

SBI posts robust 84 pc surge in net profit at Rs 16,891 crore in Q3

Mumbai: India's largest public sector lender, the State Bank of India (SBI) on Thursday reported an impressive 84.32 per cent surge in net profit (year-on-year) at Rs 16,891 crore for the October-December quarter (Q3 FY25), from Rs 9,164 crore in the year-ago period.

The profit rise was aided by higher core income during the quarter. The net interest income (NII), or core income, was up 4.09 per cent from a year ago and stood at Rs 41,445.5 crore compared to Rs 39,816 crore, according to the bank's stock exchange filing. The gross NPA ratio improved to 2.07 per cent as on December 31, 2024, against 2.13 per cent in the September quarter. On a sequential basis, the net NPA ratio remained unchanged at 0.53 per cent as on December 31, 2024.

The bank's ROA and ROE for the nine months of this fiscal (FY25) stood at 1.09 per cent and 21.46 per cent, respectively. The employee expenses dropped 17 per cent to Rs 16,074 crore and the SBI's domestic loans grew 14.06 per cent year-on-year. Provisions rose 32.4 per cent from last year to Rs 911.06 crore.

Operating profit for Q3 FY25 grew by 15.81 per cent YoY to Rs 23,551 crore. The SBI reported credit growth at 13.49 per cent YoY with domestic advances growing by 14.06 per cent while gross advances crossed Rs 40 lakh crore (year-on-year).

Kia faces \$155 million tax evasion charge for misclassifying component imports

Mumbai: India has accused South Korea's Kia of evading taxes of \$155 million by misclassifying component imports but the carmaker has denied wrongdoing, the latest fight by a foreign automaker with New Delhi over tariffs, according to a document and two sources.

Kia competes with Hyundai and Maruti Suzuki in the world's third-largest auto market, where it has a share of 6 per cent of roughly 4 million units a year, and its

Kia Seltos and Sonet SUVs are among the top sellers. Foreign companies in India face headaches from high taxes and long-drawn-out investigations.

For example, Tesla has publicly complained about high taxes on imported EVs and Volkswagen last week sued the government over a demand for a record \$1.4 billion in back taxes that it called "impossibly enormous".

Tax officers sent a confidential notice to Kia's Indian unit in April 2024, flagging

alleged tax evasion of ₹13.5 billion, according to a government notice Reuters is reporting for the first time. The offence centred on incorrect declaration of imports of components for the assembly of the carmaker's luxury Carnival minivan.

Kia India said it made "a detailed response, supported by comprehensive evidence and documentation to substantiate" its stand.

In its 432-page notice, the government said tax authorities found Kia's Carnival



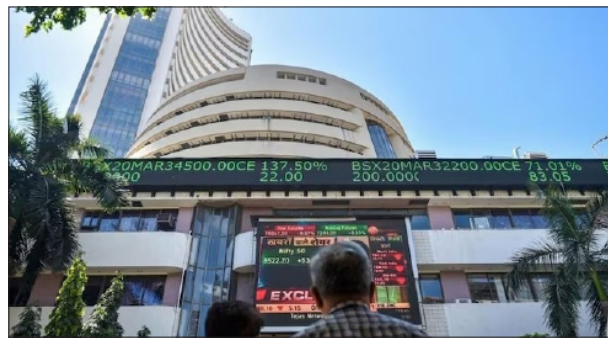
"car model was being imported in parts or components in separate lots" via

different ports, with the "intent to discharge lesser customs duty".

Sensex, Nifty end lower as investors await RBI MPC decision

Mumbai: The Indian stock market on Thursday closed lower as investors remained cautious ahead of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decision on the rate cut scheduled for February 7. The Sensex fell by 213.12 points, or 0.27 per cent to settle at 78,058.16. During the day, the index fluctuated between a high of 78,551.66 and a low of 77,843.99. Similarly, the Nifty ended lower by 92.95 points, or 0.39 per cent to close at 23,603.35. The index recorded a day's high of 23,773.55 and a low of 23,556.25.

