

# NORTH EAST BUSINESS MIRROR

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## Southwest Airlines to end cabin service earlier on flights to reduce chance of injury

**Washington (PTI):** Southwest Airlines says it is ending cabin service earlier on flights, requiring passengers to do the usual pre-landing procedures such as ensuring their seatbelts are fastened and returning their seats to an upright position earlier than before.

Beginning on Dec 4, a company spokesperson said, flight attendants will start preparing the cabin for landing at an altitude of 18,000 feet (5,486 meters) instead of 10,000 feet (3,048 meters). The change in procedure is designed to "reduce the risk of in-flight turbulence injuries" for crew members and passengers, the company

said.

While turbulence-related fatalities are quite rare, injuries have piled up over the years. More than one-third of all airline incidents in the United States from 2009 through 2018 were related to turbulence, and most of them resulted in one or more serious injuries but no damage to the plane, the National Transportation Safety Board reported.

In May, a 73-year old man died on board a Singapore Airlines flight when the plane hit severe turbulence over the Indian Ocean.

The airline had also previously announced other changes. Starting next year,



Southwest will toss out a half-century tradition of "open seating" — passengers picking their own seats after boarding the plane.

## Rural demand boosts car sales in November; Audi, BMW announce price hikes

**Calcutta:** Automobile sales in November continued their upward trend fuelled by a robust SUV demand, an increase in rural sales and a demand boost from weddings.

Maruti Suzuki recorded a 10 per cent growth in sales dispatching 1,81,531 units in November, up from 1,64,439 units in the same month last year.

Domestic car sales by Maruti rose 5 per cent, reaching 1,41,312 units compared with 1,34,158 units last year. SUV sales stood at 59,003 units compared with 49,016 units in November 2023.

Tata Motors registered a 1 per cent increase in domestic sales with 73,246 units sold in November compared with 72,647 units in the same month last year.

Passenger vehicle sales including EVs grew 2 per cent with 47,117 units sold against 46,143 units a year ago. Overall sales for Tata Motors stood at 74,753 units in November, up from 74,172 units in the same month last year.

Hyundai saw a decline in sales by 7 per cent at 61,252 units sales compared with 65,801 units a year ago. Domestic sales dipped 2 per cent totaling 48,246 units. However, exports fell 20 per



cent to 13,006 units.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor registered a growth of 44 per cent with 25,586 units sold in November compared with 17,818 units in the same month last year. MG Motor India posted a growth of 20 per cent growth with sales of 6,019 units.

Mahindra & Mahindra's sales for November 2024 stood at 79,083 vehicles, including exports.

In the utility vehicles segment, Mahindra sold 46,222 vehicles in the domestic market, a growth of 16 per cent and overall, 47,294 vehicles, including exports. The domestic sales for commercial vehicles stood at 22,042 units.

## Over billion gift cards delivered to Indian customers since 2014: Amazon Pay

**New Delhi (PTI):** Online payment procession service Amazon Pay on Friday said it has delivered over a billion gift cards to Indian customers since its launch in 2014, completing a decade.

Amazon Pay offers a diverse selection of gift card options, such as shopping vouchers, Amazon Fresh vouchers, Amazon Prime vouchers and Amazon Gold vouchers. "Since its launch, Amazon Pay has delivered over a billion gift cards to customers, SMEs, corporates and more across India, providing enhanced flexibility and convenience to their shopping experiences.

"In 2024, Amazon Pay saw a 40 per cent increase in gift card purchases during the Amazon Great Indian Festival compared to 2023, reflecting the growing preference for the value and ease Amazon Pay Gift Cards offer," a company statement said. Amazon Pay has also introduced gaming gift cards for popular platforms such as Apple App Store, Valorant, Unipin, Steam and PlayStation.

\*\*\* Flipkart End of Season Sale to begin on Dec 7 \* E-commerce platform Flipkart has said its week-long End of Season Sale (EOSS) is set to commence on December 7, 2024.

The EOSS will see the platform with a redefined homepage and user interface. It will also have new in-app features and widgets -- trendy filters, a new immersive video forward destination called 'Play', trend tags and labels on search, browse and product pages.

