

## Cyclone Remal forces train cancellations in Northeast as water levels rise

**Imphal:** Train services were disrupted in the Northeast regions as cyclone Remal rampaged through the states. Northeast Frontier Railways (NFR) officially stated that the waterlogging problem and damage on railway tracks in the Jatinga Lumpur-New Harangajao section of the Lumding division as heavy rains were observed in the mountainous Dima Hasao district of Assam has forced train cancellations.

Several reports claim that the NFR has cancelled a number of express, passenger and goods trains heading to south Assam, Tripura, Manipur, and Mizoram since Tuesday.

NFR officials told IANS, "Our engineers and workers are working round-the-clock to restore rail services but heavy rain and adverse weather conditions badly affected the restoration work." How-

ever, passenger and goods train services have been disrupted since April 25 in the region due to landslides that damaged railway tracks in the Jatinga Lumpur-New Harangajao section of the Lumding division as heavy rains were observed in the mountainous Dima Hasao district.

The one-way special train will run from Guwahati to Sealdah on May 30 for affected passengers, NFR said. Many other trains are partially cancelled which include Coimbatore-Silchar Express, Kanchanjunga Express connecting Sealdah in West Bengal and Agartala, Tripura Sundari Express that connects Agartala with Firozpur Cantonment station in Punjab, Silchar-Guwahati Express, Agartala-Kolkata special ex-



press.

The official stated that the overflow in the nearby regions is causing disruption. However, the NFR has deployed workers to restore railway services and the full-fledged work is yet to begin.

The disruption caused a shortage of fuel and other basic supplies across southern Assam, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur. These states largely depend on the outside for fuel,

food grains, viral supplies and other commodities. Two people lost their lives in Manipur's Senapati district after the Cyclone Remal triggered heavy rainfall and landslides. A 34-year-old man lost his life in a landslide on the Senapati-Thonglang Road, while an 83-year-old woman drowned in the Senapati River on Tuesday. The European Union (EU) has provided 22.6 million as aid to Manipur.

## State student 1st in Young Scientists Karyakram

**Agartala:** Abhinaba Banik of Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalyaya Viveknagar studying in class 10-has been awarded with 1st prize in project preparation and presentation on behalf of his whole team at Young Scientists Karyakram YuViKa training 2024 at National Remote Sensing Centre NRSC ISRO Hyderabad. Among 3 lacs students appeared in national level country wide open YuViKa quiz entrance only 360 students got selected, out of which 45 students got opportunity to visit National Remote Sensing Centre NRSC ISRO Hyderabad for exclusive training purpose where 10 students from tripura including Abhinaba Banik has been listed. During the Young Scientists Karyakram YuViKa training at National Remote Sensing Centre NRSC ISRO Hyderabad under the valued guidance of Dr Prakash Chauhan Director NRSC ISRO Hyderabad one project competition on space science also arranged where Abhinaba Banik being presenter and team leader of his team among 45 student

participants awarded the 1st prize and a great trophy has been conferred by the NRSC ISRO scientists to him. He also awarded prize in Space science quiz conducted by NRSC ISRO Hyderabad team of scientists. He has been appreciated with certificate of participation in Young Scientists Karyakram YuViKa with a momentum protrating his photo alongwith Space science books, ISRO bags etc kits on it.

From Tripura other participants are Ananya Sen of Udai-pur brilliant star, Kaushik debnath ritish guhoRoy, Gaurav dhaur of bhavans Tripura Vidya Mandir and from kvnit Priyan-shu Bhunik, Subodh Adhikari, subhradeep Das. Nrsr juvika program has been conducted by its deputy Director and jubika program chairman scientist g Srinivas Rao, scientist associate with chandrayan mission Srinivas Reddy P, ISRO bhuban web services head scientist A Lesslie, scientist Shubham Das, controller nrc scientist Ankur shrivastav, associate director scientist P Srinivasaulu, deputy Director scientist N Aparna and others.

## Stone quarry collapsed, 21 dead in Mizoram



**Guwahati:** At least 21 people, including two minors, were killed and seven others were missing as a stone quarry collapsed in Mizoram's Aizawl district today following incessant rain triggered by Cyclone Remal, officials said.

Meanwhile, at least two more people were killed and a few went missing in landslides across the state affecting transport and leaving Aizawl cut off from the rest of the country. Disaster management and police officials said that 21 bodies had been recovered so far from the quarry site between Melthum and Hlimen in the Aizawl district while several others are still trapped under the debris following the collapse in the morning.

