

Indian stock market rebounds with strong gains, Sensex jumps 1,006 points

Mumbai: The Indian stock market bounced back strongly on Monday despite geo-political tensions, with the benchmark indices ending the day on a robust note. The rally was driven primarily by a surge in the strong performance from select banking stocks and hopes of a new India-US trade deal. The Sensex opened with a positive gap of about 120 points, starting at 79,344. As the day progressed, the index continued to climb, reaching a fresh high for the year at 80,322 before closing at 80,218, up by 1,006 points, or 1.27 per cent.

This marked a significant recovery for the index. Similarly, the Nifty index also saw a positive movement, swinging between 24,054 and 24,355, and settling at 24,329, up by 289 points, or 1.2 per cent. "On the higher end, 24,360 has remained a resistance level, and the Nifty might spend some more time around the current range unless 24,360 is decisively breached," Rupak De of LKP Securities said.

He added that above 24,360, the index could move towards 24,550, where the 61.80 per cent Fibonacci retracement



level of the previous fall from 26,277 to 21,743 lies. Major banking stocks such as ICI-Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, and SBI contributed

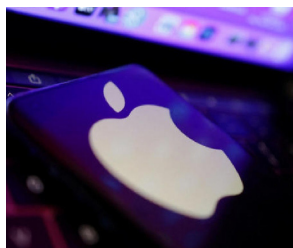
significantly to the market's strong performance, together adding up to 340 points to the Sensex. These top four stocks made up nearly 75 per cent of

the day's total gains.

Among the individual gainers, Sun Pharma, Mahindra and Mahindra, Tata Steel, SBI, Axis Bank, Tata Motors, and Larsen and Toubro all saw an increase of 2-3 per cent in their stock prices. However, some stocks like HCL Technologies, UltraTech Cement, Hindustan Unilever, and Eterna faced losses, with HCL Technologies falling nearly 2 per cent. In the broader market, the BSE MidCap index rose by 1.4 per cent, while the SmallCap index gained 0.4 per cent.

New iPhone plant starts production in southern India, another to begin shipments in May

Mumbai: A new plant making iPhones in southern India has started production and another will begin shipments in May, as Apple looks to boost manufacturing beyond its tariff-hit main manufacturing hub, China, sources said.



Apple is positioning India as an alternative manufacturing base to China as a trade war flares between Washington and Beijing, with U.S. President Donald Trump's more than 100 per cent tariffs on China threatening supply chain disruptions and stoking fears of a rise in iPhone prices. The Trump administration has so far spared China-made electronics from tariffs, but Washington has signalled that some levies could come in the coming weeks.

A new Tata Electronics plant in Hosur in south India's Tamil Nadu state started operations in recent days to make older iPhone models on one assembly line, one source said.

Another \$2.6 billion plant run by Taiwan's Foxconn that is under construction in Bengaluru will also start initial operations with one assembly line within days, according to four sources, including one government official.

One source said around 300-500 iPhone units per hour can be made at the

factory where, according to another, iPhone 16 and 16e models will be produced.

The plant is expected to create 50,000 jobs at full capacity when construction is fully completed, which is expected by December 2027. Tata declined to comment, while Apple and Foxconn did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

China accounts for more than 75 per cent of iPhone production globally, while India contributes to about 18 per cent, research firm Counterpoint estimates.

Apple is taking urgent steps to move production of most of its US-sold iPhones to factories in India by the end of 2026, Reuters has reported.

Apple in recent weeks has stepped up production in India to beat US tariffs, shipping some 600 tonnes of iPhones worth \$2 billion to the US in March, a monthly record for both Tata and Foxconn, with the latter alone accounting for smartphones worth \$1.3 billion.

PV sector to hit record volumes, EV gains stay modest amid high costs, range worries

Mumbai: The passenger vehicle industry in India is expected to touch a record cumulative domestic and export volume of 50 lakh units this fiscal despite the annual growth rate slowing down to 2-4 per cent, according to Crisil Ratings.

However, penetration of electric vehicles (EVs) is seen at a moderate 3-3.5 per cent despite launches and declining battery costs because of high prices, modest charging infrastructure and range anxiety, restricting the market to urban users as a second car option, the analytics firm said in a statement.