Among the Nifty stocks, 30 companies closed in negative territory. Trent, Bharat Electronics, Bharti Airtel, ONGC and Titan were among the biggest losers with falling up



to 8.39 per cent. On the other hand, Adani Ports, Cipla, Infosys and Dr. Reddy's Labs managed to close higher during intra-day trade with gains of up to 2.51 per cent.

The broader market also followed a downward trend. The Nifty Midcap100 fell by 1.26 per cent, while the Nifty Smallcap100 declined by 0.30 per cent. Sectoral indices on the NSE had a mixed

performance amid cautious sentiment among investors. The Nifty Auto, FMCG, Consumer Durables, Realty, and Financial Services indices faced losses with a decline of up to 2.19 per cent. On the other hand, sectors like Nifty Bank, IT, Pharma, Private Bank, and Healthcare showed resilience by ending the session in modest gains of up to 0.64 per cent.

Ola Electric launches Roadster X series

Bengaluru: Ola Electric, India's largest pureplay EV company, today announced its entry into the EV motorcycle segment with the launch of its Roadster X series to redefine motorcycling with impressive performance and a thrilling riding experience. Built on the company's scalable motorcycle platform, the all-new Roadster X series is being introduced starting at ₹74,999 for the Roadster X, ₹1,04,999 for the Roadster X+ 4.5kWh, and ₹1,54,999 for the Roadster X+ 9.1kWh (with 4680 Bharat Cell) that offers an unrivalled range of



501 km/charge.

The all-new Roadster X comes in 2.5kWh, 3.5kWh and 4.5kWh variants and are priced at ₹74,999, ₹84,999 and ₹94,999, respectively. The Roadster series comes with a standard warranty of 3 years/50,000 km. The deliveries for the Roadster series to commence from mid March onwards.

Centre plans to invite financial bids for strategic sale of IDBI Bank by end of March

The government plans to invite financial bids for the strategic sale of IDBI Bank by the end of March, aiming to conclude the transaction in the first half of the financial year 2025-26, according to official sources. Fairfax Financial, Emirates NBD, Oaktree Capital and Kotak Mahindra Bank, which expressed interest in January 2024, are conducting a due diligence and assessing the bank's valuation before submitting their bids. The Reserve Bank of India has completed its "fit and proper" assessment of the potential buyers. "The divestment of IDBI Bank remains on track, with

financial bids set to be called by March-end. We expect the sale to be completed by mid-FY2026," a government official said. The Centre, along with Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), will offload a 61 per cent stake in the lender, including 30.48 per cent held by the government and 30.24 per cent by LIC. The deal would mark India's largest privatisation since the sale of Air India to Tata Group in 2021. The privatisation process began in January 2023 when the government issued an expression of interest. Officials remain tight-lipped on expected proceeds, but market

estimates suggest the stake sale could generate around ₹28,000 crore. For FY25, the Union budget has set a ₹47,000-crore target for divestment and asset monetisation, without specifying a separate goal for IDBI Bank's sale. The government has moved away from annual divestment targets, instead clubbing asset monetisation and privatisation under a ₹50,000-crore capital receipts framework. The divestment process involves bidders reviewing a cloud-based data room containing sensitive financial details.

Car sales clock 15.5 per cent surge to 4.66 lakh units in Jan

New Delhi: Car sales in India surged by a robust 15.53 per cent to 4,65,920 in January this year, according to data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) on Thursday. Sequentially, month-on-month car sales were up 58.77 per cent. "PV (passenger-vehicle) sales grew robustly, although some of that spike stems from December purchases registered in January for a 2025 model year advantage," FADA President CS Vigneshwar said in a statement. "Inventory levels have improved, dropping by around five days to 50-55 days, suggesting improved supply-demand balance. Many dealers noted improved demand, but also pointed to last year's heavy discounting, which helped clear older models and shift registrations," he added. The "positive indicators" listed in the FADA report include the marriage season and promotions. It expects the wedding demand for cars, SUVs and two-wheelers and fresh product introductions to sustain footfalls. Improved liquidity in pockets, with the budget exempting all individuals who earn up to Rs 12.75 lakhs a year from paying income tax. The zero tax bracket now covers 1 crore individuals which is expected to boost the demand for vehicles. Two-wheeler sales are up 4.15 per cent year-on-year to 15,25,862 units with new model launches, the ongoing marriage season demand and enhanced financing options giving a fillip to purchases.