Disaster management personnel, police and local people continued hectic efforts to rescue the trapped people or recover the bodies. Heavy rain and intense winds were affecting the rescue operations, a

disaster management official said, adding that seven of the victims are locals, while the remaining are from outside the state. A minor boy and a minor girl were among the victims of the stone quarry collapse, while two persons were rescued alive. Rain-triggered landslides were reported in several other districts, leaving two dead and a few others 1 missing in different places and disrupting the movement of vehicles between the districts. Aizawl has been cut off from the rest of the country due to multiple landslides on National Highway 6, the lifeline of the mountainous state. Several buildings, houses, roads, and bridges were either damaged or swept away due to landslides and the heavy rain. Chief Minister Lalduhoma held an emergency meeting with Home Minister K. Sapdanga, Chief Secretary Renu Sharma and other senior officials to review the situation.

## State officials advance plans for Agartala City Hospital

**Agartala:** The state government is moving forward with plans to establish a new hospital in the state capital, aiming to alleviate the patient load on the city's main referral hospitals, GBP, and IGM. Named Agartala City Hospital, this new facility will be managed by the Agartala Municipality Corporation (AMC) and would primarily handle outpatient (OPD) cases, reducing pressure on the existing hospitals Today, AMC Commissioner Shailesh Kumar Yadav, along with representatives from the state Health Department and a consultancy firm responsible for the hospital's design, visited the old Municipal Corporation office premises at Kasari Patti. This site has been earmarked for the new hospital.

Commissioner Yadav explained to reporters that the state government intends to reserve GBP and IGM hospitals for super-speciality treatments. However, the current influx of OPD patients-over 2,000 daily, with IGM Hospital handling approximately 1,200 patients at the OPDs each day-necessitates the creation of a new



facility to manage primary and secondary healthcare needs.

"The Health Department has recognised the need for a dedicated hospital to reduce the burden on GBP and IGM hospitals," said Yadav. "Today, we are assessing the changes required to transform this building into Agartala City Hospital. We are planning the layout, including the placement of doctors' chambers and laboratories." Yadav further added that, contingent on smooth progress, the new hospital is expected to become operational within the next two months. The establishment of Agartala City Hospital underscores the state government's commitment to improving healthcare infrastructure and ensuring accessible medical services for the residents of Agartala and its surrounding areas.

## Delhi govt moves SC, seeks direction to Haryana to release more water to crisis-hit capital

**New Delhi:** Amidst the serious heatwave and sweltering heat in Delhi, the AAP government on Friday knocked the doors of the Supreme Court seeking direction to Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh govt for supplying more water to the national capital keeping in view the severe water woes faced by it. The sources in the Supreme Court registry and a senior staff said that water, being an essential subject and basic need of everyone, thereby, the apex court would take up this matter very soon for hearing. As per reports, many areas in Delhi including Chanakyapuri's Sanjay Camp, Geeta colony in East Delhi, Patel Nagar, various North and South Delhi parts, Mehrauli and Chhatarpur and others facing acute water shortages. Many people in these areas failed

to get even the minimum water, although they stood in queue to get at least a bucket of water. In its petition, Delhi government said that the need for water for Delhi people has increased amid sweltering heat and a severe heat wave. "Delhi's need for water has increased in the scorching heat. It is everyone's responsibility to fulfil the needs of the country's capital," the petition said. Even the Delhi's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government had ordered to impose fine of 2,000 on wastage of water and formed 200 teams to enforce the penalty on those who allegedly wastage water. The temperatures in Delhi almost touched 50 degrees Celsius and people are unable to get any relief so far, as the South West monsoon is to hit Delhi not likely before June 20-25.

## JICA, IIT Guwahati and North Eastern states forge alliance to fortify disaster management expertise

**Guwahati:** In a strategic collaboration, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Centre for Disaster Management and Research (CDMR), and the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG) have joined forces to elevate the disaster management proficiency of State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) officials across India's North Eastern Region. The alliance launches a comprehensive training program aiming to imbue officials with cutting-edge global techniques for disaster prevention and mitigation.

The North East's unique topography renders it prone to a spectrum of natural disasters, including floods, earthquakes, and landslides, inflicting sig-

nificant human and economic tolls over the years. This initiative, titled "Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building Capacities of North Eastern States of India," seeks to arm SDMA officials with the requisite expertise to enact effective disaster prevention measures.

