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Anil Ambani-led group stocks plummet after Sebi bans him, others from securities market

Mumbai: Shares of companies led by Anil Ambani on Friday fell sharply after Sebi barred him and 24 other entities, including former key officials of RHFL, from the securities market for five years for diversion of funds from the company. The stock of Reliance Home Finance Ltd (RHFL) fell 5.12 per cent to Rs 4.45 on the NSE, and 4.90 per cent to Rs 4.46 on the BSE.

Reliance Infrastructure shares tumbled 10.83 per cent to trade at Rs 209.90 apiece on the BSE. On the NSE, it plunged 8.89 per cent to Rs 214.76. Further, Reliance Power stock declined 5 per cent each to Rs 34.45 and Rs 34.48 on BSE and NSE, also its lower price band.

In the mid-session trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 57.32 points or 0.07 per cent to trade at 81,110.51, while NSE Nif-



ty climbed 29.35 points or 0.12 per cent to 24,840.85.

On Thursday, Sebi barred industrialist Anil Ambani, 24 other entities, including former key officials of RHFL from the securities market for five years for diversion of funds from the company.

Sebi has imposed a penalty of Rs 25 crore on Ambani and restrained him from being associated with the securities market,

including as a director or key managerial personnel in any listed company, or any intermediary registered with the market regulator, for a period of 5 years. Also, the regulator barred RHFL from the securities market for six months and slapped a fine of Rs 6 lakh on it.

Passing the final order in the RHFL matter, Sebi found that Ambani, with the help of RHFL's key managerial personnel, had orchestrated a fraudulent scheme to siphon off funds from RHFL by disguising them as loans to entities linked to him.

In February 2022, markets watchdog Sebi had passed an interim order and restrained RHFL, Ambani and three other individuals (Amit Bapna, Ravindra Sudhakar and Pinkesh R Shah) from the securities market till further orders, for allegedly siphoning off funds from the company.

TPSSL collaborates with ICICI Bank to provide easy financing

Mumbai: Tata Power Solar Systems Limited (TPSSL), a leading solar company in India and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL), announces its strategic collaboration with ICICI Bank, a leading private sector bank in India, to provide loans to finance the purchase of solar panels/ units for residential and Corporate customers.

This collaboration aims to enhance the accessibility and affordability of sustainable energy solutions for a broader adoption of solar energy. Under this collaboration, ICICI Bank will offer tailored financial solutions* with attractive interest rates, for the purchase of solar panels from Tata Power Solar. Customers can avail of loans up to ₹ 90 lakh with collateral-free options and tenure extending up to 5 years. They can also avail higher amounts of loans with collaterals with tenures of up to 20 years. Customers shall enjoy flexible downpayment options at 20-25% of the loan amount, making it easier for them to invest in solar energy.

Deepesh Nanda, CEO & Managing Director, Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited, commented on the collaboration, stating, "Partnering with ICICI Bank marks a significant advancement towards the promotion of clean energy adoption.

Zomato to acquire ticketing business of Paytm for Rs 2,048 crore

New Delhi: The sale of Paytm's ticketing business to Zomato will allow Paytm to strengthen its focus on core payments and help its financial services distribution business turn profitable at an operating level, Motilal Oswal said.

Paytm and Zomato on Wednesday struck a deal under which the food aggregator firm will acquire the ticketing business of Paytm for ₹2,048 crore. Brokerages have started to analyse the terms of the deal and its likely outcome for the two companies.

"With this sale, Paytm aims to refocus on strategic areas pivotal for its growth and sustainability. These areas include financial products (such as credit cards, insurance and loans), merchant services and travel services

(flight, train and bus tickets), deals and cashback," said Motilal Oswal in its report on Thursday.

"We estimate Paytm's EBITDA to turn positive by FY27," the report said.

A report from Emkay Research also said that Paytm is expected to deliver positive EBITDA in FY27.

"In our view, the deal would shore up Paytm's cash and cash equivalents, which would possibly be used to scale up rewards/cash-back programme to revive its dwindling payments business following the RBI action," the Emkay Research report said.

Zomato, on the other hand, will be developing a new app called District which will get the benefit of ticket bookings for movies, sports and live events with the acquisition.

