compliance using at least four random snapshots during the trading day, including one between 1445 IST and 1530 IST, when trading activity typically peaks, it added. For entities breaching the limits, stock exchanges will examine trading patterns and seek an explanation for such positions.

## Kalyan Jewellers opens Dibrugarh showroom



**Dibrugarh:** Kalyan Jewellers, one of India's leading jewellery brands, expanded its footprint in Assam with the grand launch of a new showroom at K.C. Gogoi Path, Khalimari, in Dibrugarh. Actor Genelia Deshmukh inaugurated the outlet, highlighting the brand's vision of combining tradition with contemporary trends in jewellery shopping. The showroom showcases signature collections, including Muhurat (wedding line), Mudhra (antique handcrafted jewellery), Nimah (temple jewellery), and Glo (dancing diamonds). It also introduced Candere, Kalyan's lifestyle jewellery brand, known for lightweight, trendy designs catering to Gen Z, working women, and style-conscious men, with prices starting at ₹10,000. Speaking at the event, Deshmukh said, "It is a privilege to represent Kalyan Jewellers, a brand rooted in trust,

transparency and customer focus. I am confident patrons here will embrace its wide array of jewellery collections." Executive Director Ramesh Kalyanaraman said the launch reflects the company's goal to enhance customer experience while staying true to its ethos of trust. In Dibrugarh, the expansion signals a growing appetite for premium jewellery across Assam. Dibrugarh, already a key hub for branded jewellery shopping, has witnessed strong consumer demand, and Kalyan's latest move in Upper Assam is expected to boost competition and strengthen brand visibility across the state. The launch is accompanied by exclusive offers, including 0% making charge on half the purchase value and Kalyan's uniform special gold board rate. All products come with BIS hallmarking and a 4-Level Assurance Certificate.

## ED raids in PNB fraud

**New Delhi:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday carried out searches in Delhi and Maharashtra in connection with a money laundering probe linked to an alleged Rs 425 crore bank loan fraud, as per a report by PTI. According to PTI citing officials said the agency searched a total of 10 premises — nine in Delhi and one in Pune. The action is part of an investigation against Gupta Exim India Private (GEIPL). The probe is based on a CBI FIR filed earlier against the company, its promoters and directors. They are accused of siphoning off loan funds extended by Punjab National Bank (earlier Oriental Bank of Commerce).

## Nutriline by Amway wins NFSU trusted tag, brings safer nutrition closer to consumers

**New Delhi:** Amway India has announced that five of its flagship Nutrilite supplements have earned the prestigious NFSU-NSTS Trusted Recognition. The certification, granted by the Centre of Excellence — National Supplement Testing for Sportspersons (CoE-NSTS) at the National Forensic Sciences University, Gujarat, ensures compliance with international anti-doping standards set by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). The certified products—Nutrilite All Plant Protein, Nutrilite Cal Mag D Plus K2, Nutrilite Glucosamine HCL with Boswellia, Nutrilite Salmon Omega-3 Softgels, and Nutrilite Daily Plus—now carry the "NFSU-NSTS Trusted" mark, offering families, athletes, and fit-



ness enthusiasts assurance of safety and transparency. Rajneesh Chopra, Managing Director, Amway India, said, "This milestone not only reinforces Nutrilite's 90-year legacy but also builds confidence among people seeking trusted, high-quality supplements for their health journeys." where families are increasingly turning to preventive healthcare, the recognition resonates strongly. Local distributors

note that young professionals and sports enthusiasts are showing greater trust in certified products, with the NFSU mark expected to drive higher adoption. For many households, it offers peace of mind that what they consume is both safe and effective. Amway said the recognition reaffirms its vision of helping people live better lives through science-backed, trusted nutrition.

## Shopsy launches Grand Shopsy Mela, brings 1 cr+ products under Rs 149 ahead of festive season

**Guwahati:** Shopsy by Flipkart has rolled out its biggest annual shopping event, the Grand Shopsy Mela (GSM), running from August 29 to September 7, to kick off Bharat's pre-festive season shopping. With the theme "Aise Gireng Dam, Shopping Hogi Subah Shaam," the sale offers over 1 crore products priced under ₹149 across fashion, lifestyle, home, and beauty categories. The platform has announced Grand Jhatpat Deals, Jackpot Offers, hourly price drops and limited-stock specials, positioning GSM as the first stop for value-driven festive shopping. As part of the initiative, Shopsy has also launched its digital campaign "Pehle Shopsy Check Kiya Kya?" urging customers to explore its exclusive