The inaugural two-week training session, conducted from May 13-24, 2024, immersed participants in Japan's foremost policies, technologies, and best practices in disaster risk reduction. Mr. SAITO Mitsunori, Chief Representative of JICA India, underscores the program's vital role in bolstering the region's disaster preparedness by harnessing Japanese and global insights.

## World No Tobacco Day Spotlights Urgent Need for Innovative Harm Reduction

**Shillong:** India faces a significant public health threat due to its persistent tobacco epidemic, with one of the highest global usage rates. In 2020, 27% of the population aged 15 and above were tobacco users, and over 120 million were adult smokers. Both smoking and oral forms of tobacco are alarmingly prevalent.

On World No Tobacco Day, experts and members of the Global Sustainability Alliance's (GSA) Leadership Council for Good Health and Well-being emphasized the importance of progressive harm reduction strategies. They emphasized that these strategies could potentially save 1.35 million lives annually, emphasizing the need for policies that align with users' psychometric journeys. Prof. Dr. R Zimlichman, Director of the Brunner Institute for Cardiovascular Research at Tel Aviv University's Sackler Faculty of Medicine, stated, "The world needs standardized alternatives promoted by governments for their



safety and efficacy. Delay in implementing these measures costs millions of lives worldwide."

India is on the verge of becoming a global economic leader, and it is crucial for policymakers to adopt effective strategies to improve public health. Increased awareness of health risks is essential for a healthy population, which is vital for India's competitive advantage. Implementing progressive policies is not only necessary for a tobacco-free nation but also to mitigate the health and economic burdens imposed by tobacco use. Harm reduction and innovative strategies can save lives and lead to a healthier future for India.

## Nissan Qashqai, crafted at the world's top plant, revolutionized the crossover segment

**Guwahati:** Nearly 18 years ago the first Nissan Qashqai rolled off the production line in Sunderland, UK, creating the crossover segment and sending shockwaves around the automotive world. In 2024, the UK's fastest-selling car, with over four million customers across 100 countries, has been upgraded with a bold design and significant technology updates to improve the customer experience. Nissan is producing the Qashqai electric vehicle in Sunderland, set to be delivered to Nissan dealers across Europe and beyond in the coming weeks.



The latest upgrades required a fresh £30m investment in the plant, building on Nissan's total investment in the UK of £6bn. The refreshed Qashqai arrives as Nissan continues to develop

its EV36Zero vision in Sunderland, a blueprint for the future of automotive manufacturing, bringing together electric vehicle manufacturing and battery production, powered by renew-

ables. Adam Pennick, Nissan's Vice President for Manufacturing in the UK, said, "We're so proud to call Sunderland plant the home of the Qashqai." Sunderland plant undergoes changes for 2024 Qashqai production, investing in new panels, bumpers, paint colors, interior features, materials, and trim. New Qashqai's advanced technology, including advanced driver assistance systems and Google integration into Nissan Connect infotainment, enables seamless interaction between customers' digital life and their vehicle, enhancing the overall experience for customers.

## Shopsy's Mega Shopping Dhamaka shatters records, attracts millions amidst hyper-value E-commerce boom

**Guwahati:** Shopsy by Flipkart has orchestrated a landmark achievement with its debut Mega Shopping Dhamaka event, drawing in millions of avid shoppers and setting new benchmarks in the hyper-value e-commerce landscape.

With an extensive catalogue boasting over 16 crore+ products, the event witnessed an unprecedented surge, with daily demand spiking by an impressive 50% and a notable 60% increase in new customers, marking a significant milestone for the platform.

The fervent response highlights Shopsy's position as a trailblazer in the hyper-val-

ue e-commerce sector, with T-shirts, Sarees, and Bedsheets emerging as standout favorites amongst consumers. Notably, tier 2 and 3 cities including Cuttack, Guwahati, and Gorakhpur contributed substantially to the event's success.

Shopsy's Mega Shopping Dhamaka didn't just offer discounts; it redefined the concept of value shopping. The 'Under 45 store' and 'Under 95 store' featured products ranging from Lipsticks to Kitchen Choppers, with prices as jaw-dropping as Re. 1/-. Moreover, shoppers enjoyed unbeatable discounts on summer essentials, including women's wear starting at



Rs. 89/- and men's wear from Rs. 139/-.

Kapil Thirani, Head of Shopsy, expressed his elation at the overwhelming response, affirming the platform's commitment to delivering unparalleled value and convenience to its expanding customer base.