"The District app could be a



small part of Zomato's business, but if executed correctly, it could give Zomato a strong mind share in the spending patterns of urban consumers across key forms of recreational or staple spending: groceries, food, and recreational "going out" activities spanning dining, movies, sports and music," the Motilal Oswal report said.

Paytm's combined entertainment GOV (gross order value) is estimated to be 4 per cent of Zomato's total GOV.

Paytm scrips were down 3.33 per cent to ₹554, while Zomato scrips were down 0.83 per cent to ₹257.8 on the BSE on Thursday.

IDBI Bank boosts interest rates on utsav fixed deposit scheme

Guwahati: IDBI Bank has announced an increase in interest rates on its popular Utsav Fixed Deposit scheme for a limited period, providing an attractive opportunity for customers to maximize their returns. The revised rates apply to specific tenures, with the 444-day depos-

it now offering a peak interest rate of 7.85% per annum and the 375-day deposit at 7.75% per annum. This promotional offer is available until September 30, 2024, allowing customers to open Utsav Fixed Deposits through the bank's website, mobile app, or by visiting any IDBI Bank

branch. In addition to these enhanced rates, IDBI Bank continues to offer competitive interest on other special tenures within the Utsav Fixed Deposit scheme. The 700-day tenure provides a return of 7.70% per annum, while the 300-day tenure offers 7.55% per annum.

Adani group sells 2.8 per cent stake in Ambuja Cements to GQG Partners for Rs 4,250.64 crore

Mumbai: The Adanis on Friday sold close to 2.80 per cent of Ambuja Cements Ltd (ACL) for ₹4,250.64 crore, with Rajiv Jain-led GQG Partners picking up part of the shares.

Bulk deals data from the NSE showed Holderind Investments Ltd, a promoter entity, divesting 6.79 crore shares at ₹625.5 per share.

During the quarter ended June 30, 2024, Holderind held 50.90 per cent in the company at the end of the first quarter, with the total promoter stake at 70.33 per cent. The Holderind stake is now down to around 48.14 per cent.

The data showed GQG purchasing 1.70 crore shares at ₹625.50 per share for nearly ₹1,068 crore, increasing its stake to 2.70 per cent from 1.35 per cent. Other buyers were Axis Mutual Fund, Baroda BNP Paribas MF and ICICI Prudential MF.

Invesco MF, Mirae Asset MF, Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company, SBI Life

Insurance, and National Pension System (NPS) Trust also bought Ambuja Cements shares. Morgan Stanley and The Vanguard Group as well as Norway government's pension fund bought shares.

While there have been speculations that the Adani family will use the proceeds to trim debt, sources close to the group denied such a move.

They said it is an "adjustment" done to keep the promoter interest at a desired level. Gautam Adani had acquired the cement business of Holcim in 2022 which catapulted him as the country's second largest player after UltraTech Cements.

Earlier this week, the Adani group said it has enough cash to cover more than 30 months of debt payments. The cash balance accounted for 24.8 per cent of gross debt of ₹2.41 lakh crore from 17.7 per cent a year earlier. Shares of Ambuja Cements on Friday ended with marginal gains at ₹633.55 on the BSE.

HDFC rebuffs Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group bid to acquire stake in HDB Financial Services

Mumbai: HDFC Bank has reportedly turned down an offer from Japan's Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG) to pick up a stake in HDB Financial Services, its non-banking finance company (NBFC) arm.

An Economic Times report said that the private sector lender is instead going ahead with the listing of HDB Financial Services.

The report said the HDFC Bank board had rejected a proposed \$2 billion purchase by MUFG. Had HDFC Bank approved the plan, the world's second largest bank holding company would have picked up around 20 per cent in HDB Financial Services.

The rejection of the proposed deal could also disappoint the Japanese government, which had communicated its support for the transaction to the Centre, the report claimed. Shares of HDFC Bank on Friday ended marginally lower at

₹1,625.60 on the BSE.

HDB Financial Services, which was incorporated in 2007, provides a wide range of secured and unsecured loans. HDFC Bank holds a 94.7 per cent stake in the NBFC with the rest being held by employees as stock options. It has been categorised as an upper-layer NBFC by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and, therefore, has to list by September 2025.