Shri Jayant Chaudhary inaugurates NSDC International Academy



Guwahati: Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), and Minister of State, Ministry of Education, has inaugurated the NSDC International Academy, a state-of-the-art facility designed to provide world-class skill development and training programmes. The NSDC International Academy is a landmark initiative designed to bridge the gap between Indian youth and global employment opportunities. Shri Chaudhary flagged off the departure of 11 candidates headed to Germany and toured the NSDC International Academy, engaging with students enrolled in its programs, and also experienced the AI and VR facilities and advanced labs pres-

ent at the centre, interacted with students about their life journeys, and offered them motivation.

Delivering his address, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India mentioned, "We must recognize that young India is breaking barriers, moving beyond traditional career paths, and looking at new opportunities." Addressing the audience, Shri Ved Mani Tiwari, CEO, Nation Skill Development Corporation said, "The coming years would ensure that India plays a dominant role in the global economy and contributes significantly to the dollar economy."

MG Sewaempowers over 70,000 women and girls, drives social change across India

Guwahati: MG Motor India's flagship initiative, MG Sewa, has made a remarkable impact, benefitting over 1.2 lakh individuals in 2024 alone, with a strong emphasis on empowering women and girls. The initiative, which focuses on girl child education, women's empowerment, and community health, has reached over 70,000 females through programs that bridge gaps in education and hygiene. MG Sewa is making notable strides through its WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) program, benefiting over 16,000 women and girls, and its educational interventions in tribal regions of Odisha, where more than 80,000 children are learning mathematics in their native languages.

What sets MG Sewa apart is its mission-driven approach, developed before MG Motor's first car rolled out. The initiative thrives on the dedication of JSW MG Motor India's employees and dealer partners,



who volunteer their time and resources to mentor, fund, and directly engage with beneficiaries.

In Guwahati, MG Sewa's outreach continues to grow, with employees and dealers playing a pivotal role in spreading awareness and supporting community initiatives. The region's participation highlights MG Motor India's commitment to contributing to a more inclusive and empowered future, both locally and nationally.

Rajeev Chaba, CEO Emeritus of MG Motor India, emphasized, "Our goal is to support as many women as the cars we sell, striving for a more equitable future."

Union Budget 2025 paves way for FMCG growth, says Godrej Consumer CFO Aasif Malbari

Guwahati: The Union Budget 2025 has been welcomed by the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, with industry leaders highlighting its focus on rural development, manufacturing, and consumer spending. Aasif Malbari, Chief Financial Officer of Godrej Consumer Products Ltd., praised the Budget for laying a strong foundation for a consumption-driven

economy.

Malbari said that increased investments in rural infrastructure and job creation would boost economic activity, leading to higher consumer demand and market expansion. He also lauded the National Manufacturing Mission as a significant step toward strengthening domestic production, reducing import dependencies, and improving cost efficiencies.

Moreover, Malbari noted that tax reforms favoring the middle class would enhance disposable income, further driving demand for both essential and aspirational FMCG products.

"Overall, the Budget lays a strong foundation for a more consumption-driven economy, creating significant growth opportunities for the FMCG industry," he said.

Air India Express launches direct flights between Dibrugarh and Guwahati

Dibrugarh: Air India Express has commenced operations from Dibrugarh, further strengthening connectivity in Northeast India. The airline now offers daily direct flights between Dibrugarh and Guwahati, with seamless onward travel to Delhi on the same aircraft, providing greater convenience for travellers. This new route further enhances Air India Express's footprint in the Northeast, with Dibrugarh being the 5th station in the region after Agartala, Dimapur, Guwahati, and Imphal. The inaugural flight from Dibrugarh took off at 13:45 hours, landing in Guwahati at 15:15 hours, before continuing to Delhi. A celebratory boarding pass was presented to the first guest of the new route at Dibrugarh Airport.