The growth in the EV segment has slowed after doubling last year on a low base, it added. This marks the fourth consecutive year of record sales, although momentum has significantly eased from the 25 per cent surge in fiscal 2023 after the pandemic. The domestic market accounted for about 85 per cent of total volumes last fiscal, with exports accounting for the rest, Crisil Ratings said.



The entry of global premium EV models, including Tesla would intensify competition in the premium segment, which accounts for less than 10 per cent of the overall volume. This will likely reset consumer expectations across categories, pushing Indian Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEMs) to accelerate technology upgrades, Crisil Ratings said. Going ahead, the pace of interest rate cuts and EV adoption, as well as potential supply shocks could impact the availability of chips and battery cells.

Spotify rolls out \$100 million push to chip away rival turf, lure video podcasters from YouTube

Mumbai: Spotify has paid more than \$100 million to podcast publishers and creators since January, the company told The New York Times' DealBook.

The payout is the result of a program introduced this year that opened new revenue streams to eligible hosts. But it is also an attempt to draw more creators (and their audiences) to Spotify, as the rise of video podcasting has driven many of them to YouTube.

Video has come to dominate podcasting. More than half of Americans older than 12 have watched a video podcast — but primarily on YouTube, according to an Edison Research report from January. The service claims to reach 1 billion podcast consumers every month, making it the dominant platform for podcasts — a media king and king-maker — and leaving onetime audio-only platforms like Spotify and Apple Podcasts in the dust.

(Spotify introduced video podcasts in 2019.)

Compared with YouTube, Spotify has become a podcast underdog, with about 170 million monthly podcast listeners among its total audience of 675 million. One indication of how far Spotify has to go to catch up to the top player: YouTube paid out more than \$70 billion to creators and media companies from 2021 to 2024. The company reports earnings Tuesday and is expected to make about 540 million euros (about \$616,000) in pre-tax income on 4.2 billion euros in sales, according to S&P Capital IQ.

The new partner programme aims to chip away at YouTube's dominance. Spotify previously paid creators only by sharing advertising revenue with them, much like YouTube. Now it also gives them incentives to upload videos, with eligible creators earning additional money based on how much premium subscribers engage with their videos.

Adani Total Gas clocks 15 pc operational revenue growth in Q4, volume up 13 pc

Ahmedabad: India's leading energy transition company Adani Total Gas Limited (ATGL) on Monday reported strong results, with revenue from operations increasing by 15 per cent at Rs 1,448 crore in Q4 FY25. For the entire FY25, operational revenue rose by 12 per cent on account of higher volume, primarily on CNG segment. The volume went up 13 per cent in Q4 FY25 and 15 per cent year-on-year in FY25. The company earned a consolidated PAT of Rs 155 crore in Q4. In the January-March period, the company added 42 new CNG stations to reach 647, while expanding PNG home connections to 9.63 lakh, adding 40,991 new households.

It expanded its footprint to 3,401 installed electric vehicle (EV) charging points across 26 states/UTs. "During the year, Team ATGL has continued its thrust to expand access of PNG and CNG to large masses.

India's industrial growth clocks 3 per cent growth in March



New Delhi: India's industrial growth, based on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), edged up to 3 per cent in March this year after slowing to 2.9 per cent in February, according to data released by the Ministry of Statistics on Monday. The data showed that the manufacturing sector, which provides quality jobs for the country's young graduates passing out of the country's universities and engineering institutes, recorded a 3 per cent growth in March compared to the same month last year. The power sector output grew by a more robust 6.3 per cent growth during the month while the mining sector proved to be a laggard with a mere 0.4 per cent growth in March.

87% of Indians link Mosquito disturbances to family health risks, reveals Goodnight Survey

Guwahati: A recent pan-India survey commissioned by Goodnight, India's leading household insecticide brand, has uncovered significant health concerns linked to mosquito disturbances. The survey, conducted by YouGov, found that 87% of Indians believe mosquito-related sleep disturbances are impacting family health, especially among children. Sleep deprivation, with adults losing up to 2 hours and children near-

ly 4 hours of sleep nightly, is heightening the risk of mosquito-borne diseases like malaria and dengue. This growing concern is reflected across regions, with 87% of respondents from North, East, and West India, and 86% from South India sharing similar sentiments. In Guwahati, trends mirror this national anxiety, with an uptick in consumer demand for mosquito repellents as families seek ways to combat the



increasing mosquito menace. The Guwahati market, known for its busy consumer base, is witnessing heightened sales in mosquito control products, with residents prioritizing health safety amid rising concerns.