At its board meeting held on July 20, the directors of HDFC Bank had "provided an in-principle approval to initiate the process of listing of HDB Financial Services through a potential initial public offering and seek necessary approvals from the regulatory authority".

of ₹16,17.75 crore, which marked a fall of 2 per cent on a sequential basis and a gain of 35 per cent over the corresponding quarter in the previous year.

super.money launches UPI app with focus on credit; hits 10 million transactions in beta

Guwahati: super.money, a credit-first UPI service platform backed by Flipkart Group, has officially launched its app after a successful beta phase. During the beta testing, the app garnered nearly one million downloads and facilitated over 10 million transactions, reflecting significant user adoption.

The platform's initial offering includes UPI transactions through RuPay cards and bank account linkage. super.money also completed testing of its innovative "credit on UPI"

solution and initiated a waitlist for users eager to access this feature. This solution, featuring a RuPay credit card operating like an interest-bearing wallet on UPI, is being touted as a global first.

super.money aims to enhance everyday transactions by offering up to 5% cashback on merchant transactions and special deals from partners like Flipkart and Myntra. Additionally, the app introduces unique rewards programs such as superName-Drop, Raffle, and Meme-Mon-

ey, adding a social dimension to financial transactions.

Prakash Sikaria, Founder & CEO, highlighted the app's potential, stating, "The digital payments landscape in India is brimming with opportunities. We aim to redefine how users engage with financial services, making them more accessible and aligned with the government's vision for a digitally empowered India."

super.money plans to expand its offerings with co-branded credit cards, fixed deposits,



and instant loans in the coming months, further democratizing access to financial services in India.

CEAT Cricket Rating Awards 2024 celebrates 26 years of cricketing excellence

Guwahati: CEAT, India's leading tyre manufacturer, marked the 26th edition of the CEAT Cricket Rating (CCR) Awards, celebrating cricketing excellence on a global scale. The event honored top cricketers, including Rohit Sharma as CEAT Men's International Cricketer of the Year, and Deepti Sharma as CEAT Women's Indian Bowler of the Year. Cricket legend Rahul Dravid was awarded the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award.

Harsh Goenka, Chairman of RPG Group, expressed pride in CEAT's ongoing commitment to recognizing cricket's finest, while Sunil Gavaskar, Chief Adjudicator, highlighted the awards' role in setting new standards in the sport.

The awards resonate strongly in cricket-loving markets like Guwahati, where the sport drives local business. The enthusiasm around these accolades influences everything from merchandise sales to viewership, creating a dynamic market for cricket-related products. Guwahati's traders capitalize on this passion, catering to both fans and the cricket economy.

The CEAT Cricket Rating Awards continue to be a benchmark of excellence, drawing global attention and reinforcing CEAT's brand association with the sport. This year's winners, from seasoned legends to emerging stars, represent the pinnacle of cricketing achievement.

NSDC International and TalentCorp partner to drive digital skilling in Malaysia

Guwahati: NSDC International, a subsidiary of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), has signed a pivotal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad (TalentCorp) to enhance Malaysia's digital skills ecosystem. The agreement, formalized at Kaushal Bhawan, aims to advance the skill development framework through a robust digital platform and strengthen India-Malaysia bilateral ties.

The MoU was signed by NSDC International's MD and CEO, Shri Ved Mani Tiwari, and TalentCorp's Group CEO, Mr. Thomas Mathew, in the presence of high-profile dignitaries, including Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and YB Steven Sim Chee Keong, Minister of Human Resources, Malaysia.

The collaboration will focus on digitizing Malaysia's talent ecosystem and implementing digitally verifiable credentials. This initiative will streamline skills assessment and certification processes, benefiting Malaysian youth and aligning with Malaysia's development priorities.

The partnership is expected to generate interest in digital skilling solutions within Guwahati. Local businesses and educational institutions in Guwahati may explore opportunities for collaboration and technology integration, potentially leading to increased investment and skill development initiatives in the region.

Dr. Rashna Dass Hazarika urges flu vaccination for children amid erratic monsoon, highlights increased risks

Guwahati: As the monsoon season sweeps across India, Dr. Rashna Dass Hazarika, Senior Consultant Paediatrician at RIGPA Children's Clinic, is raising concerns over the heightened risk of flu among children due to erratic weather patterns. The fluctuating humidity and temperature during

this season have created ideal conditions for flu viruses to spread, exacerbating the vulnerability of children.

