

NORTH EAST BUSINESS MIRROR

Vol.No. 03 ■ Issue - 13 ■ North East Business Mirror ■ Thursday, 10 July, 2025

■ Edition - Guwahati

■ Pages - 6 ■ Price ₹ 3

Gold prices fall over Rs 400, silver down Rs 1,000 amid US tariff uncertainties

New Delhi: Gold rates fell over Rs 400 on Monday amid looming uncertainty over the US reciprocal tariffs, as silver prices also took a hit of over Rs 1,000. The 24-carat gold prices closed at Rs 96,596, down Rs 425 against the previous day's closing price of Rs 97,021, the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA) latest data showed. As per the data, silver was priced at Rs 106,531 per kg, down Rs 1,049 as compared to Rs 107,580, the last day's price. Gold has come down slightly after the ceasefire announcements as well as stronger than expected US data in recent days. "However, given that gold buying by central banks is running at above 1,000 tonnes per annum, and unlikely to abate in the next few months, and that inflation is still running higher than what the Fed expects," said Sandip Raichura, CEO of Retail Broking and Distribution and Director, PL Capital.

JSW bags SMPK deal to modernise Calcutta port berths in Rs 740 crore project

New Delhi: JSW Infrastructure, the port and logistics arm of the JSW group, on Monday said it received a letter of award (LoA) from Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (SMPK) to modernise and operate two berths at the Netaji Subhas Dock (NSD) at Calcutta. The project involves the reconstruction of berth 8 and the modernisation of berths 7 and 8. The project, awarded on a design, build, finance, operate, and transfer basis under the PPP model, is aimed at enhancing the container handling capacity of the port.

The project involves an estimated capex of ₹740 crore and a construction period of two years. JSW Infra will also be able to commence operations during the construction phase. During the 30-year concession period, JSW Infra has agreed to pay ₹4,678 per container as royalty to SMPK to operate the berths beating Adani in the competitive tender, The Telegraph has reported earlier. This move brings JSW Infra's total container handling capacity close to 1 million TEUs.

Stock market ends flat as investors await clarity on India-US trade deal



Mumbai: The Indian stock market ended flat on Monday as investors remained cautious amid uncertainty around the interim India-US trade deal. Sensex closed at 83,409.68, marginally up 9.61 points or 0.01 per cent. The 30-share index opened marginally lower at 83,398.08 against the last session's closing of 83,432.89. The index did

not see much volatility as it touched an intra-day high at 83,516.83, a jump of 84 points.

Similarly, Nifty settled flat at 25,461.30, up 0.30 points. From the Sensex basket, Hindustan Unilever, Adani Ports, Kotak Bank, Asian Paints, ITC, Power Grid, NTPC, Bharati Airtel, and Sun Pharma settled in positive territory. While Mahindra and Mahindra, Tata Motors, Tata Steel, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance, L&T, TCS, SBI, and Infosys ended in the red. Meanwhile, 22 shares advanced and 28 declined from the Nifty50 index.

Nifty largely traded in a narrow range throughout the session as investors remained cautious ahead of the anticipated US tariff announcements, said analysts. "Market participants appeared reluctant to take aggressive positions, keeping the broader index range-bound," said Sundar Kewat from Ashika Institutional Equity.

India's commercial vehicle sales projected to see 2-5 pc growth in FY26

New Delhi: Commercial Vehicle (CV) wholesale volumes in India are expected to recover by around 2-5 per cent in FY26 after registering a subdued growth in the past two financial years, a report said on Monday. The medium and heavy commercial vehicle (MHCV) segment is projected to grow by 4-6 per cent in the current financial year, while light commercial vehicle (LCV) segment is expected to grow by 2-4 per cent in the same period, a CareEdge Ratings report showed.

"The commercial vehicle (CV) industry is expected to experience moderate growth, with overall sales volume likely to improve by around 2-5 per cent YoY in FY26," said Arti Roy, Associate Director, CareEdge Ratings. The recovery will be driven by increased in-



frastructure activity, improved rural sentiment on the back of normal monsoon forecast, more attractive vehicle financing due to recent interest rate cuts, and ongoing fleet replacement - particularly in the bus segment - spurred by ageing vehicles, road tax concessions available for new vehicles under the scrappage policy for

older vehicles and the transition to electric vehicles (EVs), Roy explained.

Muted growth in FY25 was due to a slowdown in demand in both MHCV and LCV segments. Despite the low demand, MHCV volumes saw a modest increase of 1.2 per cent, the report stated, whereas LCV volumes declined by 0.3 per cent.

Samsung unveils new smart monitor range with AI-powered M9



Mumbai: Samsung, India's largest consumer electronics brand, announced its all-new Smart Monitor family, featuring the luxurious M9 (M90SF), alongside enhanced editions of the M8 (M80SF) and M7 (M70F). With advanced AI features across the lineup, the new offerings provide a more personalized and connected screen for work and entertainment. "By combining Samsung's 4K QD-OLED brilliance with intuitive vision AI, the M9 elevates the display into something more than a monitor. With real time picture and sound optimization, a sleek all-in-one design and

seamless access to your favorite streaming and work tools, the M9 delivers a sharper, smarter and truly immersive experience," said Puneet Sethi, Vice President, Enterprise Business, Samsung India. All three models integrate seamlessly with SmartThings, support Multi Control between Samsung devices, and offer Multi View for multitasking. With Microsoft 365 access, users can create and edit documents directly from the monitor without a PC, making them versatile solutions for modern work and entertainment setups.

India's iPhone production unaffected by exit of Chinese staff from Apple vendor sites

The return of Chinese technology professionals from an Apple vendor's facility will have no impact on the production of the upcoming iPhone 17, sources aware of the development said on Tuesday. Apple continues to be on track to scale up production in India, sources said.

