



SC sets 2026 deadline for Maharashtra polls

New Delhi: In a decisive move to restore democratic processes at the grassroots level, the Supreme Court of India has directed the Maharashtra government and the State Election Commission (SEC) to complete all pending local body elections by January 31, 2026. The order, issued on September 16, 2025, comes after repeated delays and non-compliance with earlier court directives.



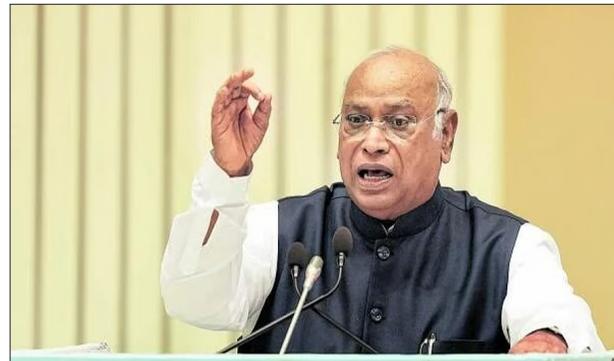
be concluded by October 31, 2025, and cannot be cited as a reason to delay the polls. The bench also dismissed other justifications provided by the SEC, including the non-availability of school premises due to board exams, staff shortages, and insufficient electronic voting machines (EVMs), calling them inadequate and reflective of administrative incompetence.

A bench comprising Justices Surya Kant and Joymalaya Bagchi expressed strong displeasure over the SEC's failure to act on its May 6 order, which had mandated the notification of elections within four weeks and their completion within four months. The court noted that elections to Zila Parishads, Panchayat Samitis, municipal corporations, and councils had been stalled since 2022, primarily due to litigation over Other Backward Classes (OBC) reservation and administrative lapses. The Supreme Court made it clear that no further extensions will be granted. It directed that the ongoing delimitation exercise must

To address logistical challenges, the court instructed the SEC to submit a detailed staffing requirement to the Chief Secretary of Maharashtra within two weeks. The Chief Secretary, in coordination with other departments, must ensure the deployment of necessary personnel within four weeks of receiving the request. Additionally, the SEC has been ordered to arrange for the required EVMs and file a compliance affidavit by November 30, 2025.

Congress forms strategy panel to gear up for 2025 Bihar Assembly elections battle

New Delhi: In a strategic move to strengthen its electoral preparedness, the Indian National Congress has constituted a 39-member Pradesh Election Committee (PEC) for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections, scheduled to take place around November 2025. The formation of the committee was approved by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on September



16, 2025, signaling the party's intent to intensify its campaign efforts in the state. The PEC includes

prominent state leaders such as Bihar Congress President Rajesh Ram, Congress Legislative Party leader Shakeel Ahmed Khan, and senior leader Madan Mohan Jha. Other notable members include Rajesh Rathore, Motilal Sharma, Anshul Avijit, Qaiser Ali Khan, Ramesh Prasad Yadav, Shashi Ranjan, Subodh Mandal, Fauzia Rana, and Khushboo Kumari.

Modi to lay foundation for country's 1st PM Mitra Park in MP village on Sept 17

PM MITRA Park to boost jobs, exports, infrastructure

Dhar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to lay the foundation stone for India's first PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park on September 17, coinciding with his 75th birthday. The ceremony will take place in Bhainsola village under Badnawar tehsil in Dhar district, marking a significant milestone in the country's push to-



ward large-scale textile infrastructure development. The PM MITRA scheme, launched by the central

government, aims to establish world-class textile manufacturing hubs across seven states. The Dhar park will be the first among these and is set to be the largest, spanning over 2,100 acres. It will integrate the entire textile value chain—from farm to fiber, factory to fashion, and even export facilitation within a single ecosystem.



Army troops undertake route march at 17,000 feet in Sikkim

Election Commission begins Bengal poll official training

Training aims to streamline voter roll revision

Kolkata: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has commenced a comprehensive training programme for poll officials in West Bengal as part of preparations for the upcoming Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The exercise is being undertaken ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections in the state.



The training, which began Tuesday, is being led by State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Agarwal, along with Additional CEOs Dibyendu Das and Arindam Neogi. The initial sessions are focused on equipping Assistant District Magistrates (ADMs) and Electoral

Registration Officers (EROs) with the necessary skills to guide Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in executing the voter list revision process efficiently and accurately.

Following the ADM and ERO sessions, BLOs will receive detailed instructions on assisting voters in fill-

ing out requisite forms and verifying documentation during the SIR drive. BLOs are expected to conduct door-to-door visits across the state to ensure proper verification and inclusion of eligible voters. Gyanesh Bharti to review Bengal poll training.



Mokokchung wraps 10 day awareness drive

Mokokchung: A 10-day special awareness campaign on women's empowerment and gender sensitization concluded in Mokokchung district, with a series of impactful programmes aimed at creating awareness, building skills, and strengthening women's rights. The campaign, organized by Sankalp-District Hub for Empowerment of Women (SDHEW) and District Administration, Mokokchung, targeted diverse groups, including women, adolescent girls, Anganwadi workers, village council members and female prisoners. A press release by Sankalp-District Hub for Empowerment of Women stated that the campaign included awareness sessions on menstrual hygiene, distribution of sanitary napkins, and personal hygiene kits, while a special awareness programme was also conducted for female inmates at District Jail Mokokchung, and relief aid provided to women and girls displaced by the ongoing landslide disaster. A three-month tailoring training course also commenced on September 8, to empower women and girls.

