

## Assam Gets ₹1 Crore Flood Relief From Meghalaya



**Guwahati, August 04:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday announced that Meghalaya has contributed ₹1 crore from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to support ongoing flood relief and rehabilitation efforts in the state, describing the assistance as a symbol of the Northeast's enduring spirit of solidarity. In a post on social media platform X, Sarma expressed gratitude to Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma and the people of Meghalaya for extending timely support during the crisis. "On behalf of the people of Assam, I convey my sincere gratitude to Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma and

the people of Meghalaya for standing with us during this challenging time," Sarma said, adding that the contribution reflects the strong bonds of unity and mutual support shared among the Northeastern states.

Assam has been battling severe floods across several districts, with thousands of families affected and extensive damage reported to homes, infrastructure and agricultural land. The state government has intensified relief and rehabilitation measures, including the distribution of essential supplies, operation of relief camps and assessment of losses for compensation.

## IMD Flash Flood Alert for Ri Bhoi, Khasi Hills

**Shillong, August 04:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD), Shillong, has issued a flash flood warning for Meghalaya's Ri Bhoi and Eastern West Khasi Hills districts, warning that flash floods are likely at several locations over the next 24 hours. According to the alert issued at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, widespread waterlogging is expected in several low-lying areas, including Jorabat and adjoining watersheds. The IMD cautioned that traffic movement and travel routes may be significantly disrupted due to flooding and water accumulation. The warning will remain in

effect until 2:00 PM on August 5.

Residents, particularly those living in low-lying and flood-prone areas, have been advised to remain vigilant, avoid unnecessary travel, and follow instructions issued by local authorities. Motorists have also been urged to exercise extra caution while driving through waterlogged stretches.

The alert was issued by the IMD, Shillong, through the CAP-SACHET emergency alert system. Authorities have advised the public to stay updated through official weather bulletins and disaster management advisories.



## Three NCPI MPs skip NDA meet again, signalling rift within TMC breakaway group

**Opposition leaders skip NDA meeting again, signaling continued absence**

**New Delhi, August 04:** Three Lok Sabha MPs of the National Congress Progressive Initiative (NCPI) on Tuesday skipped the NDA parliamentary party's weekly Mangal Milan meeting for the second time, bringing to the fore apparent differences within the 20-member breakaway Trinamool Congress (TMC) faction over its proximity to the BJP-led alliance. Khalilur Rahman (Jangipur), Abu Taher Khan (Murshidabad) and Yusuf Pathan (Baharampur) stayed away from the meeting, repeating their absence from the NDA's first Mangal Milan on June 28. Their decision comes amid continuing uncertainty over Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla's recognition of the newly formed NCPI group. Seeking to dispel speculation that they were moving closer to the BJP, Abu Taher Khan said the three MPs remained outside the NDA fold. "We are not with the NDA, and neither are we going to the BJP, rest assured. There was an NDA meeting today as well, and the three of us did not attend it," Khan told reporters.

At the same time, he indicated that the MPs would engage with the West Bengal government on constituency issues. "But we will attend the meeting called by the Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari because it is about developmental works in my constituency. We will not support any step that is against Muslims either," he said. The absence of the three MPs assumes significance as the 20-member



NCPI group's recognition in the Lok Sabha is still pending before Speaker Om Birla. To secure protection under the anti-defection law, the breakaway faction would need to demonstrate that it represents at least two-thirds of the TMC's original strength of 28 Lok Sabha MPs.

NCPI floor leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay, however, sought to play down suggestions of internal discord after attending the NDA parliamentary party meeting for the first time. He had missed the inaugural Mangal Milan on June 28. "I am one of the senior-most parliamentarians in the country. Everyone in the NCPI is united. It is a good experience," Bandyopadhyay said. The weekly NDA meeting, held in the Parliament House complex, was attended by Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, senior Union ministers including Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Shivraj Singh Chouhan and S. Jaishankar, besides representatives of NDA allies such as JD(U), JD(S), NCP and Shiv Sena. BJP president Nitin Nabin was seated next to the Prime Minister, a day after the BJP suffered a setback in the Bankipur Assembly bypoll in Bihar, where the party lost the seat vacated by Nabin following his election to the Rajya Sabha after becoming BJP president. BJP MP Manoj Tiwari said Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya made a presentation highlighting the government's sports policy and India's improved performance in international competitions. He said parliamentarians were also briefed on employment generation and social security schemes.

## Tripura CM: TET to Continue Annually, Hiring as per Vacancies

**Agartala, August 04:** Tripura Chief Minister Prof. Dr. Manik Saha on Tuesday said the state government would continue conducting the Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET) regularly, while recruitment of teachers would be undertaken in a phased manner, keeping in view existing vacancies and the state's financial position. Speaking on the issue of ongoing legal cases and teacher recruitment, Saha said legal proceedings were currently underway and that the government had already conducted recruitment drives in the past. He clarified that qualifying TET does not amount to appointment, as the examination is primarily an eligibility test. "Regarding the ongoing cases—well, the legal proceedings are underway. Aside from the



cases, we have already conducted recruitment drives in the past. As for the TET, it is simply an eligibility test—it is not an appointment in itself," the Chief Minister said.

Saha also rejected concerns over the frequency of TET examinations, stating that the test is conducted regularly, including annually. He assured that the government would continue the process

without creating confusion among candidates. "It is not as if there is an issue with the frequency of the TET; we conduct it regularly—in fact, every year. We will continue to do so," he said.

The Chief Minister said the government would adopt a balanced approach to recruitment, taking into consideration available vacancies and the state's financial capacity. "I consult with my officials, and we always take action. The process begins right after a TET exam is held. Then, as candidates are absorbed into the system, the cycle continues," Saha said.

He added that recruitment would be managed through a system of checks and balances to ensure that appointments are made in accordance with requirements and available resources.

## TVS Motor strengthens grassroots motorsport with Apache Junior Programme



**Guwahati:** TVS Motor Company has expanded its motorsport development strategy by launching the TVS Apache Junior Programme, a first-of-its-kind initiative aimed at nurturing future racing talent while strengthening India's grassroots motorsport ecosystem. As part of the programme, the company handed over 10 TVS Apache RR 200 Mini motorcycles to the Madras Motor Sports Club (MMSC), where they will be used to train aspiring racers aged 10–14 years at the Madras International Karting Arena (MIKA).

The programme introduces young riders to professional racing through struc-

tured coaching, purpose-built Apache RR 200 Mini motorcycles available on rent, world-class protective gear and mentorship from TVS Racing champions. Designed around safety, discipline, precision and control, the initiative creates a clear progression pathway from the Apache Junior Programme to the TVS OMC Rookie Category, RR 310 Expert Category and eventually the TVS Racing International Championship.

Commenting on the initiative, Vimal Sumbly, Head – Premium Business, TVS Motor Company, said the programme addresses the need for structured early training before riders become eligible

for competitive racing under FMSCI regulations at the age of 15. He said the initiative reinforces the company's four-decade commitment to democratising motorsport and building India's next generation of racing champions.