Ashwin Moorthy, CMO at GCPL, emphasized the urgent need for effective mosquito control solutions. In response, Goodnight has introduced the innovative Goodnight Flash Liquid Vaporiser, powered by Renofluthrin, an indigenously developed molecule proven to be 2X more effective than current alternatives. This product aims to address the growing health and productivity challenges posed by mosquito-borne diseases.

Nissan rolls out free nationwide AC check-up camp, offers discounts on services

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India has launched a nationwide free AC check-up camp for its customers, reinforcing its customer-first approach and commitment to high-quality service. The special service camp will run from April 15 to June 15, 2025, across all 123 authorised Nissan service workshops in India. The initiative offers a 12-point AC check-up and a complimentary car top wash, along with discounts of up to 10% on labour charges and up to 15% on Value Added Services (VAS), at the discretion of dealers. Trained professionals will carry out all inspections using Nissan Genuine Spare Parts to ensure optimal service and customer satisfaction.

Customers can easily book appointments through the Nissan ONE App or the official website, www.nissan.in. This initiative aims to provide hassle-free vehicle maintenance ahead of the summer season while rewarding customer loyalty. In Guwahati, where rising temperatures are driving demand for efficient vehicle cooling systems, the check-up camp has been welcomed by local Nissan vehicle owners. Service centres in the city have reported increased bookings, as customers take advantage of the timely offer to prepare their vehicles for the sweltering summer months.

Shri Jayant Chowdhury pays tribute to victims of the recent terror attack in Pahalgam at “Kaushal Manthan 2025”

Guwahati: In a solemn moment of unity and remembrance, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Government of India, has led officials, staff, and stakeholders in observing a two-minute silence in memory of the victims of the recent terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir. The gathering, assembled for “Kaushal Manthan 2025” at Kaushal Bhawan, stood in heartfelt solidarity with the bereaved families and the people of Jammu & Kashmir. Following the tribute, “Kaushal Manthan 2025” commenced under the theme “Collective Vision for a Skilled Bharat”, bringing together key stakeholders from across ministries, industry bodies, academia, and Sector Skill Councils to discuss a cohesive and future-ready skilling and entrepreneurship strategy for India.

Setting the context, Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, MSDE, highlighted the demographic dividend as India's strategic advantage. “India is home to one of the largest youth populations globally. Tapping this potential means aligning



skilling with market demand, embedding global standards in training, and ensuring that every certificate opens the door to opportunity,” he said. By integrating AI tools within MSDE's skilling framework, the Ministry is advancing both “skilling for AI” and “skilling with AI,” reinforcing its vision of inclusive, tech-powered learning across India. “Kaushal Manthan 2025” convened key stakeholders from MSDE, MoRD, DPIIT, NITI Aayog, NCVET, NSDC, SIDBI, NABARD, FICCI, CII, NHFDC, Sector Skill Councils, and academia—reflecting a powerful convergence of expertise and purpose.

Bajaj Allianz introduces ClimateSafe for instant, hassle-free climate risk cover

Guwahati: Bajaj Allianz General Insurance has unveiled ClimateSafe, India's first-of-its-kind parametric insurance product offering instant protection against climate risks. Designed for retail customers, gig workers, office goers, and shop owners, ClimateSafe covers income loss and extra expenses triggered by extreme weather events like excessive rainfall, heatwaves, and cold waves.

The 100% digital product enables instant policy issuance, allows multiple purchases throughout the year, and offers automatic claim settlements within seven days without the need for customer intimation. Customers can self-select their location, weather risk, and insurance



period, starting from as short as one day. Dynamic pricing based on real-time climate data ensures affordability and flexibility.

Dr. Tapan Singhel, MD & CEO of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, said, “Climate change is no longer a distant threat. ClimateSafe is our proactive solution to safeguard livelihoods from climate-related disruptions.”

In Guwahati, a city increasingly affected by erratic weather patterns, ClimateSafe is expected to be a timely solution. With the city's growing retail and gig economy sectors vulnerable to flooding and extreme heat, the insurance offers an affordable, hassle-free safety net. Experts predict strong uptake in Guwahati's market where climate resilience has become a key concern.