Apple vendors in India, Foxconn and Tata Electronics, have also seen easing of capital goods sourcing from China. These capital goods are critical for the production of iPhones, the sources added.

Multiple sources have shared that hundreds of Chinese professionals working at Foxconn India units have returned to China in the last two months.

According to sources, these engineers were handling assembly lines, factory design and also involved in training talents to handle tools and machines for iPhone production. Another source said there has been an easing of the supply of capital goods from China for iPhones.

Rupee falls 17 paise to 85.90 against US dollar in early trade

The rupee declined 17 paise to 85.90 against the US dollar in early trade on Wednesday amid a strengthening greenback and subdued sentiments in the domestic equity markets. However, easing global crude oil prices, which had gone up overnight, capped steeper losses in the local unit, according to forex traders.

At the interbank foreign ex-

change, the rupee opened at 85.84 against the greenback before slipping further to 85.90, down 17 paise from its previous close. The rupee rose 21 paise to close at 85.73 against the US dollar on Tuesday.

"The Brent oil prices reached a two-week high at USD 70.15 per barrel driven by supply concerns from fresh Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping lanes.

However, the prices fell slightly as the American Petroleum Institute reported an unexpected rise in crude oil inventories with a build up of 7.1 million barrels," Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said.

"The rupee gained (on Tuesday) on expectations of an announcement of the US-In-

dia mini trade deal but none came through overnight. The currency is expected to trade in the range of 85.50-86.00," he said. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, which rose overnight, dipped marginally by 0.14 per cent to USD 70.05 per barrel in futures trade. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was up

0.17 per cent to 97.68. Meanwhile, at the domestic equity markets, the Sensex declined 170.42 points to 83,542.09 in early trade on Wednesday, while the Nifty was down 44.35 points to 25,478.15. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 26.12 crore on a net basis on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Sachin Tendulkar bats for authenticity in organic India's new campaign

Guwahati: Organic India, a Tata Consumer Products brand, has launched its latest campaign titled 'Sirf Naam Se Nahi, Kaam Se Organic' with cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar, urging consumers to look beyond labels and demand proof of authenticity in organic products.

As awareness of organic food grows, so does confusion around what qualifies as truly organic. The campaign aims to address this by educating consumers and highlighting Organic India's stringent quality standards, which include over 600 tests on herbs, direct sourcing from 2,000+ farmers, and internationally recognized certifications.

In the campaign film, Tendulkar appeals to viewers to verify the integrity behind organic claims. "In today's world, it's important to ask where your food comes from



and how it's grown," he says, endorsing the brand's commitment to transparency and traceability.

In Guwahati, the campaign is expected to resonate with the city's growing health-conscious consumers who often seek authentic organic options amid a flood of loosely regulated products. Retailers in Guwahati anticipate a positive response as demand for certified organic goods continues to climb.

Gen Z in East India leads nation in insurance-based retirement planning at 63%



Guwahati: Working Generation Z in East India, between the ages of 21 and 29, has demonstrated remarkable foresight in retirement planning, with 63% viewing life insurance as a key retirement planning tool—the highest percentage nationwide, according to a comprehensive research study by Tata AIA Life Insurance and NielsenIQ. Titled 'New Age Habits, Traditional Values: Gen Z's Approach to Financial Planning', the study surveyed working Gen Z individuals aged 21–29 years. This generation exhibits a distinct blend of forward-thinking financial planning with traditional investment preferences. Key Findings: East India Gen Zs Prioritize Long-Term Security and Value Traditional Assets; Retirement Planning Takes Center Stage: 63% consider life insurance for retirement planning—the highest proportion across all regions.

Balanced Investment Approach: 43% have invested in stocks or shares, show-

ing moderate equity participation, 47% favor gold investments, demonstrating appreciation for traditional value-preserving assets, 54% rely on fixed or recurring deposits—reflecting a cautious approach to wealth creation. Term Insurance Awareness Growing: 11% currently hold term insurance policies, 44% express intent to purchase term insurance, indicating significant growth potential. Insurance Selection: Key Decision Drivers; When choosing life insurance products, East India's Gen Zs prioritize: Value optimization, Tax efficiency, Service quality. Digital-First Financial Information: 21% rely on social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube for financial guidance and insights. "At Tata AIA, we aim to support this generation with easy, accessible, and protection-focused solutions to help them secure their future," said Girish Kalra, Chief Marketing Officer of Tata AIA Life Insurance.

Aashirvaad brings devotees closer to Lord Jagannath with tech-powered 'Bhakti Pathe' at Puri Rath Yatra

Guwahati: Aashirvaad, India's leading packaged atta brand, launched its unique spiritual initiative 'Bhakti Pathe' during the ongoing Puri Rath Yatra. The immersive experience, live from June 27 to July 5 near Bada Sankha More, offers devotees a high-tech yet heartfelt connection with Lord Jagannath through digital prasad-making and a holographic darshan of the deities.

The activation features a "Prasad-Making Zone" where devotees virtually prepare offerings using Aashirvaad Shudh Chakki Atta. Once the

ritual is completed, a large LED screen splits to reveal a stunning holographic vision of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra on their raths, enhancing the spiritual journey for thousands.

Anuj Rustagi, COO, Staples & Adjacencies, Foods Division, ITC Ltd, said, "With 'Bhakti Pathe,' we aim to blend devotion with digital, making darshan more inclusive and accessible."

In Guwahati, where Aashirvaad holds a strong consumer base, the activation has sparked excitement. Local retailers report increased foot-



fall and consumer interest in festival-themed offerings, reinforcing Aashirvaad's bond with households during key cultural celebrations.