Dr. Hazarika highlights that drought-like conditions, which increase air pollution, weaken children's immune systems, making them more susceptible to infections. Additionally,

areas prone to waterlogging foster mold growth, further compromising lung health. The situation is worsened by crowding in homes during heavy rainfall, potentially leading to widespread flu outbreaks.

The Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP) advises annual flu vaccinations for children

aged 6 months to 5 years to prevent severe complications, such as pneumonia. Dr. Hazarika emphasizes, "Children under 5 have developing immunity and are at high risk for severe flu complications. The 4-in-1 annual flu vaccine can prevent infections or reduce severity."

Tata AIA announces Sampoorna Raksha promise: A comprehensive term insurance plan

Aizawl: Tata AIA Life Insurance has introduced an innovative term insurance plan, Sampoorna Raksha Promise, designed to offer enhanced protection and benefits tailored to modern needs. This new offering is set to redefine financial security with its array of features.

Key highlights of the Sampoorna Raksha Promise include an instant payout of INR 3 lakhs upon claim notification to cover urgent expenses. Additionally, if diagnosed with a terminal illness, policyholders will receive 50% of the base sum assured, with all future premiums waived while poli-

cy benefits continue. The plan also offers a facility to defer premiums by up to 12 months, once every five years.

"Term insurance has long been a cornerstone of financial security. With Sampoorna Raksha Promise, we address evolving consumer needs with features like immediate claim payouts and terminal illness benefits," said Samit Upadhyay, President & CFO of Tata AIA. The plan offers coverage up to age 100, with two options: Life Promise and Life Promise Plus. Life Promise provides a death benefit, while Life Promise Plus refunds 100% of pre-

miums if the policyholder survives to maturity. Other benefits include a Flexi Pay Benefit to defer premiums without extra cost, and various discounts such as 15% lower premiums for women and 10% off for online purchases.

In Aizawl, Sampoorna Raksha Promise is expected to resonate strongly with customers looking for reliable and flexible insurance solutions. The plan's features address both immediate and long-term financial needs, making it a compelling option for those seeking comprehensive coverage.

Nagaland partners with SBI General Insurance for groundbreaking parametric insurance solution

Guwahati: The Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority (NSDMA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SBI General Insurance. This three-year collaboration aims to implement the Nagaland Disaster Risk Transfer Parametric Insurance Solution (DRT-PIS), a pioneering initiative designed to safeguard the state against natural catastrophes.

The DRT-PIS, tailored specifically for Nagaland, will cover the financial impacts of extreme weather events such as excess and unseasonal rainfall. By providing a parametric insurance solution, the MoU aims to facilitate rapid recovery and mitigate financial losses associated with natural calamities.

Naveen Chandra Jha, Managing Director and CEO of SBI General Insurance, highlighted the importance of this initiative: "Parametric insurance is a crucial tool for managing the risks posed by natural disasters. This partnership will en-



hance Nagaland's disaster response capabilities and support swift recovery efforts."

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio praised the agreement as a historic first for the state, emphasizing its role in establishing a robust disaster management framework. "We are thrilled to collaborate with SBI General Insurance to introduce this innovative insurance solution, which will significantly strengthen our disaster preparedness and response."

Vi partners with NGOs to showcase Indian handicrafts at stores nationwide

Guwahati: Telecom operator Vi has launched a new initiative, "Artisans of India," to celebrate and support local artisans across the country. Partnering with NGOs, Vi showcased the unique creations of over 60 artisans at its stores in states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, and Gujarat.

The initiative features a variety of handicrafts, including hand-painted bags, chikan-kari embroidery, toys, and decorated diyas. In Kolkata, Universal Smile showcased hand-painted cloth bags at

Vi's South City store, with proceeds supporting an orphanage. In Gujarat, specially-abled children from the Astha Foundation displayed beautifully crafted diyas.

Vi's initiative aims to preserve India's rich artistic heritage while empowering local communities. The telecom giant's stores became vibrant hubs of culture, bringing traditional crafts closer to urban customers. By partnering with NGOs like ESSCENT, Shwwas Samiti, and Disha Shakti Swayam Sahayta Samooh, Vi underscores its commitment to social responsibility.