TVS Motor said the programme complements its broader motorsport ecosystem, which includes immersive racing experiences through Asphalt gaming, experiential racing at KidZania and dedicated rider training schools. As the TVS Apache brand celebrates 20 years of racing-derived engineering, the company said it continues to translate its "Track to Road" philosophy into both product innovation and rider development. Today, Apache has built a global community of over 7 million riders across 90 countries.

In Guwahati, the initiative could deepen engagement with premium motorcycles and motorsport among young enthusiasts in the Northeast. With demand for performance motorcycles steadily rising in the region, structured rider development programmes are expected to enhance brand affinity, promote safe riding practices and create opportunities for aspiring racers from Assam and the wider Northeast to pursue competitive motorsport.

## Monsoon risks reshape Assam's motor insurance market, says Tata AIG

**Guwahati:** Persistent monsoon rains and recurring flooding across Assam are reinforcing the importance of comprehensive motor insurance, with Tata AIG General Insurance projecting greater consumer focus on vehicle protection as weather-related risks continue to rise.

The insurer said prolonged exposure to waterlogged roads has increased the likelihood of engine damage, breakdowns and repair costs, prompting vehicle owners to reassess their insurance needs beyond mandatory third-party coverage. The company advised motorists to avoid flooded routes, monitor weather and road conditions, maintain

critical vehicle components and report claims promptly in the event of an incident. According to A. Kiran Kumar, Head – Motor Underwriting, Tata AIG General Insurance, seasonal disruptions are creating unexpected financial burdens for vehicle owners, making comprehensive insurance an increasingly important risk management tool. He said policies with specialised add-ons can help customers minimise repair costs and resume mobility more quickly during adverse weather conditions.

Insurers are witnessing growing awareness of value-added motor insurance products that address climate-related

risks. Demand is expected to strengthen for covers such as Engine Secure, Zero Depreciation, Consumables Cover, Electric Surge Secure for electric vehicles and Roadside Assistance, particularly in flood-prone regions like Assam.

Tata AIG said its offering also includes towing and on-road repair services, access to a network of over 11,000 garages, faster claims settlement, dedicated claims support and 24x7 customer assistance, reflecting the insurance sector's increasing emphasis on resilience, customer service and climate-risk protection as extreme weather events become more frequent.

## Air India Express waives cargo charges to boost Assam flood relief logistics

**Guwahati:** Air India Express has waived cargo charges for transporting relief materials to Assam, a move aimed at strengthening the humanitarian supply chain for flood-affected communities while supporting registered non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and recognised relief agencies engaged in rescue and relief operations. The waiver applies to relief consignments carried on Air India Express flights to Guwahati from Delhi, Bengaluru and Kolkata. Eligible cargo includes food and dry rations, drinking water, medicines, hygiene and sanitation kits, clothing, blankets, tarpaulins and other essential humanitarian supplies, subject to regulatory requirements and the airline's verification, acceptance and carriage policies.

The airline currently operates six daily flights from Delhi, three daily services from Bengaluru and two daily flights from Kolkata to Guwahati, offering multiple cargo movement options into Assam. Registered NGOs and recognised relief organisations can coordinate ship-



ments by contacting the airline's dedicated cargo team, which will facilitate documentation, packaging guidelines, shipment acceptance and flight allocation based on operational feasibility and available capacity.

In Guwahati, the initiative is expected to improve the flow of essential commodities into the state during the flood crisis, reinforcing the city's role as Northeast India's primary logistics gateway. Faster movement of relief supplies could help stabilise the availability of critical goods, reduce supply bottlenecks and support humanitarian distribution networks. The cargo waiver may also encourage greater participation by relief organisations and corporate donors, ensuring timely delivery of aid while enhancing the efficiency of the region's emergency logistics ecosystem.

## Behind every text message lies a choice as NPCI urges users to stay scam-free

**Mumbai:** As millions of Indians embrace digital payments for everyday transactions, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched a consumer awareness campaign highlighting how a single text message can determine whether a digital transaction remains safe or turns into financial fraud.

NPCI said cybercriminals are increasingly relying on social engineering rather than sophisticated technology, sending fake SMS messages that exploit fear, urgency or curiosity to manipulate users into acting without verification. Posing as banks, government agencies, telecom operators or delivery companies, scammers attempt to persuade people to click fraudulent links, call fake customer care numbers, download malicious applications, reveal confidential information such as OTPs, UPI PINs and passwords, or transfer money after receiving misleading payment notifications.

Recognising that awareness is the strongest defence, NPCI has advised consumers to read every message carefully, verify requests through official websites, apps or customer care channels, install applications only from trusted app stores, avoid suspicious links, review app permissions, and confirm payment credits by checking their bank account statements. It has also encouraged users to save screenshots and message records and report suspicious numbers through the national cybercrime helpline 1930 or the Department of Telecommunications' Saathi platform. As the organisation behind India's retail payment infrastructure, NPCI continues to strengthen trust in digital transactions through platforms such as UPI, RuPay, IMPS, NACH, AePS and e-RUPI. The campaign reflects its broader commitment to ensuring that the benefits of India's digital payment revolution are matched by greater consumer awareness, confidence and financial security.

## Indus Towers expands Assam flood relief, reaches 1,100 families through Pragati CSR programme

**Assam:** Indus Towers has expanded its humanitarian outreach in Assam by extending flood relief assistance to approximately 1,100 affected families across Charaideo, Sivasagar and Jorhat districts under its flagship corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme, Pragati.

The relief distribution was carried out through centres in Sonari and Teok, providing affected households with comprehensive support kits containing dry rations, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) supplies and essential medical items. The company also distributed customised



kits for pregnant women, new mothers and children between six months and two years of age to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups impacted by the floods.

Commenting on the initiative, Rajender Gurung, Circle CEO (NESA),

Indus Towers Limited, said the widespread flooding had disrupted access to food, healthcare and other basic necessities for thousands of families. He reaffirmed the company's commitment to supporting relief, recovery and resilience-building efforts across the Northeast. Employees of Indus Towers also visited the affected areas and interacted with beneficiaries during the distribution programme. The relief initiative was implemented by the Northeast Affected Area Development Society (NEAID) and builds on the company's recent flood relief efforts in Arunachal Pradesh.



## SBI Life elevates partnership with PCI as principal partner for 2026 para sports season



SBI Life said the partnership aims to recognise and amplify the achievements of India's elite para-athletes while encouraging individuals and families to pursue their aspirations with confidence. Chief of Brand, Corporate Communication and CSR Ravindra Sharma said the collaboration reflects the company's brand philosophy, "Apne Liye, Apno Ke Liye," and reinforces its commitment to helping people prepare for life's uncertainties while supporting sporting excellence.

**Tezpur:** SBI Life Insurance has announced the strengthening of its partnership with the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI), becoming the Principal Partner of the Indian contingent for the 2026 para sports season. The company will also serve as the Official Life Insurance Partner of the Indian Paralympic contingent competing at the Commonwealth Para Games 2026 in Glasgow and the Asian Para Games 2026 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The announcement builds on SBI Life's successful association with India's para-athletes during the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, underscoring the insurer's continued commitment to supporting athletes who exemplify resilience, determination and excellence.