HP unveils next-gen AI PCs in India, caters to business and consumer needs

Guwahati: HP has unveiled its most advanced line-up of AI-powered PCs in India, aiming to redefine work and productivity for enterprises and consumers alike. The newly launched HP EliteBook, ProBook, and OmniBook series are powered by Intel Core Ultra 200 V, AMD Ryzen AI 300, and Qualcomm Snapdragon processors, with dedicated Neural Processing Units (NPUs) delivering up to 55 trillion operations per second (TOPS).

Designed as Copilot+ PCs, the lineup includes AI features such as real-time video enhancements, personalized performance tuning, and advanced collaboration tools. Enterprise users can expect seamless multitasking, robust security with HP Wolf Pro Security, and enhanced virtual meetings via Poly Camera Pro and Poly Audio.



In Guwahati, tech retailers report growing interest from professionals and content creators seeking AI-integrated laptops. “With hybrid work models now the norm, demand for smarter, secure laptops has surged. HP's new range is well-aligned with the evolving needs of Guwahati's young workforce,” said a local electronics distributor.

For creators and everyday users, the HP OmniBook series delivers adaptive AI features for creative workflows, video calls, and performance optimization. Prices for the new range start at Rs. 77,200, available via HP World stores and online platforms.

Benelli | Keeway | Moto Vault opens new showroom in Lakhimpur

Lakhimpur: Benelli | Keeway | Moto Vault India has unveiled its newest showroom in Lakhimpur, marking the company's 67th outlet in the country. The state-of-the-art dealership, located at Ward no 14, NH 15, North Lakhimpur, will offer a full spectrum of sales, service, and spare parts support for Benelli | Keeway | Moto Vault customers in the region.

Launched under the banner of A.R Motors, this 3S facility is managed by Mr. Arif Ali Hazarika and Mr. Rizwan Ali Hazarika. The showroom showcases a wide array of premium motorcycles from renowned brands including Benelli, Keeway, Moto Morini, Zontes, and QJ Motor, with models ranging from 125cc to 650cc. These motorcycles cater to enthusiasts across diverse segments, from retro classics to adventure tourers, with prices starting at Rs. 1.20 Lakhs.

Speaking at the inauguration, Mr. Vikas Jhabakh, Managing Director of Benelli | Keeway | Moto Vault India, emphasized the company's commitment to



expanding its network and providing superior customer service. The Lakhimpur showroom is expected to further strengthen the brand's presence in Assam and the northeast region.

The opening of the Benelli | Keeway | Moto Vault showroom is expected to cater to the growing demand for premium motorcycles in the region. Lakhimpur, known for its emerging consumer market, will benefit from a direct access to high-end bikes and superior after-sales service. Local motorbike enthusiasts can now experience a range of international brands, enhancing their overall ownership experience.

Customers can also enjoy several benefits, including attractive booking amounts, extended warranties, and 24x7 roadside assistance. The showroom is now open for business, inviting riders to explore the expansive product lineup.

India, Egypt eye strategic skilling alliance to boost global workforce competitiveness



Guwahati: India and Egypt are strengthening their strategic partnership through a focused push in skill development and vocational training. A high-level Egyptian delegation led by H.E. Prof. Dr. Ayman Bahaa El Din, Deputy Minister of Technical Education, met with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in New Delhi to chart the way forward.

The meeting spotlighted India's aspiration to become the "Skill Capital of the World" through the Skill India Mission. Secretary Atul Kumar Tiwari shared that nearly 400,000 individuals have already been trained in futuristic domains like AI, robotics, and big data, while 1.3 million entrepreneurs have been nurtured. India's world-class Skill India International Centres and globally aligned TVET models

were highlighted as blueprints for collaboration.

Egypt showcased its EU-supported TVET reforms and Sector Skill Councils, echoing India's scalable skilling ecosystem. Ongoing partnerships, including the NIELIT-ITI MoU, El-Sewedy-Amity University collaboration, and the Indian-backed Vocational Training Centre in Cairo, were acknowledged as successful case studies.

In Guwahati, such international collaborations could unlock global skilling opportunities for youth in Assam, particularly in IT, tourism, and green technologies—sectors with high growth potential.

Future plans include joint certifications, faculty exchanges, and Centres of Excellence, aimed at building a future-ready, globally competitive workforce.