The Artisans of India initiative also resonates in Guwahati, where the market for traditional crafts has been growing. Vi's collaboration could further boost local artisans by providing a platform that connects them to wider audiences, thus enhancing the market's vibrancy and reach.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor reinforces commitment to gender equality on Women's Equality Day

Shillong: As Women's Equality Day approaches on August 26th, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has reaffirmed its dedication to gender equality and the empowerment of women within its workforce and beyond. Aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), TKM is making significant strides toward creating a more inclusive and diverse workplace.

A key goal for TKM is to increase women's representation in its workforce to 30% by 2030. To achieve this, the company has launched several Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, including forming a dedicated senior-level DEI team and aligning its efforts with the

International Labour Organization's 2030 agenda. TKM recently celebrated a major milestone by inducting 160 new female team members and capping its first batch of 55 women supervisors, raising the total number of women in the company to over 450.

Beyond its Bangalore headquarters, TKM's commitment to gender equality resonates across various markets, including Shillong. Local women in Shillong's automotive sector have welcomed TKM's initiatives as they pave the way for more inclusive industry practices, fostering a progressive and equitable market environment.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor's ongoing investments in infrastructure, such as the construction of a dormitory to house 600 female students at the Toyota Technical Train-



ing Institute (TTTI), and the enhancement of safety features, further underline its commitment. Executive Vice President Mr. G. Shankara emphasized, "Our commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace is deeply embedded in our values. We are proud to be making significant strides in empowering women within our workforce."

For the Femina Miss India 2024 title the state winners will compete at the grand finale

Guwahati: In a recent development, Femina Miss India 2024 co-powered by Tops & Rajnigandha Pearls, in its diamond jubilee edition, has announced its state winners who will compete at the grand finale. The winner of the 60th Femina Miss India will win an opportunity to represent India at the 73rd Miss World competition. This development takes the pageant a step closer to discovering India's next global beauty icon. The historic edition of the pageant is poised to be a grand spectacle, paying

tribute to the pageant's rich history while embracing the future of Indian womanhood. Over its six decades of legacy, the pageant has served as a springboard for countless women, propelling them to national and international recognition. Many of them have become icons in the glamour and entertainment industry.

Femina Miss India has been an integral part of India's social fabric, shaping the lives of exceptional women who have made significant contributions to society. In its 60th anniversary,

the pageant is committed to upholding its legacy of empowering women and providing them with a platform to showcase their talent, intelligence, and beauty. The Femina Miss India 2024 state winners will be participating in a boot camp, which will include a host of activities such as training programs, digital content shoots, promotional visits, subtitle competitions, personal interview rounds, and an awards night ceremony, culminating in the grand finale coronation night.

Škoda Auto India announces 'Kylaq' as new compact SUV following record-breaking campaign

Guwahati: Škoda Auto India has announced 'Kylaq' as the name for its new compact SUV, a significant milestone achieved through the innovative 'Name Your Škoda' campaign. This initiative, which attracted over 200,000 entries, reflects a robust engagement from the Indian market, aligning with Škoda's tradition of naming SUVs with a 'K' to 'Q' format.

The name Kylaq, derived from Sanskrit for crystal and inspired by Mt. Kailash, was selected from a shortlist of ten finalists based on public votes. This move not only highlights Škoda's commitment to involving customers in key brand decisions but also posi-

tions the Kylaq as a symbol of clarity and innovation. The winning participant will receive the first vehicle off the production line in 2025, while ten others will enjoy an exclusive trip to Prague.

In Guwahati, the announcement has sparked considerable interest in the local automotive market. As a key city for Škoda's expansion in Assam, Guwahati's response underscores the growing demand for compact SUVs, reflecting broader trends across the Northeast. The Kylaq's anticipated launch is expected to bolster Škoda's market presence, leveraging local enthusiasm and consumer engagement.