Aashirvaad continues to

lead India's staples segment, now extending its offerings across salt, spices, millets, and ready-to-eat meals, enriching traditional Indian kitchens.

Nothing launches first flagship phone and over-ear headphones in India

Guwahati: London-based consumer tech company Nothing has officially launched its first true flagship smartphone, Phone (3), and its first over-ear audio product, Headphone (1), in India. The launches mark Nothing's ambitious expansion in the premium device category.

Nothing Phone (3) boasts a Snapdragon® 8s Gen 4 chipset, a triple-lens pro-grade camera system, 6.67-inch AMOLED display with ultra-slim bezels, and a redesigned Glyph Matrix interface. It also ships with Android 15 and Nothing OS 3.5 featuring AI tools like Essential Space and Essential Search. The phone offers fast charging, wireless charging, IP68 rating, and is priced at ₹62,999 (12+256GB) and ₹72,999 (16+512GB). Pre-bookings are open with bundled offers including free Nothing Ear and extended warranty.

Nothing Headphone (1), developed with KEF, supports Hi-Res Audio, LDAC, spatial audio,



and offers up to 35 hours of playback. Priced at ₹21,999, it will retail at ₹19,999 on launch day.

In Guwahati, early demand signals strong market traction, with Vijay Sales and Croma reporting high pre-booking interest from tech-forward consumers. The bundled launch offers are expected to boost in-store traffic significantly.

Both products go on sale from July 15 via Flipkart and major retailers.

Toyota bets on hybrid demand surge with prestige package for Urban Cruiser Hyryder

Shillong: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has introduced a limited-period 'Prestige Package' for its Urban Cruiser Hyryder SUV, signaling a strategic push to capitalise on India's growing hybrid vehicle market. The package, available from July 2025, includes 10 premium dealer-fitted accessories such as body cladding, hood emblem, and chrome garnishes—aimed at enhancing both aesthetics and utility. This move aligns with Toyota's broader aim to strengthen its foothold in the eco-conscious B-SUV segment.

The Urban Cruiser Hyryder features a first-in-segment self-charging strong hybrid electric powertrain powered by a 1.5L TNGA Atkinson



cycle engine, supported by a high-efficiency electric motor. With hybrid and mild-hybrid variants, along with optional All-Wheel Drive (AWD), the Hyryder offers a blend of performance, fuel economy, and urban adaptability—making it a strategic product for Toyota in the Indian automotive landscape.

In Shillong, a city witnessing rising demand for sustainable transport, local

dealerships report growing traction for hybrid vehicles like the Hyryder. The Prestige Package is expected to attract premium buyers seeking a custom look without compromising fuel efficiency and reliability.

Crossing the 1 lakh sales milestone since 2022, the Hyryder reflects Toyota's successful strategy in responding to India's evolving mobility preferences.

HP launches affordable AI-powered OmniBook laptops in India

Guwahati: HP today announced the launch of its most affordable next-generation AI PCs in India, unveiling the HP OmniBook 5 and OmniBook 3 series. Aimed at students, professionals, and everyday users, the new laptops are packed with cutting-edge AI capabilities including a dedicated NPU capable of 45–50 trillion operations per second (TOPS), promising seamless responsiveness and efficiency.

The HP OmniBook 5, powered by Qualcomm Snapdragon X Plus processors, boasts the world's longest battery life in an ultra-slim design — up to 34 hours. Meanwhile, the OmniBook 3 series is equipped with AMD Ryzen AI 300 processors and offers robust AI-powered collaboration tools such as Windows Studio Effects and HP AI Companion for enhanced performance and video calling.

Assam's Guwahati welcomed the launch, noting rising demand for AI-enabled yet cost-effective laptops in educational hubs and startup ecosystems. Retailers anticipate strong interest from university students and tech-savvy professionals, especially due to flexible financing options like 8-month no-cost EMI and competitive pricing starting at ₹69,999.

Built using recycled and ocean-bound materials, the new OmniBooks also support HP's sustainability goals. The models are now available in Glacier Silver across online and offline HP stores nationwide.

Godrej Chemicals to invest over Rs 750 cr in major capacity expansion drive

Guwahati: Godrej Industries Limited's Chemicals Business has unveiled an ambitious investment plan of over ₹750 crore aimed at scaling up its production capabilities and advancing sustainability goals. The expansion supports the company's roadmap to become a USD 1 billion global player by 2030.

Key developments include doubling capacities of Fatty Alcohol and Euric Acid by 35,000 and 20,000 tons per annum respectively, tripling

its specialities and fermentation capacities, and doubling glycerine production. Primary Surfactants production will also be enhanced by 30,000 tons per annum. Additionally, the company is pushing for 75% renewable energy usage by strengthening its hybrid power infrastructure.

Vishal Sharma, CEO & Executive Director, said, "It's a very exciting time for us. Our investments reflect our deep commitment to green operations and customer-focused

innovation across market segments."

In Guwahati, a growing hub for pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and agrochemicals, market analysts believe the increased supply of high-quality specialty chemicals and surfactants from Godrej could enhance local manufacturing competitiveness. With demand rising in the Northeast, the expansion is likely to benefit downstream industries seeking sustainable and reliable inputs.

Nissan accelerates CNG push with Magnite retrofit in 6 new states, eyes wider reach

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India has announced the Phase 2 rollout of its CNG retrofit kit for the New Nissan Magnite, extending availability to six new states—Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu. This move follows strong customer demand and builds on the successful Phase 1 launch across seven states including Delhi-NCR, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

Priced at ₹74,999, the retrofit kit is developed and quality-assured by Motoren, a government-approved third-party vendor. Compatible with the 1.0-litre naturally aspirated petrol engine (manual), the kit is installed at authorised centres and comes with a 3-year or 1 lakh km warranty. Customers



have reported improved fuel efficiency compared to standard petrol variants.