## Vi partners with Netflix to enhance its entertainment offerings for its customers

**Guwahati:** Leading telecom operator Vi, announced its partnership with the global streaming service provider - Netflix, further strengthening its entertainment offerings for its customers. This partnership will offer users a world-class streaming experience on mobile, television, and tablet devices. The company is also introducing prepaid Netflix plans and plans to launch bundled postpaid plans.

Netflix in India has announced its 2024 lineup, featuring a diverse range of films and series, including local and global hits like Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar, Amar Singh Chamkila, The Great Indian Kapil Show, Laapataa Ladies, Animal, Fighter, Dunki, Squid Game, Bridgerton, and Mamla Legal Hai. However, Vi has introduced two new Unlimited prepaid packs, which include unlimited calls and

data bundled with Netflix Basic subscription, enabling users to watch Netflix on both mobile and TV.

Vi is the first telecom operator to offer a Netflix Basic bundled with a prepaid plan at less than Rs. 1000. Users with the 84-day validity product will also receive benefits from Vi's flagship Hero proposition, including Data Delight, Night Binge, and Weekend Data Roll-over.

## Mother's Recipe launches an exclusive Northeast media campaign

**Imphal:** Mother's Recipe, known for its delicious and traditional flavors, announced the launch of exclusive Northeast media campaign. Northeast India has been a key market for Mother's Recipe and is set to enhance its outreach and deepen its presence across the region, particularly in Assam and Mizoram.

The Mother's Recipe campaign

features a touching film showcasing the flavorful memories of mothers. The brand's authenticity and personal connection with customers are reflected in its products, including chutneys, papads, pickles, cooking pastes, ready-to-cook meals, and instant mixes. The storyline follows families as they share meals made with Mother's Recipe products, high-

lighting the brand's role in creating memorable dining experiences. The Mother's Recipe TVC campaign is strategically placed on regional entertainment, news, and music channels to reach a wider audience and engage viewers across various demographics. Eye-catching hoardings at strategic locations across the Northeast reinforce brand visibility and create

a strong visual impact. The combination of TV and outdoor advertising ensures the campaign reaches a wide audience. Ms. Sanjana Desai, Executive Director of Mother's Recipe said, "Our new media campaign is designed to reach the masses and bring the authentic flavors of Mother's Recipe to more homes in Assam and Mizoram."

## ICICI Prudential Launches ICICI Pru Platinum

**Shillong:** ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launched ICICI Pru Platinum, the Company's first unit-linked product (ULIP) which aligns distributor payouts to their customers' fund value - the distributor commissions are linked to their customers' Assets under Management. This unique product incentivises distributors to encourage their customers to stay invested for the entire policy tenure. Notably, it offers customers a cost and tax-efficient route to build wealth over the long-term.

The company offers value-based distributor payouts to encourage long-term investment behavior and unlimited free asset class switches without cost or tax implications. It offers various Protection and Savings products based on customers' life stage requirements, providing financial safety nets and achieving long-term goals.

ICICI Pru Platinum offers unlimited free asset class transfers without any cost or tax implications. Customers can choose from an array of 21 funds under this product, comprising 13 equity and four each in the debt and balanced categories, besides offering an option of four portfolio strategies. Mr. Amit Palta, Chief Distribution Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "ICICI Pru Platinum, our Company's first unit-linked product designed to make distributor payouts aligned to their customers fund value, promoting the long-term interests of both.

## ICICI Prudential Life achieved a claim settlement ratio of 99.17% in FY2024



**Shillong:** The claim settlement ratio of ICICI Prudential Life stood at 99.17% in FY2024, one of the best in the industry. Significantly, the average turnaround time taken to settle a genuine death claim was just 1.27 days. For the fiscal year ended 2024, the Com-

pany paid out a total of Rs. 1,867 crore as death claims.

The company's claim settlement ratio for Q1-FY2024 was 97.94%, 98.14% in Q2-FY2024, and 98.52% in Q3-FY2024, demonstrating consistent claim settlement. To provide convenience, claimants can use digital touchpoints like WhatsApp and the mobile app, and home pick-up of claim-related documents is also available. Mr.

Amish Banker, Chief Operations Officer, said "life insurance provides financial security to the family, therefore, we ensure all genuine claims are settled quickly. For FY2024, we had an industry-leading claim settlement ratio of 99.17% and the average time taken to settle a death claim was just 1.27 days for non-investigated retail claims after receiving all documents."

