



Bombay HC skips Maratha pleas



Mumbai: A division bench of the Bombay High Court on Monday recused itself from hearing a batch of petitions challenging the Maharashtra government's decision to grant reservations to the Maratha community. The bench, comprising Justices A.S. Chandurkar and Jitendra Jain, cited "personal difficulty" as the reason for stepping aside from the case.

The petitions, filed by multiple individuals and organizations, question the constitutional validity of the state's move to extend reservation benefits to the Maratha community under the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) category. The matter has been politically and socially sensitive, drawing widespread attention across Maharashtra.

During the hearing, the bench informed the parties that it would not be able to proceed with the case and directed the registry to place the matter before the Chief Justice for reassignment to another bench. No further details were provided regarding the nature of the "personal difficulty."

Two Naxalites Killed in Chhattisgarh

Bijapur: Security forces gunned down two Naxalites during a joint anti-Maoist operation in the forested region of Bijapur district, officials confirmed on Monday. The encounter took place early in the morning near the Gangaloor area, a known hotspot for Maoist activity. Personnel from the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF), and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were conducting a combing operation based on intelligence inputs about the presence of armed Naxal cadres. Upon being challenged, the insurgents opened fire, prompting re-



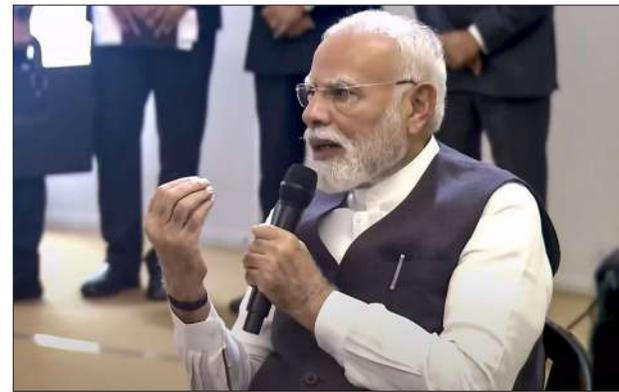
taliatory action from the forces.

"Two male Naxalites were neutralized in the exchange of fire. Their bodies have been recovered along with weapons and ammunition," said Bijapur Superintendent of Police Anjaneya Varshney. He added that the identities of the deceased are being verified and further search operations are underway in the surrounding forest.

Modi Slams Congress, Unveils Rs 5,100 cr Projects in Itanagar

PM: BJP gave Arunachal 16x funds, slams Congress neglect

Itanagar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a series of infrastructure and development initiatives worth ₹5,100 crore in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, while sharply criticizing the Congress party for what he described as decades of neglect in the Northeast region. Addressing a large public gathering, Modi inaugurated and laid foundation stones for multiple projects spanning road connectivity, power transmission, healthcare, and education. Key highlights include the launch of the Trans-Arunachal Highway expansion, a new AIIMS satellite



campus, and a high-capacity power grid aimed at improving electricity access in remote districts. "These projects are not just numbers — they are lifelines for the people of

Arunachal," Modi said. "For years, Congress governments treated the Northeast as distant and dispensable. We are changing that narrative with action, not slogans."

Irish leaders' condemnation brings relief to global Indian community

Mishra lauds support; Lahart vows stronger India-Ireland ties

London: Irish political leaders have issued strong public condemnations following a recent hate crime incident targeting an Indian national in Dublin, offering reassurance to the global Indian community and reaffirming Ireland's commitment to inclusivity and justice. The incident, which occurred earlier this week, involved a physical assault on a 32-year-old Indian software engineer outside a public transit sta-

tion. Eyewitnesses reported racial slurs and targeted aggression, prompting swift police intervention and widespread public outrage.

In response, Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar condemned the attack as "abhorrent and unacceptable," stating that such acts have no place in Irish society. He emphasized that Ireland remains committed to protecting all communities and ensuring that perpe-

trators of hate crimes face the full force of the law.

Minister for Justice Helen McEntee echoed the sentiment, announcing that the Gardaí (Irish police) have launched a full investigation and are working closely with community leaders to prevent further incidents. "Ireland's strength lies in its diversity. We stand with our Indian brothers and sisters," she said during a press briefing.

Rahul to lead Bengal stir if E Commission errors



Kolkata: Economist and political activist Prasenjit Bose has issued a sharp warning to the Election Commission of India (EC), stating that if the commission repeats the alleged procedural lapses witnessed during the Bihar elections, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will spearhead a mass movement against the State-Investment-Ranking (SIR) framework in West Bengal.

Speaking at a press conference in Kolkata, Bose criticized the EC's handling of the Bihar polls, alleging irregularities in voter data management, polling station access, and transparency in vote counting. He claimed that similar patterns in Bengal would not be tolerated and would provoke a coordinated po-

litical response. "The EC must uphold democratic integrity. If the same mistakes are repeated here, Rahul Gandhi will lead an anti-SIR agitation across Bengal," Bose declared, referring to the controversial SIR model that ranks states based on investment attractiveness—a metric critics argue undermines social equity and regional autonomy.

Bose's remarks come amid rising tensions between opposition parties and central institutions over electoral conduct and economic policy frameworks. The SIR model, introduced by the Centre to guide investment decisions, has faced backlash from several regional leaders who claim it favors industrialized states and marginalizes others.

Army jawan killed in J&K; arms seized Poonch

Srinagar: An Indian Army soldier was killed during a fierce gunfight with militants in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri sector on Friday, officials confirmed. The encounter erupted during a cordon and search operation launched by security forces following intelligence inputs about militant presence in the forested region near the Line of Control. The martyred jawan, whose identity is being withheld pending family notification, sustained fatal injuries during the ex-



change of fire. Reinforcements were rushed to the area, and the operation continued late into the evening as forces combed the terrain for remaining

threats. In a separate development, security forces recovered a cache of arms and ammunition in the Poonch district during a parallel anti-terror op-

eration. The seized items included assault rifles, grenades, and communication equipment suspected to have been smuggled across the border.

The twin operations underscore heightened militant activity in the Pir Panjal region, which has witnessed a surge in infiltration attempts and targeted attacks in recent months. Defence officials reiterated their commitment to maintaining operational readiness and ensuring the safety of civilians in border areas.



PM visits Arunachal, Tripura

Itanagar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura on Monday and lay foundation stones of multiple development projects worth over Rs 5,100 crore in Itanagar as well as inaugurate the development work of Mata Tripura Sundari Temple Complex. Harnessing the vast hydroelectric potential of Arunachal Pradesh, Prime Minister Modi will lay the foundation stone of two major hydropower projects worth over Rs 3,700 crore in Itanagar, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said. Prime Minister Modi will visit Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura on September 22. He will lay foundation stones of multiple development projects worth over Rs 5,100 crore at Itanagar and also address a public function, the statement said. Thereafter, he will visit Tripura and perform a puja and 'darshan', and inaugurate the development work of 'Mata Tripura Sundari Temple Complex' at Matabari, it said. In Arunachal Pradesh, the PM will lay foundation stones of two major hydropower projects.