## ATF price hiked 1.45%, commercial LPG up Rs 16.5 per cylinder

**New Delhi (PTI):** Jet fuel, or ATF, price on Sunday was hiked by 1.45 per cent and rates of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants increased by Rs 16.5 per 19-kg cylinder in the monthly revision done in line with international oil price trends.

The aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was increased by Rs 1,318.12 per kilolitre, or 1.45 per cent, to Rs 91,856.84 per kl in the national capital - home to one of the busiest airports in the country, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the second straight monthly increase in jet fuel prices. Rates were increased by Rs 2,941.5 per kl (3.3 per cent) on November 1. That hike came after two rounds of reduction which had taken the rates to their lowest level this year. ATF price on October 1 was cut by 6.3 per cent (Rs 5,883 per kl) and by Rs 4,495.5 per kl, or 4.58 per cent on September 1.

The ATF price in Mumbai was increased to Rs 85,861.02 per kl on Sunday from Rs 84,642.91 previously. Oil firms also increased the price of commercial LPG by Rs 16.5 to Rs 1818.50 per 19-kg cylinder.

This is the fifth straight monthly hike in commercial LPG price. Rates were hiked by Rs 62 per 19-kg cylinder at the last revision on November 1. In five price increases, commercial LPG rates have hiked by Rs 172.5 per 19-kg cylinder. Rates are now at their highest level in one year.



The increases negated the four monthly reductions prior to the current cycle that started in August. In the four rounds, prices had been cut by Rs 148 per 19-kg cylinder. Commercial LPG now costs Rs 1771 per 19-kg cylinder in Mumbai, Rs 1,927 in Kolkata and Rs 1,980 in Chennai.

Prices of ATF and LPG differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes including VAT. The rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

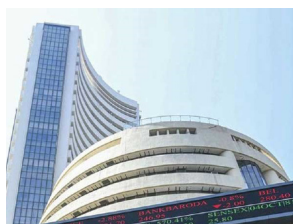
State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on the first of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate.

Prices of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates had been cut by Rs 2 per litre in mid-March ahead of the general elections. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 a litre in Delhi while diesel is priced at Rs 87.62.

## Share market ends flat, Sensex settles at 81,709 after RBI MPC decisions

**Mumbai:** The Indian stock market closed flat on Friday after the announcement of the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decisions on repo and CRR rates, as selling was seen in IT, financial services, and pharma sectors and buying was seen in auto and metal stocks. At closing, Sensex settled at 81,709.12, down by 56.74 points, or 0.07 per cent, and Nifty ended at 24,677.80, down by 30.60 points, or 0.12 per cent.

The result of the RBI MPC meeting saw the repo rate kept steady but a 50 basis point cut in CRR was seen as a major highlight. By main-



taining the repo rate at 6.5 per cent and implementing a 50 bps CRR cut to 4 per cent, the central bank has infused Rs 1.16 lakh crore into the banking system. Nifty Bank ended at 53,509.50, down by 94.05 points or 0.18 per cent. The Nifty Midcap 100 index closed at 58,704.60 at the end of trading after gaining 263.05 points or 0.45 per cent.

Nifty Smallcap 100 index closed at 19,492.10 after rising 158.55 points or 0.82 per cent. In the Sensex pack, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance, Infosys, and UltraTech Cement were the top losers, whereas, Tata Motors, Axis Bank, Maruti, L&T and ITC were the top gainers.

Krishna Appala of Capitalmind Research said the broader markets witnessed a good recovery this week, with the Nifty 50 gaining 3.2 per cent, while the Midcap and Smallcap indices rose by 3.5 per cent and 3.3 per cent, respectively.

## Eastman launches largest inverter battery range

**New Delhi:** Eastman Auto & Power, a leading provider of power solutions, today announced a major expansion of its inverter battery portfolio, introducing over 100 new models under the Eastman brand and over 70 under its ADDO brand with a total of 170+ SKU's. This positions Eastman as the leader in the inverter battery market, offering the largest portfolio, the highest capacity, and the longest warranty in the industry, offering a one-stop solution for every power need. The expanded portfolio covers a wide spectrum of capacities, from 100Ah to a groundbreaking 400Ah, the first of its kind in India. This ensures energy solutions for every application, whether residential, commercial, or industrial. Customers can enjoy peace of mind with warranties ranging from 36 months up to an unprecedented 240 months (20 years), demonstrating Eastman's unwavering confidence in its product quality.