## STAR Cement receives 50 Eicher Pro 2119 trucks from Eicher Trucks and Buses

**Guwahati:** Eicher Trucks and Buses, a division of VECV Limited, has delivered 50 Eicher Pro 2119 trucks to STAR Cement and its associates in Guwahati. This is one of the largest single haulage orders received in the North-east region for Eicher and underscores the company's commitment to providing reliable and efficient transportation solutions tailored for the cement industry in the region.

Eicher Pro 2119 trucks with a GVW of 18.5T excel in secondary distribution operations, making them ideal for the rigorous demands of last mile transporting cement. These robust vehicles will ensure efficiency and reliability, thereby offering a best-in-class performance. Eicher is expanding its



dealership network in North-east India, focusing on customer service and support. Eicher Heavy-Duty vehicles have 100% connectivity and an industry-first Uptime Centre for remote diagnostic solutions. The trucks are also integrated with "My Eicher," a fleet management service that provides

insights into fleet performance, including running hours, fuel efficiency, idle time, driver behavior, and training needs. Gagandeep Singh Gandhok, EVP, HD Truck Business, VECV, said, "We look forward to further strengthening our relationship with STAR Cement and contributing to their success."

## Groundbreaking Surgery: Fortis Bannerghatta Road Restores Mobility for 75-Year-Old Patient

**Aizawl:** In a First in Karnataka, Fortis Hospital Bannerghatta Road successfully treated a 75-year-old patient from Mizoram, with TAVR (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement) using the latest and most advanced Edwards Sapien 3 Ultra Valve. Under the care and supervision of Dr. Srinivas Prasad BV, Senior Consultant - Interventional Cardiology at Fortis Hospital, Bannerghatta

Road, the procedure was completed in mere 45 minutes.

In 2011, Mr. Vanlalzaunga, a spinal surgery patient, was diagnosed with Aortic Valve Stenosis, a condition where the aortic valve narrows and blood cannot flow normally. Battling with the heart condition, he visited numerous hospitals and received medical management, however, could not find a permanent solution.

His condition worsened, leaving him wheelchair-bound. Seeking a lasting remedy, his family turned to Fortis Hospital, Bannerghatta Road, where he was advised to undergo TAVR—a minimally invasive procedure used to replace a narrowed aortic valve that fails to open properly. The patient, who was wheelchair-bound for four months, was able to walk unassisted post 4 hours

## Embassy of India Celebrates Buddha Jayanti in Kathmandu

**Guwahati:** The Embassy of India, Kathmandu organised a number of events in Lumbini in collaboration with the Lumbini Development Trust and the Lumbini Buddhist University to celebrate the auspicious occasion of Buddha Jayanti.

Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' graced the special event as the Chief Guest. Hon'ble Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, Mr. Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Hon'ble Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal, Mr. Hit Bahadur Tamang, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Lumbini Province, Mr. Jokh Bahadur Mahara, and several senior provincial leaders also graced the event.

The event featured an academic symposium on "Buddha Dharma and Global Peace", a painting exhibition, and a cultural evening including a dance-recital entitled 'Shweta Mukti- the Feminine Glory of Nirvana' by Ms. Kavita Dwivedi and her dance troupe from India; a poignant rendition of Bhajans and Dhamma songs by celebrated Indian vocalist, Dr. Subhadra Desai; and a soulful medley of Buddhist songs by the renowned Nepali music group 'Sur Sudha'. These vibrant performances showcased the shared Buddhist heritage and traditions of India and Nepal.

## Creamline Dairy Products Limited launches Godrej My Farm

**Guwahati:** Creamline Dairy Products Limited (CDPL), a subsidiary of India's largest and diversified agribusiness, Godrej Agrovet Limited (GAVL), announced the launch of Godrej My Farm Milk, a premium milk straight from Godrej's farm to consumers' doorsteps. With Godrej My Farm Milk being directly sourced from Godrej's own farm, pasteurized, and packaged using cutting-edge technology, it ensures that milk is fresh with its natural flavor and nutritional value intact. To be available only in Hyderabad, the entire process from milking to product reaching the consumer is automated, thereby making Godrej My Farm a zero human touch milk with a single point fully controlled supply chain starting from feed to breed.