CMF by Nothing unveils next-gen smartphone and earbuds in India

Guwahati: CMF, a sub-brand of the London-based tech giant Nothing, has unveiled its latest lineup of products, including the CMF Phone 2 Pro, alongside three new variants of its earbuds—Buds 2, Buds 2 Plus, and Buds 2a. The announcement marks a significant milestone as CMF continues to revolutionize the smartphone and audio space.

The CMF Phone 2 Pro features a best-in-segment three-camera system, with a 50 MP main sensor, telephoto lens, and ultra-wide camera, ensuring enhanced photography experiences. Powered by the MediaTek Dimensity 7300 Pro 5G processor, this sleek device promises faster processing and longer battery life, lasting up to two days on a single charge. The phone will be available in four colors—White, Black, Orange, and Light Green—at INR 17,999 for the 8+128 GB variant, with special introductory offers starting at INR 16,999.

Alongside the smartphone, CMF also launched its Buds 2 series, offering affordable options for audio enthusiasts, starting at INR 2,199. These earbuds cater to different needs, from everyday use to high-quality immersive sound experiences.

In Guwahati, the demand for smartphones and audio products is soaring, driven by an increasing tech-savvy population. CMF's new offerings are expected to resonate with consumers seeking cutting-edge devices at competitive prices, especially with the upcoming sales on platforms like Flipkart and retail outlets across the city. The CMF Phone 2 Pro and Buds 2 series are anticipated to perform well in the region, contributing to the growing popularity of Nothing's products in India.

DGT, MSDE announces admissions for CITS courses at NSTIs and IToTs for the academic year 2025-26

Guwahati: The Directorate General of Training (DGT), under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, has announced the admission schedule for the Craft Instructor Training Scheme (CITS) enrolment for the academic session 2025-26. Aspirants who possess an NTC (National Trade Certificate), NAC (National Apprenticeship Certificate), Diploma, or Degree qualification, or are appearing for the final year qualifying examinations (NTC/NAC/Diploma/Degree)

can apply online at the official website— www.nimionlineadmission.in — between 8th May 2025 and 28th May 2025. Admissions will be based on the All-India Common Entrance Test (AICET), which will be conducted in a Computer-Based Test (CBT) mode across multiple centers nationwide. The examination is scheduled for 15th June 2025.

The selected candidates will be offered training across 41 trades — comprising 28 engineering trades and 13 non-engineering trades — at National Skill Training Institutes

(NSTIs) and Institutes for Training of Trainers (IToTs) across India. Under CITS, 45,025 trainers have been trained in the last five years, between 2019 and 2024. The Craft Instructor Training Scheme (CITS) is designed to train instructor trainees comprehensively, covering both technical skills and training methodologies. The National Council for Vocational Education & Training (NCVET), as an imperative, deems it suitable that all trainers in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) are CITS-certified.

Kwality Wall's launches 'The Dairy Factory' to set new standards in premium ice cream market

Guwahati: Kwality Wall's has announced the nationwide launch of The Dairy Factory, a premium range of slow-churned ice creams, aiming to elevate the at-home dessert experience this summer. Crafted with real dairy and a meticulous slow-churning process, the new line promises a richer texture and velvety smooth taste.

The Dairy Factory is available in four classic flavours — Vanilla, Butterscotch, Mango, and Chocolate — and comes in convenient party packs and tubs. The slow-churn technique breaks down ice crystals and blends air seamlessly, creating a creamier, smoother finish.

Toloy Tanridagli, Head of

Ice Cream Business at HUL, said, "The Dairy Factory's slow churned ice creams are a wonderful innovation range made with real dairy and premium ingredients. The differentiated technology enhances the experience, marrying traditional nuances with modern preferences."

In Guwahati, known for its growing appetite for premium desserts, local retailers and delivery platforms are gearing up to meet anticipated high demand. Consumers in the region have shown an increasing preference for artisanal-quality products, especially during the summer season.

The new range is now avail-



able in Kwality Wall's freezers nationwide and on quick-commerce platforms, just in time for summer vacations and IPL evenings at home.

President Murmu leads Indian delegation to attend Pope Francis' state funeral in Vatican

Guwahati: President Droupadi Murmu led the Indian delegation to Vatican City to attend the State Funeral of His Holiness Pope Francis, offering condolences on behalf of the Government and people of India. The President was accompanied by Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijju, Minister of State for Minority Affairs, Shri George Kurian, and Deputy Speaker of the Goa Legislative Assembly, Shri Joshua De Souza.