Saurabh Vatsa, MD, Nissan Motor India, said, "The Phase 2 rollout reflects the growing demand for cleaner mobility and reinforces our focus on accessible, sustainable solutions."

In Guwahati, demand for eco-friendly and cost-effective

vehicles has steadily increased. Local dealers expect a strong response, especially among first-time buyers and fleet operators looking to reduce fuel costs without compromising on performance and boot space—an area where the Magnite continues to lead.

Further expansion under Phase 3 is underway.

Skilling workshop sets Rs 60,000 cr roadmap for future-ready workforce ahead of Chief Secretaries' meet

Guwahati: A national workshop on "Skilling: Future Ready Workforce" was held on Monday at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi, as a prelude to the 5th National Conference of Chief Secretaries. Organised by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in partnership with the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), the event focused on building human capital for a future-ready India under the theme "Human Capital for Viksit Bharat".

Addressing the workshop, Rajit Punhani, Secretary, MSDE, said, "Skill training is the cornerstone of our vision for Viksit Bharat @2047. We must ensure that every youth and working professional is equipped with the right skills to contribute meaningfully to both organizational growth and the na-



tion's development. Our focus must be on three key pillars—agriculture skilling, ITI upgradation, and future skills. Integration of agri-skilling into mainstream education will empower rural youth and make agriculture a viable, future-ready career path. The ITI upgradation will help us transform these institutions into dynamic skilling hubs aligned with evolving industry needs. Emphasis on future skills will enable our workforce to stay competitive in

a rapidly changing global landscape. Above all, we must focus on making skilling aspirational—something that excites, empowers, and elevates the aspirations of our youth."

DARE's Rajbir Singh called for transforming Krishi Vigyan Kendras into rural skill hubs. A ₹60,000 crore ITI upgradation plan was showcased by the Directorate General of Training. States such as Karnataka, Odisha, Assam, and West Bengal presented innovative models, while industry players like Adobe, Tata Strive, and Indian Oil highlighted collaborative efforts.

The insights gathered will shape discussions at the Chief Secretaries' Conference, with states expected to submit feedback notes by August-end to drive inclusive and aligned skilling strategies.

Aviva Life Insurance bags 'Product of the Year 2025' in two key categories

Guwahati: Aviva Life Insurance has won the prestigious Product of the Year 2025 title in two significant categories—Life Insurance – Retirement Income and Life Insurance – ULIP. The recognition came following a nationwide consumer survey conducted by NielsenIQ for the 17th edition of Product of the Year India.

The awarded products—Aviva Signature Increasing Income Plan and Aviva Signature Investment Plan—were voted as the most innovative in their segments. Asit Rath, CEO & MD, Aviva India, called the win a "powerful validation" of the company's customer-centric product design.

Raj Arora, CEO of Product of the Year India, highlighted that Aviva stood out across a crowded field of consumer products, crediting their "future-ready financial solutions." Ajai Kumar Tripathi, Chief and Appointed Actuary, added that the win reflects Aviva's commitment to creating simple yet secure long-term financial tools based on deep consumer insight.

In Guwahati, where consumer awareness about retirement planning and ULIPs is on the rise, financial advisors noted increased interest in Aviva's offerings following the announcement. Local distributors see the recognition as a confidence booster for customers seeking long-term savings and protection plans.

The dual recognition reinforces Aviva's reputation as a transparent and innovative insurer.

Toyota InnovaHyCross secures 5-star Bharat NCAP rating, boosts demand in Shillong



Shillong: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has announced that its popular MPV, the InnovaHyCross, has been awarded a prestigious 5-star safety rating for both adult and child occupant protection under the Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (Bharat NCAP). The certification was handed over today in New Delhi by Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari to TKM executives Vikram Gulati and Sudeep Dalvi.

Built on the Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA) platform, the HyCross is packed with safety features including Toyota Safety Sense (TSS), six airbags, Vehicle Stability Control, ISOFIX mounts, and a Tire

Pressure Monitoring System, positioning it among the safest vehicles in its segment.

Shillong has responded positively to the news. Known for its preference for reliable and fuel-efficient family vehicles suited to hilly terrain, local dealers report a surge in interest. Customers in Meghalaya's capital are especially drawn to the HyCross's self-charging hybrid technology and enhanced safety suite.

With over 1.35 lakh units sold since its 2022 debut, the HyCross continues to blend safety, performance, and sustainability—strengthening Toyota's leadership in India's evolving automotive landscape.

HIF continues Mizoram chapter of Project Buniyaad, strengthens digital learning at MYC



Aizawl: Honda India Foundation (HIF), the corporate social responsibility arm of all Honda group companies in India, has marked the continuation of the Mizoram chapter of Project Buniyaad—Aathmanirbharta Ka Aadhaar through a launch ceremony held at the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) office in Aizawl. The event was held in the esteemed presence of Mr. Lalnghinglova Hmar, Hon'ble Minister of State for Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Sports & Youth Services, Excise & Narcotics, and Tourism, Government of Mizoram.

The Hon'ble Minister formally initiated the next phase of the programme, aimed at building on the progress made over the past year in enabling skill development and career access for the youth of Mizoram. As part of this initiative, HIF has also extended support to enhance the digital learning environment at MYC. Three interactive smart boards were installed across MYC classrooms and inaugurated during the ceremony. These additions are intended to enrich learning experiences and create an enabling ecosystem for aspirants undergoing training and guidance through MYC. Honda India Foundation remains committed to expanding the reach of similar such initiatives, with a continued focus on skill development, road safety, environment protection, education, rural development & health care.