Indian consumers prioritize their health and family well-being, as reflected in the Milk Report titled 'Bottoms Up... India Says Cheers to Milk'. 1 in 2 consumers consider hygienic sourcing, processing, and packaging, along with the assurance of no adulteration, when purchasing milk. The milk report revealed that 55% of consumers associate unhygienic milk with unbranded options, and 90% are willing to pay more for high-quality, safe milk, highlighting the growing demand for pure and safe dairy products among consumers. Bhupendra Suri, CEO, Godrej Jersey, said, "We at Godrej are fully committed to the way our milk is produced and distributed."

## Flipkart's Big EOSS 2024: Fashion fiesta anticipates record-breaking turnout

**Guwahati:** Flipkart is primed to launch its much-awaited 'Big End of Season Sale' (Big EOSS) on June 1st, 2024. With a lineup of over 12,000 brands, participation from 2 Lakh+ sellers, and a projected footfall exceeding 100 million visitors, this year's sale is poised to make waves in the fashion industry.

Enthusiastic shoppers can look forward to an unparalleled shopping experience, with a staggering array of over 75 lakh styles spanning various categories. The event will introduce innovative features like open-box delivery, covering coveted items such as sports shoes, watches, and jeans, alongside same-day delivery options for select products.

Renowned brands like Puma, Adidas, Nike, Tommy Hilfiger, and Fossil will showcase their latest collections, enticing customers with irresistible offers. Additionally, exclusive bank offers, including a 10% instant discount on credit card transactions, will sweeten the deal for eager shoppers.

A star-studded marketing campaign featuring celebrities Allu Arjun and Alia Bhatt has already set the stage for the grand event, driving anticipation among consumers nationwide.

Arief Mohamad, Vice President and Head of Flipkart Fashion, emphasized the significance of the Big EOSS as a platform to offer unmatched value and variety to customers, while also bolstering growth opportunities for sellers and brands.

Pre-sale insights indicate shifting consumer preferences, with a surge in demand for summer essentials like sports shoes, luggage, and lightweight apparel. Tier 3 regions are emerging as key markets, witnessing notable upticks in men's footwear sales

## 4th round of India-Bangladesh consular talks organized in New Delhi

**Guwahati:** The fourth round of India-Bangladesh consular talks was held in New Delhi on Wednesday. The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary (CPV) Dr. Aman Puri, while the Bangladesh delegation was led by Director General (South Asia) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rokebul Haque.

The Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement, "During the meeting, the two sides held extensive discussions on mechanisms to strengthen coordination and cooperation on consular issues, visa matters, repatriation, MLAT and extradition matters etc. During this, both sides also agreed to further strengthen the bilateral Revised Travel Arrangement (RTA) to facilitate the movement of citizens of both countries."

The India-Bangladesh Consular Dialogue Mechanism was established in 2017 to enhance people-to-people contact by establishing a regular communication channel for consular, visa, and mutual legal assistance cooperation between India and Bangladesh. Both parties agreed to hold the next round of talks in Dhaka at a mutually convenient date, reiterating their commitment to fostering people-to-people exchanges.

## EaseMyTrip records its Highest EBITDA

**Itanagar:** EaseMyTrip.com, a leading online travel tech platform in India, reported a 41% YoY increase in Q4FY24, with a revenue from operations of INR 1,640, an EBITDA of INR 577 million, and a profit before tax of INR 551 million. The company also reported a Gross Booking Revenue of INR 20,900 million.

showed a 39% increase in hotel nights bookings, it recorded 1.4 Lacs bookings, contributing 12% to the segment revenue. It showed a 53% to 2.7 Lacs increase in Train, Buses and Others segment bookings, contributing 8% to revenue, with gross booking revenue of INR 20,900 million, a 24% increase in EBITDA of INR 577 million, and a 24% increase in PBT. The

company's FY24 performance showed Hotel nights bookings were 5.2 Lacs, an increase of 49%, contributing 9% to the segment revenue. Nishant Pitti, CEO and Co-founder of Easy Trip Planners, commented, "We are pleased to announce that during the quarter our Revenue from Operations was at INR 1,640 million, a growth of 41% Y-o-Y. The EBITDA grew by

24% Y-o-Y at INR 577 million and our PBT was INR 550.7 million, increase of 24% Y-o-Y, demonstrating our commitment to profitability. Similarly, our FY24 Revenue from Operations grew by 32% at INR 5,906 million. During FY2024, EBITDA was at INR 2,282 million, had a Y-o-Y growth of 19% and our PBT grew by 16% Y-o-Y to INR 2,151 million."