14-day India–Thailand joint military exercise ends in M'laya

The 13th edition of the exercise was held at Fort Vachiraprakan in Tak Province, Thailand

Shillong: The closing ceremony of the 14th edition of the India-Royal Thai Army joint military exercise 'Maitree-XIV' was held at the foreign training node in Meghalaya's Umroi cantonment on Sunday, officials said. Defence spokesman Lt Col Mahendra Rawat said that the aim of the exercise was to achieve interoperability and to acquaint each other with operational procedures and combat drills.



It was evident from what was witnessed that both the armies were able to achieve this aim, he said. According

to the spokesman, the 14-day exercise was conducted under the United Nations (UN) mandate. Both contingents jointly participated in all the tactical drills as well as operational discussions. The exercise culminated with a 48-hour-long validation exercise which included creation of a Temporary Operating Base (TOB), establishing an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) grid, isolation

of the village, heliborne operations, conduct of a raid and hostage rescue, the spokesman said. The exercise also included the display and active use of new-generation equipment by both armies.

Lt Col Rawat said that the closing ceremony was organised as a solemn occasion to felicitate outstanding soldiers and to showcase each other's cultural and martial heritage.

Modi slams Congress during Assam launch

Guwahati: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday alleged that the Congress, instead of supporting the country's army, was backing terrorists groomed by Pakistan. Addressing a programme at Mangaldoi in Assam's Darrang district, he accused the grand old party of "protecting" infiltrators and anti-national forces.

The prime minister also asserted that the BJP would "not allow infiltrators to grab land and conspire to change the demography". "The Congress, instead of supporting the Indian Army, backs terrorists groomed by Pakistan. During 'Operation Sindoor', the Con-

gress, instead of supporting our armed forces, which destroyed the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan, was engaged in protecting infiltrators and anti-national forces," the PM alleged, while addressing the public meeting. 'Operation Sindoor' was successful due to Ma Kamakhya's blessings, Modi said, adding that he was honoured to be present on this sacred land.

PM says Assam CM showed video of ex-Congress chief mocking BJP for honouring performers. The Congress leader's comment came after the BJP had bestowed the Bharat Ratna on Bhupen Hazarika in 2019.

Tripura Congress launches signature campaign against alleged voter fraud

Agartala: As part of its nationwide signature campaign against alleged voter fraud, the Tripura Pradesh Congress held a meeting at the state party headquarters in Agartala on Monday. The meeting was attended by Pradesh Congress president Ashish Kumar Saha along with other party leaders. The Congress has resolved to collect signatures from five crore citizens and submit a memorandum to the President of India and the Election Commission of India demanding corrective measures. Speaking to reporters, Congress president Ashish Kumar Saha said democracy rests on the power of every single vote,



which he alleged is now under threat. He pointed out that in several constituencies, the electoral rolls are riddled with errors—missing photographs, duplicate entries, and deliberate exclusions of genuine voters. He further accused that

certain communities are being intentionally targeted and genuine voters are being suppressed through fraudulent means. Saha stressed that every eligible citizen's name must be included in the electoral rolls and urged people.

Meghalaya cabinet reshuffle likely soon; several ministers may be dropped

Casual remarks by two ministers spark reshuffle calls

Shillong: A major cabinet reshuffle is on the horizon in Meghalaya, with Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma expected to overhaul his council of ministers in the coming days. Sources indicate that as many as eight ministers could be dropped, marking one of the most significant shake-ups in the current administration.

The reshuffle, initially slated for early this week, has been temporarily deferred following the death of former Chief Minister D.D. Lapang on September 12 and the subsequent three-day state mourning period. According to senior officials and party insiders, the move is driven by



a combination of performance concerns, coalition dynamics, and political recalibration. Ministers from the ruling National People's Party (NPP), as well as coalition partners including the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), United Democratic Party (UDP), and Hill State

People's Democratic Party (HSPDP), are expected to be affected. The reshuffle is also expected to bring in new faces such as Gavin Miguel Myllem, Banteidor Lyngdoh, Wailadmiki Shylla, Brening Sangma, and Marthon J. Sangma. These appointments are seen as

part of a broader strategy to reward loyalty, neutralize dissent, and strengthen the coalition's internal balance.

The reshuffle has gained urgency following a series of controversies involving sitting ministers. Notably, Revenue Minister Kyrmen Shylla faced backlash for suggesting that 4,000 metric tonnes of missing coal may have been washed into Bangladesh by rain—a statement that drew national attention and was raised in Parliament.

Education Minister Rakkam Sangma also came under fire for dismissive remarks about poor school infrastructure, prompting damage-control efforts by the government.

Centre, Arunachal govt sign Siang development pact

Itanagar: The Government of India and the Arunachal Pradesh administration have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to implement a special development package for the Siang region, marking a strategic step toward inclusive growth and infrastructure enhancement in the frontier state. The MoU was formalized in the presence of key officials including Arunachal Pradesh Chief Secretary Manish Kumar Gupta, State Planning and Investment Commissioner Ankur Garg, Union Jal Shakti Ministry Secretary V.L. Kantha Rao, Union Power Secretary Pan-kaj Agarwal, and Ministry Commissioner S.K. Sinha.

This initiative is part of the pre-investment activities for the proposed Upper Siang Multipurpose Project

(SUMP), a mega hydro-electric and water storage project envisioned to generate clean energy, moderate floods, and enhance water security in the Brahmaputra basin.

The package also emphasizes marketing and branding of local products, aiming to create distinct identities for indigenous crafts such as textiles and bamboo-based goods. This is expected to expand market access for artisans and promote regional entrepreneurship. Officials stated that the scheme will significantly improve the quality of life in the region while strengthening its socio-economic fabric. It reflects the Centre's commitment to sustainable development and long-term investment in Arunachal Pradesh's future.