Wedding Jokes and Quick Comebacks Light Up The Great Indian Kapil Show

Mumbai: Netflix's The Great Indian Kapil Show Season 3 delivered another dose of laughter as the Metro...In Dino cast joined Kapil Sharma on the couch. Kapil teased Aditya Roy Kapur about his co-stars getting married after working with him, hinting at possible wedding bells for the actor. However, Sara Ali Khan's sharp retort turned the tables, suggesting Aditya should be the one on guard. The episode, also featuring Anupam Kher, Neena Gupta, and Pankaj Tripathi, was filled with witty exchanges and unexpected roasts. The star-studded fun is now streaming on Netflix.

India positions outcome-based financing as global benchmark at UN Development Meet

Guwahati: At the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) held in Seville, Spain, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, spotlighted India's strides in institutionalizing outcome-based financing (OBF). Participating in a high-level panel co-hosted by OECD and the Outcomes Finance Alliance, Chaudhary highlighted India's success stories like the Skill Impact Bond and Project AMBER, showcasing how public, private, and philanthropic capital can converge for scalable social impact.



The Indian delegation, led by Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, reinforced India's commitment to linking financing with measurable development outcomes in skilling, women's empowerment, and livelihoods. Global leaders and multilateral agencies,

including the World Bank and UNFPA, joined the session to explore innovative funding approaches for accelerating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Shri Chaudhary also held bilateral meetings with leaders from OECD, CIFF, UBS Optimus Foundation, and

Swiss agencies, discussing collaboration on gender-focused and employment-driven finance models.

In Guwahati, where skilling initiatives are vital for youth employment, industry leaders expressed optimism over OBF's potential to drive data-backed training programs and boost women's participation in micro-enterprises. Experts believe these models could significantly uplift the Northeast's employment ecosystem, attracting greater investment in skill-linked ventures.

India's leadership in OBF sets a global precedent for sustainable, inclusive growth.

Indus Towers, NEAID deliver relief to flood-hit northeast families



Imphal: Amid widespread devastation caused by recent floods in Northeast India, Indus Towers Limited, in partnership with grassroots organization NEAID, has stepped in to aid affected communities across Assam, Manipur, and Tripura. Under its CSR initiative 'Pragati', the telecom infrastructure giant distributed 1,030 dry ration kits to families in severely impacted regions such as Cachar (Assam), Imphal (Manipur), and remote areas in Tripura.

Indus Towers employees actively participated in the distribution process, providing on-ground support. "We are deeply committed to supporting families affected by the floods with timely and meaningful assistance," said Rajender Singh Gurung, Circle CEO, Indus Towers Limited.

In Imphal, where several localities remain waterlogged, the relief kits were a much-needed lifeline. Many residents, especially daily-wage workers, welcomed the support, with local vendors noting a gradual improvement in access to essential food items. "The support from Indus Towers came when local supply chains were disrupted. It brought immediate relief," said a market trader in Imphal Bazaar.

NEAID Co-Founder Meraj Ahmed said, "Thousands have been left struggling. With Indus Towers' support, we aim to provide timely relief and help build long-term resilience."

Mahindra launches XUV 3XO 'RE VX' Series, starting at an attractive price of ₹8.94 Lakh

Guwahati: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., India's leading SUV manufacturer, has unveiled the exciting new XUV 3XO REVX series, starting at an attractive price of ₹8.94 Lakh. The XUV 3XO recently achieved an impressive milestone of over 1 lakh sales in under a year, making it Mahindra's fastest SUV to reach this milestone. The REVX series will further enhance the XUV 3XO portfolio with a compelling value offering of premium features, distinctive styling and best in segment performance, resonating with customer aspirations. Catering to individuals who seek vehicles that reflect their unique personality, the REVX series celebrates the spirit of personal expression—because for those who dare to stand out, "Different is in."

REVX Series key highlights: REVX M (Ex-Show-



room Price: ₹ 8.94 Lakh) – This variant is powered by a 1.2L mStallion TCMPFi engine delivering a power of 82 kW and torque of 200 Nm. Safety is prioritized with 35 standard features, including six airbags, ESC with Hill Hold Control (HHC), and All 4 Disc Brakes. REVX M(O) (Ex-Showroom Price: ₹ 9.44 Lakh) – This variant enhances sophistication with the addition of a single-pane sunroof, elevating the cabin experience and overall de-

sign appeal over REVX M. REVX A (Ex-Showroom Price starting at ₹ 11.79 Lakh) – This variant is powered by the advanced 1.2L mStallion TGD engine, delivering best-in-class power of 96 kW and torque of 230 Nm paired with both manual and automatic transmissions. All three variants of the REVX series are available in five eye-catching colors—Galaxy Grey, Tango Red, Nebula Blue, Everest White, and Stealth Black.

IPM India pledges crackdown on illicit tobacco trade, supports government's track & trace rollout

Aizawl: On the occasion of World Anti-Counterfeiting Day, Philip Morris International's India affiliate, IPM India, reiterated its commitment to dismantling the illicit tobacco trade in the country. The company emphasized a three-pronged approach—protecting revenue, safeguarding product integrity, and curbing the informal economy—aligned with the Indian government's landmark rollout of a pack-level Track & Trace (T&T) system for tobacco products.

India, home to an estimated 120 million tobacco users, has emerged as the world's fourth-largest illegal cigarette market, with smuggled products making up nearly 25% of the domestic industry. Backed by global experience across over 140 countries, PMI aims to support India's enforcement bodies with ad-

vanced traceability technology that ensures transparency and accountability in the tobacco supply chain.

Navaneel Kar, MD of IPM India, praised the government's initiative, stating it will "boost public trust and strengthen enforcement." Rodney Van Dooren, Head of Illicit Trade Prevention (Asia Pacific), called for a regional coalition to curb smuggling from ASEAN nations.