"Aarohan" initiative project launches according to Max Life Insurance

Guwahati: Max Life Insurance Co. Ltd. ("Max Life/Company") has announced the launch of the 'Aarohan' initiative to expand its distribution footprint by adding 21 new offices in Tier 3 and Tier 4 East Indian cities. The initiative aims to enhance protection penetration in these underserved markets through consumer-focused insurance awareness programs, and life advisor recruitments. Serving approximately 19 lakh customers across East India, Max Life now plans to expand its distribution footprint by recruiting and training local life advisors from Tier 3 and Tier 4 markets in East India. This targeted approach aims to connect with communities



that have traditionally limited access to comprehensive life insurance services.

Additionally, as part of Max Life's 'DigiSaarthi' project, the aim is to make the 15 new branches in East India under Aarohan, 100% digital. Sumit Madan, Chief Distribution Officer, Max Life, said, "Max Life's Aarohan initiative aligns with IRDAI's vision of 'Insurance for All by 2047,' empowering grassroots communities. It aims to make insurance accessible to India's farthest reaches, ensuring financial security for emerging markets."

NESFB's 30+ branch heads to be hired across Northeast

Guwahati: North East Small Finance Bank (NESFB) has unveiled a major hiring initiative, aiming to recruit over 30 Branch Heads throughout the Northeast. This strategic expansion targets key states including Assam, North Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, and Meghalaya.

The recruitment drive underscores NESFB's dedication to enhancing financial inclusion and supporting the region's economic growth. By bringing in experienced banking professionals, the bank seeks to fortify its operational base and contribute to regional development through job creation and skill-building opportunities. The roles are tailored for candidates with a solid background in banking, and the process includes an initial screening test followed by interviews for selected applicants.

For Guwahati, this initiative presents a promising opportunity for local talent. As NESFB strengthens its footprint in Assam, including Guwahati, the recruitment drive is expected to stimulate job growth and bolster the local economy, aligning with broader efforts to enhance financial services in the region.

#NoPainPeriod Campaign, encourages Empowers Women

Mumbai: Saridon®, the iconic pain relief brand from Bayer's Consumer Health Division in India has introduced 'Saridon® Woman,' an innovative first-of-its-kind period pain solution to provide holistic relief from abdominal cramps, backache, headache every month. The launch campaign, #NoPainPeriod Campaign, encourages women to get relief from monthly pains and continue life without disruption. Saridon® Woman marks a significant breakthrough in the OTC sector, offering a unique solution for menstrual discomfort combining the efficacy of Paracetamol with plant-based molecule Hyoscine Butylbromide.

Sandeep Verma, Country Head for India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka at Bayer Consumer Health Division, emphasized, "With over 50 years of trusted efficacy in headache relief, Saridon® has been a trusted household name for Indians. This launch underscores our unwavering commitment to women's health."

Flipkart Samarth marks 5 years with focus on empowering artisans and upskilling youth

Guwahati: Flipkart, India's leading e-commerce marketplace, celebrated the 5-year milestone of its Samarth program with an event dedicated to empowering artisans, weavers, SHGs, women, and rural entrepreneurs. The event, attended by over 250 industry leaders and stakeholders, highlighted the program's role in elevating India's rich cultural heritage. Key dignitaries included Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and other prominent officials from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

A significant highlight of the event was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Flipkart's Supply Chain Operations Academy (SCOA) and MSDE. This partnership, under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 4.0, aims to upskill thousands of youth across India, enhancing their employability in the e-commerce and supply chain sectors. The training program includes seven days of intensive classroom sessions followed by 45 days of hands-on industry experience at Flipkart's facilities.

Shri Jayant Chaudhary emphasized the alignment of this initiative with

the vision of a Viksit Bharat 2047, commending Flipkart's efforts in integrating traditional crafts into the digital space. Rajneesh Kumar, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at Flipkart, highlighted the program's impact on 1.8 million livelihoods and the preservation of over 100 traditional art forms.

The event also introduced the 'Samarth storefront' on the Flipkart app, offering artisans and MSMEs unprecedented access to a national market. This virtual platform aims to enhance market reach ahead of the festive season.

In Guwahati, Flipkart's Samarth



program is expected to boost local artisans and weavers by providing them with a wider audience through the platform. This initiative will support regional craftsmanship and offer Guwahati's artisans the opportunity to showcase their products to a broader customer base across India.