## Ekart achieves 8X growth in supply chain monetization, revolutionizes India's logistics sector

**Guwahati:** Ekart, India's leading 4PL supply chain company, has achieved an impressive 8X growth over the last three years by monetizing its robust logistics network. With a daily capacity exceeding 6 million shipments, Ekart's network now spans 98% of Indian postal codes, backed by 50+ million cubic feet of warehousing and a fleet of 7,000 trucks. This has enabled significant improvements in delivery efficiency, with a 30% increase in Day-2 deliveries and a 40% expansion in zonal coverage for e-commerce brands.

In addition to e-commerce, Ekart has diversified into offering comprehensive document delivery solutions for financial institutions, bolstering its position as a trusted partner for enterprise supply chain needs. Ekart's client base has expanded by 10X, outpacing the logistics industry's typical 5-10% growth rate.

The impact on regional markets, such as Siliguri, has been notable. Local businesses in Siliguri now benefit from Ekart's extended reach and faster delivery capabilities, allowing them to meet



rising consumer demand and streamline their supply chain operations.

Ekart's end-to-end solutions, including PTL, FTL, and refurbishment, have also helped partners optimize their supply chains, improving conversions by 3-4% and reducing costs by 10-12%. With a focus on scalability and efficiency, Ekart continues to drive innovation in India's logistics sector.

## QNET India launches SHARP-QNET Zensational Air Purifier to combat winter smog

**Guwahati:** As northern India battles a surge in air pollution with Air Quality Index (AQI) levels crossing the hazardous mark of 300, QNET India has introduced the SHARP-QNET Zensational Air Purifier to address the escalating health crisis. With post-Diwali smog, vehicle emissions, and crop stubble burning contributing to toxic air, the urgency for indoor air quality solutions has never been greater.

The SHARP-QNET Zensational Air Purifier employs advanced Plasmacluster Ion Technology, neutralizing 29 types of airborne microbes, including H1N1 viruses and E. coli bacteria. Equipped with a triple-filtration system—pre-filter, activated carbon filter, and

true HEPA filter—it removes 99.97% of pollutants, allergens, and toxins as small as 0.3 microns, ensuring safe and clean air for spaces up to 530 sq. ft.

In Guwahati, a rapidly urbanizing hub, the air quality during winter often deteriorates due to increased vehicular traffic and construction activities. The introduction of this air purifier offers a lifeline for households, aligning with the city's growing awareness about indoor health solutions. With its energy-efficient and quiet operation, the Zensational Air Purifier is poised to gain traction in Guwahati's markets.

Recognizing National Pollution Control Day on December 2, QNET India emphasizes the importance of protecting indoor spaces.

## Škoda Auto India launches Kylaq SUV with value pricing and attractive offers

**Guwahati:** Škoda Auto India has officially launched its highly anticipated Kylaq SUV, positioning it as a major player in the sub-4m SUV segment. With a starting price of INR 7.89 lakh for the Classic variant, the Kylaq offers four trims and a range of attractive features, including a 1.0 TSI engine, six-speed manual and automatic transmissions, and over 25 safety features. The top-tier Prestige variant is priced at INR 14.40 lakh. Bookings for the Kylaq open today, with deliveries slated for January 27, 2025. In a limited-time offer, the first 33,333 customers will receive a complimentary 3-year Standard Maintenance Package (SMP), bringing the cost of ownership



to just INR 0.24 per kilometer.

Škoda's value pricing, combined with advanced European technology, is expected to generate strong demand across India. In Guwahati, the Kylaq is set to appeal to urban professionals and families looking for a compact yet premium SUV. With a growing market for high-quality, fuel-efficient

vehicles in the region, Škoda's emphasis on low maintenance costs and modern features aligns well with local consumer preferences. The Kylaq's entry into the market is poised to drive Škoda's growth, offering an attractive alternative to other compact SUVs in Guwahati's competitive automotive landscape.