RIMS Imphal doctors strike after assault; hospital services remain suspended

Imphal: Medical services at the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), Imphal, came to a standstill today after doctors initiated a strike in response to the alleged physical assault of a senior consultant by a patient's attendant. The incident, which occurred late Sunday evening, has sparked widespread outrage among the medical fraternity and prompted immediate action from the hospital staff. According to

hospital sources, the senior consultant was attacked while on duty, leading to injuries and emotional distress. In protest, doctors across departments suspended outpatient services and elective procedures, demanding swift justice and enhanced security measures within the hospital premises.

The RIMS Doctors' Association condemned the incident, calling it "a grave violation of medical eth-

ics and workplace safety." In a joint statement, they urged the state government and law enforcement agencies to take stringent action against the accused and ensure protection for healthcare professionals. Emergency services at RIMS remain operational, but patients requiring routine consultations and non-critical care have been advised to seek alternatives until the strike is resolved.

APSC prelims in Assamese and English: CM Sarma

Guwahati: In a landmark decision aimed at promoting linguistic inclusivity and regional representation, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC) preliminary examinations will now be conducted in both Assamese and English. The announcement was made during a press briefing held at the Assam Secretariat, where the Chief Minister emphasized

the importance of enabling aspirants to write competitive exams in their native language. "This move will empower thousands of students from Assamese-medium backgrounds and ensure a level playing field," Sarma stated. The decision comes after sustained appeals from student bodies, educators, and civil society groups advocating for the inclusion of regional languages in state-level examinations.

TMP to raise Tiprasa accord during Assembly session

Agartala: The Tipra Motha Party (TMP), an ally in the BJP-led coalition government in Tripura, is set to raise two key issues — progress on the Tiprasa accord and infiltration — in the state Assembly on September 23. The TMP had signed an agreement with the Centre and the state government ahead of last year's Lok Sabha elections for the overall development of indigenous people in the northeastern state.

"Today, we had a meeting with Deputy Speaker Ramprasad Paul on the sidelines of the Assembly



session, and he agreed to allow us to raise two of our most important issues — progress in Tiprasa accord and illegal infiltration in the northeastern state. We will raise these issues in the Assembly on Tuesday," TMP legislator Ranjit Debbarma told PTI.

Dimapur CWC tackles 310 child cases over two years

Dimapur: Child Welfare Committee (CWC) Dimapur has handled a total of 310 child-related cases over the last two years, highlighting the scale of challenges faced by vulnerable children in the state's commercial hub.

According to official records presented by District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) Dimapur, Avika Zhi-momi, between September 2023 and August 2025, 299 cases were disposed while 11 remain pending.

The statistics were revealed during a one-day awareness programme on



Child Rights & Child Protection organised by the Nagaland State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NSCPCR) in collaboration with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) Dimapur, held at Hotel Saramati

on Friday. Avika said these figures underline both the risks that children face in Dimapur and the urgent need for collective responses. He pointed out that being a commercial hub and transit town.

Gauhati HC acquits death row convict in 2018 train passenger murder case

Counsel said only confession, disclosure linked Das weakly

Guwahati: In a landmark judgment, the Gauhati High Court has acquitted Bikash Das, who was previously sentenced to death for the alleged murder of a female train passenger in 2018. The division bench overturned the trial court's conviction, citing lack of admissible evidence and failure to establish a conclusive chain of circumstantial proof.

The case dates back to July 2018, when a female student from Assam Agricultural University was found dead in the toilet of the DSLR compartment of the Dibrugarh-Rangia Express at Simaluguri Railway Station. Her body was discovered in a half-naked condition, prompting authorities to register a case under



Sections 302 and 376 of the Indian Penal Code. Following investigation, Bikash Das and another accused were charge-sheeted. In 2019, the trial court convicted Das and awarded him the death penalty, while the co-accused was acquitted. However, during the appeal, senior counsel Angshuman

Bora, appointed as amicus curiae, argued that the conviction was based solely on an extrajudicial confession and an alleged disclosure statement—both of which were inadmissible under Sections 25 and 26 of the Indian Evidence Act. The High Court observed that the prosecution failed to

present any legal evidence linking Das to the crime. It noted that the circumstances relied upon did not form a complete chain pointing to the accused's guilt and emphasized that conviction must rest on legal evidence that rules out any reasonable hypothesis other than guilt.

In its order, the court stated: "We are of the unhesitant view that the circumstances do not form a complete chain, which lead to an irresistible conclusion of the guilt of the accused. Instead, it is a case of no legal evidence against the accused." With this ruling, Bikash Das has been acquitted and is to be released unless required in connection with any other case.

Assam's beloved Zubeen Garg passes away at 52

Guwahati: Assam's legendary singer, composer, and cultural icon Zubeen Garg passed away on Saturday at the age of 52, leaving behind a legacy that shaped the musical identity of an entire generation. He breathed his last at a private hospital in Guwahati, where he had been undergoing treatment for a prolonged illness.

Zubeen Garg, known for his soulful voice and genre-defying compositions, rose to national fame with the hit song "Ya Ali" from the 2006 Bollywood film Gangster. However, his contribution to Assamese music and cinema far surpassed his Bollywood success. With over 30,000 songs recorded in multiple languages including Assamese, Hindi, Bengali, and Bodo, Garg was widely re-



garded as the voice of modern Assam. Born in Jorhat in 1973, Garg began his musical journey at a young age, inspired by his mother's classical training and his father's literary background. His debut Assamese album Anamika became a cultural phenomenon, and he went on to dominate the regional music scene for decades. He was also a prolific actor, director, and social activist, often using his platform to speak out on issues ranging from youth empowerment to regional identity.

Tata AIA launches Shubh Maha Life, a whole-life savings plan for every life stage

Aizawl: Tata AIA Life Insurance Co. Ltd., a leading life insurance company in India, today announced the launch of Shubh Maha Life, a Non-Linked, Participating Whole Life Savings Plan designed to meet financial needs across all stages of life. The plan offers high life cover during peak earning years, reduced cover during retirement, tax-free retirement income, and long-term critical illness protection. Kamal Bhardwaj, Chief Bancassurance Officer, Tata AIA Life Insurance, said, "Shubh Maha Life is tailored to grow with individuals—providing strong protection when responsibilities are highest, ensuring financial



independence in retirement, and covering critical health needs. This launch underscores our commitment to delivering holistic solutions that empower customers at every stage of life."

The plan is available in four packages—Gold,

Plus, Gold Health, and Plus Health—with flexible payout options, including Retirement Income, Deferred Income, and Lump Sum structures. Policyholders also gain access to Tata AIA Health Buddy, providing preventive health

check-ups, teleconsultations, and lifestyle management programs. Special discounts are offered to women, existing Tata AIA customers, and Tata Group employees. In Aizawl, local advisors report strong interest among professionals and middle-income families seeking integrated financial solutions. Many are evaluating customized payout structures and long-term protection options, indicating an increasing awareness of comprehensive insurance solutions in the region. With Shubh Maha Life, Tata AIA continues to position itself as a trusted partner in financial security, wealth growth, and wellbeing.