HMD boosts market presence with Vibe 5G, expands 4G range for festive season

Shillong: HMD Global has reinforced its position in the Indian mobile market with the launch of the HMD Vibe 5G and two new feature phones, HMD 101 4G and HMD 102 4G, as part of its festive strategy to capture consumer demand across price categories. The HMD Vibe 5G, launched at an introductory festive price of ₹8,999, is aimed



at the value-conscious 5G buyer. With a 6.67-inch

HD+ display, 90Hz refresh rate, 50MP dual camera, 5000mAh battery, and Android 15 support, the device is positioned to compete in the growing affordable 5G segment. The company also unveiled the HMD 101 4G (₹1,899) and HMD 102 4G (₹2,199), designed for users seeking reliable connectivity with essentials like FM radio, dual SIM, Type-C

charging, and local language support. Ravi Kunwar, VP & CEO, HMD India & APAC, said the launches align with the company's goal of making "next-generation connectivity more accessible" while maintaining trusted usability. The new devices are available from September 11 across retail stores, e-commerce platforms, and HMD.com.

TVS launches NTORQ 150, targets premium growth



Guwahati: TVS Motor Company (TVSM) has entered a new segment with the launch of the NTORQ 150, positioning it as India's first hyper sport scooter. The company is betting on growing demand for performance-driven two-wheelers, offering the model at an introductory price of Rs. 1,19,000 (ex-showroom, all India). Powered by a 149.7cc O3CTech engine delivering 13.2 PS and 14.2 Nm torque, the scooter clocks 0-60 km/h in 6.3 seconds and reaches a top speed of 104 km/h, making it the quickest in its class.

Designed on stealth aircraft lines, the NTORQ 150 features MULTIPOINT® projector headlamps, aerodynamic winglets, coloured alloys and a signature 'T' tail lamp. The highlight remains its hi-res TFT cluster with

50+ smart features, including Alexa and smartwatch integration, navigation, live tracking and OTA updates. Safety upgrades include ABS, traction control, emergency alerts and hazard lamps.

In Guwahati, dealers report increasing demand for premium scooters among urban youth and professionals. Market observers say the NTORQ 150's sporty design and connected features could strengthen TVS's position in Assam, where consumer preference is steadily shifting toward high-performance and tech-integrated mobility options.

TVS executives believe the NTORQ 150 will expand the brand's franchise, with two variants offered in six colour options including Stealth Silver, Racing Red and Nitro Green.

Amazon Pay-ICICI Bank card renewal brings travel rewards, forex fee cut

Guwahati: Amazon Pay and ICICI Bank have renewed their long-term partnership for the Amazon Pay ICICI Bank Credit Card, India's most-adopted co-branded credit card with over five million customers. Since its launch in 2018, the card has grown rapidly on the back of transparent rewards and seamless digital convenience.

From October 11, 2025, the card will lower its forex markup on international transactions from 3.5% to 1.99%. Prime members will continue to enjoy 5%

unlimited cashback on Amazon shopping and travel bookings, while non-Prime members will get 3%. The card also maintains benefits such as no annual or joining fees, 2% cashback on Amazon Pay categories, 1% on general spends outside Amazon, and a 1% fuel surcharge waiver.

Mayank Jain, Director of Credit & Lending at Amazon Pay India, said the upgrades reaffirm customer trust and simplify credit usage for everyday and travel needs. Vipul Agarwal, Head of Cards & Pay-

ment Solutions at ICICI Bank, highlighted growing consumer demand for travel-related rewards and flexible redemption options. In Guwahati, traders and financial analysts expect the renewed credit card to encourage more digital transactions, particularly during the festive season. With rising online shopping and outbound travel from Assam's commercial hub, the enhanced rewards are likely to make the card attractive for consumers balancing both local and global spending.

RBI issues payment aggregator guidelines

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India on Monday issued final directions for payment aggregators (PA). Under the guidelines, a bank does not require an authorisation to act as a PA, while non-banking finance companies will need approval from the RBI to carry out such operations.

The RBI had issued draft norms on April 16, 2024, proposing guidelines on proximity or face-to-face payments.

Groww MF launches SHAASTRA-backed multi asset fund

Guwahati: Groww Mutual Fund has launched the Groww Multi Asset Allocation Fund, an open-ended scheme that invests across equity, debt, gold, and silver. The New Fund Offer (NFO) will be open from September 10 to September 24, 2025, with a minimum investment of ₹500 and SIPs starting at ₹100. The scheme will be managed by Paras Matalia, Kaustubh Sule, and Wilfred Gonsalves.

The fund is powered by SHAASTRA (Strategic Holistic Asset Allocation and Systematic Technical Risk Assessment), Groww's proprietary platform that combines macroeconomic indicators, technical signals, and market trends to guide asset allocation. By maintaining over 65% equity exposure, the scheme qualifies for equity taxation, while also leveraging



debt and commodities to balance risk.

Industry data shows that multi-asset portfolios have historically delivered comparable returns to equities with lower volatility. The allocation framework is designed to adapt to shifting cycles — overweighting equities during growth phases or leaning on debt, gold, and silver during uncertain times.

In Guwahati, retail investors are increasingly seeking diversified options that reduce portfolio stress. Advisors expect strong interest in the new fund, particularly from first-time investors looking for stable, adaptive strategies.

TVS Motor partners with ALT Mobility to rollout 3,000 electric three-wheelers in FY 2025-26

Guwahati: TVS Motor Company and ALT Mobility have announced a strategic partnership to deploy up to 3,000 electric three-wheelers across India in FY 2025-26. Under the agreement, TVS Motor will supply the vehicles while ALT Mobility will manage procurement, leasing, and financing through its Drive-to-own model, targeting both passenger and cargo segments. The collaboration leverages ALT's integrated asset management ecosystem, offering 24x7 vehicle monitoring, pre-emptive maintenance, and full-service leasing that covers insurance, roadside assistance, servicing, challan, and fitness compliance. This approach aims to minimize downtime, maximize asset utilization, and enhance driver earnings while supporting sustainable urban mobility.