With direct flights to Guwahati, Air India Express will provide convenient one-stop connections from Dibrugarh to five major Indian cities: Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Jaipur, and Kolkata. As part of its Tales of India initiative,



Air India Express has adorned two of its brand-new aircraft with Assamese-inspired liveries—VT-BXI features a 'Gamosa' inspired design, symbolizing Assam's deep-rooted traditions, while VT-BWB showcases a 'Jaapi' inspired livery, celebrating the region's craftsmanship. This winter marks a significant milestone for Air India Express as its network expands to over 50 destinations, including Bangkok, Dibrugarh, Dimapur, and Patna.

Nissan Motor India exports a total of over 10,000 units of the LHD version of the New Nissan Magnite

Guwahati: The New Nissan Magnite, the B-SUV launched by Nissan Motor India in October 2024 with a bold road presence and premium features, has now made its way to customers in global Left-Hand Drive (LHD) markets. Nissan Motor India flagged off the first shipment of close to 2,900 units of the LHD variant of the New Nissan Magnite from Chennai from the Kamarajar Port (KPL - Ennore), India in late January 2025 to select markets in the LATAM

region. This underscores Nissan's 'One Car One World' strategy and highlights the Nissan Motor India's commitment towards expanding its global footprint and transforming India into a global hub for exports.

In February 2025, Nissan Motor India will export over 7,100 units of the New Nissan Magnite in the second wave in February 2025 to markets in the Middle East, North Africa, select markets in LATAM & Asia Pacific region. By

end of February, the company will have exported a total of over 10,000 units of the LHD version of the New Nissan Magnite. Frank Torres, Divisional Vice President of AMIEO Region Business Transformation & President of Nissan India Operations, commented on the milestone, saying, "Nissan Motor India has been diligently working towards expanding its operations and reach, not just within the domestic market but also focusing on exports."

Celebrate Valentine's Day with California Almonds in the season of love

Guwahati: Valentine's Day is all about celebrating love and showing you care. What better way to express your affection than with a gift loaded with various health benefits? This year, go beyond the traditional gifts and opt for the gift of good health – a box of California almonds. Not only

do California almonds offer a delicious crunch and are packed with essential nutrients that support overall well-being, but they also demonstrate your care for your loved ones' health.

Rich in 15 essential nutrients, California Almonds are a natural source of vitamin E, mag-

nesium, dietary fiber, health fats, and protein. Known as the "king of nuts," these almonds provide a wide range of health benefits. Talking about the season of love and highlighting the significance of almonds in her daily diet, Bollywood actress Soha Ali Khan said, "For me, showing

love to my loved ones means taking care of their health." Talking about the many health benefits of almonds, Rohini Patil, MBBS and Nutritionist said, "I always recommend my clients and patients to follow a healthy, balanced diet and include natural foods like almonds as part of it."

JSW MG Motor launches India's Most Advanced SUV - MG Astor

Guwahati: JSW MG Motor has launched the MY 2025 editions of India's Most Advanced SUV in its class - MG Astor, introducing new features for its Shine and Select variants. The Shine variant of Astor 2025 comes with a panoramic sunroof and six speakers, providing a pleasurable driving experience. This makes MG Astor the only SUV in its segment to offer a panoramic sunroof under INR 12.5 lakh. The Select variant further elevates comfort and safety with the addition of six airbags and premium ivory leatherette seats. India's first SUV with AI inside will be available in the variants - Sprint, Shine, Select, Sharp Pro and Savvy Pro, starting at an attractive price of INR 9.99 Lakh ex-showroom price.

The variants of MG Astor MY 25 offer a host of exciting features – Ventilated Seats in the front row, Wireless Charger, Wireless Android Auto & Apple Car Play, and Auto-dimming IRVM for additional security and convenience, along with an updated i-SMART 2.0 with Advanced User Interface for a holistic driving experience. The MG Astor 2025 will be available with 1.5 L MT and CVT and 1.3 Turbo AT powertrains.

Dr. Prathap C Reddy, Founder & Chairman, Apollo Hospitals comments on Union Budget

Guwahati: Further to the Union Budget announced by Honorable Minister Smt. Nirjala Sitharaman. Dr. Prathap C Reddy, Founder and Chairman, Apollo Hospitals, has spoken on the Union Budget, "From the 1980s, when our healthcare system grappled with limited infrastructure and resource constraints, we have made significant strides in expanding access to quality care."