Welcoming the renewed association, Paralympic Committee of India President Devendra Jhajharia said SBI Life's continued support follows India's historic performance of 29 medals at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games and will help create an environment where para-athletes can focus on achieving excellence. He expressed confidence that the strengthened partnership would inspire the Indian contingent to perform strongly at the Commonwealth Para Games and Asian Para Games in 2026.

The partnership highlights SBI Life's growing focus on purpose-led corporate initiatives while reinforcing long-term collaboration between corporate India and the country's expanding para sports ecosystem.

## Stayfree® expands premium portfolio with upgraded Secure XL to strengthen market position

**Mumbai:** Stayfree®, one of India's leading menstrual hygiene brands, has expanded its premium product portfolio with the launch of the upgraded Stayfree® Secure XL, introducing a category-first 'Pad Change Alert' feature as it seeks to reinforce its presence in India's growing feminine hygiene market. The product combines the brand's patented Double Leak Lock Technology with Double Protection for up to 12 hours, reflecting the increasing focus on technology-led innovation in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector.

The upgraded Stayfree® Secure XL features two protective barriers that help lock in menstrual flow, with the outer barrier gradually turning red to function as a 'Pad Change Alert', notifying users when it is time to replace the pad. According to STAYFREE, consumer research and testing conducted by MMR in India in 2026 found that 100 per cent of women liked the upgraded product, highlighting strong consumer acceptance of the innovation.

Commenting on the launch, Supriya Srinivasa, Marketing Director, Stayfree® India, said women often carry the mental burden of worrying about leakage, access to toilets and frequent pad changes during periods. She said the latest innovation has been

integrated "Zero Tension. Double Protection" campaign featuring Bollywood actor and brand ambassador Kiara Advani. Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Shoojit Sircar and produced by Omnicom (Magnon India), the campaign will be amplified



designed to reduce these concerns and enable women to go about their daily lives with greater confidence. Dr. Dilip Tripathi, Head of Baby & Women's Health Research & Development at Kenvue, said the upgraded product is the outcome of extensive consumer research and feedback, combining advanced technology with user-centric design to deliver improved comfort and protection.

To support the launch, STAYFREE has unveiled its

through television, digital platforms, influencer collaborations, sampling initiatives, wall paintings and on-ground activations.

The upgraded Stayfree® Secure XL is now available through supermarkets, kirana stores, e-commerce platforms and quick commerce channels across India, reinforcing STAYFREE's strategy of driving growth through product innovation, wider retail availability and enhanced consumer engagement.

## ICICI Prudential Life combines strong growth with faster financial support for families



**Dibrugarh:** Behind ICICI Prudential Life Insurance's strong financial performance in the first quarter of FY2027 lies a story of faster financial support for thousands of policyholders and their families. The insurer reported a 27.8% year-on-year increase in Profit After Tax (PAT) to ₹386 crore for the quarter ended June 2026, while paying total customer benefits of ₹4,666 crore, including ₹1,306 crore in death claims and ₹3,360 crore in maturity and survival benefits.

The company maintained an industry-leading claim settlement ratio of 99.3% in Q1-FY2027, with non-investigative death claims settled in an average of just one day, reflecting its focus on timely financial assistance. During FY2026, it settled ₹5,149 crore in death claims and paid ₹15,363 crore as maturity and survival benefits. Its retail protection (term plan) business also grew by 60.4% year-on-year, indicating rising awareness among Indians about the need for life insurance.

Managing Director and CEO Anup Bagchi said the company's customer-first approach continues to guide its strategy, with investments in technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and digital capabilities helping improve efficiency and customer experience. He said the savings cost-to-premium ratio declined by 50 basis points to 13.6% in Q1-FY2027, enabling greater investment in innovation. Anup Bagchi also noted that the Board has approved a proposal to rename the company as ICICI Life Insurance Limited, subject to regulatory approvals, reflecting the trust and legacy associated with the ICICI brand as the insurer continues to expand its presence in India's growing life insurance market.

## ShardaCare-Healthcity bets on Northeast expansion with specialist OPD launch in Dibrugarh

**Dibrugarh:** ShardaCare-Healthcity has strengthened its expansion strategy in Northeast India with the launch of specialised Outpatient Department (OPD) services in Dibrugarh in partnership with Aziz Diagnostic & Hospital, a unit of HM Hospital & Diagnostic Center. The move is aimed at improving access to super-speciality healthcare while expanding the healthcare provider's regional footprint through strategic collaborations.

The newly launched OPD will offer specialist consultations in Neurology, Nephrology and Medical Oncology, led by Dr. Atampreet Singh, Senior Director & Head, Neurosciences, Dr. Kunal Raj Gandhi, Director, Nephrology, and Dr. Anindya Mukherjee, Senior Consultant, Medical Oncology. Besides consultations and second opinions, patients will receive treatment planning, follow-up care and referrals for advanced investigations and complex procedures at ShardaCare-Healthcity's 600-bed su-



per-speciality hospital in Greater Noida. Group CEO Dr. Kousar Shah said the partnership reflects the institution's commitment to making advanced healthcare accessible beyond metropolitan cities by

strengthening regional healthcare networks.

The expansion comes as demand for specialised medical services continues to rise across the Northeast, where chronic

kidney disease affects an estimated 15-17 per cent of adults in India and the region records among the country's highest incidence of oesophageal, stomach, liver, and head and neck cancers. Rising cases of stroke and other neurological disorders have also increased the need for timely specialist intervention.

In Dibrugarh, the launch is expected to enhance the city's status as a healthcare destination for Upper Assam and neighbouring states. The presence of visiting specialists from a leading Delhi-NCR super-speciality hospital is likely to increase patient footfall, strengthen the local diagnostic and referral ecosystem, and reduce outbound medical travel, creating new growth opportunities for Dibrugarh's organised healthcare market.

The OPD will function at Aziz Diagnostic & Hospital from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm, with nephrology consultations on every second Friday, medical oncology on every third Friday and neurosciences on every fourth Friday of each month.



## Robotsav opens doors for young innovators as Vi Foundation, Ericsson expand STEM mission

**Mumbai:** For thousands of school students with aspirations of becoming future engineers, programmers and innovators, the launch of Robotsav – The Festival of Technology by Vi Foundation and Ericsson promises to transform curiosity into opportunity. The initiative, introduced under the Robotics Lab Programme in collaboration with knowledge partner Moinee Foundation, combines digital learning with practical exposure to prepare young minds for India's rapidly evolving tech-

nology-driven economy.

The newly launched Robotsav website enables students from across the country to participate in quizzes, essay-writing competitions, explore blogs and access curated learning resources on robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), 3D printing, programming, virtual reality (VR) and generative AI. The open digital platform allows students to learn at their own pace, while offline competitions scheduled in the coming months will provide opportunities to showcase

creativity, innovation and teamwork.

Ambika Khurana, Chief Regulatory & Corporate Affairs Officer at Vodafone Idea and Director of Vi Foundation, said the initiative supports the Digital India mission by making robotics and AI education more engaging and accessible, encouraging students to pursue careers in STEM. Saharsh Simon David, Head of Sustainability & Corporate Responsibility at Ericsson India, said the partnership aims to nurture curiosity, problem-solving

skills and innovation among the country's next generation of technology leaders.