festive deals. In partnership with Cleartrip, shoppers

also stand a chance to win travel packages and flight vouchers through curated cart contests. In Guwahati, traders and retailers expect GSM to reshape festive buying patterns. With customers in Assam increasingly adopting digital shopping, Shopsy's budget-friendly deals are expected to attract households seeking affordable apparel, home décor, and festive essentials online, intensifying competition with local stores. Kapil Thirani, Business Head of Shopsy and Flipkart Marketplace, said, "GSM is designed to blend affordability with wide selection while giving sellers access to millions of customers across Bharat."

## KOLKATAWOOD 2025: Bringing the latest furniture and mattress innovations to Eastern India

**New Delhi:** Consumers and businesses in Eastern India will get a first-hand look at the latest in furniture, woodworking, and mattress manufacturing at KOLKATAWOOD 2025, set from September 12–14, 2025 at Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan, Kolkata. Organised by NuernbergMesse India, the exhibition extends the INDIWOOD legacy, connecting global technology with regional markets. The event will feature 150+ leading brands showcasing modern machinery, materials, and ergonomic solutions. Attendees can experience live demonstrations, B2B matchmaking, and skilling sessions, helping both consumers and small busi-



nesses understand and access new product offerings. With the Indian furniture market valued at USD 23.9 billion in 2023 and poised to more than double by

2032, KOLKATAWOOD arrives at a pivotal moment for lifestyle and home improvement sectors.

The exhibition opens opportunities for local con-

sumers and retailers alike. Rising disposable incomes and increased interest in home and office interiors have sparked demand for quality furniture, modular kitchens, and smart mattresses. Retailers in Kolkata view KOLKATAWOOD 2025 as a chance to source innovative products, enhance supply chains, and meet the evolving preferences of families and young professionals. With major investments in Eastern India by Reliance Industries, Ambuja Neotia, and JSW Group, KOLKATAWOOD 2025 is set to act as a consumer-focused gateway for modern furniture, design solutions, and lifestyle upgrades across the region.

## Honda promotes road safety, reaches 2,400 Assam student

**Tinsukia:** Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India (HMSI) is strengthening its corporate social responsibility (CSR) outreach with a large-scale road safety awareness campaign in Assam, impacting more than 2,400 students and staff across St. Stephen's Higher Secondary School (Tinsukia) and St. Mary's Higher Secondary School (Dibrugarh).

Led by HMSI's trained instructors, the campaign combined interactive learning with practical demonstrations, including helmet safety, blind spot awareness, and riding simulators. Sessions also featured Honda's danger prediction training (Kiken Yosoku Training) and activities to improve riding skills. The company further showcased its digital initiative, E-Gurukul,

which offers multilingual road safety modules for students aged 5–18, ensuring wider accessibility and inclusivity.

In Tinsukia, community members welcomed the campaign, noting that with rising two-wheeler use in the commercial hub, awareness drives are vital for safer mobility. Local traders and parents said educating young riders would directly influence safer commuting practices, helping reduce accident risks in the fast-growing town. This initiative reflects HMSI's global vision of achieving zero traffic collision fatalities by 2050 and supports India's national target of halving road fatalities by 2030. To date, HMSI has reached over 10 million people across India through its road safety programs.

## Small towns fuel FMCG boom

**New Delhi:** Rural India is no longer just a value market. Villages and small towns now account for 42% of sales of premium FMCG products, up from 30% just four years ago, according to a new report by Worldpanel India (formerly Kantar). The survey shows how Indians everywhere, not just metro elites, are willing to spend extra for better quality, healthier, or more aspirational products. Premium goods form 15% FMCG sales.

## Slice SFB appoints ex-RBI chief Eugene Karthak Chairman for Northeast growth

**Guwahati:** slice Small Finance Bank (SFB) has appointed Eugene Emmanuel Karthak, former Executive Director of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as Part-time Chairman and Independent Director, marking a significant boost to its governance and Northeast presence.