Rajat Gupta, Business Head - Commercial Mobil-



ity, TVS Motor, highlighted that the partnership pro-

vides "clean, cost-efficient, and reliable mobility solu-

tions" and generates measurable environmental and economic impact. ALT Mobility Co-founder Anuj Gupta emphasized financial inclusion and seamless EV adoption for drivers and fleet operators. In Guwahati, the deployment is expected to transform urban transportation, particularly in busy markets, crowded lanes, and last-mile delivery services. Local businesses and small fleet operators are likely to benefit from lower operating costs and zero-emission vehicles, making electric mobility a viable and sustainable alternative in Assam's capital.

The initiative is poised to strengthen India's electric mobility ecosystem, supporting livelihood creation, shared mobility, and clean transport adoption nationwide.

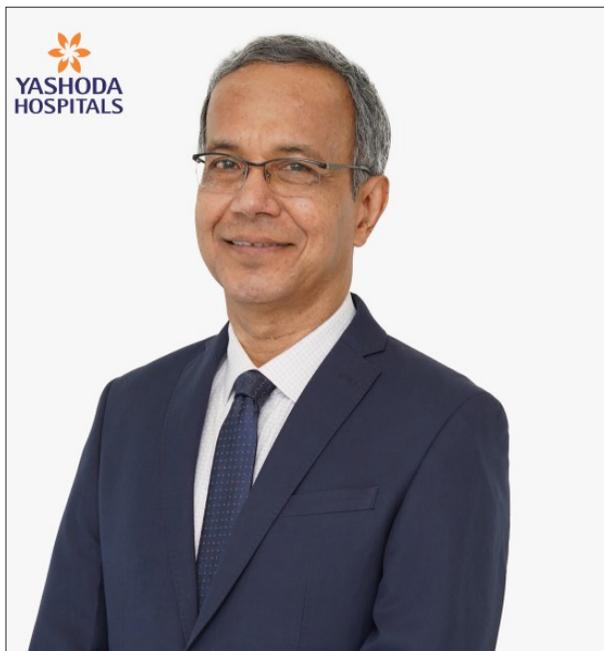
"Parkinson's Awareness: When to Consult a Movement Disorder Specialist and the Advances in DBS Therapy"

Prof. Dr. Rupam Borgohain, Senior Consultant Neurologist and Programme Director-PDMDC, Yashoda Hospitals, Hyderabad(Hitec City)

Prof. Dr. Rupam Borgohain said DBS involves placing tiny electrodes into particular brain regions that are hyperactive in Parkinson's disease, typically the Subthalamic nucleus or globus pallidus internus. These electrodes provide mild electrical impulses that are controlled by a tiny device that is placed beneath the chest's skin, the pacemaker. The stimulation greatly lessens symptoms, including tremor, stiffness, and dyskinesia by regulating abnormal nerve signals. DBS is especially promising since it can significantly increase mobility, lessen motor fluctuations, and reduce the dosage of Parkinson's medicine, which in turn reduces negative effects associated with the medication. Patients frequently report fewer "off" spells, increased emotional well-being, and

increased independence in everyday activities. Importantly, DBS can prolong years of useful, comparatively symptom-free living for carefully chosen individuals, but it is not a cure. To book an appointment, please call [8929967886] or book online at -<https://www.yashodahospitals.com/>

Who Gets the Most Out of DBS?—For patients with intermediate to advanced Parkinson's disease whose symptoms are not well managed with medication alone, DBS is typically advised. A movement problem specialist thoroughly screens candidates to evaluate their general health, brain imaging, and reaction to levodopa treatment. The greatest benefit is typically shown in those with severe tremors, medication-induced dyskinesias, or variations in symptom control. (Doctor



visit Every Month of Second week to provide specialized consultations and care at our center in Guwahati, Assam). Early Parkinson's Symptoms: When to Get Professional Assistance

Early detection of Parkinson's disease improves the likelihood of timely treatment. Among the early warning indicators are

- Persistent shaking in the legs, wrists, or chin.

- Bradykinesia, or slowness of movement, makes routine tasks like buttoning a shirt more difficult.

- Muscular rigidity is sometimes confused with stiffness associated with aging.

- Abrupt alterations in gait, such as dragging feet or taking smaller strides.

- A quieter voice or less facial emotion.

From Yashoda Hospital, Prof. Dr. Rupam Borgohain says, "Along with these distinctive features, mild non-motor symptoms such as mood swings, constipation, sleep issues, or loss of smell may appear before obvious motor symptoms." For a precise diagnosis and prompt treatment, speaking with a neurologist—especially one who specializes in movement disorders—is essential if these symptoms continue.

Advancements like DBS highlight how modern neurology is transforming Parkinson's care. While early diagnosis helps initiate medical therapy and lifestyle support, procedures like DBS are bridging the gap for patients in advanced stages. By recognizing early signs and seeking timely expert consultation, individuals stand a better chance at managing the disease effectively and maintaining a higher quality of life. Prof. Dr. Rupam Borgohain, Senior Consultant Neurologist and Programme Director-PDMDC, Yashoda Hospitals, Hyderabad, Hitec City. Visit Every Month of Second week to provide specialized consultations and care at our center in Guwahati, Assam. To book an appointment, please call [8929967886] or book online at -<https://www.yashodahospitals.com/>.