The Robotics Lab Programme currently operates 20 robotics labs across seven states, benefiting nearly 10,000 students. Beyond its social impact, the initiative reflects growing corporate investment in future talent development, helping build a digitally skilled workforce that can contribute to India's expanding innovation economy and strengthening the long-term pipeline for the country's technology sector.

## TATA AIG appointed PMFBY implementing partner for 11 Mizoram districts in Kharif 2026

**Aizawl:** TATA AIG General Insurance Company has been appointed as the implementing insurance partner for the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) across 11 districts of Mizoram for the Kharif 2026 season, marking a significant step in expanding crop insurance coverage in the state. The mandate covers Hnahthial, Serchhip, Aizawl, Lawngtlai, Mamit, Saitual, Siaha, Champhai, Khawzawl, Kolasib and Lunglei districts.

PMFBY, a flagship crop insurance scheme jointly sponsored by the Gov-

ernment of India and the Government of Mizoram, is designed to provide financial protection to farmers against crop losses caused by natural calamities, pests and diseases. Under the implementation, TATA AIG will facilitate enrolment of farmers cultivating notified crops through banks, Common Service Centres (CSCs) and the official PMFBY website. Farmers can also check applicable premium rates and complete enrolment before the notified cut-off dates.

The appointment reinforces TATA

AIG's commitment to supporting India's agricultural community through innovative risk solutions and greater insurance awareness. A joint venture between the Tata Group and American International Group (AIG), the company is celebrating 24 years of operations in India. It has assets under management of ₹26,854 crore, a presence across more than 220 locations, over 8,750 employees, including 1,100-plus full-time claims experts, and an extensive service network comprising over 12,000 hospitals and 11,000 garages.

## Renault reiterates ownership of Chennai plant, reinforces India growth strategy

**Guwahati:** Renault Group has clarified that its Chennai manufacturing facility has been fully owned by the company since September 2025, underscoring the plant's strategic importance to its India operations and long-term business growth.

The automaker said the facility, which manufactures vehicles for both Renault and Nissan for domestic and export markets, is still occasionally referred to as the "Nissan plant" or "Nissan factory". However, Renault said such references are no longer accurate as the Chennai facility is now a Renault-owned manufacturing unit. According to the company, the clarification has been issued to ensure accurate references to the facility in future communications, reports and media cov-

erage. Despite the ownership change, the plant continues to manufacture vehicles for both brands, reflecting the ongoing production collaboration between Renault and Nissan.

The clarification reinforces Renault's commitment to strengthening its manufacturing footprint in India at a time when the country is emerging as a major global automotive production and export hub. The company described the Chennai facility as a key pillar of its India operations, supporting its long-term growth strategy, localisation initiatives and export ambitions. The continued focus on local manufacturing and exports is expected to enhance Renault's competitiveness in the Indian market while strengthening its role in the country's expanding automotive value chain.



## SBI General Insurance rolls out new motor insurance campaign featuring Pankaj Tripathi



**Shillong:** SBI General Insurance has expanded its integrated brand campaign, 'Chuniye Bharosa, Apno Sa', with the launch of a new motor insurance film featuring actor and brand ambassador Pankaj Tripathi, reinforcing its focus on trust and customer confidence in the country's growing motor insurance market. The campaign encourages consumers to look beyond policy pricing and choose a dependable insurance partner offering long-term protection and support.

The company said the campaign highlights the importance of informed decision-making while purchasing motor insurance, positioning trust as a key differentiator. Managing Director and CEO Naveen Chandra Jha said customers increasingly seek simple, transparent and dependable protection as vehicles become an essential part of everyday life, adding that the campaign reflects SBI General's commitment to making insurance more relevant throughout the vehicle ownership journey. Rathin Lahiri, Head of Marketing & CSR, said the campaign showcases the emotional and financial value of

owning a vehicle and emphasizes the importance of choosing a trusted insurer backed by an extensive garage network and documented claims support. The campaign will be promoted across television, print, outdoor, OTT and digital platforms.

Supporting the campaign is SBI General Insurance's motor insurance portfolio, which offers access to over 8,400 network garages, cashless repair facilities, faster claim approvals and a transparent claims process. Established in 2009, the insurer reported a Gross Direct Premium of ₹15,904 crore in FY2025-26, registering 14.5% year-on-year growth, while expanding its nationwide presence to 182 branches and serving customers through more than 23,000 SBI branches and multiple distribution channels.

The campaign comes at a time when Shillong's automobile market is witnessing steady growth, supported by rising private vehicle ownership and increasing awareness of comprehensive insurance solutions. With Meghalaya's hilly terrain and frequent monsoon-related driving risks, demand for dependable motor insurance, cashless repairs and faster claim settlements is gaining importance. Industry experts believe SBI General's trust-centric campaign and strong service network could strengthen its presence in Shillong, where customers are increasingly prioritising insurer credibility and after-sales support alongside competitive premiums.

## TVS Motor strengthens Raider portfolio with Doctor Doom-inspired Super Squad edition

**Guwahati:** TVS Motor Company has expanded its TVS Raider Super Squad Edition portfolio with the launch of a new Doctor Doom-inspired variant, as the two-wheeler maker seeks to strengthen its presence in the highly competitive 125 cc motorcycle segment through premium styling and technology-led offerings. The new Spectral Green edition, inspired by the Marvel character Doctor Doom, was unveiled through a post-credit reveal following screenings of Spider-Man: Brand New Day in select theatres across India.

The motorcycle features a distinctive Spectral Green colourway with a multi-tone travel finish that transitions from green to brown. It retains the Raider's three-valve engine and comes equipped with a Connected Reverse LCD Cluster offering more than 85 connected features, along with iGO Assist technology to improve acceleration and rideability. Wider

tyres enhance handling, while the top-end variant offers dual disc brakes with single-channel ABS. TVS Motor said the new variant will be available soon through authorised dealerships at an ex-showroom price of ₹95,320 in Delhi.

The launch builds on TVS

ine-themed models. The Doctor Doom variant marks the latest addition to the Super Squad portfolio, reflecting the company's strategy of leveraging entertainment partnerships to engage younger consumers and differentiate its products in the premium commuter motorcycle category.

The new Raider Super Squad Edition is expected to generate interest among young urban riders and Marvel fans in Guwahati, where demand for feature-rich premium commuter motorcycles has been rising steadily. Industry observers believe the festive buying season and increasing preference for connected mobility solutions could support retail demand in the city. The latest variant is also likely to help TVS dealerships in Guwahati strengthen their position in the competitive 125 cc segment, where buyers increasingly value styling, technology and brand-led experiences alongside performance.



