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Airbnb says 30% rise in bookings from Indian guests for Olympic Games Paris 2024

New Delhi: Online accommodation hosting platform Airbnb on Friday said it has witnessed a 30 per cent rise in bookings from Indian guests for the Olympic Games Paris 2024. Beyond Paris, Indian travellers are also exploring other locations in France such as Nice, Aubervilliers, Colombes, and Saint-Ouen-sur-Seine, Airbnb said in a statement, citing data for bookings made by Indian guests between January 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024, for stays in and around the host cities during the period of the Olympic Games Paris 2024.

These areas, including key Olympic venues like Colombes (field hockey) and Chateauroux (shooting events), along with cities hosting football matches like Saint-Etienne, Lyon, Nantes, Nice, and Bordeaux, are experiencing significant interest, it added.

Airbnb said travellers from over 160 countries and regions have already booked their stays on its platform during the sporting event.



The Paris Olympics will be held from July 26 to August 11, 2024. As of March 31, 2024, nights booked during the dates of the Olympics are over five times higher than they were in the Paris region the same time a year ago, it added.

Paris remains the top-searched city on the platform, with a nearly 40 per cent increase in active listings in the region, ensuring ample availability for guests. In terms of growth in bookings, Asian countries are on the leaderboard, Airbnb said, adding that it has witnessed the highest increase in travellers coming from India, Mainland China, Hong Kong (SAR) and Japan.

India alone witnessed an

approximately 30 per cent increase in booking of stays in and around Paris during the games, Airbnb said. "The surge in bookings for Paris reflects an exciting trend among Indian travellers, who are increasingly planning trips around iconic sporting events like the Olympics, showcasing their growing appetite for unique, global experiences," Airbnb General Manager for India, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, Amanpreet Bajaj said.

He further said, "Interestingly, while Paris remains a top destination, these travellers are also venturing beyond traditional tourist spots to explore cities like Saint-Denis and Bordeaux to catch their favourite sports."

FDI in Indian real estate sector to grow at 20 pc by 2025 : Industry

New Delhi: The Indian real estate has emerged as an economic growth engine and foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector is expected to grow at 20 per cent by 2025, industry experts said on Wednesday.

The real estate sector has emerged as the largest employment provider and rapid urbanisation, smart cities, housing for all and relaxation in the FDI regulations will further boost the sector, said Sanjeev Kumar Arora, Member, Haryana RERA, at an ASSOCHAM event.

The government introduced the RERA Act, 2016 with an aim to bring transparency to the sector with disciplined growth and sustainability solutions. About 1.25 lakh projects have been registered under RERA in pan-India since its enactment, Arora said.

Pradeep Aggarwal, Chairman, National Council on Real Estate, Housing and Urban Development, ASSOCHAM and Chairman, Signature Global (India), said that in order to achieve the goal of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, the housing and real estate sector needs a constant push, which will also generate more employment opportunities.

"The vision is that every family will have a home and job opportunity, as this sector is crucial to make India the top economy. Real estate is a Rs 24 lakh crore market, and its GDP contribution is around 13.8 per cent," Aggarwal told the gathering.

In a boost for 'ease of living' and dignity for crores of Indians, the Cabinet has decided to further expand the Pradhan-Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and construct 3 crore additional rural and urban houses.

PC shipments grew by 1.9 pc in Q2 this year globally: Report

New Delhi: PC shipments totalled 60.6 million units in the second quarter (Q2) of 2024 globally, a 1.9 per cent increase from the same quarter of 2023, a new report showed on Wednesday.

According to Gartner, this marks three-consecutive quarters of year-on-year growth for the PC market. "The low year-on-year growth, together with stabilised sequential growth, indicates that the market is on the right track to recovery," said Mikako Kitagawa, Director Analyst at Gartner.

"With 7.8 per cent sequential growth between 1Q24 and 2Q24, PC inventory is tracking back to an average level," she added.

The PC market in the US witnessed the highest shipment volume since the third quarter (Q3) of 2022,

"Business PC demand picked up slowly as well, contributing to this growth. Our current expectation is to see surging busi-



ness PC demand in the US in the second half of 2024," said Kitagawa. HP maintained the top spot in the US PC market based on shipments with a 27 per cent market share, followed by Dell with a 25.2 per cent market share.

Moreover, the Asia-Pacific (APAC) market dropped 2.2 per cent (year-on-year) due to the weak China market, offsetting the growth in mature and emerging APAC. Emerging APAC continued to see mid-single digit growth, led by healthy growth in India.