Navratri demand lifts Guwahati sales of nutrient-rich vrat items

Guwahati: With Navratri just around the corner, demand for nutritious and vrat-friendly ingredients is witnessing a significant uptick in Guwahati and other urban markets. Health experts advise combining tradition with wellness by incorporating ingredients like California Almonds, sabudana, kuttu (buckwheat), and samak rice into fasting meals, highlighting their nutritional benefits.



Ritika Samaddar, Regional Head – Dietetics at Max Healthcare, recommends avoiding refined sugars and fried foods during fasting. Almonds provide protein, healthy fats, magnesium, and vitamin E, offering sustained energy. Sabudana

supplies quick-digesting carbohydrates, ideal for khichdi and vada, while kuttu flour, rich in fiber and antioxidants, supports digestion. Samak rice serves as a low-fat, vitamin-rich alternative to regular rice for

pulaos and kheer.

Guwahati retailers report brisk sales of these key ingredients as consumers prepare for Navratri. Premium California Almonds, high-quality sabudana, and kuttu flour are in particular demand. Suppliers are scaling operations to meet the spike, while small and mid-sized vendors are strategically pricing these items to attract health-conscious buyers.

This Navratri, the convergence of tradition, health awareness, and consumer demand is driving growth in the fasting foods segment, reflecting evolving dietary preferences and business opportunities in the festive market.

Zomato parent Eternal's ₹3.16T mcap surpasses ONGC, Adani Ports

New Delhi: Eternal, the parent company of Zomato, on Tuesday hit a market capitalisation of around ₹3.16 trillion, surpassing the likes of Adani Ports, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), etc. The stock closed at ₹327.3 apiece, up 1.24 per cent for the day. Some of the biggest companies in terms of market capitalisation are Reliance Industries (₹19.01 trillion), HDFC Bank (₹14.84 trillion), and Bharti Airtel (₹11.06 trillion).

Eternal's share price has risen over 2.75 per cent in the past month and more than 31 per cent over the last three months. Earlier this month, domestic brokerage firm Motilal Oswal



Financial Services (MOFSL) also turned bullish on the stock, updating its target price to ₹420. It also upgraded Swiggy, Eternal's competition, to a 'Buy' category with a target price of ₹560. The firm backed the upside prospect of improving consumption backdrop, rational competition, and policy support. Similarly,

Nomura has also adopted a more positive outlook on Eternal, raising its target price to ₹370 on the back of stronger visibility in food delivery growth, a margin-friendly transition in quick commerce, and revised valuation methods. Eternal's food delivery arm enters steady, profitable growth phase.

Flipkart's supply chain push in Northeast set to boost regional trade and employment

Guwahati: Flipkart's latest expansion in Northeast India represents a strategic bet on one of the country's fastest-growing consumption hubs. With over 6 lakh sq. ft. of warehousing capacity in Guwahati and Agartala, the company is positioning itself to capture 35–40% year-on-year growth in

the region, fueled by rising digital adoption and festive demand. The addition of nine Micro Fulfillment Centers (MFCs) in Guwahati under Flipkart Minutes highlights the increasing importance of quick commerce in shaping urban consumer behavior.

Employment and inclusion are central to

this expansion, with over 5,000 direct jobs created and skilling programs rolled out for women, PwDs, and youth. On the supply side, more than one lakh sellers from Assam are active on the Flipkart marketplace, while 300+ farmers from Meghalaya, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh supply fruits like pineapp-

les, strawberries, lemons, and baby kiwi to national markets under Samarth Krishi. With 2,000+ distributors driving Flipkart's Reset for Business, contributing nearly 30% of its circular economy operations, the Northeast is emerging as a crucial node in India's e-commerce growth story.



Godrej Agrovet launches Tripura Samadhan Center to accelerate oil palm sector growth

Agartala: Godrej Agrovet Limited (GAVL) has expanded its Oil Palm Business footprint in the North-east by inaugurating its first Samadhan Center at Nalkata in Dhalai district. Designed as a one-stop solution (OSS), the center aims to equip oil palm farmers with modern agricultural techniques, tools, and advisory services to enhance yields and long-term productivity. Tripura, with 1.46 lakh hectares of potential oil palm cultivation, has set a target of bringing 11,500 hectares under cultivation by 2026-27. The Samadhan Center will play a strategic



role in supporting farmers across Unakoti and Dhalai districts, offering soil-based fertilizer guidance, irrigation systems to tackle dry-season water challenges, and assistance in accessing finance, subsidies,

and government schemes. Sougata Niyogi, CEO, Oil Palm Business, GAVL, said, "The launch of Samadhan marks another step in our commitment to fostering the sustainable development of the oil palm

industry. These centers will empower farmers with technology and expert advice, enabling sustained income growth." In Agartala, stakeholders see the development as a catalyst for boosting farmer incomes and stimulating demand for agri-inputs, machinery, and ancillary services. Analysts also expect steady palm oil output to strengthen regional trade flows and create fresh opportunities in allied industries. Each Samadhan Center is expected to support planting of around 2,000 hectares, reinforcing GAVL's growth strategy in Northeast India.

Rashi Peripherals drives channel growth via CBF



Guwahati: Rashi Peripherals Limited (NSE: RPTECH), a leading national distribution partner for global technology brands, successfully hosted its flagship Channel Business Forum (CBF) 2025 in Guwahati, bringing together over 110 local resellers and retailers. The event is part of RP Tech's nationwide strategy to expand ICT solutions across India's Tier C and D cities, connecting channel partners with top technology brands to drive business growth.

The forum featured interactive product demonstrations, hands-on experience zones, and training sessions on next-generation technology, including AI-powered laptops and PCs, gaming hardware, consumer peripherals, smart collaboration tools, and storage solutions. Hemant Dalmia, Group Business Manager at Rashi Peripherals, emphasized, "CBF 2025 is helping

us build deeper relationships in emerging markets like Guwahati. The engagement here reinforces our commitment to empower partners with knowledge, tools, and opportunities."