Q4 FY24 performance

## India Submits Bid to Host Gukesh vs. Ding Liren World Chess Championship Match

**New Delhi:** India is vying to host the World Chess Championship match between young prodigy D Gukesh and reigning champion Ding Liren of China, set to take place from November 20 to December 15 this year. The 17-year-old Gukesh, who recently became the youngest ever challenger by securing victory at the Candidates Tournament, could face Liren in Chennai if the All India Chess Federation (AICF) wins the hosting rights.

FIDE CEO Emil Sutovsky confirmed the receipt of India's bid, with no other countries having submitted their bids yet. However, Singapore is also expected to enter the race by the deadline on May 31, "The decision on the hosting rights will be made following the FIDE Council meeting next week, after which the due process will be followed," said Sutovsky. To secure the championship, the AICF will need to meet FIDE's stringent financial criteria, which includes a budget of approximately Rs 71 crore (\$8.5 million) and a facilitation fee of USD 1.1 million for FIDE.

## Indian Women's Hockey Team Warmly Welcomed in London

**London:** The Indian women's national hockey team received a warm welcome at the High Commission of India in London, celebrating their achievements and the inspiring journeys of the players. The reception, held at India House, was in honor of both the men's and women's hockey teams who are in the United Kingdom for the upcoming FIH Pro League games.

The event saw significant figures including the Indian High Commissioner to the UK, Vikram Doraiswami, praising the women's team for their perseverance and success. "These young ladies represent the best of India, showcasing that with ambition and courage, anything is possible in our country," Doraiswami said during his address. The Indian community in the UK has been encouraged to support the team in large numbers.

## T20 World Cup to Favor Bowlers Over Batters, Unlike IPL

**Bengaluru:** Following an IPL season where batters frequently breached the 250-run mark, the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas is expected to present a contrasting challenge, likely tipping the scales in favor of bowlers.

In the recent IPL, batters like Travis Head and Andre Russell showcased explosive performances, setting up expectations for high-scoring encounters at the World Cup. However, the lack of the Impact Player rule in the World Cup will necessitate a more balanced and strategic approach, as teams will have to rely more heavily on allrounders. Australian pace spearhead Mitchell Starc, fresh from his IPL triumph with Kolkata Knight Riders, highlighted the difference in formats. "The absence of the Impact Player rule will mean one less

batter in the lineup, which could curb the high scoring we saw in the IPL," Starc explained.

The pitches across the West Indies, known for being slower and offering more grip, are expected to favor spinners significantly more than the flat tracks observed during the IPL. This shift is anticipated to reduce the frequency of high-scoring innings, a stark contrast to the IPL's average run rate of 9.56 and numerous slower and offering more grip, are expected to favor spinners significantly more than the flat tracks observed during the IPL. This shift is anticipated to reduce the frequency of high-scoring innings, a stark contrast to the IPL's average run rate of 9.56 and numerous totals above 200. Historically, Caribbean pitches have produced



lower scores in T20 cricket, with averages rarely crossing the 140-run mark, suggesting that spinners and tactically astute bowlers will play crucial roles in the outcomes of matches.

David Warner, with extensive experience in Caribbean cricket, concurred with the assessment. "The conditions in

the West Indies are likely to assist bowlers more, particularly spinners, due to the drier and slower nature of the pitches compared to those in the IPL," said Warner. This edition of the World Cup, also being hosted in part by the USA, introduces the variable of new venues in New York and Texas, which are expected to use drop-in pitches. These might initially offer more consistent and batter-friendly conditions, potentially leading to higher scores in the early rounds.

As teams adapt to the changing conditions and the strategic demands of the World Cup, the tournament is poised to highlight the skills of bowlers, potentially making it a bowler-dominated spectacle, much to the delight of cricket purists who have lamented the recent skew towards batting in the shortest format.

## Gautam Gambhir gives blunt take on Mitchell Starc's 'ball of IPL 2024'



**New Delhi:** With KKR breaking the bank for Starc at the IPL 2024 auction, Gambhir had a clearcut stand on the Australian pacer becoming the most expensive buy. Starc had last played an IPL game in 2015 when KKR bought the veteran Australian pacer for INR 24.75 crore at the 2024 auction. Gambhir's KKR outclassed Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) to acquire Starc's services at the auction. Speaking to Sportskeeda about Starc's fruitful stint with KKR in the IPL 2024, Gambhir said that the franchise had no doubts about the Australian star becoming the X-factor for the three-time winners this season. "We always knew he was the X-Factor and he will become one at the right time. I mean, what other big matches could be there in the IPL? It was the Qualifier 1 and the Final. That is why I say that the big players wait for such occasions, they thrive on these occasions. Money is irrelevant. What Starc brings to the team was more important," Gambhir said. Starc's away-swing-er to Abhishek in the IPL 2024 final kickstarted the downfall of the Sunrisers at Chennai.