## Shriram Finance's #TogetherWeSoar campaign: A strategic push to empower India's aspirations

**Guwahati:** Shriram Finance Ltd. has launched its new campaign, #TogetherWeSoar, aimed at deepening its customer relationships and empowering individuals across India. Featuring cricket icon Rahul Dravid as the brand ambassador, the campaign promotes the idea that collective effort leads to shared success. Shriram Finance emphasizes that strong partnerships with customers are key to overcoming challenges and achieving financial goals, making the brand's values resonate with a wide audience.

The campaign, voiced by veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah for the Hindi version, and enriched by regional versions featuring prominent lyricists like K.S. Chandrabose and Madhan Karky, strengthens Shriram Finance's position in India's diverse markets. With a multi-channel approach including TV, print, digital platforms, and Pro Kabaddi League broadcasts, the campaign has nation-



wide reach.

From an economic perspective, Shriram Finance's focus on empowering aspiring individuals through financial products aligns with the broader market trends in urban and semi-urban areas.

In Guwahati, where financial inclusion is rapidly increasing, the campaign is expected to appeal to both individuals and small businesses. With a growing demand for accessible loans and financial services, Guwahati residents are likely to view Shriram Finance as a valuable partner in their pursuit of financial stability and growth.

## Hotel Polo Towers Shillong launches 'Tring Tring' – A vintagedining and cocktailbarexperience

**Guwahati:** Hotel Polo Towers Shillong has officially unveiled its latest offering, Tring Tring, an all-day dining and cocktail bar designed to transport guests to the golden era of the 90s. Opening today, the 3,200-square-foot venue combines vintage charm with modern luxury, aiming to become a hub for locals and tourists alike.

The space accommodates 150 guests, offering private booths, a lively bar, and a serene verandah overlooking Shillong's scenic mountains. Vintage telephone booths and rotary dial phones add to the retro vibe, making it an Instagram-worthy destination. For intimate gath-

erings, private dining spaces with a nostalgic twist promise unforgettable moments.

Tring Tring's menu blends local flavors with global classics, featuring innovative cocktails such as Taste of Shillong, The Landline, and 0364. Culinary highlights include Crispy Goat Cheese Salad, Pistachio Basil Pasta, and Grilled Fish with Capers Butter Sauce.

Deval Tibrewalla, CEO and Director of Hotel Polo Towers Group, stated, "Tring Tring celebrates Shillong's cultural legacy while redefining modern luxury. We invite everyone to experience its unique charm."

## Toyota Urban Cruiser Hyryder achieves 1 lakh sales milestone, fuels hybrid market growth

**Shillong:** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) announced that its Urban Cruiser Hyryder has surpassed 1,00,000-unit sales in India since its launch in July 2022. This achievement highlights the rising consumer shift towards hybrid technology in the Indian automotive market.

The Urban Cruiser Hyryder, available in Self-Charging Hybrid Electric (SHEV), Neo Drive, and CNG powertrains, has carved a niche with its advanced features and fuel efficiency. The SHEV variant offers up to 27.97 km/l\*, while the Neo Drive's optional All-Wheel Drive (AWD) appeals to a wide range of drivers.

In Shillong, the Hyryder has seen strong traction, driven by the city's unique terrain and eco-conscious population. The SHEV's silent operation and outstanding mileage resonate with customers seeking sustainable yet practical vehicles for navigating Shillong's hilly roads and urban areas. This demand reflects a growing acceptance of hybrid SUVs in smaller but strategically important markets.

"This milestone reaffirms our commitment to delivering innovative, sustainable mobility solutions that align with evolving customer preferences," said Sabari Manohar, Vice President, Sales-Service-Used Car Business, TKM.

## Vi launches AI-powered solution to combat spam SMS

**Guwahati:** Telecom giant Vodafone Idea (Vi) has unveiled an advanced AI-powered spam SMS identification solution to enhance user safety and deliver a clutter-free messaging experience. The technology leverages machine learning and pattern recognition to detect and tag suspicious messages as "Suspected Spam," alerting users instantly.

Since its testing phase, the system has flagged over 24 million spam messages, tackling the growing threat of unsolicited and fraudulent SMS. Highlighting Vi's proactive approach, Jagbir Singh, CTO of Vodafone Idea, stated, "Our AI-powered spam detection technology reinforces our commitment to customer safety by delivering proactive, real-time protection. Vi is focused on staying ahead of threats and empowering customers with safer communication."