In Guwahati, the forum underscored the city's growing demand for smart and connected technology. Local retailers expressed enthusiasm for accessing advanced products and training, highlighting opportunities to expand their offerings and cater to a tech-savvy customer base increasingly seeking AI-enabled devices, gaming solutions, and enhanced connectivity. CBF 2025 is running across 50 cities in nine phases until October, reflecting RP Tech's mission to make innovative technology accessible in every district of India while strengthening channel capabilities and fostering collaboration at the grassroots level.

Two mega PSBs gain momentum



New Delhi: The finance ministry and top management of public sector banks (PSBs) on Friday agreed on a plan for the country to have two large PSBs among the top 20 banks globally. They also stressed that more autonomy needs to be given to bank boards. The department of financial services' two-day 'Manthan' with PSBs chiefs also addressed issues related to customer service, regulatory changes, credit growth, NPAs, and the need for technological investments to enhance efficiency and competitiveness, according to official sources. As India's stature in the global economy grows, with the country slated to be the third largest economy by 2027-28, officials and bankers discussed the creation of large banks, which will have risk-taking ability to support growth in the economy.

Currently, the State Bank of India (SBI) is ranked 43rd globally by assets, and HDFC Bank is ranked 73rd.

Amid geopolitical tensions, banks discussed improving performance through innovation.

TCS Rural IT Quiz 2025 expands tech awareness in small towns

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SEBI approves 5 IPOs worth ₹10,000 crore

Mumbai: SEBI has approved five initial public offerings (IPOs) collectively worth ₹10,000 crore. The companies receiving clearance include Hero Motors, Canara Robeco Mutual Fund, Pine Labs, Orkla India (a subsidiary of Norway's Orkla ASA), and Emwee Photovoltaic Power. These IPOs span sectors such as automotive, fintech, FMCG, and renewable energy. In addition to these approvals, SEBI has accepted pre-filing applications from Manipay Payment and Identity Solutions and Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company. This follows SE-



BI's recent clearance of 14 smaller IPOs and reflects its push to facilitate listings by high-growth and multinational companies.

SEBI has also introduced regulatory reforms aimed at encouraging startup and large-cap IPOs. These include allowing founders to retain ESOPs post-listing and extending timelines for meeting minimum public shareholding requirements.

Godrej aer unveils Plug, electric freshener at ₹2.5/day

Guwahati: Godrej aer, India's leading fragrance brand under Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL), has launched aer Plug, positioned as the country's most affordable electric room freshener. Priced at just ₹149, the device offers continuous fragrance for up to 60 days, translating to a usage cost of only ₹2.5 per day. The aer Plug comes in two premium variants – Violet Bloom and Rose Blossom – and is designed to blend seamlessly into contemporary homes and offices. Crafted by GCPL's in-house design studio Disco, the aer Plug features smart



heater technology and a sleek, modern design. With India's ₹3,000 crore air freshener market projected to double in the next five years, Godrej aims to bridge the gap between expensive electric diffusers and widely used sprays, which dominate the ₹1,000 crore segment. "With aer Plug, we bring premium fragrance within reach, reducing cost by over 70%

compared to existing electric diffusers," said Shilpa Suresh, Head of Marketing – Home Care, GCPL.

The aer Plug is expected to appeal strongly to urban consumers and office spaces in Guwahati, where demand for affordable yet premium home care solutions is rising. Retailers in key outlets have reported encouraging early traction, signaling strong local adoption potential. The starter kit is available at ₹149, with standalone refills priced at ₹99, across modern trade, general trade, and e-commerce platforms nationwide.



Renault Group strengthens India's innovation role with leadership hires

Guwahati: Renault Group India has announced two key leadership appointments in India, reinforcing the country's growing importance as a global hub for automotive design and engineering. This decision reflects Group's ambition to accelerate its development in India, one of the world's most dynamic automotive markets, and to establish it as a benchmark international hub. It also paves the way for closer cooperation with local teams, staying closely connected to on-ground challenges and customer needs. Dr. Vikraman V has been appointed as Chief of Renault Engineering at Renault Nissan Technology & Business Centre India (RNT-BCI), Chennai. He will lead engineering excellence and



innovation, supporting Renault Group's global transformation and India's expanding role in advanced R&D. Dr. Vikraman joins Renault from Mahindra & Mahindra, where he led the Vehicle Mechanical Division and held senior leadership roles for nearly two decades. To drive the next chapter of design-led

mobility, Sandeep Bhambra has been appointed as Head of Renault Design Centre India (RDCI) while continuing his position as Chief Designer Advanced Renault. He will play a pivotal role in shaping future portfolios rooted in Renault's design DNA while embracing forward-looking innovation. Sandeep will

continue to report to Laurens van den Acker, Chief Design Officer, Renault Group. Commenting on the appointment, Stéphane Deblaise, Chief Executive Officer, Renault Group India, said: "The appointments of Sandeep Bhambra and Dr. Vikraman V mark a transformative moment in Renault Group's journey in India." Laurens van den Acker, Chief Design Officer, Renault Group, commented: "In an industry undergoing profound transformation, Sandeep's international experience, creative vision and determination will be key assets to guide our team in India." To better reflect its strategic role and India's commitment, the Renault Design Centre Chennai has been renamed as Renault Design Centre India.