In Aizawl, where cross-border trade poses a heightened risk, authorities and local retailers have welcomed stricter measures. The market has seen an influx of unregulated tobacco, undercutting legal businesses and raising health and safety concerns. Strengthening traceability could protect both livelihoods and consumers in the region.

Yasmin Karachiwala and Soha Ali Khan on Fitness, Food & Family Rituals: Parenting the Wellness Way

Guwahati: Bollywood fitness trainer Yasmin Karachiwala and Actress Soha Ali Khan may come from different worlds—fitness and films, but when it comes to raising their children, their approach is beautifully aligned. According to them, "Wellness is not an event; it's a way of life". From including wholesome foods like almonds and berries to staying active, embracing meaningful routines, and spending quality

time with family—the duo reveals how they create balance in both their homes and lives." "I make sure Inaaya, and I have some form of movement every day—whether it's a little yoga, dancing in the living room, or just stretching together before bed," Soha shares. Yasmin Karachiwala believes that moving your body every day, even in small ways, can make a big difference to your health. She says, "You don't

have to do tough workouts. Just keep your body moving. That's enough." Simple daily movement like walking, stretching, or climbing stairs can greatly improve your health. It boosts energy, lifts your mood, reduces stiffness and back pain, improves sleep, supports heart health, and helps manage weight. Yasmin encourages her sons to make conscious choices to stay active. "As they get older, it's



easy to become less active, so I always remind them that movement is non-negotiable—it's key to feeling good and staying strong," she says. Yasmin mentioned that "My sons and I share a sweet tooth, but instead of indulging in traditional sugary treats, we opt for healthier alternatives that satisfy cravings without compromising on nutrition". Soha says that "Every day, I pack a handful of almonds in a small tiffin box

for Inaaya to take to school". Almonds, rich in vitamin E and healthy fats, help boost her energy and brain health throughout the day. On the other hand, Yasmin ensures that her son's follow a strict bedtime routine to get quality sleep, helping them stay fit and fresh. Yasmin shares, "Good sleep and consistent movement are the foundation for strength and lasting health at any age".

Karan Johar turns poetic to wish 'lord of bling' Ranveer Singh on his 40th birthday

Mumbai: Ace filmmaker Karan Johar took to social media to wish actor Ranveer Singh on his 40th birthday. Taking to Instagram, the director shared a couple of the photos featuring Singh alongside a heartfelt poem where he called the actor a 'lord of bling.' Karan wrote, "Happy Birthday @ranveersingh Buoyant spirit, blazing bright, A comet streaking through the night, In every step, a thunderous cheer, Ranveer walks, the world draws near. A fashionista bold and grand, Silken suits and sequins stand, A canvas dressed in dreams and flair, Each outfit roars, "He doesn't care!" "Yet deeper still this man unfolds, A heart of gold within he holds, A larger-than-life, flamboyant flame, But kind and warm beyond the



fame. His laughter rolls like summer skies, A mimic's art behind his eyes, A thousand voices, shades, and ways, His acting leaves us in a daze. He jokes, he dances, flips and twirls, A madcap prince in mortal worlds.... Yet roots run deep, a

loyal son, A brother, husband, all in one."

His caption further read, "For Deepika's smile, for parents' pride, For friends who know he'll never hide He gives his all, his soul, his grin, Such love and light he carries in. So here's to Ranveer - fierce and true, A rainbow burst in Bollywood's blue, May his spirit ever leap and sing, Long live the lord of BLING Ranveer Singh!!"

Ranveer Singh shared screen space with Alia Bhatt in Karan Johar's romantic comedy "Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahani." His film "Simmba" was also produced by Johar. The actor-director duo shares great bond of friendship, built on mutual respect and years of collaboration both on and off screen.

Raveena Tandon reprimands a crew member for invading Shradha Kapoor's privacy

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Raveena Tandon took to social media to call out a crew member for invading Shradha Kapoor's privacy. The actress expressed her disappointment over the incident and urged people to respect personal boundaries. Shradha was recently spotted travelling with her rumoured boyfriend, writer Rahul Mody. While the couple was seated together on a flight, an airline crew member secretly recorded a video of them. In the clip, the actress was seen showing something on her phone to Rahul as they chat. The crew member, smiling at the camera, then turned it toward the couple. The video, which went viral on social media, ended with a close-up shot of Shradha.

Responding to one of the videos, Raveena Tandon criticized the incident in the comment section, calling it a total invasion of privacy. She stressed that it's important to ask for consent before filming anyone. The 'Mohra' actress wrote, "This is a breach of privacy. The crew should know better than to do this. Consent must be taken. Not expected from crew members to do this."

The viral video sparked mixed reactions online. While some viewed it as a fan moment, others criticized it as a clear violation of privacy. Meanwhile, Shradha Kapoor recently posted a fun video of herself showcasing quirky dance moves.

Rashmika Mandanna says 'Have a great feeling' after watching Vijay Deverakonda's 'Kingdom' promo

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna said "Have a great feeling about this one" after watching the recently released promo of rumored beau Vijay Deverakonda's "Kingdom". Taking to her X (formerly known as Twitter) handle, the 'Animal' actress wrote, "This is All the best-est to the whole team! Have a greaaaaaatttt feeling about this one July 31st is going to be a big celebration!"

The makers of Gowtam Tinnanuri's directorial recently announced the new release date of the much-discussed drama. VD's next will be reaching the cinema halls on July 31st this year. Announcing the release date on his official Instagram

handle, Vijay wrote, "#KINGDOM July 31st. Worldwide. Let our Destinies unfold. A @gowtam19 story that unfolds like a novel to @anirudhofficial's genius score."