Motor's collaboration with Marvel, which began in 2023 with Iron Man and Black Panther-inspired Raider editions and expanded in 2025 with Deadpool and Wolver-



**Delivery partners from the quick commerce platform Instamart wade through flooded streets to deliver relief kits to affected families in Dibrugarh, Assam. Each kit includes essential food items such as rice, dal, potatoes, salt, and soybean, along with eggs and clean drinking water, to help households meet their immediate needs.**

## TVS Motor posts record monthly sales of 6.30 lakh units in July



**Guwahati:** TVS Motor Company, part of TVS VENU, reported its highest-ever monthly sales in July 2026, with total dispatches rising 38 per cent year-on-year to 6,29,675 units from 4,56,350 units in the corresponding month last year. The company also achieved record monthly sales in its international business, electric two-wheelers and three-wheeler segments.

Total two-wheeler sales increased 38 per cent to 6,03,138 units in July 2026 from 4,38,790 units a year

ago. Domestic two-wheeler sales outpaced overall growth, rising 42 per cent to 4,37,394 units compared with 3,08,720 units in July 2025, reflecting sustained demand across key product categories.

The company's electric mobility business continued its strong momentum, with two-wheeler EV sales surging 158 per cent year-on-year to a record 60,934 units from 23,605 units in the year-ago period.

TVS Motor's international business also registered its

highest-ever monthly performance, with overall overseas sales climbing 29 per cent to 1,84,264 units from 1,42,629 units in July 2025. International two-wheeler sales rose 27 per cent to 1,65,744 units, while the three-wheeler segment recorded its best-ever monthly sales of 26,537 units, up 51 per cent from 17,560 units a year earlier.

TVS Motor, a global manufacturer of two- and three-wheelers with operations across 90 countries, said the record performance underscores robust domestic demand, sustained export growth and the accelerating adoption of its electric vehicle portfolio.

## Persistent CFO: AI projects funded through existing IT budgets

**Bengaluru:** Enterprise customers are increasingly funding artificial intelligence (AI) initiatives through existing IT budgets as they focus on improving productivity rather than increasing technology spending, Persistent Systems Chief Financial Officer Vinit Teredesai has said.

"Customers expect us to deliver more value for the same dollar they spend. That's where the AI story is going," Teredesai told The New Indian Express. He added that outcome-based pricing for AI projects is still at an early stage and is likely to gain traction over the next few quarters.

Persistent estimates AI tools can reduce delivery costs by 20-25%, although the extent



of savings depends on customers' readiness to adopt AI and service providers' implementation capabilities.

For the June quarter, Persistent reported consolidated revenue of Rs 4,303.2 crore, up 29.1% year-on-year, while net profit rose 13.7% annually to Rs 483 crore despite sequential pressure from foreign exchange losses. The company maintained its operating margin target of 16-17%.

Persistent also reported a record quarterly total contract value of \$1.15 billion, including a strategic services agreement exceeding \$650 million. Teredesai said enterprise decision-making remains cautious despite rising large deal activity but expressed confidence that the company remains on track to achieve its target of \$2 billion in annual revenue by FY27 through strong execution and deal conversions.

## ICICI Prudential expands affordable protection as insurance sector aligns with evolving financial needs

**Imphal:** ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has launched a 10-year life cover option under its ICICI Pru iProtect Smart Plus plan, reflecting the broader policy emphasis on expanding financial protection and insurance penetration in India. The new offering is aimed at customers with defined financial obligations such as home loans, children's education goals and business loans, enabling them to access higher life cover at lower premiums during periods of peak financial responsibility.

The plan also includes complimentary health and wellness services worth up to ₹67,100, an instant claims payout of ₹3 lakh and a 100 per cent payout on the diagnosis of a terminal illness, reinforcing the industry's growing focus on comprehensive financial security.

Manikandan Rajamani, Chief of Distribution, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said customer expectations from financial protection continue to evolve alongside changing life goals. He said the introduction of the 10-year policy term reflects the company's customer-first approach by delivering affordable protection with features that provide meaningful financial security. From an economic policy perspective, the product launch is in line with ongoing efforts to deepen insurance coverage and encourage greater financial resilience among households. Affordable term insurance products, supported by faster claims settlement and enhanced customer services, are increasingly viewed as key contributors to long-term financial inclusion



and risk management.

ICICI Prudential reported an industry-leading claim settlement ratio of 99.3 per cent and an average claim settlement turnaround time of one day in Q1 FY2027. During the quarter, it settled death claims worth ₹1,306 crore and paid ₹3,360 crore as maturity and survival benefits. In FY2026, the company settled ₹5,149 crore in death claims and disbursed ₹15,363 crore as maturity and survival benefits, underscoring its continued focus on timely financial protection for policyholders.

## Nissan accelerates India growth with 218% jump in domestic sales



**Guwahati:** Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. (NMIPL) has reported a strong turnaround in its India business, registering a 218% year-on-year increase in domestic wholesale volumes and a 50% month-on-month rise in July 2026, driven by the launch of the all-new Nissan TEKTON and continued expansion of its SUV portfolio.

The company reported domestic wholesales of 4,518 units, export wholesales of 4,821 units and total wholesales of 9,339 units during July. Customer deliveries of the all-new Nissan TEKTON commenced nationwide on July 20 after its World Premiere on July 9, strengthening Nissan's product lineup alongside the Magrite and Gravite.

Commenting on the performance, Nissan Motor India Managing Director Saurabh Vatsa said the strong wholesale growth reflects increasing customer confidence in the brand and marks a significant milestone in the company's growth journey. He said the TEKTON, introduced as Nissan celebrates 75 years of SUV excellence, combines design inspired by the

legendary Nissan Patrol with advanced safety technologies, superior driving dynamics and enhanced comfort. Supported by the Nissan Care package, the SUV is expected to enhance customer ownership experience while contributing to sustainable long-term growth.

The launch follows an extensive product introduction programme that included a record-setting expedition recognised by the India Book of Records. A convoy of 60 Nissan TEKTON SUVs travelled from Chandigarh to Leh via the 16,703-foot-high Shinku La through the Zaskar region, earning the record for the "Largest Convoy of Single-Model 4-Wheeler to Reach Leh," showcasing the vehicle's durability, reliability and off-road capability.

As Nissan expands from a single-product offering to a comprehensive three-product portfolio, the company is strengthening its retail and service footprint across India to improve accessibility, customer convenience and overall ownership experience while reinforcing its commitment to quality, innovation and reliability.

In Guwahati, Nissan's expanding SUV portfolio is expected to enhance its competitive position in Assam and the Northeast, where demand for premium and rugged SUVs continues to grow. The arrival of the TEKTON, backed by a wider dealership and service network, is likely to attract both urban buyers and customers from neighbouring states, creating fresh business opportunities for dealers in Guwahati while intensifying competition in the region's fast-growing SUV market.



## Soft, fluffy & delicious: Blueberry Muffins Recipe



You'll need fresh or frozen blueberries, granulated sugar, and all-purpose flour to make simple, fluffy blueberry muffins.

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour, ¾ cup white sugar, 2 teaspoons baking powder, ½ teaspoon salt, ¾ cup vegetable oil, 1 big egg, 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract, ¾ cup milk (plus extra if needed to reach a 1-cup liquid

line with oil/egg), and 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries are the ingredients.