The solution uses real-time analysis, pattern recognition, and adaptive learning to identify and manage phishing attempts, unauthorized promotions, and potential scams. In addition to spam tagging, Vi's system continuously evolves to counter new trends in spam messaging.

From Guwahati's perspective, Vi's robust spam management tool holds significant value for businesses and customers alike. With the city's growing reliance on digital transactions and e-commerce, this feature promises safer mobile interactions, safeguarding sensitive information and bolstering consumer trust in the telecom network.



## Nissan crosses milestone of 5 lakh domestic sales

**Guwahati:** Nissan Motor India announced that it has achieved a significant milestone today with the crossing of 5 lakh cumulative domestic sales since the start of its operations, with a total of 5,13,241 units sold till date. Additionally, in November 2024, the company recorded consolidated wholesale dispatches of 9040 units, driven by consistent demand for its vehicles,

including the new Nissan Magnite SUV. The domestic sales accounted for 2342 units, while exports stood at 6698 units. Compared to October 2024, total consolidated wholesale saw a 62% (MoM) increase from 5570 units to 9040 units, driven by a substantial surge in export shipments. Exports in November 2024 recorded a (YoY) growth of 222% compared to 2081 units in November 2023 and

a (MoM) growth of 173.5% compared to 2449 units in October 2024. Mr. Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, said, "It's a matter of great pride for all of us at Nissan Motor India to see our brand crossing the 5 lakh domestic sales milestone." The new Nissan Magnite features a bold, stylish design both inside and out, offering 20+ first & Best-In-Segment features and 55+ total safety features.

## NSDC International and Somo Care collaborate to enhance caregiver training



**Guwahati:** NSDC International has announced a landmark collaboration with Somo Care Inc. to enhance caregiver training in India and open doors to international opportunities, particularly in Japan. As part of this partnership, a cutting-edge Nursing Care Lab has been inaugurated at NSDCI's Greater Noida training center. The facility will provide a blend of practical caregiving skills training and Japanese language programs to prepare Indian caregivers for global roles, especially in Japan, where there is a high demand for skilled professionals.

Shri Ved Mani Tiwari, COO (Officiating CEO), NSDC & MD, NSDC International, expressed excitement over the collaboration, saying, "We aim to bridge the gap in healthcare services by enhancing the skills of Indian nursing personnel and providing them with valuable opportunities in Japan's healthcare system." The nine-month program combines language and caregiving training, with the first cohort of 75 candidates set to begin.

This initiative is expected to have a significant impact on the Guwahati healthcare sector, creating new pathways for caregivers from the region. The collaboration offers Guwahati's skilled workforce access to international job markets, especially in Japan, addressing the growing demand for caregivers globally. This partnership marks a step forward in strengthening India's presence in the global caregiving industry.

## Shopsy launches Wow Winter Sale: Affordable essentials for Bharat's winter needs

**Guwahati:** Shopsy, India's leading hypervalue e-commerce platform, has introduced its exclusive Wow Winter Sale, providing a one-stop destination for winter essentials tailored for Bharat's diverse regions. From stylish hoodies to cozy comforters, the sale offers top-quality products starting at just Rs. 99.

With winter gripping northern, western, and eastern India, Shopsy's curated range includes hoodies, jackets, scarves, kids' winterwear, and more, blending comfort with affordability. The platform's

extensive delivery network spans over 19,000 pin codes, ensuring even the remotest customers can access winter must-haves seamlessly.

Guwahati shoppers, for instance, can embrace the seasonal chill with Shopsy's offerings that combine warmth and trendy designs. With exclusive deals, families in the region can revamp their wardrobes without straining their budgets, making it a win-win for both style and savings.

Categories like durable kids' wear, contemporary hoodies, and luxurious comforters ex-



emplify Shopsy's commitment to innovation and customer-centricity. Highlighting the sale, a Shopsy spokesperson remarked, "We aim to make winter shopping not just affordable but enjoyable for every household in Bharat."