Mature APAC also saw improving PC demand, resulting in year-on-year growth for the first time in two years, the report said.

Industry, telcos to deploy technology to create 5G intelligent villages : Centre

New Delhi: Emphasising the priority to unlock the potential of 5G technology for rural development, the government on Wednesday urged the industry and telecom service providers (TSPs) to come forward and deploy technology to create "5G Intelligent Villages".

The "5G Intelligent Village" initiative of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) responds to the pressing need for equitable technological advancement by harnessing the transformative power of 5G technology to uplift rural communities.

At a DoT workshop, Telecommunications Secretary Dr Neeraj Mittal discussed the concept of "smart" and "intelligent" villages, emphasising the ability of these communities to interact, sense their surroundings, convey data, and extract knowledge, to be able to make informed decisions. He urged Industry and



TSPs to come forward and adopt villages and employ technology to make them intelligent villages.

Emphasising the government's priority on enhancing rural development, the workshop showcased initiatives aimed at improving connectivity, digital literacy, and sustainable practices to significantly enhance the quality of life for rural communities.

The experts emphasised on the need to bridge the digital gap between urban and rural landscapes. The workshop aimed at integrating technology and rural development to enhance quality of life.

Navi Mumbai Airport To Be Operational in March 2025, Says Maharashtra Civil Aviation Minister Murlidhar Mohol

Mumbai: Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol on Saturday said the Navi Mumbai International Airport is slated to commence operations in March 2025.

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu and Mohol visited the airport site and reviewed the progress of the ongoing work.

"Going by the progress of the work, the airport will be operational in March next year. It will enhance connectivity with neighbouring Mumbai, Pune, Thane, Kaly-

an, and western Maharashtra," Mohol said, highlighting its international standards and anticipated annual footfall of nearly 20 million passengers. He expressed positivity towards naming the airport after late PWP leader DB Patil. "We are committed to ensuring that people who have contributed land for the airport project are not displaced," the minister clarified, emphasising the government's awareness of project-related issues and compensations.

He underscored Prime Min-

ister Modi's ongoing support for development initiatives in Maharashtra. Talking about the results of the Maharashtra council elections, Mohol lauded the Mahayuti alliance's performance and urged the Congress to introspect on its internal challenges.

The ruling Mahayuti alliance on Friday won all the nine seats it contested in the biennial elections to 11 legislative council seats, while the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi faced a setback as a candidate backed by NCP (SP) lost.

Kotak Mahindra Bank to boost SME business in Kolkata and Eastern India

Guwahati: Kotak Mahindra Bank plans to significantly expand its SME business in Kolkata, seeing the East region as a promising opportunity. Shekhar Bhandari, President of SME at Kotak Mahindra Bank, highlighted Kolkata's importance as a trade and commerce hub

with diverse industries like iron and steel, biotechnology, coal, leather, jute products, tea, IT, and gems and jewelry. The bank aims to invest in local talent and open new branches in key locations such as Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Bhubaneswar, and Cuttack, supporting the

growth of SMEs essential to India's \$5 trillion economy goal.

Shekhar Bhandari emphasised that SMEs are crucial to the bank's growth strategy, with a specific focus on Kolkata and the eastern region of India. He highlighted the significant potential in the area's diverse

industries and expressed the bank's commitment to supporting sustainable growth. Bhandari also stated that SMEs are vital for India to reach its goal of a \$5 trillion economy, and Kotak Mahindra Bank is dedicated to their development and mutual growth.

Flipkart boosts digital payment offerings, launches new bill payment categories

Guwahati: Flipkart, a leading e-commerce platform in India, has unveiled an expansion in its digital payment services with the introduction of five new recharge and bill payment categories. These include Fast-ag, DTH recharges, landline, broadband, and mobile postpaid bill payments, complementing existing options like electricity and mobile prepaid recharges. Partnering with BillDesk and integrating with the Bharat Bill Payments System (BBPS), Flipkart aims to streamline electronic bill payments for its customers nationwide.

Customers can now avail up to 10% rewards using Flipkart UPI and SuperCoins during a promotional period. Gaurav Arora, Vice President of Payments and SuperCoins at Flipkart, emphasized the growing preference for digital payments among consumers and the platform's commitment to enhancing convenience and security.

In Guwahati, this initiative is expected to resonate well in the local market, offering residents a seamless way to manage their bills while enjoying the benefits of shopping on Flipkart. The move aligns with Flipkart's strategy to cater to the evolving needs of digital consumers and support the government's cashless economy vision.