## 'BCCI won't be able to stop MS Dhoni. He should never retire'

**New Delhi:** July 7 is Dhoni's birthday, and on the day he turns 43, former India captain Sunil Gavaskar feels MSD would have made up his mind. A viral tweet posted by a user on X, claims Gavaskar wants Dhoni to never retire, suggesting MSD take up more of a Davis Cup role where players are part of the team but don't particularly play all the time.

"I feel he will make a big announcement on July 7. MS Dhoni should never announce retirement from the IPL. Instead, he should stop playing in it. Whenever Dhoni feels fine, he can return to the league. Even BCCI will not be able to stop him as he will not retire from the tournament," Gavaskar, whose birthday falls three days after Dhoni's, was quoted as saying.

While HT could not independently verify the statements, the quotes posted by the user are usually genuine, authentic and not fake. Gavaskar is believed to have said these lines while doing commentary during the IPL 2024 final between Kolkata Knight Riders and Sunrisers Hyderabad on Sunday.

## India Submits Bid to Host Gukesh vs. Ding Liren World Chess Championship Match

**New Delhi:** India is vying to host the World Chess Championship match between young prodigy D Gukesh and reigning champion Ding Liren of China, set to take place from November 20 to December 15 this year. The 17-year-old Gukesh, who recently became the youngest ever challenger by securing victory at the Candidates Tournament, could face Liren in Chennai if the All India Chess Federation (AICF) wins the hosting rights.



FIDE CEO Emil Sutovsky confirmed the receipt of India's bid, with no other countries having submitted their bids yet. However, Singapore is also expected to enter the race by the deadline on May 31, "The decision on the hosting rights will be made following the FIDE Council meeting next week, after which the due process will be followed," said Sutovsky. To secure the championship, the AICF will need to meet FIDE's stringent financial criteria, which includes a budget of approximately Rs 71 crore (\$8.5 million) and a facilitation fee of USD 1.1 million for FIDE.

## Sindhu Advances, Lakshya Falls at Singapore Open



**Singapore:** P.V. Sindhu, former BWF champion, made a strong start at the Singapore Open Super 750 badminton tournament by advancing to the second round, while Lakshya Sen faced a challenging defeat against world number one Viktor Axelsen here on Wednesday.

Sindhu, who clinched her last BWF title at this venue two years ago and recently finished as runner-up at the Thailand Open, defeated Denmark's Line Hojmark Kjaersfeldt 21-12, 22-20. The match lasted 44 minutes, setting up a highly anticipated clash with Spain's Carolina Marin, the Rio Olympic champion. Marin holds an 11-5 record over Sindhu, and their rivalry saw tensions flare during their last encounter at the Denmark Open, where both players received yellow cards.

On the men's side, Lakshya Sen, ranked 14th globally, put up a vigorous fight but ultimately succumbed to Axelsen 13-21, 21-16, 13-21 in a match that stretched over an hour. Axelsen, coming off his first season title win at the Thailand Open, proved too strong in the decider.

Elsewhere, India's Kidam-

bi Srikanth had to retire hurt during his match against Japan's fifth seed Kodai Naraoka, trailing 14-21, 3-11. In mixed doubles, B. Sumeeth Reddy and N. Sikki Reddy faced defeat against Malaysia's Goh Soon Huat and Lai Shevon Jemie 18-21, 19-21. The match between Sindhu and Line started evenly until Sindhu pulled ahead, leveraging unforced errors from the Dane to close the first game. The second game saw Line make a comeback, tying at 14-14 and almost pushing the match to a decider. However, Sindhu accelerated at the crucial moment, scoring six consecutive points to secure her victory.

Lakshya's match against Axelsen saw the Indian struggling with his pace and precision initially. After losing the first game, Lakshya returned stronger in the second, adjusting his strategy to level the match. However, Axelsen regained control in the decider, capitalizing on Lakshya's errors to secure his victory. As the tournament progresses, all eyes will be on Sindhu's next match against Marin, a showdown that promises to be as intense as their past encounters.