Detailed Instructions: Prepare an 8–10 cup muffin tin with paper liners and preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). In a big bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt to combine the dry components. In a measuring cup, combine the oil, egg, milk, and vanilla to mix the wet parts. Stir just enough to blend the wet mixture into the dry flour mixture. Avoid overmixing. Gently fold in the blueberries. Don't defrost frozen berries if using them. After baking the packed muffin cups for five minutes at 400°F, lower the heat to 375°F (190°C) and bake for an additional twenty minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.

## Gluten-Free Zucchini Bread



To begin baking, preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Prepare a 9- by 4-inch loaf pan by greasing it.

For grating the zucchini, use a grater to shred the zucchini into a bowl. Place the grated zucchini onto a double layer of paper towels. Squeeze out the excess moisture from the zucchini into the sink. This step is essential to prevent the zucchini bread from becoming overly moist. Reserve approximately 225 grams (equivalent to about 2 cups) of the drained zucchini. Combining the dry ingredients: In a large bowl, combine the flour mix, psyllium, baking powder, soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, and salt. Combining the wet ingredients: Whisk together the egg, sugars, olive oil, yogurt, and vanilla extract.

Finishing the batter: Plop the drained zucchini into the liquids and whisk them together. Sprinkle the dry ingredients over the top of the liquids. Using a rubber spatula, fold the dry ingredients into the wet until no sign of flours remain. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Slide the pan into the oven and bake until the top of the bread is crackly brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out dry, 45 to 55 minutes. Allow the bread to cool in the pan for 10 minutes. Turn it onto a cooling rack and let it cool to room temperature before slicing into it.

All-Purpose Gluten-Free Flour Mix: Pour all the flours into a large container. Shake and shake and shake harder until all the flours have become one color.

## A healthier way to bake: No Maida Bread Making

To make soft whole wheat bread without maida, mix 100% whole wheat flour, activate the yeast with sugar and warm water, and completely knead the dough. Required Ingredients: Three cups (360 grams) of whole wheat flour (atta); one cup (divided) of warm water; one teaspoon (or 1.5 tsp) of instant yeast; One spoonful of raw sugar One teaspoon of salt; two tablespoons of oil or butter; and two tablespoons of yogurt or curd (which softens the texture of wheat).

Step-by-Step Making Process:

Activate yeast: To activate yeast, combine sugar and warm water in a bowl, add the yeast, and wait 10 to 12 minutes for it to get foamy.

Make the dough: In a big basin, mix together the yogurt, oil, salt, and whole

wheat flour to make the dough. Gradually add the remaining water and the active yeast mixture.

Knead thoroughly: The mixture should be smooth, soft, and slightly elastic after 8 to 10 minutes of kneading.

First rise (proofing): Place a moist cloth over the dough and let it in a warm location for one to two hours, or until it doubles in size.

Shape the loaf: Form the loaf by gently punching down the risen dough, reshaping it into a log, and putting it inside a loaf pan that has been buttered.

Second rise: For 30 to 45 minutes, cover the pan and let the shaped loaf to rise once more.

Bake: Until the top is golden brown, bake for 30 to 35 minutes at 180°C



(350°F) in a preheated oven.

Cool and slice: Cool the loaf thoroughly on a wire rack before slicing.

## The Secret Science Behind Perfect Fried Rice

The perfect comfort dish is fried rice, which is quick, forgiving, and incredibly adaptable. Do you want more vegetables? Add anything you have on hand. Do you need to increase your protein intake? Add a tonne of eggs, fish, poultry, or beef. You may adjust the spice levels, add extra garlicky flavour, and even utilise any leftover rice from your refrigerator. Even if you live alone, this dish is ideal for feeding a hungry family.

However, it might be difficult to achieve the ideal restaurant-style version at home, when each grain is distinct, somewhat crisp, and intensely flavoured. The good news? Mastering it doesn't require years of experience or a bathtub-sized wok. Simple rice can be transformed into a consistently wonderful, restaurant-worthy dish with a few clever, scientifically supported changes to your components and cooking method. The

texture, aroma, and balance of the best fried rice can be achieved in your own home with the help of these five simple, scientifically



proven strategies.

Add the eggs to oil that is starting to smoke rather than just shimmer. Because of the additional heat, the proteins set quickly and the water in the

eggs quickly turns to steam. As a result, the eggs are fluffy and airy rather than hard and solid. Cook the meats and vegetables apart from the rice. When the wok is crowded, the temperature decreases, causing all of the ingredients to steam rather than sear. Every piece has an opportunity to brown because everything is cooked in batches.

Instead of using fresh rice, use cooled leftovers. The rice's starch is recrystallised in the refrigerator, strengthening it and enabling further cooking. Avoid adding all of the rice at once. First, crumble it, then scatter it like a rice snowstorm over the wok. The majority of the grains are being separated before they even come into contact with heat. Stir often, and use a spatula to break up any clumps you observe. You are looking for identifiable individual grains that will readily mix with the mix-ins and are completely coated with oil.

## Healthy and nutritious: Homemade Cerelac Recipe for Babies



Simple ingredients like rice, moong dal, oats, and fox nuts (makhana) can be used to make nutritious DIY Cerelac. Dry-roast them over low heat, let them cool fully, and then crush them into a fine powder. Ingredients for Homemade Cerelac Powder: 1 cup of rice or poha (flattened rice), 2 to 4 tablespoons of moong dal (yellow lentils) for protein, and 1 cup of makhana (fox nuts) for vitality and lightness. Nuts (almonds, cashews): 5 to 8 pieces each (optional, for healthy fats); Oats: 1/2 cup (adds fiber).

Detailed Instructions:

Clean and Dry: After giving the rice and moong dal a thorough wash, place them on a fresh cloth to dry

entirely overnight or for a few hours.

Dry Roast: To make a dry roast, put a heavy pan over a low heat. Rice, moong dal, makhana, oats, and almonds should all be roasted individually until they are crisp and somewhat fragrant. Avoid burning them.

Cool and Grind: Allow all roasted foods to cool fully. In a mixer, blend them into a fine, smooth powder.

Sieve and Store: To get rid of any coarse particles, sift the powder using a fine mesh strainer. The powder should be kept in an airtight, clean container. At room temperature, it lasts up to one month.

How to Make Your Baby's Porridge: In a clean pan, add one or two tablespoons of the prepared powder. To avoid lumps, thoroughly stir in 1/2 cup of water or milk. Cook over low heat for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring constantly, until smooth and thick. Before feeding, allow it to cool to a moderate temperature.

## SC seeks Arunachal officials' reply on Khandu-linked probe claims

New Delhi, August 03:

The Supreme Court on Monday sought responses from Arunachal Pradesh Chief Secretary Manish Gupta and Principal Secretary (Home) Dr Sonal Swaroop after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) alleged non-cooperation by the state government in its preliminary enquiry into the award of public works contracts allegedly linked to the family members of Chief Minister Pema Khandu.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta directed both senior officials to appear before the court on August 24 along with written replies to the CBI's status report explaining the alleged failure to provide records sought by the agency.