## Godrej DEI Lab and Khaitan& Co announces handbook on disability rights to promote workplace inclusion

**Guwahati:** Godrej DEI Lab and Khaitan& Co joined forces to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities by unveiling the second edition of Khaitan& Co's Handbook on Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the Disability Inclusion Summit in Mumbai. The handbook aims to guide organizations toward a purpose-driven approach to workplace inclusion for persons with disabilities (PwDs).

"This milestone reinforces our dedication to creating

equitable corporate environments," said Parmesh Shahani, Head of Godrej DEI Lab. The handbook, he added, offers insights to help organizations evolve beyond compliance toward meaningful inclusion.

The handbook provides legal guidance on critical legislations such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017. It also offers actionable strategies for inclusive hiring, accessibility, and accommodations.



In Guwahati, this initiative could inspire local industries to adopt best practices in disability inclusion. With Guwahati emerging as a

commercial hub, fostering accessible workplaces could bolster the city's reputation as a progressive business destination.

## IN-SPACE gains dual awarding body recognition from NCVET, advances space sector skills

**Guwahati:** In a significant step for India's space sector, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) has officially recognized the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACE) as a dual awarding body. This partnership aims to address the growing need for a skilled workforce in the rapidly expanding space industry. IN-SPACE's newly accredited

training programs will cover key areas like satellite manufacturing, space technology in agriculture, and orbital mechanics, aligning with both national and international standards.

The move is poised to benefit Guwahati, where the demand for space-enabled technologies, especially in agriculture, is rising. The city's agricultural sector is increasingly looking for skilled

professionals to implement satellite-based solutions that can enhance productivity and sustainability, making this recognition crucial for meeting local industry demands.

Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, MSDE, emphasized the importance of this collaboration in preparing India's workforce for the future. Dr. Vinod Kumar, Director of IN-SPACE, also hailed the recognition as a vital milestone



in skilling the workforce for India's ambitious space program. This initiative is in line with the government's broader goals of boosting innovation and competitiveness in the space sector.

## IPRU Edge app drives growth for ICICI Prudential Life Advisors, enhances productivity by 37%

**Aizawl:** ICICI Prudential Life Insurance's IPRU Edge mobile app has emerged as a powerful tool for the company's vast network of over 2 lakh advisors, resulting in a 37% boost in productivity in the first half of FY2025. The app's efficient features have led to 98.1% of advisors receiving commissions on the same day, making ICICI Prudential Life the first insurer to offer such quick payouts.

The app streamlines operations for agents, allowing them to focus on business development by offering real-time KYC authentication and a paperless buying process through OCR technology. This has been particularly beneficial for agents in small towns and rural areas. Additionally, approximately 50% of savings policies were issued on the same day in H1-FY2025, supporting a 49% increase in retail weight received premiums from the Agency channel.



Mr. Rajiv Arora, Chief of Sales at ICICI Prudential Life, highlighted the app's role in empowering agents to grow their business, with access to new opportunities and detailed business insights.

In Aizawl, local advisors have capitalized on IPRU Edge to enhance customer engagement and streamline operations, which has resulted in a stronger foothold in the region. The app's user-friendly interface and efficiency are driving business growth in Aizawl, improving advisor-client interactions.

## Aranyak Chakraborty shines in IGU National Junior Boys Championship 2024

**Kolkata:** Kolkata's young golfing prodigy, Aranyak Chakraborty, has continued to carve a name for himself in the Indian golfing circuit with remarkable performances in the IGU (Indian Golf Union) Junior Boys Golf Championship 2024. Competing in Category C (Under 13), Aranyak showcased extraordinary talent and consistency across multiple tournaments this year. At just 12 years old, his journey culminated in the prestigious IGU National Junior Boys Golf Championship 2024, held at the Karnataka Golf Association (KGA) Club, Bangalore, where he clinched the 2nd position in Category C after a gripping competition.

Aranyak Chakraborty is undoubtedly a name to watch in the world of golf, embodying talent, determination, and the spirit of a champion. His inspiring journey marks him as one of the most promising junior golfers in India.