Croma's 'Festival of Dreams' offers 35% off

Shillong: Croma, India's leading omni-channel electronics retailer, has rolled out the first leg of its much-awaited 'Festival of Dreams' campaign, offering festive deals across West Bengal, Odisha, Assam, Meghalaya, and Jharkhand. The campaign, running from September 12 to 22, is designed to make Durga Puja shopping more affordable with attractive discounts, cashback up to ₹30,000, and GST relief benefits. Key offers include flat 35% off on televisions, air conditioners, and small appliances, 25% off on refrigerators, 30% off on washing machines and home audio, and 20% off on laptops. Smartphones are available at 15% off, while earphones and headphones come with a 45% discount. The retailer is also extending EMI plans and exchange offers to boost affordability. In Shillong, the festive season has already translated into rising demand for smart electronics. Local consumers are showing strong interest in premium televisions, smartphones, and kitchen appliances ahead of the Puja. With Croma's competitive offers, the Shillong market is expected to see a sharp uptick in sales as households plan upgrades to match festive celebrations. "Durga Puja is a time of celebration and renewal. We want to make this season more special by enabling families to bring home the latest technologies at great value," a Croma spokesperson said.

Myntra powers Fashion Festival 2025



Mumbai: Myntra has unveiled its Big Fashion Festival (BFF) 2025, showcasing over 4 million styles from 15,000 brands and more than 100 exclusive launches, while highlighting the growing role of technology and innovation in shaping India's retail landscape.

The platform's fresh launches include Sourav Ganguly's Souragya, Inddus X Malaika Arora, Chaap X Adah Sharma, and Laxmi-pati X Rashmika Mandanna, alongside global tie-ups such as Levi's X Alia Bhatt, Crocs Miami Bae, and Puma X Levi's. Beauty and lifestyle segments are also strengthened with brands like YSL, Prada, MAC, and Estée Lauder, in addition to functional offerings such as Puma Speedcat and New Balance 530.

Myntra's Big Fashion Festival 2025 is driving a tech-enabled shopping revolution, with M-Now hyper-speed delivery and Glamstream content attracting young consumers. This fusion of entertainment and commerce is reshaping festive buying patterns and drawing close attention from market participants.

Medanta introduces AI cancer care Northeast

Dimapur: Gurgaon-based Medanta – The Medicity, voted India's Best Private Hospital by Newsweek for six years in a row, has brought advanced cancer care closer to people in the Northeast, combining human compassion with cutting-edge technology. At an awareness event in Dimapur on September 16, held with NGO Beyond Cancer and Christian Institute of Health Sciences and Research (CI-HSR), doctors highlighted how artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics are helping tailor cancer treatment to the genetic profile of each patient. Dr. Amit Bhargava, Director of Medical Oncology at Medanta, explained how AI can pre-

dict treatment responses, identify new drug targets, and support therapies beyond traditional chemotherapy. "Early detection and precision therapies are transforming outcomes for patients who once had very limited options," he said. Following the event, Medanta doctors also conducted OPDs in Dimapur, offering direct consultations to patients who often travel long distances for specialized care. The outreach is backed by Medanta's MoU with the Government of Nagaland under the Chief Minister's Health Insurance Scheme (CMHIS) and the launch of a health awareness booklet with IDAN, endorsed by Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio.

Tata AIA unveils Shubh Maha Life to cater to evolving financial needs across life stages

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Kamal Bhardwaj, Chief Bancassurance Officer, Tata AIA, said, "Shubh Maha Life is designed to grow with individuals, ensuring protection when responsibilities are high, tax-

free income in retirement, and coverage for critical illnesses. It reflects our commitment to providing holistic financial security and peace of mind."

The plan is available in four packages—Gold, Plus, Gold Health, and Plus Health—offering customizable payouts through Retirement Income, Deferred Income, and Lump Sum options. Policyholders can also benefit from Tata AIA Health Buddy, which includes preventive health check-ups, teleconsultations, and lifestyle management programs. Special discounts are offered to women, Tata AIA existing customers, and

Tata Group employees. In Guwahati, financial advisors report strong interest from working professionals and mid-income households seeking integrated solutions for protection and wealth creation. Many are exploring customized packages and payout options to align with retirement planning, children's education, and long-term financial security, highlighting growing awareness of holistic insurance solutions in the city.

With Shubh Maha Life, Tata AIA aims to combine financial protection, wealth growth, and wellbeing under a single comprehensive plan.

Starbucks India unveils 'Aamar Pujo, Aamar Starbucks' menu, targets festive market across Eastern India

Guwahati: Starbucks India is bringing the spirit of Durga Pujo to its stores with the launch of "Aamar Pujo, Aamar Starbucks," a limited-edition menu available from September 20 at select outlets across Kolkata, Guwahati, Siliguri, Gangtok, Bhubaneswar, Jamshedpur, Patna, and Ranchi. The festive spread combines regional culinary heritage with Starbucks' signature offerings, featuring Chingri Turn-



over, Bhetki Bhaja Sandwich, Aloo Poshto Burger, Kasundi Chicken Burger, and Dhakai Chicken Wrap. Traditional sweets receive a

modern twist with Mihidhana Brulee and Kalakand Pie, while beverages include Chocolate Foam Cold Brew and Jaggery Cloud Latte.

Customers can also avail 50% off on the second sale potential. In Guwahati, Starbucks is tapping into a rising café culture, with the festive menu expected to attract both millennials and working professionals. Early store reports indicate strong pre-launch interest, suggesting that Guwahati's market could become a key revenue driver during the Pujo season. Local consum-

ers are particularly drawn to the fusion of familiar Eastern flavors with Starbucks' premium offerings, highlighting the city's growing appetite for curated, festive dining experiences. Mitali Maheshwari, Head of Product and Marketing, TATA Starbucks, said, "Pujo is a time of joy when everyone comes together. Our stores become a 'third place' where people connect, celebrate, and create memorable moments."



Flipkart reinvents two-wheeler shopping with fully digital experience ahead of BBD 2025

Guwahati: Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce giant, is set to transform two-wheeler shopping with a fully digital, end-to-end experience as the Big Billion Days festival approaches. The platform offers an extensive range of petrol and electric two-wheelers, including top brands such as Hero, TVS, Bajaj, Suzuki, TVS iQube, Chetak, Ather, VIDA, OLA, Ampere, and premium options like Royal Enfield, Jawa Yezdi, KTM, and Triumph.

The recent GST revision, reducing tax on two-wheel-

ers below 350cc from 28% to 18% from September 22, further boosts affordability. Flipkart's digital-first approach allows customers to complete the entire purchase journey online, including insurance, registration, and financing, with options up to 48 months tenure and 24-month No-Cost EMI plans. Dedicated 24x7 two-wheeler expert assistance enhances convenience and transparency, helping buyers make informed decisions.