He also said, "Now, Budget 2025 serves as a visionary launchpad for 'Heal in India,' creating the roadmap to establish India as a global center for advanced healthcare and medical innovation. The expansion of medical education with 75,000 additional medical seats over the next five

years, coupled with the launch of Centers of Excellence in AI, will foster innovation in health-tech and expand R&D investments."

He also added, "The announcement to promote medical tourism through private sector partnerships will enhance our capacity to attract global patients and position India as the go-to destination for affordable, world-class medical care under the 'Heal in India' mission. The focus on skilling healthcare professionals in emerging technologies through the establishment of National Centers of Excellence and 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs will empower the next generation of medical innovators and startups."

Bajaj Finserv AMC launches multi-cap fund with contrarian strategy



Guwahati: Bajaj Finserv AMC has launched the Bajaj Finserv Multi Cap Fund, an open-ended equity scheme that aims to invest across large, mid, and small cap stocks, opening for subscription from February 6 to February 20, 2025. The fund will employ a contrarian investment strategy, focusing on undervalued assets and companies with hidden growth potential, offering investors opportunities in overlooked sectors. With a balanced portfolio allocation of at least 25% each across the three market cap segments, the fund seeks to capture opportunities in various economic cycles and business disruptions.

Ganesh Mohan, CEO of Bajaj Finserv AMC, high-

lighted the unique investment approach, stating, "Our fund provides a chance to unlock hidden value in overlooked assets, ensuring long-term growth and sustainable wealth." Nimesh Chandan, CIO, added that the fund's disciplined framework is designed to discover contrarian opportunities across all market segments.

For investors in Guwahati, this multi-cap fund offers an attractive option, especially in the growing market where demand for diverse investment opportunities is on the rise. Guwahati's market is becoming increasingly receptive to new financial products, as local investors seek long-term, balanced strategies amid economic uncertainties.

Catch Spices rollout new TVCs starring Akshay Kumar and Rajpal Yadav to strengthen brand positioning

Guwahati: Catch Spices, a key brand of the Dharampal-Satyapal Group (DS Group), has launched two new television commercials featuring Bollywood celebrities Akshay Kumar and Rajpal Yadav. This campaign aims to reinforce its brand philosophy, "Kyunki Khana Sirf Khana Nahi Hota" (Food is more than just food), with engaging narratives centered around Catch Turmeric and Catch Garam Masala.

The commercials, conceptualized by Dentsu International and directed by Hemant Bhandari, focus on how these spices



elevate culinary experiences. The Catch Turmeric TVC humorously depicts a mix-up leading to an unexpected bonding moment with neighbors, while Akshay Kumar empha-

sizes the importance of food in fostering relationships. In the Catch Garam Masala TVC, a head chef's journey highlights the flavor-enhancing power of the spice.

Catch Spices is now expanding its reach across television and digital platforms, with sponsorships and brand integrations in top shows like "Laughter Chef" and "MasterChef." The brand has also seen significant growth, entering the INR 1000 crore club and expanding its portfolio to over 125 variants.

In Guwahati, preference for premium, high-quality spices like Catch aligns with evolving consumer trends, contributing to a strong brand presence and growing consumer engagement in the region.

The government promises a step toward uplifting Indian farming families

Guwahati: Balram Singh Yadav, Managing Director, Godrej Agrovet Limited, Empowering Farmers, Sustainable Production, and Resilient Agri-Economy—Imperative in our Journey to Viksit Bharat, "The budget proposals showcase a comprehensive strategy to strengthen India's agricultural sector, positioning it as a key driver in our journey towards Viksit Bharat. By addressing critical growth levers such as high-yielding, climate-resilient seeds, boosting cotton productivity, and achieving self-sufficiency in pulses, the budget lays a robust foundation for a resilient agri-economy. The enhanced loan limit under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme—from ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh—for Kisan Credit Card loans will provide vital financial

support to small fisheries and dairy farmers, empowering them to scale operations."