Karthak, with over 30 years of regulatory and supervisory experience, has headed critical RBI departments including Information Technology and Corporate Services and served as Regional Director in Delhi and

Bengaluru. He also played a key role in setting up RBI's first office in Gangtok, Sikkim, and currently leads the Guwahati-based Indian Institute of Bank Management, in addition to being on the Governing Council of CAFRAL, Mumbai. In Guwahati, Karthak's appointment signals a stronger alignment with local aspirations. With Guwahati emerging as a financial hub for the Northeast, businesses and small borrowers see the move as an opportunity for faster credit disbursal, digital-first

solutions, and greater confidence in compliance-driven banking. Local entrepreneurs and MSMEs expect the bank's renewed leadership to further ease access to capital.

Headquartered in Assam, slice SFB has created over 400 jobs in the region over the past year and expanded its footprint with new branches in Nagaland and Mizoram. The bank continues to focus on MSMEs, agri-linked enterprises, women's empowerment, and financial inclusion.

## India launches SOAR program to equip students with AI skills

**Guwahati:** India has taken a decisive step towards preparing its next generation for an AI-powered future with the launch of the SOAR (Skill for AI Readiness) program by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). The initiative, designed for students from classes 6 to 12 as well as teachers, aims to bridge the growing skill gap in artificial intelligence and digital technologies. Under the program, students will learn the fundamentals of AI through stories, games, and case studies, progressing to advanced activities such as coding, data analysis, and chatbot creation. Ethics will remain a core element, ensuring responsible use of AI. The framework includes three 15-hour modules for

students and a 45-hour "AI for Educators" module for teachers. The project has already been piloted in 10,000 schools, with \$14.4 million raised through Skill Impact Bonds to expand its reach. In Guwahati, the SOAR program is seen as a transformative push. With Assam's growing IT and startup ecosystem, local stakeholders believe AI training in schools will create a skilled workforce ready to contribute to the state's digital economy, while also generating opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship.

The government plans to implement SOAR nationwide by 2027, positioning India as a global hub of technological innovation and aligning with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

## Medanta's 40,000 knee replacements highlight innovation in orthopaedics, eyes growth in NE

**New Delhi:** Medanta Gurugram, ranked India's Best Private Hospital by Newsweek for six consecutive years, has showcased its innovation-led growth as Dr. Ashok Rajgopal, Group Chairman – Medanta Institute of Musculoskeletal Disorders and Orthopaedics, completed 40,000 knee replacement surgeries. The milestone reflects how Medanta is leveraging cutting-edge technology, robotics, and patient-centric models—principles often associated with startups—to disrupt traditional healthcare delivery. India's knee replacement market is on a fast-growth trajectory, pro-



jected to expand at an 11% CAGR from 2025–2035. Cases of osteoarthritis are expected to hit 60 million by 2025, creating a growing consumer base seeking

minimally invasive solutions, faster recovery, and personalized implants. Dr. Rajgopal emphasized the role of robotic-assisted surgeries and structured rehabilitation in

transforming outcomes.

The appetite for innovative healthcare solutions is evident as patients in Meghalaya increasingly seek access to advanced orthopaedic care. However, many still travel to Guwahati or Delhi for treatment, highlighting a gap ripe for disruption. Medanta's expansion into the Northeast is expected to reshape this market, offering patients in Shillong access to next-gen surgical innovations closer to home.

With its startup-like focus on innovation and scalability, Medanta continues to redefine India's healthcare growth story.

## Deutsche Bank Exits India Retail

**New Delhi:** Deutsche Bank is exploring the sale of its Indian retail bank-invested assets and has invited bids from domestic and foreign lenders in the coun-



try, two sources told Reuters, making the bank to consider on India. The German has pledged to make its retail business more profitable. In March, CEO Christian Sewing said headcount at its retail bank will be cut by almost 2,000 people in 2025, with a "significant" reduction in branch numbers.



## Experts Call for Cross-Sector Collaboration and Tech-Led Tracking to Curb Illicit Tobacco trade

At the recent summit held in Manila, 'Combatting Illicit Trade in Southeast Asia: Cross-border and Cross-Sector Strategies for Tackling the Threat', experts from Southeast Asia underscored the escalating threat of illicit tobacco trade — a challenge undermining public health systems and draining government revenues in India and Southeast Asia. Fueled by affordability gaps, tax disparities, and weak enforcement, the illegal tobacco market is expanding rapidly. Globally, an estimated 500 billion illicit cigarettes are consumed annually, representing 14–15% of total tobacco use. These products evade taxation and quality control, resulting in significant fiscal losses and



heightened health risks.