In Guwahati, the festive season is expected to spur significant interest in

two-wheeler purchases, driven by rising urban mobility needs and increasing acceptance of online buying. Local customers are leveraging Flipkart's platform for access to a variety of models, easy financing, and doorstep assistance, bridging the gap between traditional showrooms and the convenience of digital ownership. Sujith Agashe, Flipkart VP, Electronics, said, "We're committed to making two-wheeler ownership seamless, accessible, and trustworthy through a fully digital journey."

India's banking liquidity crunch seen as temporary, says analyst

Mumbai: The fall in India's banking system liquidity surplus is expected to ease over the coming days, as government spending and bond redemptions offset the impact of recent tax outflows, analysts said on Monday. The liquidity surplus declined to 70 billion rupees (\$794 million) on September 21, the lowest since late March, after nearly 2.6 trillion rupees moved out due to income tax and goods

and services tax payments. The amount of money in the banking system influences market interest rates, including those on consumer loans. "We expect this shortage to be temporary, as a pickup in government spending should help neutralise its impact over the coming week," said Vivek Kumar, an economist with Quanteco Research, adding that bond redemptions will also help.

In Q1-FY2026, ICICI Prudential Life leads with a Claim Settlement Ratio of 99.60%

Imphal: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has declared a claim settlement ratio of 99.60%, the highest in the industry, for the period from April 2025 to June 2025. Notably, the average time to settle a non-investigated death claim was just 1.1 days. Mr. Amish Banker, Chief Operations Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "Claims are where promises meet reali-

Medanta expands kidney care in Guwahati

Guwahati: Medanta – The Medicity, India's top-ranked private hospital by Newsweek for six consecutive years, has expanded its kidney care and transplant expertise to Guwahati, signaling a major move in the North Eastern healthcare market. The Gurgaon-based hospital aims to address rising renal health concerns and enhance specialized medical knowledge across the region.

At a recent event in Guwahati, Dr. Sanjay Gogoi, Chairman of Urology and Renal Care, highlighted the benefits of Nephron Sparing Surgery, a procedure that removes kidney tumors while preserving maximum kidney function. Dr. Manish Jain, Senior Director of Nephrology, spoke on the complexities of renal transplants, emphasizing the gap between demand and availability, with 13,400 transplants performed in India in 2024 versus nearly 2 lakh patients on waiting lists. The initiative precedes Medanta's planned 400-bed super specialty hospital in Guwahati, reflecting a strategic investment in the North East and reaffirming the hospital's commitment to providing world-class care to underserved communities.

KFC Pujo menu boosts Northeast festivities



New Delhi: KFC has rolled out its Pujo'r Ulaah menu across Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Tripura, aiming to capture consumer demand during the festive season. The limited-time promotion, valid until October 5, offers discounts of up to 30% on a selection of popular items, including 12 pieces of chicken at ₹499. The set comprises 6 Boneless Chicken Strips, 4 Hot Wings, 2 Hot & Crispy Chicken pieces, and 2 dips. The launch is accompanied by a limited-edition Pujo bucket, designed to reflect the vibrancy of festival celebrations—from the beats of the dhak to gatherings of friends and family. Industry observers note that seasonal offerings like this are key drivers of footfall and revenue for quick-service restaurants in the region. KFC Pujo menu available across platforms.

Flipkart Minutes turns Big Billion Days 2025 into India's fastest shopping festival

Guwahati: Flipkart has announced that its 12th edition of The Big Billion Days (TBBD) 2025 will become India's fastest shopping festival with the launch of Flipkart Minutes, offering 10-minute doorstep delivery across 19 cities and 3,000 pincodes. Starting midnight, customers will gain access to blockbuster deals on mobiles, electronics, groceries, beauty, personal care, and festive hampers. The platform is introducing fruits and vegetables starting at Rs 9, lipsticks

from Rs 49, up to 80% off on perfumes and deodorants, and up to 50% discounts on gourmet essentials such as olive oil, coffee, pulses, and millets. Customers can also shop the iPhone 17 and other smartphones, with a first-of-its-kind hyperlocal real-time exchange option. Over 900 festive categories, including swadeshi and global brands, will be available with exclusive offers.

In Guwahati, the move is expected to significantly boost festive shopping.

Consumers in the Northeast capital are welcoming the convenience of instant access to fresh produce, gourmet items, and regional festive assortments, while traders see Flipkart Minutes as a catalyst for shifting buyer preferences toward digital-first shopping during peak demand.

Hemant Badri, Senior Vice President at Flipkart, said the initiative combines speed, scale, and selection, ensuring festive celebrations without compromise.

Tata AIA unveils Shubh Maha Life to cater to evolving financial needs across life stages

Guwahati: Tata AIA Life Insurance Co. Ltd., one of India's leading life insurers, has launched Shubh Maha Life, a Non-Linked, Participating Whole Life Savings Plan designed to address financial priorities across all stages of life. The plan provides high life cover during peak earning years, reduced cover during retirement, tax-free retirement income, and long-term critical illness protection. Kamal Bhardwaj, Chief Bancassurance Officer, Tata AIA, said, "Shubh Maha Life is designed to grow with individuals, ensuring protection when responsibilities are high, tax-free income in retirement, and coverage for critical illnesses. It reflects our commitment to providing holistic financial security and peace of mind." The plan is available in four packages—Gold, Plus, Gold Health,

and Plus Health—offering customizable payouts through Retirement Income, Deferred Income, and Lump Sum options. Policyholders can also benefit from Tata AIA Health Buddy, which includes preventive health check-ups, teleconsultations, and lifestyle management programs. Special discounts are offered to women, Tata AIA existing customers, and Tata Group employees. In Guwahati, financial advisors report strong interest from working professionals and mid-income households seeking integrated solutions for protection and wealth creation. Many are exploring customized packages and payout options to align with retirement planning, children's education, and long-term financial security. Tata AIA promotes holistic insurance with Shubh Maha Life plan.

ICICI Bank rolls out 'Festive Bonanza 2025' with deals across sectors, eyes strong festive demand

Guwahati: ICICI Bank has announced the return of its flagship 'Festive Bonanza 2025', unveiling a comprehensive set of offers across e-commerce, electronics, fashion, travel, grocery, dining, and home décor. Customers can access cashbacks and

discounts up to ₹50,000 through ICICI Bank credit and debit cards, internet banking, cardless EMI, and consumer finance. No-cost EMI options are also available.