India, PNG deepen trade on independence milestone



Guwahati: Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Pabitra Margherita represented India at Papua New Guinea's 50th Independence Day celebrations at Independence Hill, Port Moresby. Ahead of the ceremony, he met Prime Minister James Marape, conveying warm greetings from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and discussing measures to enhance bilateral trade relations. During his visit, MoS Margherita also interacted with leading business leaders, including key Indian entrepreneurs in PNG's textile sector, exploring opportunities to expand economic cooperation. He highlighted these engagements on social media platform 'X', noting productive discussions on strengthening trade ties and the contributions of

over 4,000 members of the Indian community in PNG, who serve as a vital bridge between the two nations. In Guwahati, traders and exporters are optimistic about tapping into PNG's market, particularly in textiles and handicrafts. Analysts suggest that stronger bilateral engagement could enable Guwahati-based SMEs and textile units to access new demand centers, while local investors are exploring partnerships with PNG businesses to diversify trade channels. This visit reinforces India's commitment to Pacific Island countries following the third Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit in Port Moresby in May 2023, highlighting India's growing role as a key voice in the Global South.

Crisil projects 12% credit growth

New Delhi: Crisil Ratings expects a 11-12% credit growth in the current financial year, backed by a pick-up in retail credit in the second half, the agency said in a webinar on Monday. Consumption push following GST rationalisation, lower inflation and better affordability in the lower interest rate regime will drive the growth, it said.

"A slew of other regulatory measures such as revised LCR norms, rollback of higher risk weights on NBFC lending and the final project financing norms being less stringent than the draft ones have also removed potential constraints on the supply side. These should encourage banks to pursue credit growth," Krishnan Sitharaman, chief ratings officer at Crisil Ratings, said. The agency expects retail credit to grow at 13%, compared with 11.7% in the last fiscal.

Nissan India assures E20-ready Magnite with warranty protection

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India is fully aligned and supportive of the Government's initiatives focused on alternative fuels and innovative solutions for a sustainable future. We are committed to advancing these goals through continuous product innovation and sustainable mobility solutions. The New Nissan Magnite has solidified its reputation as a symbol of quality and safety, earning the prestigious 5-star GN-CAP safety rating. Nissan Motor India also recently launched a segment first 10-year warranty programme for the New Magnite that underscores the brand's long-term commitment towards its customers. Both available powertrains for the New Nissan Magnite are E20 compliant: The 1.0L HR10 turbocharged petrol engine is E20 compliant since August 2024. The BR10 naturally aspirated petrol engine is



E20 compliant since February 2025. Owing to Nissan's robust engineering and high build quality, all Magnite vehicles — new and existing—are capable of running on E20 fuel; with no significant issues observed. Nissan has ensured full compatibility with the Government of India's initiative to shift to E20 fuel as part of our shared commitment to the move to greener fuels and lower emissions. Nissan Motor India confirms that using E20 fuel will not void

warranty on New Nissan Magnite vehicles sold after October 2024 and any/all India manufactured Nissan vehicles with an active warranty. As a customer-focused company, Nissan Motor India assures all vehicle owners that any issues potentially arising from the transition to E20 fuel, as mandated by the Government of India, will be thoroughly inspected and addressed during routine service appointments. Please visit www.nissan.in for more information.

Fusion Finance recalibrates lending strategy

New Delhi: Warburg Pincus-led Fusion Finance is emerging from a turbulent phase marked by rural over-leverage and structural stress, which has seen it making a conscious effort to cut flab by reducing its loan book by nearly 28% to Rs 8,000 crore from Rs 11,000 crore a year ago. The crisis, triggered by regulatory relaxation, led borrowers to take on more debt than they could manage. "Borrowers took on more debt than they could manage," said Sanjay Garyali, CEO at Fusion Finance, attributing the downturn to behavioural shifts and internal credit process gaps. While disbursements were slowed to prevent further deterioration, the challenge ran deeper than credit metrics. Political disruptions such as loan waiver promises and stagnating rural demand compounded the pressure. "The spike

in NPAs was a symptom. The root cause lay in weak guardrails and informal income profiles," Garyali noted. With auditors flagging viability concerns, Fusion overhauled its lending structure. At its peak, gross NPAs breached 10%. Today, GNPA has declined to 5.5%, with net NPA at just 0.2%. "We aim to bring down our GNPA below 5% this fiscal," Garyali said. "Credit cost for Q1 was around 2%, and we aim to stabilise it below 3% annually." With 80% of borrowing sourced from banks, Fusion recently completed an Rs 800 crore rights issue, boosting capital adequacy to 29%. "Rs 400 crore remains callable," Garyali added.



Cosmic orange iPhone 17 Pro Max stocks depleted

New Delhi: Apple's iPhone Pro Max 17 in cosmic orange has witnessed a considerable surge in demand, and it has gone out of stock within three days after pre-booking went live for pick up of the

devices at the company's official stores in the US and India, as per information shared by company staff. In India, the entire iPhone Pro Max series is not available for pre-order with pick-

up option at Apple stores, according to information sourced from the Apple India website. The cosmic orange devices were not available for pre-orders in both iPhone Pro Max and iPhone Pro se-

ries in India for the pick-up at store option. "I am really sorry to inform you, but due to the large number of pre-orders, all the cosmic orange iPhone 17 Pro Max are being sold very fast.



Apollo Tyres named new sponsor for Indian cricket team, BCCI

Mumbai: The Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) search for a new lead sponsor for Team India finally came to a close on Tuesday, with Apollo Tyres emerging victorious in a fiercely contested bidding process. The Gurgaon-based tyre giant clinched the rights with a stunning bid of INR 579 crore, beating out competition from Canva and JK Cements. The three-year deal will span 121 bilateral fixtures and 21 ICC matches, ensuring Apollo's presence on one of the biggest sporting stages. Apollo Tyres, which has operations in more than



100 countries, managed to outpace Canva's offer of INR 544 crore and JK Cements' INR 477 crore, sealing its spot as the new lead sponsor of Team India. The competition was intense, with the BCCI's auction drawing considerable interest. While Birla

Optus Paints had shown willingness to invest, it opted not to join the formal bidding. Apollo's aggressive approach reflected the immense value brands see in associating with Indian cricket — the most commercially dominant team in the sport.