President Murmu arrived in Rome on April 25 and participated in the State Funeral on April 26, where she paid homage at the Saint Peter's Basilica. The Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Shri Randhir Jaiswal, confirmed the President's visit, noting, "President Droupadi Murmu paid homage to His Holiness Pope Francis at the Saint Peter's Basilica in Vatican City."

The passing of Pope Francis on April 21, 2025, marked a moment of profound grief worldwide. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences, acknowledging the late Pope's deep affection for the people of In-



dia. India declared three days of State Mourning to honor the Pope.

In Guwahati, local communities have been deeply moved by the loss of Pope Francis. The sentiment of mourning is reflected in the city's churches, where memorial services are being held. The Guwahati market has also witnessed a surge in religious items, with many locals seeking to pay tribute, purchasing candles and symbols of peace in remembrance of the late Pontiff.

Bahamas unveils a fresh collection with bold prints and vibrant colors

Guwahati: Bahamas, a brand by India's largest footwear manufacturer, Relaxo Footwears Limited, has introduced its latest collection of casual footwear that blend comfort with creative expression. The new range is designed to resonate with India's Gen-Z and millennial consumers who are increasingly gravitating toward fashion that reflects their individuality. With fresh, funky, and unapologetically fun new designs, Bahamas is stepping up its style game in a way that feels as effortless as its signature comfort. The new line features everything from high-energy shades to bold prints that instantly catch the eye.

The launch comes close on the heels of the brand's digital campaign, "Stress Ko Do Rest", a campaign based on the brand's philosophy, "Keep Chillin', Keep Flippin'". Fronted by Salman Khan, the campaign urged young Indians to shake off the small stuff and imbibe a more joyful lifestyle. The new collection echoes that spirit, not limited to the messaging but in the way it feels: easy, expressive, and effortlessly cool.

ITC's Sunrise Spices Launches 'Xipa Bisari: A Back to Roots Series'

Guwahati: ITC's Sunrise Spices has launched "Xipa Bisari: A Back to Roots Series," a culinary documentary exploring Assam's traditional cuisine. The 10-episode series, launched at the Chandmari Bihu Xonmilon pandal in Guwahati, features acclaimed chef Atul Lahkar journeying through Assam to document and revive disappearing recipes.

Supported by the Cultural Ministry of Assam, the series captures Chef Lahkar interacting with local culinary knowledge custodians, particularly elderly women who have preserved traditional cooking methods through generations.

"Xipa Bisari" honors Assam's food heritage, empowers local communities, and inspires the next generation to cherish their culinary roots," said Piyush Mishra, Business Head, Spices, ITC Ltd.

The documentary showcases Chef Lahkar reinterpreting traditional recipes using Sunrise Spices' authentic blends, highlighting the distinctive flavors that characterize Assamese cuisine while preserving its cultural significance for future generations.

Barcelona routs Chelsea 4-1 to reach Women's Champions League final



Washington: Defending champions Barcelona delivered a commanding performance at Stamford Bridge on Sunday, defeating Chelsea 4-1 in the second leg of their Women's Champions League semifinal to advance 8-2 on aggregate. Having already won the first leg 4-1 in Spain, Barcelona stayed on course for a third consecutive European crown—and fourth overall—behind a ruthless attacking display.

Aitana Bonmati opened the scoring in the 27th minute with a stunning solo effort. Picking up the ball in-side her own half, she drove at pace down the right flank before rifling a low, curling shot into the top-corner from just outside the area. Two minutes before halftime, Caroline Graham Hansen's precise cross found Poland captain Ewa Pajor, who converted from close range to make it 2-0. Early in the second half, Clàudia Pina added a third with a superb curled finish from the edge of the box, and Salma Paralluelo wrapped up the rout in stoppage time, stabbing in the rebound after Niko Karelis saw two attempts blocked by desperate Chelsea defending. Chelsea, who had themselves shot ahead in the first leg, managed a stoppage-time consolation goal through Dutch midfielder Wieke Kaptein, but it proved little more than a footnote to Barcelona's dominance. The win extended Barcelona's unbeaten run in all competitions to nine matches and increased their goal tally in this Champions League campaign to an astonishing 44 strikes.