The offers include a 10% additional discount up to ₹4,500 during Flipkart's

Big Billion Days (September 23–October 2), ₹6,000 cashback on iPhone 17 purchases, and up to ₹50,000 off on electronics from brands such as LG, Haier and Panasonic. Discounts extend to OnePlus, Nothing smartphones, TataClq, Ajio, MakeMyTrip,

Goibibo, Yatra, Bigbasket, Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, Pepperfry, Livspace, and The Sleep Company. Dining and entertainment benefits are available via Swiggy, EazyDiner, and District. In Guwahati, retailers in hubs like Fancy Bazar and GS Road are optimistic

that ICICI Bank's festive tie-ups will stimulate consumer spending ahead of Durga Puja. Electronics and smartphone dealers expect the cashbacks on Apple and OnePlus products to be strong demand drivers, while grocery and travel discounts are likely

to further lift festive consumption in Assam's capital. ICICI Bank has also extended festive offers on home, auto, personal loans, and loan against securities, with special rates and processing fee waivers valid through December 2025.



Schneider Electric launches Guwahati retail drive, eyes Assam's rising potential

Guwahati: Schneider Electric, the global leader in digital transformation of energy management and next-gen automation, has recently launched its national retail activation campaign in Guwahati. The initiative, part of the Bring Home the Smart campaign, aims to strengthen engagement with various stakeholders, including retailers and electricians, through dynamic, on-ground activations. The company is organizing live and interactive product demonstrations and dedicated learning sessions for retailers and electricians, ensuring hands-on knowledge transfer and deeper community-level



engagement. Commenting on the initiative, Rajat Abbi, Vice President, Marketing, Schneider Electric India, said, "This initiative reflects our commitment to driving brand preference, accelerating the adoption of sustainable technologies, and reinforcing Schneider Electric's strong focus on the

home electricals market in India".

Amongst the most important element of this campaign is the new innovative range of Miluz Zeta switches with a first-of-its-kind Air Quality Indicator (AQI) for real-time indoor air monitoring; Motion-sensing LED foot lamps for enhanced

nighttime safety; and Wis-er Smart Home Automation system, offering GPS-enabled appliance control and energy management for smarter and efficient living. Sumati Sahgal, Vice President – Retail Business, Schneider Electric India, said, "Retailers and electricians are not just partners in our ecosystem, they are the frontline ambassadors of Schneider Electric's brand and the enablers of customer trust." The activation, part of the Bring Home the Smart Campaign, will be live across all major cities in India and will aim to increase awareness around Schneider Electric's home electricals portfolio.

Renault unveils Kwid Anniversary Edition lineup

Guwahati: Renault India has rolled out the 10th Anniversary Limited Edition of Kwid, marking a decade of the company's best-selling entry-level model. Limited to 500 units, the edition is priced at ₹5.14 lakh for the manual and ₹5.63 lakh for the AMT, ex-showroom pan-India.



The celebratory edition, based on the Techno variant, boasts over 10 exclusive enhancements, including dual-tone colour options—Fiery Red with Black Roof and Shadow Grey with Black Roof. Features such as shiny black Flex Wheels, yellow grille inserts, themed seat designs, illuminated scuff plates, and leatherette steering with mustard stitching add to its premium positioning.

Alongside, Renault refreshed the entire Kwid lineup with new nomenclature—Evolution, Techno, and Climber. Safety upgrades include 3-point

seatbelts for all seats, while the Climber now comes with six airbags. The range starts at ₹4.29 lakh, with AMT options beginning at ₹4.99 lakh, making Kwid one of the most affordable automatics in India. Powered by a 1.0L SCe engine with manual and Easy-R AMT transmissions, Kwid continues to blend SUV-like design, high 184 mm ground clearance, and robust suspension with affordability.

Renault India MD Venkatram Mamillapalle said the anniversary edition "celebrates a decade of customer trust and the brand's commitment to delivering high-value mobility."

IndusInd Bank appoints Damania CFO

New Delhi: IndusInd Bank on Monday announced the appointment of Viral Damania as its Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Key Managerial Personnel (KMP), effective September 22. With this appointment, the additional responsibilities of Santosh Kumar — who was elevated as Special Officer-Finance & Accounts and designated as KMP on April 18 — will cease immediately. Kumar, however, will continue as the Deputy CFO of the bank. Damania brings 27 years of experience in banking and was most recently the CFO of Bank of America's India branch. He has also worked with Citibank North America, BofA Securities India, and Citibank N.A. across India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, as well as with Price Waterhouse Coopers. A qualified Chartered Accountant, Company Secretary and Cost & Works Accountant.

Jayant Chaudhary drives India-Australia skilling and entrepreneurship collaboration

Guwahati: Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, embarked on an official visit to Australia to strengthen bilateral cooperation in skilling, vocational training, and entrepreneurship. The visit began in Melbourne with an address at the Australia India Business Council Event on "Skilling for the Future," where Shri Chaudhary highlighted the importance of industry-aligned training models. He held a bilateral meeting with Australia's Minister for Skills and Training, Hon. Andrew Giles, focusing on workforce development and future-ready skill frameworks. The Minister toured Holmesglen's Victorian Tunnelling Centre and North Metropolitan TAFE in Western Australia, observing advanced mechanical, fabrication, and digital technology training



programs. Discussions with WA officials, including Hon. Amber-Jade Sanderson, centered on enhancing India-Australia collaboration in vocational education, higher education, and applied learning models. In Brisbane, he met Hon. Ros Bates, Queensland's Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment & Training, to explore apprenticeships and skill development in sectors such as clean energy and advanced manufacturing. In Guwahati, the city's vocational training and skill de-

velopment initiatives are expected to benefit from these international collaborations. Adoption of advanced training methods can enhance employability for local youth in infrastructure, IT, renewable energy, and manufacturing sectors, positioning Guwahati as a regional hub for industry-ready talent. Shri Chaudhary said that India-Australia cooperation will expand employability, foster entrepreneurship, and contribute to India's goal of becoming a global talent hub by 2047.

Ayurveda demand grows with holistic lifestyle shift

Guwahati: With National Ayurveda Day approaching on September 23, the ancient Indian wellness system is witnessing renewed interest as consumers increasingly turn to holistic health solutions. Modern lifestyles characterized by stress, sleep disruption, anxiety, and weight management concerns are driving demand for practices and products rooted in Ayurveda.

Experts like Dr. Madhumitha Krishnan recommend early rising during Brahma Muhurta, balanced diets featuring fresh produce and almonds, yoga, meditation, and personalized health routines based on individual doshas—Pitta, Vata, or Kapha. Sleep quality, often compromised in fast-paced urban settings, can also be improved with Ayurvedic practices such as warm oil massages, grounding foods, and



mindful bedtime routines. The growing global trend for personalized health aligns well with Ayurveda's principles of individual-focused wellness. In Guwahati, the Ayurveda sector is expanding steadily. Retailers report rising sales of herbal products, nuts, and organic foods, while wellness centers offering yoga and meditation programs are seeing increased participation. Consumers are increasingly investing in preventive health measures, reflecting a shift from reactive to proactive wellness, and creating new opportunities for brands and service providers in the region.