Rajavelu N.K., CEO - Crop Protection Business, Godrej Agrovet Limited & Co-Chairman of the FICCI Committee on Crop Protection Chemicals. Boosting Rural Resilience: Budget 2025 Focuses on Crop Productivity, Self-Reliance, and Farmer Prosperity, "The government's enhanced focus on crop productivity and protection is a promising step toward uplifting Indian farming families. The Mission for Cotton Productivity, integrating science and technology with extra-long staple cotton varieties, addresses declining cotton acreage while helping farmers boost yields and profits."

Cabinet approves ₹8,800 crore Skill India Programme to boost workforce development

Guwahati: The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the continuation and restructuring of the Skill India Programme (SIP) till 2026, with an outlay of ₹8,800 crore. The initiative aims to enhance workforce development by integrating demand-driven, technology-enabled, and industry-aligned training.

Under the revamped scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 (PMKVY 4.0), Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS), and Jan Shikshan Sansathan (JSS) have been consolidated. PMKVY 4.0 will introduce 400+ new courses, including AI, 5G, and green hydrogen, while PM-NAPS will support apprentices with stipends through

Direct Benefit Transfer. JSS will focus on community-based skill training.

Guwahati, a growing hub for technology and skilled industries, is expected to benefit significantly. With increased focus on industry-aligned training and regional language accessibility, the scheme will enhance employability in sectors like IT, logistics, and renewable energy, catering to local demand.

The initiative aligns with global trends, promoting skill certification, international mobility, and MSME participation, ensuring India's workforce is future-ready. The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship will oversee implementation, driving employment and economic growth.

HSBC Mutual Fund introduces HSBC Financial Services Fund

Guwahati: HSBC Mutual Fund has announced the launch of the HSBC Financial Services Fund, an open-ended equity scheme investing in the financial services sector. The New Fund Offer (NFO) opens on February 6, 2025, and closes on February 20, 2025. The financial services sector plays a crucial role in economic growth and development of the country. Driven by increasing financial inclusion, digitalisation, and supportive regulatory policies, along with the shift towards Indian households channelizing their savings into financial assets, has meant that the sector is on a growth trajectory. The HSBC Financial Services Fund aims to capitalise on the growth opportunities and potential of the financial services sector.

Kailash Kulkarni, CEO, HSBC Mutual Fund, said, "Our fund aims to capitalize on these emerging growth prospects." Venugopal Manghat, CIO-Equity, HSBC Mutual Fund, said, "Our investment approach is aimed at delivering long-term alpha through an equity investment process comprising apt stock selection, diligent analysis of companies, and portfolio creation and monitoring." With a footprint at 64 locations across cities, the company offers comprehensive and tailored solutions with around 44 open-ended funds, including equity funds, debt funds, hybrid funds, index funds, and fund of funds as on December 31, 2024.

LIC Housing Finance Reports Strong Q3 FY2024-25 Results

Aizawl: LIC Housing Finance Ltd. (LICHousing) unveiled impressive Q3 FY2024-25 results, showcasing a 23% year-on-year jump in profit after tax to Rs. 1431.96 crore. Despite a slight 5% dip in net interest income (NII) to Rs. 2000 crore, the company demonstrated robust growth in other areas. Q3 disbursements reached Rs. 15475 crore, driving the outstand-

ing loan portfolio up to Rs. 299144 crore. Profit before tax surged by 24%, reaching Rs. 1793.44 crore, while total revenue from operations rose 4% to Rs. 7057 crore. The company disbursed Rs. 12248 crore in individual home loans and Rs. 983 crore in project loans during the quarter.

Aizawl, characterized by its unique

topography and growing urbanization, presents both opportunities and challenges. Demand for housing is steadily increasing, driven by factors like government initiatives and improving connectivity.

LICHousing's focus on affordable housing and project loans could be instrumental in addressing this demand, particularly by supporting

the development of suitable housing solutions in the hilly terrain. The company's strong Q3 performance and focus on customer-centric strategies position it well to capitalize on the growth potential of the Aizawl market and other similar markets across the country. Looking ahead, LICHousing anticipates a strong finish to the fiscal year.

Yashasvi Jaiswal's flying catch on debut stuns England, reminds India of World Cup pain

Mumbai: Yashasvi Jaiswal's ODI debut for India was already a moment to cherish. But a stunning catch in Nagpur on Thursday has made him the talk of the internet.