Jericho Nograles, President, Philippine Tobacco Institute, highlighted how the scale of the problem is growing "In the Philippines, one in five cigarettes is illicit, with a sharp rise seen post-pandemic. Yet governments often avoid discussing the issue, sometimes due to embarrassment. Legal exports can end up fueling illicit imports elsewhere



so we need to normalise honest policy dialogue about the existence of illicit trade, if we want real solutions." On the sidelines of the event, Rodney Van Dooren, Head of Illicit Trade Prevention, Philip Morris International said, "Illicit tobacco is not just an economic concern but also a health hazard. Counterfeit cigarettes have been found to contain up to 160% more tar and 133%

more carbon monoxide than regulated products. In India, where about 120 million people smoke cigarettes, nearly one in four is illicit. Industry estimates suggest this translates into annual excise losses of ₹12,000–13,000 crore (USD 1.5–1.6 billion)."

The affordability of these unregulated products, particularly in low-income and border regions, drives sustained demand. In some cases, the absence or prohibition of regulated, less harmful alternatives has inadvertently pushed consumers toward black-market products. Regional dynamics further complicate enforcement. Illicit products often originate legally in one jurisdiction before being smuggled into others.

## JSW Group, Assam govt unite for Guwahati museum project

**Guwahati:** The JSW Group—one of the largest corporate promoters of arts, culture, and heritage in the country—has partnered with the Government of Assam to set-up a state-of-the-art museum in Guwahati. To begin with, the world-class museum will house the Vrindavani Vastra, the 17th-century Srimanta Sankardev and currently preserved at the British Museum in London. The British Museum has consented to loan the Vrindavani Vastra for public exhibition in Assam in 2026–27, where it will remain for 18 months. The Government of Assam has allotted land at the Sericulture Farm, Khanapara, Guwahati, for the construction of the museum, which will be fully funded by the JSW Group. Mrs. Sangita Jindal, Chairperson, JSW Foundation, said, "The JSW Group is honored to partner with the Government of Assam in building a befitting museum that will safeguard the Vastra under global



standards, while creating a lasting world-class cultural institution in the city of Guwahati." The Vastra measures approximately 9.5 meters in length and two meters in width, making it one of the largest surviving devotional silk textiles of its era. Mr. Abin Chaudhuri, architect of the proposed museum, said, "Our vision is to create a space that balances reverence and modernity - where the architecture itself pays homage to the textile's devotional essence while providing the most advanced conservation facilities." The initiative was recently announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, who welcomed the JSW Group's commitment as a vital step in realizing a long-cherished cultural aspiration of the people of Assam.

## Public banks lose deposit share



**New Delhi:** The share of household deposits held by public sector banks (PSBs) has declined to 63%, marking a significant shift in India's banking landscape, according to recent financial data. This represents a notable drop from nearly 73% just three years ago, underscoring the growing influence of private sector banks in retail banking. Household deposits remain a key indicator of consumer trust and banking stability. As private banks gain ground, the evolving dynamics could reshape credit flows, investment patterns, and the broader financial services market in the years ahead.

## Medanta opens Noida hospital, expands Delhi-NCR healthcare with 550 beds

**Gurugram:** Global Health Limited "Medanta", one of the largest private multi-specialty tertiary care providers operating in the North and East regions of India, has announced the commencement of operations at its new 550 bedded hospital in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. The launch further strengthens Medanta's commitment to provide highest standard of healthcare in the National Capital Region (NCR). The state of the art hospital opens with 300 operational beds, including 100+ ICU beds and 5 advanced operating theatres. Equipped with cutting-edge technology such as Da Vinci Xi Surgical Robot, Next generation O-Arm, Artis Icono AI-driven Biplane Cath Lab, advanced diagnostic systems including 3 Tesla MRI, 256-Slice Dual Source CT, PET Scan, and Gamma Camera, the facility is designed to provide world-class medical care. Medanta Noida will deliver comprehensive tertiary and quater-



nary care across more than 20 super specialties including Cardiology, Oncology, Neurosciences, Gastroenterology, Orthopaedics, and all kind of Transplants. Strategically located in Sector 50, Noida, with direct connectivity to the Metro network, the hospital is well positioned to serve patients across Delhi-NCR and the underserved regions of Western Uttar Pradesh. Speaking about the launch of the Noida unit, Dr. Naresh Trehan, Chairman and Managing Director of Medanta, shared: "Our new hos-

pital in Noida marks another milestone in Medanta's journey of bringing world-class healthcare to the people of India." Highlighting the importance of expanding healthcare services in Delhi-NCR, Mr. Pankaj Sahni, Group CEO, Medanta, said: "The launch of our Noida facility today represents a significant step in Medanta's growth journey. This expansion strengthens our presence in the NCR while extending access to a large and underserved population in Noida and Western Uttar Pradesh."