Neeraj Chopra Returns to Action in Lausanne, Eyes Diamond League Title Post-Olympic Silver

Lausanne: Indian javelin star Neeraj Chopra is back in action at the Lausanne Diamond League meeting this Thursday, just two weeks after clinching a silver medal at the Paris Olympics. Chopra, who is also the reigning Diamond League champion, is setting his sights on reclaiming the title at the season-ending finale next month.

Despite battling a persistent groin injury, Chopra achieved a commendable second-place finish in Paris with a throw of 89.45m. The Olympic silver medal adds to his illustrious achievements, including his historic gold at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago. The 26-year-old athlete confirmed his participation in Lausanne as he contemplates potential surgery post-season.

Chopra's previous Diamond League performances have been notable. He won the title in 2022 and finished second in the 2022 finals in Eugene, USA, just behind Jakub Vadlejch of the Czech Republic. To secure

a spot in this season's finale in Brussels on September 14, Chopra needs to maintain a top-six position in the series standings. He currently holds the fourth spot with seven points from his second-place finish at the Doha Diamond League earlier in May.

The Lausanne event will be a competitive field, featuring five of the top-six finishers from the Paris Olympics, with only Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem absent. Nadeem, the Paris Olympic gold medalist with a record throw of 92.97m, has participated in limited events this season, including the Paris Diamond League where he placed fourth.

Chopra, who has been diligently managing his groin injury since his victory at the Budapest World Championships last year, has been training in Switzerland in preparation for the Lausanne meeting. He remains optimistic about his performance, stating, "I thought of continuing my season like most other athletes. There is one month



to go until the season ends. I will go to the doctors in my free time." The competition in Lausanne will not only test Chopra's resilience and recovery but also set the stage for a thrilling finale to this year's Diamond League. With his consistent performance over the last few seasons, Chopra is a strong contender for the title and aims to end the season on a high note.

We're anticipating a great cricket contest between Australia and India this year : Kuldeep Yadav

Melbourne: Ahead of the five-match Test series against Australia later this year, India spinner Kuldeep Yadav is looking forward to the great cricket contest between the two powerhouses of world cricket. Expressing his enthusiasm, Kuldeep said, "It's great to be here at Cricket Australia's headquarters and the iconic MCG. I'm looking forward to the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, and we're anticipating a great cricket contest between Australia and India this year."

He also acknowledged the unwavering support of Indian cricket fans, stating, "India cricket fans always support the team around the globe, and I'm confident they will come in big numbers for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, especially during the Boxing Day Test." Kuldeep, who is currently in Melbourne on a short family trip, recently made a significant stop at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). During his visit, the spinner posed for a photo with the statue of his idol, the late Shane Warne, outside the stadium.

Reflecting on the moment, he shared, "Shane Warne was my idol, and I had a very strong connection with him. I still get emotional when I think about Warnie - it feels like I've lost someone from my family."

Olympic Medalist Manu Bhaker Advocates for Sports Careers to Students in Chennai

Chennai: Fresh from her historic double-medal win at the Paris Olympics, Indian shooter Manu Bhaker visited Velammal Nexus School in Chennai, sharing her journey and encouraging students to consider sports as a viable career path. At 22, Bhaker has already made significant marks on the international stage, including becoming the first Indian athlete postindependence to win two medals in a single Olympics.

Reflecting on her experiences, Bhaker discussed the rollercoaster of emotions from her initial Olympic appearance in Tokyo to her triumphant outings in Paris. "My journey coming from the Tokyo Olympics, it was very difficult for me to be confident again," Bhaker shared. Despite being ranked world number two at the time, her performance in Tokyo didn't meet her expectations, a setback that only fueled her determination.

Bhaker emphasized the importance of perseverance and hard work in sports. She encouraged students to dream big and reassured them of the comprehensive support—both financial and otherwise—that a career in sports can offer. "We have many career options. You don't have to become a doctor or an engineer. Sports life is a beautiful life," Bhaker asserted, challenging the conventional career paths often promoted in academic settings.

Manu Bhaker's success is not just a testament to her skill but also to the foundational support of her family and educational institutions. She credited her mother as her inspiration and



highlighted the significant role that parents and teachers play in nurturing young talents. "Without parents' support, a child cannot do much," she said, underscoring the collaborative effort required to excel in any field, including sports.