Barcelona will now await the winner of Sunday's semi-final second leg between Lyon and Arsenal in Lyon, where the French side held a 2-1 advantage from the first match. The final is scheduled for May 24 at Lisbon's 50,000-seat Estádio José Alvalade. Lyon and Barcelona have already met in three of the last six finals, promising another high-stakes showdown.

Mohun Bagan, FC Goa Secure Super Cup Semifinal Spots with Wins



Bhubaneswar: Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) and FC Goa advanced to the Super Cup semi-finals with victories over Kerala Blasters and Punjab FC, respectively, in exciting encounters on Saturday. MBSG, the Indian Super League Shield and Cup winners, triumphed 2-1 over Kerala Blasters, with goals in each half from Sahal Abdul Samad (22nd minute) and Suhail Ahmad Bhat (51st minute). Kerala Blasters' Sreekuttan MS pulled one back in injury time (90+4), but it was too late to change the outcome, sending MBSG into the semifinals.

In the later match, FC Goa produced a dramatic late comeback to defeat Punjab FC 2-1. Punjab FC had taken the lead through Ezequiel Vidal in the 57th minute, but quickfire goals from Borja Herrera and Mohammed Yasir in the dying minutes (88th and 90th minutes) secured a thrilling turnaround for FC Goa. The match between Mohun Bagan and Kerala Blasters started slowly, with both teams hesitant to commit men forward early on. The first real chance came in the 22nd minute when MBSG made their break-through. Salahuddeen Adnan beat his marker Naocha Singh and delivered a perfect cross into the six-yard box, where Samad latched onto it and chipped the ball over Kerala goalkeeper Sachin Suresh to make it 1-0.

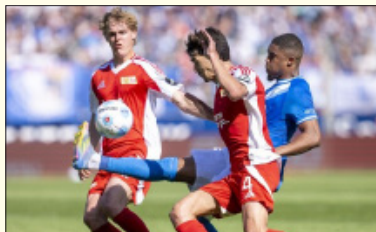
The Blasters responded with some attacking intent but failed to convert their chances. Noah Sadaoui's long-range effort was comfortably saved by MBSG goalkeeper Dheeraj Singh, and a series of dangerous comers from Kerala saw Hormipam's header tipped over by Dheeraj, and Sadaoui's low cross cleared off the line. As the second half began, Kerala's hopes were dashed early when Mohun Bagan added another. Ashique Kuruniyan made a blistering run down the left and crossed perfectly for Bhat, who tapped it in for a 2-0 lead. Kerala Blasters had several more opportunities to get back into the game, including two missed chances from Jesus Jimenez, but Dheeraj's stellar goalkeeping.

kept them at bay. The Mohun Bagan goalkeeper was also called into action to deny Kwame Peprah and Jimenez in the final stages. Despite the late consolation goal from Sreekuttan, which was set up by Jimenez in the 94th minute, MBSG held on for a 2-1 victory.

Bochum Held by Union, Remains Rooted to Bottom

Berlin: VfL Bochum's faint hopes of Bundesliga survival suffered another blow on Sunday as their 1-1 draw with Union Berlin did nothing to lift them off the bottom of the table. Despite Matus Bero's second-half penalty rebound levelling Benedict Hollerbach's first-half opener, Bochum remain adrift on 21 points with just three matches left.

Union took the lead shortly before halftime when Hollerbach capitalized on a defensive slip to slot home. Early in the second period, Bochum won a spot-kick, but goalkeeper Frederik Rönnow denied the initial effort. Bero pounced on the rebound to restore parity, yet Bochum could not find a winner. The draw proved costly, as relegation rivals Holstein Kiel and Heidenheim both won their 31st-round fixtures, moving to 22 and 25 points respectively. Hoffenheim and St. Pauli also secured victories, with the latter set to conclude their match at Werder Bremen later on Sunday.



Hunger for Challenges Fuels Iyer's IPL Resurgence

Kolkata: Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer has rediscovered his peak form this season, a turn-around his spin coach Sunil Joshi attributes to the batter's "relentless hunger for challenges." Since starring in India's Champions Trophy campaign, Iyer has posted unbeaten knocks of 97 and 52 in his first two IPL outings, silencing doubts over his retention. Joshi pointed to Iyer's growing consistency against both pace and spin over the past eight to ten months. "He's shown a real willingness to take on every delivery," the coach remarked ahead of Punjab's clash with his former side, Kolkata Knight Riders. "Players of his calibre don't shy away from challenge—they embrace it."