The announcement promo started with VD in a police uniform. Next, he was seen fighting his own battle. The preview further has the 'Ligar' actor performing some high-intense action sequences directed by three stunt choreographers - Yannick Ben, Chethan D'Souza, and Real Satish. This is the third release date for 'Kingdom' as the drama has already been postponed twice. Initially slated to reach the cinema halls on May 30, the release was later



rescheduled to July 4.

According to the makers, the project was delayed because of the India-Pakistan tensions after the Pahalgam terrorist attack, and the subsequent Operation Sindoor.

Riddhima wishes 'incredible woman' Neetu Kapoor: I love you most in the world



Mumbai: As her mother Neetu Kapoor turned 67 on Tuesday, her daughter Riddhima Kapoor wished her mother, whom she tagged as an "incredible woman" and said that she deserves all the happiness in the world. Riddhima took to Instagram stories, where she shared a video collage featuring her along with Neetu, brother Ranbir Kapoor, sister-in-law Alia Bhatt and late father Rishi Kapoor. "To the most incredible woman I know! I feel blessed every single day to call you my mom! You deserve all the happiness in the world today and always! I love you most in the world! Happy Birthday, Ma," Riddhima wrote as the caption.

Neetu is known for appearing in Hindi films throughout the late 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s. In 2012, she was inducted into the Walk of the Stars, an entertainment hall of fame at Bandra in Mumbai. She made her debut in the swash-buckler film Suraj in 1966. She was then seen in films such as Rickshawala, Yaadon Ki Baaraat, Deewaar, Khel Khel Mein, Kabhi Kabhie, Amar Akbar Anthony, Dharam Veer, Parvarish, Jaani Dushman, Kaala Patthar and Yaarana.

She went on a hiatus after appearing in the thriller film Ganga Meri Maa in 1983 and made her acting comeback with a minor role in the romantic comedy Love Aaj Kal three decades later. Her latest work is Jugjugg Jeeyo. In other news, Neetu Kapoor will be seen in Kapil Sharma's next, which has been extensively shot in the scenic locales of Shimla. The film also stars Riddhima Kapoor. It is directed by Ashish R Mohan and is tentatively titled, "DKS".

Commemorating the occasion, the director of the movie penned a nostalgic note, showing his gratitude to the entire team for an incredible experience during the shoot.

Sara Ali Khan says she was left surprised throughout entirety of 'Metro...In Dino'

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan, who has been receiving a lot of positive response to her work in the recently released film 'Metro...In Dino', has shared that she was surprised by director Anurag Basu's process of putting the film together, and it happened throughout the entirety of filming. The actress recently spoke with IANS, and shared that the director gives a lot of space to his actors, which results in magical moments in front of the camera.

Sara told IANS, "I was surprised throughout. I think that the minute you let go some surprising things land up happening. Basu da calls it magic. I feel like just being able to let free, let go and truly be present in the moments that we were because the whole set would come alive. There was just a palpable energy in general so you just had to let go not think and be there. And that was what we had to flow". Presented by Gulshan Kumar & T-Series presents, in association with Anurag Basu Productions Pvt. Ltd., 'Metro In Dino' is produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Anurag Basu, and Taani Basu. The film is currently playing in cinemas.

Earlier, Sara celebrated 6 years of the release of her debut movie 'Kedarnath', as she took to her Instagram, and shared a video featuring a collection of clips of the movie and its BTS. She wrote in the caption, "6 years of Kedarnath. Sometimes it feels like just yesterday and sometimes it feels like a lifetime away... Jai Bholenath. Thank you for making me me. And thank you for giving me a lifetime of memories". 'Kedarnath' marked Sara's debut in Bollywood, and starred her opposite the late actor Sushant Singh Rajput.



Yamini Malhotra says 'Punjabi sets feel like a big fat wedding, Telugu shoots are more strict



Mumbai: Actress Yamini Malhotra has been a part of both Punjabi and Telugu movies. Pointing out the huge difference in the working cultures of the two industries, Yamini revealed that while Punjabi film sets feels like a big fat Indian wedding, Telugu sets are strictly professional. She stated that the energy and atmosphere on a Punjabi film set is extremely different from the Telugu films.

Disclosing what is it like working on the set of a Punjabi movie, Yamini shared that it feels like a family coming together. "Shooting for a Punjabi film feels like a big fat wedding. Everyone is so involved,

there's food, laughter, and music even if it's work, it feels like family coming together to enjoy the process. You build bonds, spend time together after shoots, and it's more personal," she shared.

Contrary to this, Yamini found Telugu sets to be more disciplined and strictly professional. The 'Bigg Boss 18' contestant added, "On Telugu sets, it's all about discipline and precision. Everyone comes, does their job, and goes back to their vanity once the shot is done. There's hardly any personal interaction it's very professional, almost mechanical at times."

Wicket Washington Sundar, assist Ravindra Jadeja: How India outfoxed Ben Stokes

Birmingham: It was a complete team effort from India in the second Test, and they were on the cusp of a historic victory at lunch on Day 5. India had England reeling at 153 for 6, chasing a mammoth 608 runs at Edgbaston in Birmingham. Before the break, India's game awareness shone through as they plotted the downfall of England captain Ben Stokes. Washington Sundar claimed the crucial wicket in the final over of the first session, breaking a 70-run partnership between the England skipper and firstinnings centurion,

Jamie Smith. The assist came from Ravindra Jadeja. No, this wasn't football-but Jadeja and Sundar combined brilliantly to secure the breakthrough.