Leadless pacemakers set to revolutionize India's cardiac care market

Shillong: The next-generation leadless pacemaker market is witnessing a breakthrough as innovations in cardiovascular technology enable safer, minimally invasive solutions for patients with irregular heart rhythms. These palm-sized devices manage arrhyth-

mias such as bradycardia, eliminating the need for traditional chest implants and leads, which are often prone to infection, displacement, or fracture. Ajay Singh Chauhan, General Manager for Cardiac Rhythm Management at Abbott India and Southeast Asia, said,

"Leadless pacemakers offer meaningful improvements over existing technologies, making implantation and retrieval smoother for physicians while opening new possibilities for patient care." The devices provide precise electrical mapping before implantation and

are designed to integrate seamlessly with the heart, reducing recovery time and allowing patients to resume daily activities quickly. Shillong is seeing growing adoption among hospitals and clinics. Leadless pacemakers revolutionize cardiac care in smaller cities.



American Tourister launches “Everyone’s In” campaign, tap youthful travel trends

Guwahati: American Tourister, a leading global travel gear brand, unveiled its energetic new campaign “Everyone’s In,” targeting young, socially connected travellers. The campaign features a 2-minute original anthem, sung by Jonita Gandhi and Siddhant Chaturvedi, with Ananya Panday and Siddhant Chaturvedi starring in a vibrant music video that captures the spontaneity and camaraderie of road trips and shared adventures. Shorter 20- and 30-second edits will run across digital platforms to maximize reach and engagement.

Anushree Tainwala, Executive President – Marketing, Samsonite South Asia, said, “Travel today is about experiences, connections, and memories. With ‘Everyone’s In,’ we celebrate inclusivity, spontaneity, and youthful energy, re-



fecting the same values as our travel gear—stylish, reliable, and ready for any adventure.” The campaign also involves collaborations with Sony Music, influencers including Rohit Saraf and Taaruk Raina, and interactive social media contests enabling fans to remix and personalise the anthem.

In Guwahati, the campaign is generating noticeable traction among young consumers. Retailers report higher engagement

with American Tourister products, as urban youth increasingly seek travel gear that aligns with lifestyle, style, and social experiences. Local outlets are witnessing an uptick in inquiries and sales, reflecting the brand’s growing resonance with the city’s millennial and Gen Z travellers. With “Everyone’s In,” American Tourister positions itself as a brand not just for travel, but for connecting, exploring, and creating shared experiences.

Slice SFB expands NE, adds K.V. Eapen to board

Guwahati: slice Small Finance Bank (slice SFB) has appointed retired IAS officer and former IMF Senior Advisor, K.V. Eapen, as an Independent Director on its Board, reinforcing its commitment to financial inclusion in Northeast India. Mr. Eapen brings 35 years of experience in public administration, financial policy, and institutional governance, having served in key roles in Assam and Meghalaya, including as Secretary of the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region (DoNER) and Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance, overseeing national financial inclusion initiatives. At the international level, Mr. Eapen advised the IMF on global financial governance, while domestically, he has held board positions in public sector banks, including



Union Bank of India, and contributed to reforms in rural and priority sector credit, microfinance, and farm credit. “slice’s model of combining digital innovation with local branch presence is key to inclusive growth, and I look forward to supporting this mission,” he said.

MD & CEO Satish Kumar Kalra said Mr. Eapen’s addition will enhance governance, strategic oversight, and regional impact as slice SFB continues to expand across the Northeast.

Festive credit offers boost demand

Mumbai: As the festive season kicks off, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and banks are launching a range of offers to boost credit demand, which has been muted so far in FY26. Lenders are providing benefits such as lower interest rates on personal, home and vehicle loans, along with zero processing fees, extended repayment tenures and pre-approved loan limits.

Additionally, many lenders are partnering with retailers and e-commerce platforms to offer instant EMI options, cashback deals and festive discounts on purchases. Banks such as ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank and the State Bank of India have rolled out festive offers. ICICI Bank is offering discounts and cashback across categories including electronics, mobiles, fashion, travel, groceries, etc.

Mirae Asset expands footprint in Northeast India, inaugurates strategic new office in Guwahati city

Guwahati: Mirae Asset Investment Managers (India) Pvt. Ltd. has announced the opening of its first office in Assam, marking its 25th branch across India. Located at Dihang Arcade, GS Road, Guwahati, the new office will cater to investors and distribution partners in Assam and across the wider North-East region, reinforcing the company’s commitment to expanding its national footprint.

“The North-East has been one of the promising



regions for mutual fund participation, and we have seen encouraging growth

here,” said Swarup Anand Mohanty, Vice Chairman & CEO, Mirae Asset Investment Managers. “With our new office in Guwahati, we want to be closer to our investors and partners, ensuring they have better access to our products and services while staying true to our principle of putting investors first.”

In Guwahati, the city is emerging as a financial services hub for the North-East, supported by growing investor participation and rising awareness of

mutual fund investments. The market’s expanding middle-class base and its role as a commercial gateway make Guwahati a strategic choice for Mirae Asset to anchor its regional outreach. Suranjana Borthakur, Head – Distribution & Strategic Alliances, noted that the Guwahati office would serve as a hub for distribution and investor awareness programs, adding pride in bringing the company’s presence closer to her native region.

Sony India launches ‘Ab Kuch Cinematic Karte Hain’ to transform wedding videography market

Guwahati: Sony India on Monday launched ‘Ab Kuch Cinematic Karte Hain’, a campaign aimed at empowering local wedding studios across India to elevate their craft with cinematic technology. Targeting the family-run studios that have been the backbone of wedding videography in small towns, the initiative encourages professionals to move from legacy cameras to Sony’s FX30 — a compact, affordable entry-level model in the Sony Cinema Line.

Mukesh Srivastava, Head of Imaging Business, Sony India, said, “Weddings are more than events — they are once-in-a-lifetime stories that deserve cinematic storytelling. This campaign celebrates tradition while inviting studios to embrace modern technology and storytelling.” The six-minute campaign film, produced in Hindi, Malayalam, Telugu, Tamil, and Kanna-

da, showcases the emotional connection between videographers and couples and highlights the evolution possible when studios upgrade their gear.

In Guwahati, the campaign has been well-received by local studios, with professionals noting that the FX30 allows for more flexibility, faster workflows, and cinematic results that appeal to both urban and semi-urban clients. Studios in the city report growing demand for high-quality wedding films, indicating a significant opportunity for Sony to capture a rising market for professional storytelling. The campaign is live on Sony India’s YouTube channel, Sony Alpha Community page, and across social platforms. Sony cameras and lenses are available at authorised outlets, Sony Centers, e-commerce platforms like Amazon and Flipkart, and www.ShopatSC.com.

Tata Tea and Tetley unveil specialty blends for National Chai Day, target wellness and regional tastes

Guwahati: Ahead of National Chai Day, Tata Tea and Tetley have launched a range of specialty teas aimed at catering to diverse consumer preferences, combining taste, wellness, and regional appeal. Tata Tea Premium highlights hyperlocal flavors such as “Dumdar Chai” for Uttar Pradesh and “Kadak Assam Chai” for Odisha, priced between Rs 150 and Rs 315, and is available at major retail outlets and e-commerce platforms including Amazon and Tata NutriKorner. Tata Tea Gold emphasizes rich taste and aroma with Assam valley teas and highland leaves, with packs ranging from Rs 180 to Rs 600.