The young opener pulled off a running catch to dismiss Ben Duckett in the first ODI against England, drawing instant comparisons to a moment Indian fans would rather forget — the 2023 World Cup final.

Fielding at mid-wicket, Jaiswal sprinted backwards and dived forward to grab Duckett's top-edged pull off debu-



tant Harshit Rana's bowling in the 10th over. The grab was eerily similar to Travis Head's iconic catch that sent skipper Rohit Sharma packing in the



ODI World Cup 2023 final — a moment that practically sealed India's fate in the tournament.

Back then, Rohit had been on a charge, smashing 47 off

31 in a bid to maximize the powerplay before Head's brilliance cut him short. And on February 6, Duckett suffered a similar fate, his aggressive 32 off 29 ending in near-identical fashion.

It didn't take long for social media to explode. "Travis Head feels that Yashasvi catch!" wrote one user. "Jaiswal just gave us World Cup flashbacks. Same energy, but no heartbreak this time," posted another. One fan put it bluntly: "Purani yaadein yaad dila di Jaiswal ne..!"

The breakthrough came in the 10th over, just four balls after Phil Salt's run-out via a brilliant throw from Shreyas Iyer. England, cruising at 72/0, suddenly found themselves at 77/2.

Some even saw shades of Kapil Dev's legendary running catch of Vivian Richards in the 1983 World Cup final, a moment that turned the game in India's favour. At the time of writing, England were at 220 for 7 in 42.3 overs, with Jacob Bethell and Adil Rashid at the crease.

Chance for Bagan to seal berth in playoffs as they face Punjab FC in ISL clash



Mumbai: Mohun Bagan Super Giant, unbeaten in their last five games, will look to keep up their good work as they face Punjab FC in Wednesday's ISL clash at the Salt Lake Stadium.

After a clean sweep last season, Bagan will be looking to complete their second league double over Punjab FC since winning the earlier fixture 3-1 last December.

Besides, Bagan are on an eight-game winning streak at home and a victory on Wednesday will equal the longest home victorious stretch by any team in ISL history, levelling FC Goa's sequence of nine such games between December 2019 to November 2022.

Currently placed at the top with 43 points from 19 matches, Bagan will become the first team to qualify for the playoffs if they beat Punjab FC or even secure just a point.

Most of the things have gone in Bagan's favour in their last few games, but head coach Jose Molina is careful about focusing on the requirements of his team. "It is important to have balance in the team," Molina said on Tuesday, the eve of the game. The Spaniard also spoke about his team's strength from set-pieces. "Of course, we focus on set-pieces, but we focus equally on attack and defence."

"I've always talked about the importance of having balance in the team," Molina emphasised. Punjab FC will also draw motivation from having created chances against Bagan in their previous meeting.

FA Cup: Nistelrooy laments offside decision as United edge Leicester to enter last 16

Manchester: Leicester coach Ruud van Nistelrooy was left frustrated after his team's controversial 2-1 loss to Manchester United in the FA Cup last 16 on Friday. United's Harry Maguire netted a dramatic injury-time winner, despite strong claims that he was in an offside position.

Without VAR in the FA Cup, the goal stood, sending United through to the next round and marking their third home win over Leicester this season.

"This (loss) wasn't necessary," Van Nistelrooy told broadcasters. "This was half a meter (offside). Then extra time, stay in the game, you never know what happens. We deserved to go into extra time and maybe penalties. Decisions like these at our level are hard to swallow."



Leicester had taken the lead four minutes before halftime through Bobby De Cordova-Reid. Manuel Ugarte was dispossessed near the touchline, allowing Bilal El Khannouss to send in a low cross that Wilfred Ndidi struck goal-bound, deflecting in off De Cordova-Reid. Leicester went into the break with a deserved 1-0 advantage.

United, under new coach Ruben Amorim, struggled in the first half, playing at a slow tempo and failing to create clear chances. However, the introduction of substitutes Alejandro Garnacho and Joshua Zirkzee in the second half shifted the momentum. Garnacho's energetic play down the left set up Zirkzee's equalizer in the 68th minute, with the Dutch forward finishing an easy chance.