Ajay Kaushal, Co-Founder and Director of BillDesk, highlighted the collaboration's benefits, ensuring that Flipkart customers receive efficient bill payment solutions with timely notifications and transparent billing information.

Samsung launches Galaxy Z Fold6 and Z Flip6, elevates mobile AI

Guwahati: Samsung has launched its latest innovations, the Galaxy Z Fold6 and Galaxy Z Flip6, along with Galaxy Buds3 and Galaxy Buds3 Pro, at the Galaxy Unpacked event in Paris. These new foldable phones aim to revolutionize mobile AI, combining versatility, durability, and cutting-edge technology to enhance communication, productivity, and creativity.

TM Roh, President and Head of Mobile eXperience Business at Samsung Electronics, highlighted the significance of this launch, stating, "Our foldables meet the unique needs of every user and now enhanced by the

power of Galaxy AI, Samsung is delivering an experience like never before."

The Galaxy Z Fold6 and Z Flip6, the slimmest and lightest in the series, feature enhanced Armor Aluminum and Corning Gorilla Glass Victus 2 for maximum durability. Both devices are powered by the Snapdragon® 8 Gen 3 Mobile Platform for Galaxy, providing top-tier performance.

In Kolkata, the launch is expected to create a significant buzz in the market. Local retailers anticipate high demand for the new foldables, especially given the city's growing appetite for advanced tech and

stylish gadgets. The inclusion of AI-powered features and a superior gaming experience in the Galaxy Z Fold6 is likely to attract tech enthusiasts, while the Galaxy Z Flip6's customizable features and improved camera capabilities are expected to appeal to a broader audience.

The Galaxy Buds3 series, designed with a new computational design for a comfortable fit, offers an enhanced communication experience through Galaxy AI. Available in two designs, the Buds3 Pro caters to those seeking immersive sound, while the Buds3 is ideal for extended use in various situations.

Vi Business and PayU forge alliance to drive digital advancement for Indian MSMEs

Guwahati: Vi Business, the enterprise arm of Vi, has partnered with PayU, a leading digital financial services provider, to accelerate digital growth among India's MSMEs. This strategic collaboration aims to empower MSMEs by offering tailored digital payment solutions and enhancing their overall digital capabilities.

The partnership leverages Vi Business's comprehensive digital transformation solutions alongside PayU's expertise in fintech and digital payments. Key features of this alliance include innovative payment solutions, a bespoke offers engine, Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) options, and seamless WhatsApp integration, designed to streamline business operations for MSMEs.

Under the ReadyForNext initiative, Vi Business is offering exclusive productivity and collaboration tools at discounted rates. These include Google Workspace, location tracking, personal cloud storage, and mobile security solutions, enabling MSMEs to efficiently manage their digital workplace.

Arvind Nevatia, Chief Enterprise Business Officer at Vodafone Idea, stated, "Our partnership with PayU underscores our commitment to digitally empower small and medium-sized businesses in India. By integrating Vi Business's enterprise solutions with PayU's fintech capabilities, we aim to accelerate the growth trajectory of MSMEs."



Anirban Mukherjee, CEO of PayU India, emphasized, "At PayU, we believe in leveraging digital innovation to drive business transformation. Our collaboration with Vi Business will provide robust financial and business solutions to support Indian MSMEs in their digital journey."

This partnership also aims to extend its reach to markets like Guwahati, facilitating broader accessibility and adoption of digital solutions among businesses in the region.

Mahindra announces mileage guarantee for BS6 OBD II trucks



Guwahati: Mahindra's Truck and Bus Division (MTBD), a leader in the commercial vehicle industry, has announced a groundbreaking initiative for its BS6 OBD II range of trucks, including the BLAZO X, FURIO, OPTIMO, and JAYO models. The new customer value proposition, "Get More Mileage or Give the Truck Back," aims to tackle rising fuel costs and stringent regulatory standards.

Mahindra's latest range features the 7.2L mPower Engine and mDi Tech Engine with advanced FuelSmart Technology, Mild EGR, and the iMAXX Telematics solution, promising superior fuel efficiency and lower Ad Blue consumption. This guarantee, validated through extensive testing over 1 lakh kilometers and under various conditions, ensures customers receive the best fluid efficiency in the market.