Technical adjustments have underpinned Iyer's revival. A slightly more open batting stance has improved his on-side access, while moving deeper into the crease affords him extra split-seconds to negotiate shortpitched bowling. Those tweaks, combined with rigorous off-field preparation, have yielded impressive returns: in five Cham-



pions Trophy matches, Iyer averaged 48.60 with four scores above 40, including a pair of fifties.

Joshi also praised Iyer's leadership, noting how the captain invests time with every squad member—even net bowlers—to build team unity. "When he speaks to players at all levels, it shows he cares about every contributor," Joshi said. "That kind of mindset bodes well for his future as a leader."

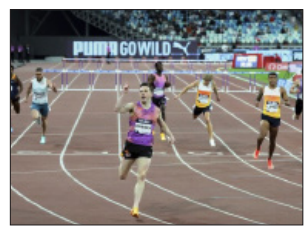
Warholm Sets Unofficial 300m Hurdles World Record at Diamond League Opener

Xiamen: Norwegian athlete Karsten Warholm set a new unofficial world record in the 300-meter hurdles, clocking 33.05 seconds at the opening Diamond League meeting on Saturday. Warholm shaved 0.21 seconds off his previous record of 33.26, set in Oslo in 2021, the same year he also set the 400-meter hurdles world record.

Although the 300-meter hurdles is not currently an Olympic event, it will soon become an official world-record discipline, as announced by World

Athletics. Warholm expressed surprise at the ease with which he completed the race. "I was a little bit surprised by how easy my legs were feeling off the last bend," he said. "Of course you feel it a little bit in the end, but I managed to really push in the last 45 meters. This shows that the speed is there and the speed over the hurdles is there."

Other Olympic champions also posted strong victories at the event. Faith Kipyegon of Kenya won the 1,000 meters with a time of 2:29.21, mov-



ing closer to Svetlana Masterkova's 1996 world record of 2:28.98. Mondo Duplantis triumphed in the pole vault, Yaroslava Mahuchikh won the high jump, Beatrice Chebet took the 5,000 meters, and Valarie Allman claimed victory in the discus.

Mayank Yadav's pace set to rise with more IPL game time, says Zaheer Khan

Mumbai: Former India seamer and Lucknow Super Giants mentor Zaheer Khan expressed confidence on Sunday that young pacer Mayank Yadav will regain and surpass his prior speeds as he accumulates more match experience in the IPL. Playing his first game since a lengthy injury layoff, Yadav impressed despite bowling slightly below his peak velocity. He returned figures of 4-0-40-2 against Mumbai Indians, dismissing Rohit Sharma (12) and Hardik Pandya (5), while consistently hitting around 140 km/h—short of the 150-155 km/h highs he reached before back and toe problems sidelined him after his India T20 debut last October.

"The wait was long, and for anyone returning after so many months, crossing that first hurdle is vital," Zaheer told reporters after LSG's 54-run defeat. "I'm happy with how he bowled and that he completed his four overs. His execution, and crucially his speed, will only improve as he plays more." Zaheer outlined the cautious approach the franchise adopted to reintegrate Mayank into competitive action. "We took our time to create a comfortable environment around him," he said.

"Fast bowling is never easy—especially in T20 when batters attack from ball one—so we wanted to ensure he was physically and mentally ready."

The LSG mentor also emphasised the ongoing collaboration with the National Cricket Academy. "We've maintained constant dialogue with the NCA—physios, trainers and I were always updated on his progress. There's a clear plan for his workload and recovery, and we've structured his IPL schedule with adequate breaks to help him flourish." Beyond Mayank's return, Zaheer reaffirmed his faith in LSG's batting nucleus. "Nicholas Pooran, Mitchell Marsh and Aiden Markram have been our template all season, and we'll continue to back them," he said. "We encourage a fearless approach—freedom of expression at the crease has been key to our mindset."

On the other side, Mumbai's young all-rounder Naman Dhir, who struck a rapid 11-ball 25, credited the team's balanced performances for their fifth straight win. "In the last five games, we've been ticking all the boxes and winning key moments," he said. "We'll keep doing that."