## RBI approves R Gandhi's Yes Bank chairmanship extension



**Mumbai:** Private sector lender Yes Bank on Tuesday said the Reserve Bank has approved the re-appointment of former RBI Deputy Governor R Gandhi as non-executive chairman of the bank. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), through its letter dated September 1, 2025, has approved the re-appointment of Rama Subramaniam Gandhi as part-time Chairman of the bank for a further period from September 20, 2025, to May 13, 2027, at a remuneration approved by the RBI,

Yes Bank said in a regulatory filing.

He served as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for three years from 2014 to 2017. He had been a seasoned and accomplished central banker for 37 years. Gandhi had a three-year secondment to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the capital market regulator. He also held the charge of Director of the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology, IDRBT, Hyderabad.

## Government may raise GST on luxury EVs soon

**New Delhi:** An Indian tax panel has proposed steep increases in consumer levies on luxury electric cars priced above \$46,000, a government document showed, a move

that could impact sales of carmakers such as Tesla, Mercedes-Benz, BMW and BYD. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is aiming to reform India's tax system and is pushing Indians to

buy more domestic goods just when relations with the United States have soured due to high tariffs. His government has recommended hefty cuts in the goods and services tax (GST) that

could make everything from shampoos to electronics cheaper.

The key panel tasked with making rate suggestions to India's powerful GST Council has backed sweeping.



## Ederson ends City stint, moves



**London:** Manchester City released a statement to announce the departure of one of their most successful players and wrote, "He has left City to join Turkish side Fenerbahce, subject to international clearance. Everyone at Manchester City wishes Ederson the best in the next stage of his career.

During his eight years in Manchester, Ederson won 18 major honours under manager Pep Guardiola, comprising six Premier League titles, two FA Cups, four League Cups, three Community Shields, and the club's first-ever Champions League, UEFA Super Cup, and FIFA Club World Cup successes. With six league titles, Ederson is the most decorated goalkeeper in the Premier League era of English football. Before him, former Liverpool man Bruce Grobbelaar is the only other goalkeeper to have also won the English top-flight title six times in the sport's history. "I leave Manchester City incredibly proud of what we have achieved together, and I am honoured to have worn the shirt so many times.

## Starc ends T20I career, Australia reacts

**Sydney:** Veteran Australian fast bowler Mitchell Starc has officially announced his retirement from Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is), bringing an end to a distinguished career in the shortest format of the game. The 35-year-old left-arm pacer made the decision to prioritize Test cricket and prepare for the upcoming 2027 ODI World Cup. Starc, who played 65 T20Is for Australia between 2012 and 2024, claimed 79 wickets at an economy rate of 7.74, and was widely regarded as one of the most lethal white-ball bowlers of his generation. He was a key figure in Australia's vic-



torious 2021 T20 World Cup campaign in the UAE.

In a statement, Starc said, "Test cricket is and has always been my highest priority. I have loved every minute of every T20 game I have played for Australia, particularly the 2021 World Cup — not just because we won but for the incredible group and the fun along the way". The decision comes ahead of Australia's three-match T20I series against New Zealand in October.

## India win SAFF U-17 title despite Bangladesh loss

**Thimpu:** India's U-17 women's football team was crowned champions of the SAFF U-17 Women's Championship 2025 on Sunday, despite a dramatic 3-4 defeat to Bangladesh in their final league match at the Changlimithang Stadium. The title was secured on the strength of India's dominant performance throughout the tournament, finishing atop the table with 15 points from six matches. The tournament followed a double round-robin format involving four teams. India had already sealed the championship prior to the final fixture,