"The mileage guarantee reflects our technological prowess and deep understanding of customer needs," said Vinod Sahay, President of Trucks, Buses, CE, Aerospace & De-

fence Businesses at Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. "Our commitment to operational efficiency and customer satisfaction positions us to lead the commercial vehicle sector in India."

Jalaj Gupta, Business Head – Commercial Vehicles at Mahindra, highlighted the initiative's profitability boost for transporters facing rising fuel costs. "Our new mileage guarantee, 'Zyada Mileage Nahin toh Truck wapas,' offers unmatched value and efficiency," he stated.

In Guwahati, a crucial market for commercial vehicles, transporters are optimistic about the new mileage guarantee. The promise of higher fuel efficiency and lower operational costs is expected to significantly impact their profit margins, offering a competitive edge in the regional market.

Mahindra also offers comprehensive support, including 36-hour guaranteed turnaround at workshops, casualty coverage for drivers, and 24/7 emergency assistance.

Shopsy celebrates milestone; over 330 million downloads in 3 years

Guwahati: Shopsy, India's rapidly growing hyper-value e-commerce platform, has achieved a significant milestone by surpassing 330 million app downloads within just three years of its inception. Catering primarily to the value-conscious consumers across Bharat, Shopsy has established itself as a preferred destination for affordable online shopping experiences. The platform offers a diverse range of products across 1,300 categories and operates in more than 19,000 pin codes, empowering a robust community of 1.4 million sellers nationwide, including those integrated from Flipkart.

Prathyusha Agarwal, Business Head at Shopsy, expressed gratitude towards customers, sellers, and partners, highlighting their pivotal role in Shopsy's success. She emphasized, "Our journey is

marked by a commitment to exceptional value and innovation, tailored to meet the unique needs of Bharat. With the Indian e-commerce market poised to grow significantly, we are dedicated to enhancing our offerings and technological capabilities to deliver an unmatched shopping experience."

Shopsy has expanded its footprint extensively, reaching deep into Bharat with a notable presence in Tier 2 and 3 cities like Bhagalpur, Bankura, Kurnool, Nagaon, and Dhule. Nearly 70% of Shopsy's customers hail from these cities, reflecting the platform's success in catering to diverse consumer needs. The majority of new customers are millennials and Gen Z, drawn by Shopsy's competitive pricing, comprehensive product range, and user-friendly shopping experience.

ICICI Pru iProtect Smart ensuring financial stability through innovative features

Aizawl: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has introduced a game-changing addition to its acclaimed term insurance offering, ICICI Pru iProtect Smart, with the launch of the revolutionary 'Life Continuity' option. This feature allows beneficiaries to receive their insurance claim as a regular monthly income, offering a steady financial lifeline during challenging times.

Understanding the uncertainties of life, ICICI Pru iProtect Smart not only covers outstanding financial obligations but also supports long-term aspirations such as funding children's education and

planning for retirement. The plan's comprehensive critical illness benefit covers 34 major illnesses, including cancer and kidney failure, providing financial support upon diagnosis to manage high medical expenses effectively.

In Aizawl's diverse insurance market, these enhancements are expected to resonate strongly, addressing the specific needs of local families. ICICI Prudential Life's commitment to customer satisfaction is further evidenced by its exceptional claim settlement ratio of 99.17% in FY2024, with claims typically processed within just 1.27 days.

Lava International Ltd. launch the all-new Lava Blaze X

Guwahati: Lava International Ltd., has announced the expansion of its Blaze series with the launch of its latest offering, the all-new Lava Blaze X. Setting new benchmarks in the affordable smartphone segment, the Blaze X comes with segment's first Curved AMOLED display. The new Lava Blaze X comes in two stunning colors variants Starlight Purple and Titanium Grey. It will be available on Lava e-store and Amazon starting 20th July.

Mr. Sumit Singh, Product Head, Lava International Ltd., said, "The new Lava Blaze X, the latest addition to the line-up

is developed with three key parameters at the epicentre – segment - first curved AMOLED display, performance and aesthetics. I hope the fans like our new Blaze X and enjoys the experiences that it is designed to deliver." The smartphone flaunts a stunning 16.94 cm (6.67") 120 Hz Curved AMOLED Display with punch hole design providing an immersive experience to the users. Equipped with a 64MP + 2MP rear camera featuring the Sony sensor and a 16MP front camera. The starting price of the all-new Lava Blaze X is Rs. 13999*(inclusive of bank offers).