The Olympic medalist also touched on the broader educational value of sports, noting her own personal growth through her experiences abroad. "I have travelled almost half of the world. I have seen different kinds of people and cultures, their backgrounds and struggles, and also known their journeys," Bhaker explained, illustrating how sports can be both a career and a gateway to a broader, more comprehensive education. Her message to the students was clear: embrace every opportunity for learning, remain resilient in the face of setbacks, and carry one's cultural background with pride. As Bhaker continues to inspire the next generation, her journey underscores the transformative power of sports and the potential it holds to shape futures beyond the playing fields.

Historic Football Derby Between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal Set for Lucknow Debut

Lucknow: In a significant move to boost football's popularity in Uttar Pradesh, the city of Lucknow is set to host the historic rivalry between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal on September 2. This marks the first time the iconic derby will be played in the state capital, with the match scheduled at the K.D. Singh Babu Stadium under floodlights.

State Sports Director R.P. Singh, in conversation with media, confirmed that

extensive preparations are underway to accommodate the expected crowd of 10,000 spectators and ensure a memorable event. The recently installed floodlights at the stadium are currently being tested, and facilities such as dressing rooms are being readied for the teams.

The initiative to bring the derby to Lucknow was discussed during a recent meeting between All India Football Federation (AIFF) President Kaly-



an Chaubey and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The Chief Minister is also

expected to attend the match, signaling strong governmental support for promoting football in the region.

Both teams are scheduled to arrive in Lucknow on September 1, setting the stage for a thrilling encounter in the city of Nawabs. This event not only celebrates the rich football heritage of Mohun Bagan and East Bengal but also aims to inspire a new generation of football enthusiasts in Uttar Pradesh.

ICC Chairmanship Update: Greg Barclay Steps Down, Eyes on BCCI's Jay Shah for Succession

Dubai: Greg Barclay, the current Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC), has decided not to seek a third term, setting the stage for potential new leadership at the helm of the global cricket governing body. His tenure will conclude on November 30, sparking speculation about the future involvement of BCCI secretary Jay Shah.

Barclay, a New Zealand-based attorney, has served two terms since his initial appointment in November 2020 and his re-election in 2022. Under the rules of the ICC, a chairman may serve up to three two-year terms. The ICC confirmed Barclay's decision in a media release, stating, "Greg Barclay confirmed to the Board that he will not stand for a third term and will step down from the post when his current tenure finishes at the end of November."

Attention now turns to Jay Shah, who is currently a key figure in the ICC's boardroom and heads the influential Finance and Commercial Affairs (F&CA) sub-committee. Shah, noted for his significant clout among the ICC's voting members, is in the final year of his tenure as BCCI secretary, with a mandatory cooling-off peri-



od looming in October 2025.

The process to elect a new ICC chairman involves a simple majority of nine out of 16 votes, a change from the previous requirement of a two-thirds majority. Nominations for the next chair are open until August 27, 2024, with the election scheduled if there is more than one candidate. The new chairman's term will commence on December 1, 2024.

If Shah decides to pursue the chairmanship, it could see him become the youngest person to hold the position, adding a dynamic shift to the ICC's leadership landscape. His decision is highly anticipated and could influence the strategic direction of international cricket governance significantly. The lineage of Indian ICC chairpersons includes notable figures such as Jagmohan Dalmiya, Sharad Pawar, N. Srinivasan, and Shashank Manohar, pointing to a strong precedent for Indian leadership within the organization.

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan among 156 named in a murder case FIR: Report

New Delhi: Bangladesh's veteran all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is amongst 156 people named in a murder case FIR filed in Dhaka's Adabor area, in connection with the protests called by students in the country earlier this month. According to a report in Cricbuzz, the FIR was filed on August 22 by Rubel's father, Rafiqul Islam, which names 154 local Awami League leaders and activists accused of his son's demise on August 7, including Shakib and then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who subsequently fled to India.

"Besides them, another 400-500 unnamed people were also accused in the case. According to the case statement, Rubel joined the peaceful protests of the Student Movement against Discrimination demanding quota reforms in government jobs on August 5 in the Adabor Area."

"Following orders from Hasina and the other accused, unidentified people attacked the protesting students by firing against them. As per the chargesheet, he is said to be accused no.28 in the FIR lodged by Rafiqul," said the report.