The direction came after the bench examined the CBI's status report dated July 17. Appearing for the agency, Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj sought more time to complete the enquiry, stating that state authorities had not been cooperating. The bench remarked that if there was



non-cooperation, it saw little reason for granting the state a "long rope" and questioned why the CBI had not yet registered a regular case despite noting discrepancies.

The court observed that the status report indicated the state government had failed to furnish necessary records despite its earlier directions. It issued notices to the two officials, requiring them to explain the alleged non-compliance.

On April 6, the apex court had ordered the CBI to initiate a preliminary enquiry into allegations that public works contracts in Arunachal Pradesh were preferentially awarded to firms allegedly

owned by or connected to Khandu's family members. It also directed the state government and its departments to extend full cooperation to the investigation.

The petition was filed by NGOs Save Mon Region Federation and Voluntary Arunachal Sena, which alleged that contracts and work orders worth around Rs 1,270 crore were awarded between 2015 and 2025 to four firms linked to the chief minister's family. The Supreme Court had held that the allegations warranted an independent investigation and directed the CBI to conduct a time-bound enquiry into the award and execution of the contracts.

## Bangladesh warns India over Hasina virtual address

New Delhi, August 03: Bangladesh has conveyed its concerns to India over reports that former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who has been living in India since leaving Dhaka last year, is scheduled to deliver a virtual address on August 5, warning that the event could impact the recent improvement in bilateral relations.

The issue was discussed during a meeting on Monday between Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humayun Kabir and India's newly appointed High Commissioner to Dhaka, Dinesh Trivedi, at the Prime Minister's Office in Tejgaon.

According to a statement issued by Bangladesh, Dhaka raised reports circulating on social media that Hasina may deliver a public speech and sought India's cooperation to ensure its territory is not used for political activities targeting Bangladesh. "Bangladesh expects India's cooperation to ensure that no person belonging to organisations whose activities are banned, includ-



ing the fugitive Sheikh Hasina, can use Indian territory to deliver political speeches or carry out activities aimed at creating instability inside Bangladesh," Kabir was quoted as telling the Indian envoy. Dhaka warned that such activities could harm the positive momentum in bilateral ties. The reported virtual address is expected to be hosted by the Foreign Correspondents' Club in New Delhi on August 5, a date marking one year since protests led to the fall of Ha-

sina's Awami League government.

Trivedi assured the Bangladeshi side that he would consider the matter, make necessary inquiries and remain vigilant. The meeting also reviewed broader India-Bangladesh relations, with both sides reaffirming their commitment to dialogue and cooperation. However, Hasina's presence in India and Bangladesh's repeated calls for her extradition remain major points of tension between the two neighbours.

## Tamil Nadu moves SC over Cauvery water

Chennai, August 03: The Tamil Nadu government on Monday moved the Supreme Court, seeking directions against Karnataka for allegedly failing to release Cauvery water in accordance with orders issued by the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA). According to an official release, the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC), at its meeting on July 28, directed Karnataka to release water from the Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) and Kabini reservoirs to ensure the availability of 3,500 cusecs at Biligundlu from July 29 to August 12. The CWMA ratified the decision at its emergency meeting on July 30.

Tamil Nadu, however, said the actual flow received at Biligundlu between July 29 and August 2 ranged from just 158 to 550 cusecs, far below the mandated quantity.

The state also noted that Karnataka's four major Cauvery basin reservoirs—KRS, Kabini, Harangi and Hemavathi—held a combined 77.537 tmcft of water as of August 3, including 67.517 tmcft of live storage, indicating sufficient availability to release Tamil Nadu's share.

Citing increased inflows due to heavy rainfall, Tamil Nadu claimed it was entitled to 26.954 tmcft under the principle of proportional sharing. Acting on legal advice, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin directed officials to approach the Supreme Court, seeking orders to ensure Karnataka releases Tamil Nadu's rightful share of Cauvery water within the stipulated period.



## Premium Organic Push for Malta Orange



Dehradun, August 04: Uttarakhand's Malta orange is set to enter the premium organic market as the state prepares to certify key production clusters, a move expected to improve farmers' incomes and create export opportunities. Officials said certification will enable growers to legally market the fruit as organic, helping it command higher prices and access organised retail chains. Agriculture and Horticulture Secretary S N Pandey said the initiative focuses on certification, branding, quality improvement and stronger market linkages. Widely grown across the state's hill districts using largely low-chemical farming practices, Malta oranges could gain a premium identity if supported by effective certification, packaging and marketing.

## Meta grilled by parliamentary panel over PM Modi post glitch, algorithmic bias concerns

New Delhi, August 03: Meta on Monday told a parliamentary panel that it is ready to apologise for the brief restriction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Facebook post, while members across the committee pressed the company on accountability, alleged algorithmic bias and compliance with Indian laws. The issue came up during a meeting of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, where Meta officials appeared before lawmakers. According to sources, members questioned why Meta, despite earning significant revenue from India, failed to adhere to the country's laws. They also raised concerns over the platform's content moderation practices, alleging that objectionable content, including pornography, remains accessible while "genuine" content gets removed. "When Facebook has not removed a lot of other objectionable content, who removed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's video from the platform?" a member asked Meta representatives. "Who bears the ultimate responsibility for this?"

the sources quoted the panel member as saying. The discussion comes days after the Centre summoned Meta's top executives over the temporary restriction on Modi's Facebook post addressing India's youth and promising stringent action against paper leaks.

Members also questioned the effectiveness of Meta's algorithms in detecting deep-fakes involving the prime minister.

According to sources, Meta officials expressed regret over the incident before the committee and said they were



While the US-based social media company had attributed the incident to a technical glitch and apologised, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) termed the explanation "inadequate". Meta had said the content was removed "in error" and was later restored. "In a democracy, if a video of the prime minister is not safe, then accountability needs to be fixed," another panel member was quoted as saying during the meeting.

ready to apologise. However, a BJP MP insisted that an apology alone was insufficient. "This isn't just about offering an apology. Accountability must be fixed and legal action should be taken in this matter," the member asserted. The meeting was chaired by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey. Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, MeitY Secretary S Krishnan, and representatives of Meta, Google, X, Snapchat and YouTube also attended the discussion.

## Sher-e-Punjab T20 League a fantastic platform: Shubman Gill

**Chennai, August 02:** The Sher-e-Punjab T20 League was launched at the PCA International Cricket Stadium, New Chandigarh, on Sunday, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter in Punjab cricket. The tournament will be played from August 30 to September 13 and is set to feature some of the biggest names from the state, including India captain Shubman Gill, Arshdeep Singh, Abhishek Sharma, Gurnoor Brar, Prabhsimran Singh and Randeep Singh. The league was launched by PCA Secretary Gurmeet Singh Meht, President Amarjeet Singh Mehta in the presence of Gill and Arshdeep Singh. A total of six teams will compete in 27 high-voltage matches for the coveted title. "The Sher-e-Punjab T20 League is a fantastic platform for young



cricketers to showcase their talent and progress towards playing for Punjab and India. Punjab has always produced outstanding cricketers, and I believe this league will help discover many more. I congratulate the Punjab Cricket

Association for this wonderful initiative and wish the league great success," Gill said at the event. The tournament will be played in a round-robin format. Each franchise will have one marquee player and at least two icon players, ensuring a perfect blend of international stars, domestic performers and emerging talent from Punjab. The official logo of the tournament was also unveiled during the launch ceremony, adding to the excitement ahead of the inaugural edition. The auction date for the Sher-e-Punjab T20 League was also announced during the launch event and will

be held on August 9. The six franchises representing Amritsar, Fazilka, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Mohali and Bathinda will assemble their squads ahead of the inaugural season. Each franchise will have a salary purse of INR 45 lakh. The Marquee Player's price has been fixed at INR 10 lakh, while the base price for an Icon Player is INR 1.50 lakh. The base price for Punjab First-Class players has been set at INR 1 lakh, U-23 players at INR 75,000, U-19 players at INR 50,000, and District players at INR 20,000. Each franchise can have a maximum squad size of 20 players.