Tata Motors celebrates 20 lakh SUVs milestone with 'King of SUVs' festival

Guwahati: Tata Motors, India's leading SUV manufacturer, has reached a historic milestone with over 20 lakh SUVs on Indian roads. To mark this achievement, Tata Motors has launched the 'King of SUVs' festival, offering special prices and benefits up to ₹1.40 lakhs on its ICE and EV SUV range.

The company's robust SUV lineup, including the Safari, Harrier, Nexon, Punch, and the iconic Sierra, has been pivotal in achieving this milestone. Tata Motors has been a pioneer in the SUV segment since introducing India's first SUV, the Tata Sierra, in 1991. With a focus on safety, cutting-edge design, and advanced technologies, Tata Motors has established itself as the 'King of SUVs.'

Mr. Vivek Srivatsa, Chief Commercial Officer, Tata Pas-

senger Electric Mobility Ltd., commented, "Our understanding of the SUV segment and our multi-powertrain strategy have enabled us to provide world-class SUVs. Achieving the 20 lakh sales mark underscores our commitment to this approach and sets the pace for future growth."

As part of the festival, Tata Motors has revised the starting prices of its flagship SUVs, with the Harrier now at ₹14.99 lakhs and the Safari at ₹15.49 lakhs. Benefits up to ₹1.4 lakhs are available on popular variants, and the Nexon.ev offers up to ₹1.3 lakhs in benefits, making it more accessible than ever.

The Kolkata market is anticipated to experience a significant boost in SUV sales, with consumers keen to take advantage of the newly launched offers and benefits.

CMF launches Phone 1, Buds Pro 2 and Watch Pro 2 in India



Aizawl: CMF, a sub-brand of the London-based tech giant Nothing, has launched its latest devices: CMF Phone 1, CMF Buds Pro 2, and CMF Watch Pro 2, with sales beginning today at 12 PM IST.

The CMF Phone 1 stands out with its MediaTek Dimensity 7300 5G processor, offering unparalleled performance. It features a 5000 mAh battery for two days of use, up to 16 GB RAM, a Sony 50 MP rear camera, and a 16 MP front camera. The 6.67" Super AMOLED display with a 120 Hz adaptive refresh rate ensures a smooth user experience.

The CMF Watch Pro 2 combines style and functionality with a 1.32" AMOLED always-on display, over 120 sports modes, and 11 days of battery life. It supports health monitoring, Bluetooth calls, and music control, and is IP68 rated for water and dust resistance.

The CMF Buds Pro 2 deliver a premium audio experience

with dual drivers, LDAC™ technology, and 50 dB Smart ANC. These earbuds offer 43 hours of battery life, with a quick 10-minute charge providing seven hours of playback.

In Aizawl, tech-savvy consumers are excited about the new CMF products. Local retailers like Croma and Vijay Sales are gearing up for high demand, driven by competitive pricing and launch offers. The CMF Phone 1, available at ₹15,999 for the 6GB model and ₹17,999 for the 8GB model, is expected to attract significant interest, especially with Day 1 Sale prices of ₹14,999 and ₹16,999, respectively.

The CMF Watch Pro 2 is priced at ₹4,999 (Dark Grey, Ash Grey) and ₹5,499 (Blue, Orange Vegan Leather). The CMF Buds Pro 2 are available for ₹4,299. All products are available on Flipkart, Croma, Vijay Sales, and other partner stores starting today, with additional discounts valid until July 31st.

Chanakya IAS Academy announces launch of 'SUPER 20 Batch' for UPSC 2025

Guwahati: Chanakya IAS Academy, Guwahati, has introduced its prestigious 'SUPER 20 Batch' aimed at aspirants preparing for UPSC 2025. This exclusive batch, designed to provide intensive mentorship, features a teacher-student ratio of 1:20, ensuring personalized guidance throughout the course.

Scheduled to commence on August 20, 2024, the 8-month program encompasses comprehensive training for all stages of the UPSC examination—Prelims, Mains, and Interview. Students will benefit from a hybrid learning model combining offline, online, and recorded classes, catering to diverse learning preferences.

Highlighting the academy's commitment to holistic development, enrolled students will have access to a well-equipped 24x7 library and specialized mentorship from past successful candidates of Chanakya IAS Academy. Emphasizing main answer writing, the curriculum integrates guidance on static, current, and personality aspects crucial for UPSC preparation.

Mrs. Kuranga Nayani Chetia, Managing Partner, Chanakya IAS Academy, North East India, expressed, "The SUPER 20 Batch is tailored for ambitious aspirants aiming to clear UPSC in their first attempt. With a 360-degree approach, each student receives personalized mentoring aligned with their individual needs."