## Rohit Sharma Considers Batting Shift for Adelaide Test

**Adelaide:** India's cricket team, led by Rohit Sharma, is poised to face a crucial test in the upcoming day/night match against Australia, starting this Friday in Adelaide. After a commanding performance in Perth, where India took a 1-0 lead in the series, the focus now shifts to Rohit Sharma's potential reshuffle in the batting order as the team seeks to capitalize on their current momentum.

Returning from paternity leave, the Indian skipper faces a tactical dilemma. His decision to possibly bat down the order, thereby allowing the in-form duo of KL Rahul and Yashasvi Jaiswal to continue opening, illustrates a strategic depth aimed at maintaining stability at the top. This move underscores the adaptability and team-first approach Rohit has often championed. The day-night format presents unique challenges, notably the increased seam movement of the pink ball during the twilight phase, which both teams will be eager to exploit. Historically, Australia has thrived

in pink-ball Tests, boasting an impressive record with only one loss in twelve home matches. The conditions in Adelaide, coupled with the Australians' familiarity with the format, could test the Indian team's resilience and strategic planning.

India's previous tour down under showcased their ability to bounce back from challenging situations, famously overturning a lowscoring debacle in Adelaide in 2020 to clinch the series. This time, however, they enter the match with a lead and a well-fortified lineup, bolstered by the return of Shubman Gill, who has recovered from injury and looked in good touch during the practice match in Canberra. On the Australian front, the absence of Josh Hazlewood due to injury necessitates a lineup change, with Scott Boland expected to take his place. Boland's knack for consistent line and length could be pivotal on the Adelaide pitch, which traditionally offers some assistance to bowlers who can exploit its



nuances. With the pressure mounting after the Perth defeat, Australia's response in this match could be defining for the series.

As for India's bowling strategy, the Adelaide pitch's tendency to aid spinners brings the spotlight onto the spin duo of R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, whose roles could be crucial in the latter stages of the match. Their expertise in utilizing the spin-friendly conditions will be vital for India's hopes of tightening their grip on the series. Off the field, the strategic decisions made by Rohit Sharma regarding the batting order

and his own role within it reflect a broader philosophy of flexibility and situational awareness. These choices will not only affect the forthcoming match but could set the tone for the remainder of the series. The upcoming Adelaide Test is not just a battle between bat and ball; it is a clash of strategies, conditions, and mental fortitude. As both teams prepare for this crucial encounter, the decisions made now will resonate throughout the rest of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, potentially defining the legacies of the players and the tactical acumen of the captains

## Australia Dominates in Women's ODI Series Opener Against India

**Brisbane:** Australia's women's cricket team demonstrated their prowess with a decisive five-wicket victory over India in the first ODI of the series, as the visitors struggled at the crease. India, opting to bat first, was dismissed for a meager total of 100 runs in just 34.2 overs, largely due to a stellar bowling performance by Australia's Megan Schutt, who claimed five wickets. The Australian side then reached their target comfortably, scoring 102 for 5 in 16.2 overs.

Debutant Georgia Voll led the chase with an unbeaten 46 from 42 deliveries, including a six, while her partner Phoebe Litchfield contributed 35 off 29 balls to a quick 48-run opening stand. Despite a brief challenge when Renuka Thakur took two wickets in a single over, Australia remained in control throughout their innings.

For India, Jemimah Rodrigues was the top scorer, managing 23 runs off 42 balls, in a batting lineup that failed to produce significant innings. The Indian openers departed early, and the



middle order crumbled under pressure from the Australian attack. The highlight of the day was Schutt's five-wicket haul, which dismantled the Indian batting order. The performance underscored the challenges facing the Indian team as they look to bounce back in the second ODI scheduled for December 8 at Allan Border Field.

India will need to reassess their strategy and composition if they hope to counter the dominant Australian side in the remaining matches of the series.

## Bumrah becomes third Indian pacer to take 50 Test wickets in a calendar year

**Adelaide:** India's Jasprit Bumrah celebrated his 31st birthday in style, becoming the first pacer to notch 50 Test wickets in 2024. The milestone was achieved during the first day of the pink-ball Test against Australia in Adelaide on Friday when Bumrah dismissed opener Usman Khawaja.