Chicago, August 02: Robert Lewandowski scored two goals, including the winner, in his home debut for the Fire, helping Chicago beat Charlotte FC 2-1 on Saturday. Lewandowski, who made the move from FC Barcelona in a two-year deal with Chicago, equalised in the 20th minute off a screamer from outside the box that tied the game at 1. He scored his second goal of the night in the 68th minute with a go-ahead shot to the bottom left corner to seal the win for the Fire (9-6-2), who played their first home match in over two months. Pep Biel gave Charlotte (7-7-4) an early lead with a shot from the right side of the box on an assist from Idan Tokloamat. Charlotte pushed for an equaliser late and earned a corner in stoppage time, but Chicago held on to preserve the one-goal lead.

## Lewandowski double lifts Chicago past Charlotte



Neeraj's tip powers Yashvir's throw

New Delhi, August 03: Indian javelin thrower Yashvir Singh credited Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra's last-minute advice for helping him achieve a career-best performance and win bronze at the Commonwealth Games. Yashvir, whose previous best was 82.57m, produced an 85.41m throw in the final round to secure third place after being seventh following the penultimate round. He revealed that Chopra advised him to keep the javelin in one line before his final attempt. "Neeraj motivated me before my final throw and supported me. He told me to keep the javelin in one line, and it paid off," Yashvir said after returning to India. He explained that maintaining alignment between the javelin, shoulders and release point helped maximise distance. Yashvir added that he competed without pressure as attention remained on Chopra and other top contenders.

## Neeraj's tip powers Yashvir's throw



Neeraj's tip powers Yashvir's throw

## World Cup star Vozinha arrives to join Colo Colo

**Santiago, August 03:** Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha arrived in Chile on Sunday to complete his move to Colo Colo after a series of delays had put the transfer in doubt. The 40-year-old, who became one of the standout performers at the recently concluded World Cup, was welcomed by a large group of fans at Santiago airport with flags, banners and chants. Colo Colo had announced the signing of Josimar Évora Dias, popularly known as Vozinha, on July 24, but documentation issues and personal matters delayed his arrival three times.

Vozinha gained global recognition for his performances against Spain, Uruguay and Lionel Messi's Argentina at the World Cup, where he became the oldest player to feature in a national team's debut match at the tournament. He will undergo medical tests on Monday before signing an initial six-month contract, with an option to extend. Colo Colo expects him to join training on Tuesday. The Chilean Football Federation has also approved his request to wear "Vozinha" on his jersey, allowing him to use the nickname that made him famous worldwide.



## Eala stuns Osaka to book Washington final against Pegula



**Washington, August 02:** Alexandra Eala stunned former world number one Naomi Osaka 6-4, 6-2 on Saturday to reach the women's final of the WTA and ATP Washington Open, where she will face third-ranked Jessica Pegula. The 21-year-old Philippines left-hander delivered an impressive victory over the four-time Grand Slam winner from Japan to reach her second WTA final, having lost her first last year at Eastbourne. "I'm super proud of my performance," Eala said. "I played really well and I had a great mentality and I stayed locked in until the end."

Eala, set to jump to a career-best 24th in the world rankings, had previously ousted second seed Elina Svitolina for her sixth top-10 victory of the year after dethroning 2025 Washington

champion Leylah Fernandez. It was the first meeting of the Asian stars, Eala facing one of the idols of her youth. "She definitely has an aura and she definitely has power," Eala said of Osaka. "I remember watching her finals in the Australian Open and US Open, so really a great experience to share the court with her. "I'm really happy I was able to produce that level against her."

Osaka, ranked 13th, was thwarted in her bid for an eighth WTA title and first since taking the 2021 Australian Open. "I hit a lot of unforced errors, so that was probably one of the main reasons (for losing)," Osaka said.

Pegula, seeking her 12th WTA title and third of the year, eliminated Russia's Diana Shnaider 7-5, 6-4 in the other semi-final. "It's going to be a battle," Pegula said of the final. "Alex, I'm a big fan of hers. She's the future of the tour and she's already here."

Pegula, who won her first WTA title in 2019 at Washington, fell behind 5-2 against Schnaider, but the 32-year-old American top seed battled back to reach her fourth final of the year. A semi-finalist at this year's Australian Open, Pegula has lifted trophies at Dubai and Charleston this season.

## Growing injury concerns raise alarm bells in Indian cricket

### Injuries put spotlight on India's fitness management team



**New Delhi, August 03:** Jasprit Bumrah's latest injury setback has raised serious concerns in Indian cricket, with the fast bowler's absence coming at a crucial time ahead of the Sri

Lanka tour and the team's World Test Championship campaign. While the cricketing fraternity celebrated Aujib Nabi becoming the first cricketer from Jammu and Kashmir to receive a Test team call-up, Bumrah's injury has once again highlighted India's growing list of fitness concerns among key players. Bumrah suffered a knee injury while fielding during the second ODI against England, adding to the number of Indian internationals currently sidelined. Hardik Pandya, who has shifted base to Bengaluru, is yet to return to international cricket after India's T20 World Cup triumph. Nitish Kumar Reddy, seen as Pandya's potential backup, also suffered a quadriceps injury before the England tour despite improving his

bowling pace. All-rounder Washington Sundar, who has had previous injury issues, will miss at least the opening Test due to a leg injury sustained in England. Harshit Rana's recurring hamstring problems have also caused concern, while players such as Varun Chakravarthy and B Sai Sudharsan have dealt with injuries recently. Former India strength and conditioning coach Ramji Srinivasan stressed the need for better communication and accountability among players and support staff to manage injuries effectively. "There has to be an open line of communication among everyone in the ecosystem. There cannot be any dark edges when you are playing for the country," Srinivasan said, adding that workload management should focus on an athlete's condition rather than only statistical data. India captain Shubman Gill had also raised concerns after the ODI series loss in England, saying frequent injuries were affecting team combinations and long-term planning. The Indian team will leave for Sri Lanka on Tuesday and play a three-day warm-up match before the Test series. The BCCI review meeting, expected after the England tour, is likely to discuss the recurring injury concerns and fitness management. Meanwhile, Gill and head coach Gautam Gambhir will hope the remaining squad members stay fit during the upcoming campaign.

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