Prospective candidates must qualify an aptitude test conducted at Chanakya IAS Academy, Guwahati, to secure admission. For further details, interested students can contact 6001808306.

Samsung's 'Solve for Tomorrow' initiative advances with 100 shortlisted teams

Itanagar: Samsung India has selected 100 teams for its 'Solve for Tomorrow' initiative, aimed at fostering innovation nationwide. The program includes 50 teams each from the 'School' and 'Youth' tracks, focusing on community inclusion and environmental sustainability. Regional shortlisting has extended participation to remote areas such as Khurda in Odisha and Amreli in Gujarat.

In the 'Youth' track, teams address critical issues like deforestation and plastic waste management, while the 'School' track focuses on challenges such as mental health and digital literacy for economically disadvantaged groups. Participants, totaling 232, will receive training in



presentation and communication skills in preparation for regional rounds.

From five regions, two teams per region will advance to form a national cohort of 20 teams. These finalists will receive intensive training, mentorship, and visit Samsung's facilities nationwide, including its Regional Headquarters in Gurugram and R&D Cen-

tres.

Samsung India has partnered with FITT, IIT Delhi, and various governmental and international organizations for this initiative. Launched in the US in 2010, 'Solve for Tomorrow' is now active in 63 countries, aligning with Samsung's global CSR commitment to nurturing future leaders through education.

National security threat: SASTRA releases report on illegal betting and gambling

Guwahati: The Security and Scientific Technical Research Association (SASTRA) under Rashtriya Raksha University, in collaboration with the India Future Foundation, unveiled a pivotal report titled "Curbing Betting and Gambling in India: A National Security Imperative." This report was introduced during a roundtable discussion attended by government officials, United Nations representatives, research bodies, and advisory groups.

Colonel Nidhish Bhatnagar, Director of the School of Applied Sciences, Engineering, and Technology, and Managing Director of SASTRA, underscored the grave threats posed by illegal betting and gambling. "These activities are conduits for numerous

illicit activities, including money laundering, terror financing, and organized crime. Amending our legal framework to establish a centralized response and enforcement mechanism is crucial to safeguard our systems," he stated.

The comprehensive report details the historical context, current legal framework, and government actions concerning illegal betting and gambling. It includes case studies, national security implications, and recommendations for a robust regulatory regime and international cooperation.

Kanishk Gaur, Founder of India Future Foundation, stressed the urgency of addressing these threats. "The

unlawful activities and user harm caused by illegal betting and gambling platforms require a concerted effort by the Government of India. The report's recommendations aim to address the national security risks posed by these platforms," he emphasized.

The roundtable highlighted the multifaceted risks associated with illegal betting and gambling, evaluating existing legal frameworks and identifying necessary improvements. The report's recommendations seek to create a cohesive approach to combating illegal betting and gambling in India, ensuring national security and citizen well-being through enhanced regulatory and enforcement mechanisms.

Amazon India's Prime Day to feature over 3,200 new products from small businesses

Guwahati: Amazon India's 8th Prime Day, scheduled for July 20th and 21st, will showcase over 3,200 new products from small businesses across various categories including home and kitchen, fashion, grooming, and handmade items. Brands such as Behoma, Dream of Glory, and Orika Spices will participate in the event, offering unique products to a nationwide audience.

"Amazon Prime Day is one of the most anticipated shop-

ping events in India, helping us deliver unparalleled value to our sellers and customers," said Amit Nanda, Director of Selling Partner Services at Amazon India. The event aims to enhance the visibility of small and medium businesses (SMBs) and enable them to tap into Amazon's extensive customer base across the country.

Guwahati market is expected to see significant participation, with local sellers gearing

up to offer exclusive deals and new launches. This surge in e-commerce activity is anticipated to boost the local economy, providing customers with access to a diverse range of products.

Amazon India has equipped SMBs with tools like the Sale Event Planner and the New Seller Success Centre to optimize their Prime Day sales. Additionally, the Amazon Seller App has been enhanced to allow seamless manage-

ment of selling operations on the go.

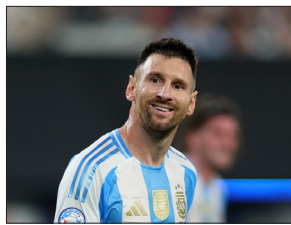
Prime members can look forward to big savings and exclusive deals during the event, with benefits like 10% savings on payments using ICICI Bank and SBI Credit/Debit cards. This year's Prime Day promises to deliver a comprehensive shopping experience, blending great deals with blockbuster entertainment and exclusive new product launches.