Just when the match seemed destined for extra time, Bruno Fernandes launched a long ball into the box, where Maguire headed home the winner in the dying moments. The decision not to call offside ignited protests from Leicester players and staff, but with no VAR, the goal was upheld.

Maguire defended United's second-half improvement and credited Garnacho's impact. "(It was a) great finish to the game," Maguire said.

"The second half we played a lot better. The first half was nowhere near good enough, we played at a slow tempo and we didn't really get going.

"He (Garnacho) made a big impact. He always does that when he comes off the bench, so credit to him, he's ready, he's focused."

Injury not serious, will be back for 2nd ODI: Shubman Gill provides fitness update on Virat Kohli

India vice-captain Shubman Gill has allayed fears around Virat Kohli's fitness, saying the batting stalwart is fine and should be fit for the second One-Day International against England here on Sunday.

Kohli, 36, was forced to miss the ODI series opener in Nagpur due to swelling in his right knee, leaving the team in a spot of bother as it went into the final dress rehearsal for the ICC Champions Trophy, beginning in Pakistan and Dubai on February 19.

Gill, who scored a clinical 87 in India's four-wicket victory against England in Nagpur, told Disney-Hotstar: "It's nothing serious. He (Kohli) was fine during yesterday's (Wednesday) practice, but he woke up with some swelling in his knee this morning (Thursday). He'll definitely be back for the second ODI." The top-order batter said he did not get carried away while approaching his century, adding that he would have played the shot, which ultimately got him, even if he was in his 60s.

Jos Buttler took a diving catch at mid-on off Saqib Mahmood's bowling as Gill, trying to pace the innings, mis-timed a shot to leave India at 235/6. "No, I wasn't thinking about my century. I was focused on the field placements and played my shots accordingly. I wanted to dominate the bowler, and I would have played the same shot even if I was in my 60s," Gill said.

Gill, who usually opens the innings in ODIs, said he had no problem coming in at No.3 in the



series against England. "I play at No. 3 in Tests, so it wasn't a big adjustment. It's always a challenge at that position because you have to adapt to the game situation. If the team loses quick wickets, you need to play sensibly. If the team starts well, you need to carry the momentum. My approach was simple — play according to the situation." On young Indian players frequently choosing the sweep and reverse sweep shots against spinners, Gill said it was not a team strategy.

It's an individual choice, not a team strategy. Every batsman has a plan to target specific areas. Many players are practicing sweeps and reverse sweeps in the nets to have more options while batting." On his 94-run partnership with Shreyas Iyer (59) for the third wicket, Gill said once they had sized up the field, scoring runs became easy. "We lost two early wickets, but the plan was to play according to the field and not hold back. After a few overs, the line and lengths became predictable, which helped us score faster." (PTI)

Leverkusen move past Cologne to advance into German Cup semifinals

Berlin: Defending champions Bayer Leverkusen came from two goals down to beat stubborn second-division Cologne 3-2 in extra time to book its semifinal spot in the German Cup on Thursday (IST). Facing a well-organised Cologne side, it took half an hour for Leverkusen to create its first clear chance when Alejandro Grimaldo's free kick hit the woodwork and four minutes later, Grimaldo shot wide from a tight angle.

On the stroke of halftime, Damion Downs

pounced on Dejan Ljubicic's good work to break the deadlock for Cologne, reports Xinhua. The hosts responded with furious attacks after the restart, but Cologne doubled its advantage in the 54th minute when Downs found Linton Maina, who slotted into the bottom corner of the far post from a tight angle.

Leverkusen was rewarded on the hour when Patrik Schick beat goalkeeper Marvin Schwabe from close range to halve the

deficit. The hosts had to wait until the sixth minute of stoppage time to restore parity after Schick nodded in a cross at the far post.

Leverkusen turned the table around eight minutes into extra time when Victor Boniface latched onto Grimaldo's pinpoint cross to find the net. Cologne thought it had equalized, but the VAR ruled out Imad Rondic's 112th-minute goal for offside. Also on Tuesday, Stuttgart saw off Augsburg 1-0 thanks to Deniz Undav's winner.