PSG Relieved as Kvaratskhelia, Lee Fit for Champions League

Mumbai: Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) has received a timely boost ahead of their Champions League opener against Serie A side Atalanta, with key players Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Lee Kang-in declared fit for the match. Both players had raised injury concerns during PSG's recent Ligue 1 fixture against RC Lens, where the club extended its perfect start to the domestic season with a fourth consecutive win. Kvaratskhelia was forced off with a calf issue, while Lee Kang-in exited in the second half due to discomfort. However, medical



assessments revealed no serious damage, and both are expected to be available for selection. The only player still under treatment is defender Lucas Beraldo, who suffered a left ankle sprain and will miss the Atalanta clash. PSG is already without forwards Ousmane Dembélé and Désiré Doué, who are sidelined with muscle injuries sustained

during the international break. Manager Luis Enrique, recovering from a cycling accident himself, expressed relief at the squad update, noting that the return of Kvaratskhelia and Lee would help offset the team's injury challenges. PSG, the reigning Champions League titleholders, face a demanding group stage that includes Atalanta, Bayern Munich, Barcelona, and Tottenham Hotspur. With depth being tested early in the season, the fitness of key players could prove crucial as PSG aims to defend its European crown.

Rohit Sharma Trains with Mumbai Youngsters, Gifts Bat to Mhatre

Mumbai: India's ODI captain Rohit Sharma recently trained with young Mumbai cricketers Ayush Mhatre and Sarfaraz Khan, offering mentorship and encouragement ahead of the upcoming Australia tour. The session took place in Mumbai, where Rohit—who has retired from Tests and T20Is—focused on sharpening his 50-over game. During the nets, Sarfaraz Khan was seen exchanging insights with Rohit, while Ayush Mhatre received a special gift—a bat from the 'Hitman' himself. Mhatre, who idolizes Rohit, shared the moment on social me-



dia, calling it "a blessing and a memory of a lifetime." This isn't the first time Rohit has supported Mhatre. Back in June, before India's Under-19 tour of England, Rohit had gifted him another bat. Mhatre, who led the

U19 side in both ODIs and Tests, impressed with his red-ball performance, scoring 340 runs in four innings, including two centuries. This isn't the first time Rohit has supported Mhatre. Back in June, before India's

Under-19 tour of England, Rohit had gifted him another bat. Mhatre, who led the U19 side in both ODIs and Tests, impressed with his red-ball performance, scoring 340 runs in four innings, including two centuries. Rohit is expected to feature in the three-match ODI series against Australia starting October 19 at Optus Stadium, Perth, followed by games in Adelaide and Sydney. His continued involvement with emerging players reflects his leadership beyond the pitch, as he prepares for what could be one of his final international assignments.

Doping threatens India's Olympic bid, careers



New Delhi: India's ambitious bid to host the 2036 Olympics is facing serious scrutiny as the country grapples with a troubling reputation for doping violations among its athletes. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has raised concerns over the high number of Indian competitors testing positive for performance-enhancing drugs, casting doubt on the nation's credibility as a potential host. Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra has publicly acknowledged the issue, stating that "doping is a big problem in India among our athletes," and urging them to focus on proper nutrition, rest, and hard work instead.

In response to mounting pressure, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) recently formed a new anti-doping panel, and the government passed a national anti-doping bill aimed at tightening enforcement, expanding testing facilities, and ensuring

integrity in sports. Despite these efforts, India remains one of the worst offenders globally, according to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). In 2023 alone, 213 out of 5,606 samples tested positive, with the synthetic steroid stanozolol being the most commonly used banned substance.

Experts suggest that the desperation to win medals and secure government jobs—often with the police or armed forces—drives some athletes to risk doping. Lawyer Saurabh Mishra, who has defended athletes in doping cases, noted that while some athletes unknowingly consume banned substances, others take the risk knowingly, sometimes under pressure from coaches.

Athletics and wrestling are the leading sports in India's doping violations. Notably, under-23 wrestling champion Reetika Hooda, a Paris Olympics quarter-finalist, was provisionally suspended after testing positive in July.

World Championship: Neeraj Chopra Begins Title Defence with Qualifying Round

Mumbai: Indian javelin star Neeraj Chopra has begun his title defence at the 2025 World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, entering the qualification round alongside a blockbuster field. Chopra, who won gold in the 2023 edition in Budapest with a throw of 88.17m, aims to become only the third male javelin thrower to win back-to-back World Championship titles. The other two are Czech legend Jan Zelezny (1993, 1995), now Chopra's coach, and Grenada's Anderson Peters (2019, 2022). Chopra is



placed in Group A with Germany's Julian Weber, Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch, Trinidad and Tobago's Kesnada's Anderson Peters (2019, 2022). Chopra is

features Pakistan's Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem, Anderson Peters, Kenya's Julius Yego, Brazil's Luiz da Silva, and Indians Rohit Yadav and Yashvir Singh.

The automatic qualifying mark is 84.50m, or the top 12 performers across both groups will advance to the final.

This marks the first time Chopra and Nadeem will compete in the same event since the 2024 Paris Olympics, where Nadeem won gold with a throw of 92.97m and Chopra took silver with 89.45m. However, they are in separate qualifying groups and expected to clash in the final. India has fielded its largest-ever javelin contingent at the World Championships, with four athletes participating.