Messi Commits to Continue Playing for Argentina After Copa America

East Rutherford: Argentine football legend Lionel Messi has declared his intention to continue playing for the national team beyond the Copa America final this Sunday. The statement came after Argentina's recent 2-0 victory over Canada, where Messi scored his 109th international goal, marking his first in this year's tournament and his 14th in Copa America matches.

Speaking to reporters outside the locker room at MetLife Stadium, Messi reminisced about his brief retirement announcement at the same venue in 2016 after Argentina's loss to Chile in the Copa America final. He reversed his retirement decision seven weeks later and has since added 54 goals in 73 appearances, extending his record to 186 matches for Argentina. His contributions were pivotal in Argentina's triumphs at the 2021 Copa America and the 2022 World Cup.

Meanwhile, Messi's teammate Ángel Di María announced that Sunday's final would be his last match for Argentina. Di María, who began his international career in 2008, has been capped 144 times and scored 31 goals. "It's my last battle," Di María



shared. "I have to say thank you to all Argentines and to this generation that has allowed me to lift so many trophies." Reflecting on Di María's decision, Messi expressed his admiration and support, noting that retiring in a final is a fitting conclusion for his teammate's illustrious career.

Argentina's coach, Lionel Scaloni, expressed hope that Di María might reconsider his decision, emphasizing the emotional significance of his departure and the possibility of influencing him to stay.

As South American World Cup qualifying resumes in September, and with the 2026 World Cup final set to take place at MetLife Stadium, Scaloni reassured that the doors are always open for both veterans. "He can be with our team for as long as he wants to be," Scaloni said, highlighting the open invitation for Di María to remain involved with the national team in any capacity he chooses.

Suryakumar Yadav Holds Firm at Second in ICC T20I Batting Rankings

Dubai: India's Suryakumar Yadav has retained his second position in the latest ICC Men's T20I batting rankings, maintaining his spot behind Australia's Travis Head. Suryakumar's consistent performance has kept him at 821 rating points, close to Head's 844. Rituraj Gaikwad, another Indian star, has risen 13 places to the seventh spot, thanks to his impressive unbeaten 77 off 47 balls in the recent T20I against Zimbabwe. This performance contributed to India's 100-run victory, highlighting his potential as a key player for India. The rankings also saw Phil Salt of England positioned third with 797 points, followed by Pakistan's Babar Azam at 755 and Mohammad Rizwan at 746. England's Jos Buttler is another notable name, currently sixth with 716 points.

This shift in the rankings comes at a critical time as India's young talents are

proving their mettle on the international stage, especially after the retirement of seasoned players like Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, and Ravindra Jadeja. Among other Indian players making significant strides in the rankings, Rinku Singh has moved up to the 39th position, and Abhishek Sharma, after scoring a rapid century, entered the rankings at 75th place. This marks a promising shift in India's batting dynamics, as younger players step up in key roles. On the bowling front, Axar Patel is the top-ranked Indian, though he has dropped to ninth in the T20I bowlers' chart with 644 points. Kuldeep Yadav and Jasprit Bumrah have also seen declines in their rankings. The latest updates also reflect changes in the allrounders' rankings, where India's Hardik Pandya has dropped to second place, just below Sri Lanka's Wanindu Hasaranga who now leads the chart.

Chasing Dreams: PV Sindhu and Mumbai's Olympic Hopefuls Shine in Citywide Ad Blitz

Mumbai: In a vibrant tribute to its athletes, Mumbai has unveiled an expansive outdoor advertising campaign featuring Olympic hopefuls such as badminton icon PV Sindhu, javelin ace Kishore Jena, and celebrated hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh. This initiative, launched in collaboration with Puma and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), celebrates the remarkable achievements of these sports figures as they prepare for the upcoming Paris Olympics, which kick off on July 26.

The campaign, aptly named "See the Game Like We Do," aims to highlight the extraordinary skills and accomplishments of these athletes through visually stunning displays across the city. Puma, the official footwear partner for the Indian team at the Olympics, has gone to great lengths to create a series of larger-than-life installations that capture the essence of these champions' feats.

PV Sindhu's renowned badminton smash, which clocks in at an astounding speed of 349 kmph—three times the speed of Mumbai's iconic Central Line—is the centerpiece of one such installation. Images of



Sindhu in action are splashed across the coaches of the local train, symbolizing her powerful smash and her swift ascent in the world of badminton.