Health-focused offerings include Tetley Green Tea Slim Care with L-Carnitine in Lemon & Honey and Ginger Mint Lemon variants, Tata Tea Chakra Gold Care infused with Tulsi, Ginger, Elaichi,

Brahmi, and Adhimadhuram, and Organic India Tulsi Green Tea Classic with antioxidant-rich properties. Tetley Japanese Matcha Tea brings authentic Japanese matcha to India at Rs 600 per 50 g pack, reflecting the growing demand for mindful and wellness-oriented beverages. In Guwahati, retailers report rising demand for these specialty teas, particularly Tata Tea Premium and Tetley Green Tea, driven by urban consumers’ interest in regional flavors and wellness benefits. Local stores and online platforms are witnessing brisk sales, highlighting the city’s expanding premium tea market.



Celebrate World Heart Day with California Almonds

Guwahati: This year, World Heart Day is anchored in the theme "Don't Miss a Beat"- a powerful reminder that countless lives are being lost too early to cardiovascular disease (CVD), depriving families of precious time together. The warning is especially urgent for India, where the CVD burden is projected to rise sharply. According to Lancet study, "The changing patterns of cardiovascular diseases and their risk factors in the states of India", CVDs strike Indians

a decade earlier than their global counterparts. The World Heart Federation further notes that women often suffer more severe first heart attacks, with higher mortality rates than men, while young adults are witnessing an unprecedented surge in heart attacks. One simple yet effective preventive measure is adopting heart-healthy habits- such as adding California Almonds to the daily diet. More than 200 published studies have shown that California Almonds



offer numerous health benefits. They provide 15 essential nutrients, including heart-healthy mono-unsaturated fats, vitamin E, magnesium, potassium,

and dietary fiber. Sheela Krishnaswamy, Nutrition and Wellness Consultant, said: "Starting your day with California Almonds can aid in managing cholesterol levels and promote a healthier heart, while also providing sustained energy and supporting overall wellness." The nutritional profile of almonds also aligns with ICMR guidelines and meets FS-SAI immunity claims standards, making them an excellent choice for today's overworked professionals.

Adding to this, Ritika Samaddar, Regional Head – Dietetics, Max Healthcare, Delhi, said, "This World Heart Day, including almonds in your daily diet is a smart step toward a balanced diet and a stronger heart." Apart from health experts, celebrities are also encouraging healthier choices. Actor Soha Ali Khan shared: "I start my mornings with California Almonds as they keep me full, boost my energy, and most importantly, support my heart health."

Sept Rate Cut Is Best Option For RBI, Says SBI Research

Mumbai: In a recent policy outlook, SBI Research has recommended a repo rate cut by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in September, citing it as the most prudent course of action amid evolving macroeconomic conditions. The report underscores that a calibrated monetary easing would support growth without compromising inflation management.



with inflation control," the report stated. The research note also highlights global monetary trends, pointing to easing stances adopted by other central banks, which could offer RBI additional room to maneuver. It cautions, however, that any rate action must be data-dependent and aligned with fiscal discipline. The RBI's next monetary policy meeting is scheduled

for early October, and market participants will closely watch for signals in the lead-up. SBI's recommendation adds weight to growing expectations of a dovish turn, especially as India navigates a delicate post-pandemic recovery phase. This advisory from SBI Research is expected to influence investor sentiment and policy discourse in the coming weeks.

Nvidia To Invest Up To \$100 billion in OpenAI Technology

New Delhi: In a landmark move poised to reshape the artificial intelligence landscape, Nvidia has announced plans to invest up to \$100 billion in OpenAI, marking one of the largest strategic partnerships in the tech industry to date. The investment will support the deployment of at least 10 gigawatts of Nvidia-powered data centers, aimed at scaling OpenAI's compute infrastructure for training and operating advanced AI models. The two companies signed a letter of intent outlining the roadmap, with an initial \$10 billion tranche to be unlocked once OpenAI activates its first gigawatt of computing power. The infrastructure will be built on Nvidia's upcoming Vera Rubin platform, with deployment expected to begin



in the second half of 2026. OpenAI CEO Sam Altman emphasized the strategic importance of compute capacity, stating, "Compute infrastructure will be the basis for the economy of the future, and we will utilize what we're building with Nvidia to both create new AI breakthroughs and empower people and businesses with them at scale". The deal gives Nvidia a financial stake in OpenAI through non-voting shares, while OpenAI gains access to Nvidia's cutting-edge chips critical for maintaining its competitive edge.

Aditya Birla Capital raises ₹2,000 crore



Mumbai: Aditya Birla Capital plans to raise Rs 2,000 crore (\$226.96 million) through the sale of multiple maturity bonds, as per a recent Reuters report. The report, quoting sources, added that the company will raise Rs 500 crore each through two-year and six-month bonds at a coupon of 146 basis points above three-month overnight index swaps, and five-year bonds at a coupon of 7.52 per cent.

Furthermore, the report elaborates that the company is also targeting Rs 500 crore each through the re-issue of 7.3789 per cent February 2028 bonds and 7.2959 per cent September 2028 bonds. Looking at Aditya Birla Capital's performance and strategic shift in increasing digital offerings and reducing exposure in the small ticket loans, Motilal Oswal has maintained a 'Buy' on the company.

A Motilal Oswal report highlighted that Aditya Birla Capital has gradually diversified its portfolio, lending, insurance and asset management. Through its digital infrastructure, such as the ABCD App, the company has expanded its MSME and retail lending. One major strategic shift that the company has recently concluded is the amalgamation of the subsidiary company Aditya Birla Finance with itself.

PhonePe gets RBI approval for aggregator operations

Bengaluru: PhonePe on Friday announced that it has secured final approval from the RBI to function as an online payment aggregator. The regulatory clearance will allow the fintech major to scale its digital payments network by onboarding online merchants, with a particular push toward small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across India.

The company believes the nod positions it to serve a broader spectrum of enterprises seeking reliable and secure payment processing solutions. Yuvraj Singh Shekhawat,

CBO Merchant Business at PhonePe, said, "With this authorisation, PhonePe is well-positioned to accelerate financial inclusion by providing accessible payment solutions to businesses that were previously underserved, particularly in the SME segment." The company's focus on serving both established enterprises and emerging businesses aligns with its goal of enabling broader digital financial inclusion, Shekhawat added. PhonePe said its payment gateway provides businesses with a secure, reliable platform for customer transactions.