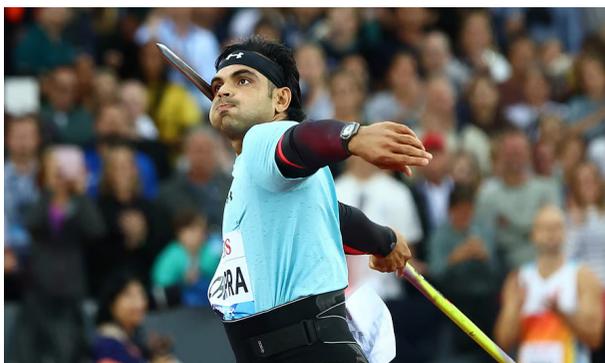
having won five consecutive matches, including a 2-0 victory over Bangladesh earlier in the campaign. In the final match, Bangladesh struck early, with Purnima Marma scoring in the opening minute. India responded in the ninth minute through

Anushka Kumari, who showcased her attacking prowess with a composed equalizer. Bangladesh regained the lead in the 34th minute via Alpi Akter and extended it to 3-1 early in the second half through Sauravi Prity.

## Neeraj Chopra leads India's Worlds squad

### Neeraj Chopra targets title defence after Budapest gold triumph

**Bengaluru:** The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) has announced a 19-member contingent for the upcoming World Athletics Championships, scheduled to be held in Tokyo from September 13 to 21, 2025. Reigning world and Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra will headline the squad, entering the competition as the defending champion in men's javelin throw. Chopra's wild card entry has enabled India to field the maximum four



athletes in the men's javelin event for the first time at the World Championships. Joining him are Sachin

Yadav, Yashvir Singh, and Rohit Yadav, all of whom qualified via the World Athletics ranking system.

The squad comprises 14 men and 5 women, with athletes selected through a mix of direct qualification, world rankings, and WA invitations. Only three athletes—Gulveer Singh (5000m), Praveen Chithravel (triple jump), and Parul Chaudhary (3000m steeplechase)—qualified by breaching the entry standards.

Among the first-time entrants are Animesh Kujur (200m) and Tejas Shirse (110m hurdles), mark-

ing India's debut in these events at the World Championships. Long jumper M Sreeshankar, returning from injury, qualified via rankings and is seen as a potential medal contender.

The Indian team will hold a pre-event training camp in Tokyo from September 4 to 9. Chopra, currently training in the Czech Republic, will join the camp on September 5, while the other javelin throwers will arrive later due to the timing of their event.

## Djokovic, 38, becomes oldest to reach all four Slam QFs in a season

### Djokovic out-aced Struff, despite ace ranking

**New York:** Serbian tennis legend Novak Djokovic has etched his name into the history books once again, becoming the oldest player to reach the quarterfinals of all four Grand Slam tournaments in a single season. At 38 years old, Djokovic achieved the milestone after a commanding straight-sets victory over Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff (6-3, 6-3, 6-2) in the Round of 16 at the US Open.

This achievement marks Djokovic's 64th career Grand Slam quarterfinal appearance, extending his all-time record. It also represents



the ninth time he has reached the quarterfinals of all four majors in a calendar year—surpassing Roger Federer's previous record of eight such seasons. Djokovic's 2025 Grand Slam cam-

paign has been marked by consistency and resilience. He reached the quarterfinals at the Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, and now the US Open, despite not winning a major ti-

tle this year. His run included losses to Taylor Fritz in Melbourne, Jannik Sinner in Paris and London, and now a rematch with Fritz awaits in New York. During the match against Struff, Djokovic displayed clinical precision, breaking his opponent's serve six times and winning 79% of his first-serve points. Despite receiving treatment for his shoulder and forearm, he maintained control throughout the 109-minute contest. Struff, ranked 144th in the world, had entered the match with momentum after defeating three seeded players.

## Ashwin in ILT20 auction talks

**New Delhi:** Veteran Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has confirmed his intention to participate in the upcoming player auction for the UAE-based International League T20 (ILT20), marking a significant step in his post-IPL career. The 38-year-old, who recently announced his retirement from all forms of Indian cricket including the Indian Premier League, is currently in talks with ILT20 organisers and is expected to formally register for the auction ahead of the September 10 deadline. The ILT20's fourth season is scheduled to run from December 2, 2025, to January 4, 2026. For the

first time, the league will adopt an auction format, replacing its previous draft-based recruitment system. The auction is set to take place on September 30 in Dubai. Ashwin, one of India's most decorated bowlers with 765 international wickets across formats, stated: "Yes, I am in talks with the organisers. Hopefully, I will have a buyer if I register for the auction". If selected, he would become the most high-profile Indian cricketer to feature in the ILT20, joining the ranks of Ambati Rayudu, Robin Uthappa, and Yusuf Pathan—though only Rayudu has played in the league so far.