Kishore Jena, whose javelin throw at 87.54m could metaphorically pierce the height of a skyscraper, is another athlete being honored in a grand manner. His image adorns the facade of a similarly tall building in Prabhadevi, celebrating his monumental throw and his potential to scale new heights at the Paris Olympics.

Meanwhile, PR Sreejesh, known for his incredible ability to fend off the fastest hockey shots, is featured on a digital billboard along the Eastern Express High-

way. This highway, connecting the cities of Mumbai and Thane, now bears witness to Sreejesh's steadfast defense, aiming to inspire commuters with his dedication and prowess in the sport. Over 100 Indian Olympians will receive custom-designed podium and travel footwear, trolleys, backpacks, sippers, yoga mats, headbands, wristbands, socks, and towels. These items are specially designed to enhance their training and comfort, ensuring they are well-prepared for the challenges of the Olympic games.

IOA president PT Usha emphasized the significance of this partnership and its role in boosting India's performance at the upcoming games. "The IOA is deeply committed to enhancing India's medal prospects at the Paris Olympics. Collaborations like this are a crucial step towards achieving that goal," she said. This campaign not only celebrates the current achievements of India's top athletes but also aims to inspire a new generation of sports enthusiasts to follow in their footsteps and pursue greatness on the global stage.

Uruguay players clash with fans after Copa America defeat to Colombia

Uruguay players clashed with Colombia fans following the Copa America semi-final on Wednesday before security personnel stepped in to restore order.

After Colombia sealed a 1-0 victory in Charlotte, North Carolina, videos on social media showed what appeared to be Uruguay players climbing into the stands and exchanging blows with opposition fans.

South American football's governing body CONMEBOL said it is investigating the incident. Uruguay captain Jose Maria Gimenez said the players were trying to defend their families.

Let me say something before they cut you off because they won't let us speak into the microphone, they don't want me to say anything about what's going on but this is a disaster," Gimenez said on the official broadcast. "Please be careful, our families are in the stands, there are little newborn babies. It was a disaster; there was no police and we had to defend our families.

Jefferson Lerma's first-half header gave Colombia a place in Sunday's final while Uruguay will play Canada in the third-place playoff.

Sunil Gavaskar at 75: Celebrating a Cricketing Legend

New Delhi: On a day filled with nostalgic remembrances, Sunil Gavaskar celebrates his 75th birthday, an age that belies his everlasting relevance in the world of cricket. To the younger generation, raised on a diet of IPL extravaganzas, Gavaskar may appear as a commentator from a bygone era, yet his legacy as a cricketer remains monumental among those who witnessed his prowess. Renowned for his fearless stance against the fiercest pacers of his time, Gavaskar's debut series in 1971 against the West Indies is still spoken of in reverent tones. He racked up 774 runs, setting the stage for a legendary career that would redefine Indian cricket. Chandu Borde, a former India player, recalls the buzz around Gavaskar even before he made his international debut: "We were told by Ajit Wadekar about a talented Bombay boy poised to score heavily for India. And score,



he did." His technique against fast bowlers was impeccable, but Gavaskar was equally adept against spin, demonstrating versatility that belied his orthodox image. Mohinder Amarnath, another contemporary, highlighted Gavaskar's mastery over spin, praising his footwork and ability to play the ball late. Gavaskar's batting wasn't just about defense. His aggressive innings, like his boundary-laden 103 against New Zealand in the 1987 World Cup, showcased his ability to dominate bowlers when required. Off the field,

Gavaskar transitioned smoothly into a respected commentator, known for his insightful and sometimes cheeky commentary. His lively anecdotes and forthright opinions have made him a cherished voice in cricket broadcasting. As Gavaskar turns 75, the cricket world reflects on a career that not only excelled on the pitch but also inspired generations to dream big. His journey from a cricketer hero to a celebrated commentator exemplifies a life dedicated to the sport, making his birthday a celebration of a truly illustrious legacy.

French marathoner Frere out of Olympics for doping violation

Paris: French marathon runner Mehdi Frere will miss his home Olympics after receiving a two-year suspension for breaking anti-doping rules,

his lawyer Laurent Fellous confirmed on Tuesday. Frere, aged 27, had a World Athletics disciplinary tribunal after three missed whereabouts checks in

February 2023 and February 2024. Athletes must always disclose their whereabouts so they can submit to out-of-competition doping controls.