Rupee Slumps 47 Paise to Hit All-Time Low of 88.75 Against US Dollar Business

Mumbai: In a sharp depreciation, the Indian rupee fell by 47 paise to close at an all-time low of 88.75 against the US dollar on Tuesday, weighed down by persistent foreign fund outflows, rising crude oil prices, and global economic uncertainties. This marks the steepest single-day drop in recent weeks, raising concerns across trade and financial sectors. Currency traders attributed the fall to a combination of factors, including a stronger dollar index, hawkish signals from the US Federal Reserve, and cautious sentiment ahead of key



domestic macroeconomic data. The rupee opened weak at 88.45 and continued to slide throughout the session, breaching previous support levels. Market analysts noted that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may intervene to curb excessive volatility, but is unlikely to

reverse the broader trend unless global conditions stabilize. Bond yields remained steady, while equity markets saw mild profit booking amid currency concerns. Investors are now watching for RBI's next monetary policy stance and any signals of intervention.

Usain Bolt to visits India



New Delhi: Bolt, one of the greatest athletes of all time with eight Olympic gold medals to his credit, will light up the pitch in an exclusive football showcase alongside footballers, Bollywood personalities and other prominent figures. Bolt will represent both Bengaluru FC and Mumbai City FC, playing one half each bringing fans from both camps together in PUMA's two-day celebration, starting September 30. This exhibition match will be a ticketed event.

"We believe sport has the power to inspire and unite communities. Football is one of the most popular sports among the youth of India, and bringing Usain Bolt to play here is our way of celebrating that momentum," PUMA India MD Karthik Balagopalan said.

Beyond the track, Bolt has always carried a deep passion for football. Growing up, he often played the sport and dreamt of showcasing his speed and skills on the pitch. After retiring from athletics, he actively pursued this love, training, playing trial matches, and even scoring goals along the way. The match will be held at a ticketed venue and promises a star-studded lineup, including professional footballers, Bollywood celebrities, and other prominent personalities.

Mithun Manhas nominated for BCCI president

New Delhi: Former Indian cricketer Mithun Manhas has officially filed his nomination for the post of President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), marking a significant development ahead of the board's upcoming elections.

Manhas, who represented Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir in domestic cricket and was part of the Indian Premier League (IPL) setup with teams like Delhi Daredevils and Pune Warriors, brings a wealth of experience both on and off the field. Following his retirement, he transitioned into coaching and administrative roles, including stints with IPL franchises and state associations.

His nomination comes amid growing calls for re-



form and modernization within the BCCI, with several stakeholders advocating for increased transparency, grassroots development, and better player welfare mechanisms. Manhas is expected to campaign on a platform focused on strengthening domestic cricket infrastructure and enhancing the role of former players in governance. The BCCI elections are scheduled for next month, with nominations closing later this week.

SKY dismisses rivalry talk after India-Pakistan Asia clash



Dubai: In a commanding display of dominance, India defeated Pakistan by six wickets in the Asia Cup 2025 Super Four clash, prompting Indian skipper Suryakumar Yadav to declare that the historic rivalry between the

two sides no longer holds weight. India chased down Pakistan's competitive total of 171 with seven balls to spare, riding on a blistering 74 off 39 balls from opener Abhishek Sharma and a fluent 47 from Shubman

Lamine Yamal Will Win Ballon d'Or One Day, Says Coach Hansi Flick Sports

Barcelona: Barcelona head coach Hansi Flick has declared that teenage sensation Lamine Yamal is destined to win the Ballon d'Or, football's most prestigious individual award, "one day." The statement came during a pre-match press conference ahead of the 2025 Ballon d'Or ceremony in Paris, where Yamal is among the 30 nominees for the men's award. Yamal, who turned 18 in July, has had a breakout season, helping Barcelona clinch La Liga, Copa del Rey, and reach the Champions League semifinals. He also played a pivotal role in Spain's triumph at the UEFA European Championship in July 2024. "One day we will see this, that Lamine gets this trophy," Flick said, expressing confidence in the



forward's long-term potential. He added, "Everyone who's got this trophy deserved it. I want to enjoy it and show respect to the winners. For me, it's crucial." Yamal is also nominated for the Kopa Trophy, awarded to the best under-21 player in the world. Despite his accolades, he remains sidelined due to a groin injury and will miss

Barcelona's upcoming La Liga fixture against Getafe. Flick confirmed that Yamal is undergoing daily treatment and progressing well. Barcelona has a strong presence at this year's Ballon d'Or ceremony, with six players nominated across categories, including Raphinha, Pedri González, Robert Lewandowski, and Aitana Bonmatí.

Martinelli nets 93rd-minute equaliser for Arsenal city



London: Arsenal forward Gabriel Martinelli delivered a dramatic 93rd-minute equaliser to rescue a crucial point for the Gunners in their Premier League clash against reigning champions Manchester City at the Emirates Stadium. In a high-stakes encounter between title contenders, City appeared poised for victory after Kevin De Bruyne's 57th-minute strike gave the visitors a 1-0 lead. The Belgian midfielder capitalised on a defensive lapse, curling a precise shot past Arsenal goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale. Arsenal, however, refused to concede defeat. Despite City's dominance in possession and territorial control, Mikel Arteta's side pressed relentlessly in the final minutes. Their persistence paid off when Martinelli latched onto a loose ball at the edge of the box and fired a low shot through a crowded penalty area, beating Ederson at the near post.

The goal sent the Emir-

ates crowd into raptures and marked Martinelli's first of the season, reaffirming his importance to Arsenal's attacking setup. "We never gave up. That's the spirit of this team," Martinelli said post-match. "Scoring against City in the dying seconds means a lot."

The draw keeps Arsenal within touching distance of the top of the table, while City drop points for the second consecutive week following their defeat to Liverpool. Pep Guardiola praised his team's performance but acknowledged the sting of conceding late. "We controlled the game for long periods, but in football, one moment can change everything," he said.

The match also saw tactical battles across the pitch, with Declan Rice and Rodri locking horns in midfield and Bukayo Saka testing City's backline throughout. Both managers made late substitutions, but it was Arsenal's gamble that paid off.

Arshdeep Singh Takes 100 T20I Wickets

Abu Dhabi: Indian left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh etched his name in cricketing history by becoming the first Indian bowler to take 100 wickets in men's T20 Internationals. The milestone was achieved during India's final Group A match against Oman in the ongoing Asia Cup 2025, held at the Zayed Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

Singh reached the landmark in his 64th T20I appearance, dismissing Oman's Vinayak Shukla in the final over of the match. His achievement plac-



es him as the fourth-fastest bowler globally to reach the 100-wicket mark in T20Is, and the quickest among pacers. Only Rashid Khan (53

matches), Sandeep Lamichhane (54), and Wanindu Hasaranga (63) have reached the milestone faster.

India secured a 21-run vic-

tory in the match, posting 188/8 after electing to bat first. Key contributions came from Sanju Samson (56 off 45 balls) and Abhishek Sharma (38 off 15), while Suryakumar Yadav, in a tactical move, batted at number 11. Oman responded with a spirited chase, ending at 167/4 in their 20 overs, with Aamir Kaleem scoring a notable 64 off 46 balls. Arshdeep's feat also solidifies his position as India's leading wicket-taker in T20Is, surpassing Yuzvendra Chahal (96 wickets in 80 matches) and Hardik Pandya.