With this feat, Bumrah joins the elite company of Kapil Dev and Zaheer Khan as the only Indian pacers to take 50 Test wickets in a calendar year. Bumrah reached the landmark in his 11th Test of 2024. Kapil Dev remains the highest wicket-taker for Indian pacers in a year, with 75 Test wickets



in 1983, followed by his 74 in 1979. Zaheer Khan stands third with 51 scalps in 2002.

## Tharun and Ravi Make Impressive Strides into Guwahati Masters Quarterfinals

**Guwahati:** In a display of remarkable talent and determination, M Tharun and Ravi advanced to the quarterfinals of the Guwahati Masters Super 100 badminton tournament, causing significant upsets in the men's singles category.

Tharun, fresh from his runner-up finish at the Senior National Championships, faced a tough challenge against top seed Priyanshu Rajawat. In a match that extended beyond an hour, Tharun saved two game points in the first game to secure a narrow 24-22 victory. Despite losing the second game 15-21, he rallied to clinch the match with a decisive 21-13 win in the third game. Ravi, on the other hand, showcased his resilience against Denmark's fifth seed, Mads Christophersen. After a narrow loss in the first game, Ravi turned the tables to register a 21-23, 21-17, 21-14 victory, setting up a promising quarterfinal matchup against Chinese qualifier Zhu Xuan Chen.

Sathish Kumar Karunakaran also joined the quarterfinalists with a gritty 21-19, 9-21, 21-7 victory over Malaysia's Sholeh Aidil, demonstrating the depth of talent in the tournament.

## East Bengal Football Club Calls for Protection of Minorities in Bangladesh

**Kolkata:** East Bengal Football Club, a major player in Indian football, has issued a statement expressing serious concerns about the safety of minorities in Bangladesh, calling for immediate action to ensure their protection. In a heartfelt appeal, the club urged the Bangladeshi government to prioritize the safety and well-being of vulnerable communities, highlighting its longstanding commitment to social justice and support for marginalized groups.

"East Bengal Club was established in defiance of discrimination and has consistently been involved in various public movements, advocating against racial and communal persecution," the club stated. The statement recalls the club's active involvement in humanitarian efforts during significant crises such as the 1943 Bengal famine, Cyclone Ayla, and the recent Covid-19 pandemic. The club also emphasized its

historical connections to Bangladesh, noting that many of its supporters and prominent members have roots in the region. "The systematic targeting of minorities in Bangladesh has deeply affected our supporters, many of whom have family histories of suffering from such violence," the statement read.

Responding to numerous calls and messages from concerned supporters, East Bengal declared its intent to bring these issues to light at appropriate platforms to stimulate action and safeguard those at risk.

Debabrata 'Nitu' Sarkar, a top official of East Bengal, reinforced the club's neutral stance on political matters, framing the appeal as a call for humanitarian action. "We might even reach out to the prime minister if necessary. Our aim is to express solidarity and push for a swift resolution to these urgent human rights issues," Sarkar explained.

## Bengaluru Bulls Fight Back to Draw with Gujarat Giants



**Pune:** The Pro Kabaddi League season 11 witnessed a nail-biting encounter as Bengaluru Bulls staged a remarkable comeback to secure a 34-34 draw against Gujarat Giants in Pune. Gujarat Giants looked poised to take the win as they maintained the lead for the majority of the match, thanks to strong performances from Rakesh, who scored seven points, and Neeraj, who achieved a 'High 5'. The team's defense, led by Rohit, initially managed to contain the Bulls' raiders effectively.

However, the Bulls, driven by Nitin Rawal's seven points and solid contributions from Pardeep Narwal and Sushil, each adding six points, clawed their way back into the game. Despite Gujarat's early dominance, Bengaluru's defense

tightened, preventing their opponents from widening the gap.

The first half ended with the Bulls pulling ahead slightly with a score of 15-13, following a surge of points from Narwal. The dynamic shifted in the second half when Rakesh spearheaded a strong start for the Giants, and Neeraj's efforts forced an 'All out' on the Bulls, giving Gujarat a temporary upper hand.

The match continued to swing dramatically as both teams exchanged leads. In the end, neither side could edge out the other, resulting in a thrilling draw. The draw leaves both teams with mixed feelings but demonstrates the unpredictable nature of the league and the fine margins that separate victory from a stalemate.