With less than five minutes remaining in the session, Jadeja began his sixth over of the day. While he didn't take a wicket himself, he ensured India would have enough time to bowl one more over before lunch. With just two minutes left on the clock, Jadeja had three deliveries remaining in his over. He rushed through them-as he often does-despite Smith tak-



ing his time between balls. Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant reminded Jadeja to finish the over quickly so that India could squeeze in another one before the

break. According to the laws of the game, a new over can begin if there is more than a minute left in the session. India managed to sneak in

that one extra over. It was Washington Sundar bowling just his second of the innings. Coming around the wicket, he fired in an arm ball that struck Ben Stokes on the pads. It looked plumb to the naked eye, and umpire Sharfuddoula raised his finger.

Stokes reviewed the decision, but the ball-tracking system confirmed it was crashing into the stumps. Stokes was gutted as his vigil came to an end. India, meanwhile, were jubilant, having snatched an extra wicket in the dying moments of the session.

Messi Magic Returns: Brace Leads Inter Miami to 4-1 Win Over Montreal

Montreal: Lionel Messi once again proved why he's the heartbeat of Inter Miami, scoring two daz-zling goals to lead his team to a dominant 4-1 victory over CF Montreal on Saturday night in their return to MLS action. Playing their first Major League Soccer match in over a month — following a disappointing 4-0 loss to PSG in the Club World Cup — Miami showed no signs of rust, especially with Messi back at the helm. Montreal shocked the visitors early, as Prince Owusu netted a goal in just the second minute following a costly giveaway by Messi. But it didn't take long for the Argentine to make amends.

Messi set up Tadeo Allende's equalizer in the 33rd minute, threading a pass that Allende buried to level the match at 1-1. Just seven minutes later, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner struck gold himself, cool-lecting a headed pass from Luis Suárez, gliding past defenders, and slotting the ball into the far corner with his signature left-footed finish — putting Miami ahead 2-1.

After the break, Telasco Segovia extended Miami's lead in the 60th minute, finishing off a smooth team build-up. Barely two minutes later, Messi added another moment of brilliance. Weaving through Mon-treal's defensive line



with ease, he tucked in his second goal of the night — his 12th goal in 14 MLS appearances this season — to seal the match 4-1. Though Messi was guilty of the early error, goalkeeper Óscar Ustari made up for it, making seven crucial saves throughout the match to keep Montreal from mounting a comeback.

Inter Miami, now 9-3-5 on the season, continues their ascent up the table with this third consecutive victory. The club had also edged Montreal 3-2 at home on May 28, and Saturday's result completes a clean sweep over the Canadian side this season. As Messi finds his rhythm again, Inter Miami looks poised to make a serious run in the second half of the MLS season.

Mairaj, Ganemat Lead Indian Charge in Skeet at Lonato World Cup

New Delhi: India's top skeet shooters, Mairaj Ahmad Khan and Ganemat Sekhon, delivered strong performances to position themselves as the best among their compatriots after the opening day of the ISSF World Cup Shotgun in Lonato, Italy. Mairaj, an Olympian, showed excellent form in the men's skeet, firing scores of 24 and a perfect 25 in his first two rounds. With a total of 49 hits, he stands just one point behind the leaders in a massive field of 176 shooters, where at least 15

marksmen have notched up a flawless 50 so far. The second qualification round for men was still ongoing at the time of reporting.

On the women's side, Ganemat Sekhon also stood out, shooting a 23 in her first round and bouncing back with a clean 25 in her second. With a cumulative score of 48, she currently sits in ninth place, trailing the leaders—six women, including Mexico's Gabriela Rodriguez—who share the top spot with 49 points each. Ganemat, who has previously

won two World Cup medals and was a finalist in Lonato last year, remains India's brightest hope as the competition advances.

Among the other Indian women, Olympian Maheshwari Chauhan posted scores of 24 and 22, while Raiza Dhillon finished with rounds of 22 and 23, placing them further down in the rankings after day one. In the men's event, young Bhavtegh Gill impressed with a flawless 25 in his second round, following a 23 in the first.

Novak Djokovic acknowledges Virat Kohli's 'gladiator' shoutout at Wimbledon



London: Novak Djokovic, one of tennis' greatest champions, had a surprise fan cheering him on during his dramatic fourthround win at Wimbledon Indian cricket superstar Virat Kohli. Djokovic, fresh off a gutsy comeback against Australia's Alex de Minaur, took a moment to acknowledge Kohli's Instagram shoutout in the most Djokovic way possible: with quiet gratitude and laser focus.

Kohli, clearly captivated by Djokovic's resilience on Centre Court, called the Serb a "gladiator" after watching him claw his way back from a one-set deficit, eventually

taking the match 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. The Aussie looked dominant early and even led 4-1 in the fourth set, seemingly pushing the match towards a fifth. But in true champion fashion, Djokovic reeled off five straight games to seal his place in the quarterfinals.

"What a win! It was business as usual for the gladiator," Kohli wrote on his Instagram story, sharing a clip from the match. Djokovic saw the message and responded simply but meaningfully with a four-word post of his own: "Thank you for supporting," acknowledging Kohli's tribute on social media.

Dhoni celebrates 44th birthday at JSCA Stadium

Ranchi: Former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni celebrated his 44th birthday at the JSCA International Stadium Complex in Ranchi on Tuesday. He was joined by JSCA President Ajay Nath Shahdeo, Secretary and former cricketer Sourabh Tiwari, and ex-India pacer RP Singh for the special occasion.



India's Deepika Nominated for Poligras Magic Skill Award for Dazzling Solo Goal Against Netherlands



New Delhi: Indian women's hockey team forward Deepika has been nominated for the prestigious Poligras Magic Skill Award for her breathtaking solo field goal against world No.1 Netherlands during the 2024-25 FIH Hockey Pro League season. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) released the list of nominations for this fanvoted accolade on Friday, showcasing the most sensational skills and goals of the season. Fans from across the globe can vote for their favourite moment, with polling closing on July 14 at 3:29 am IST.

Deepika's moment of brilliance came during India's dramatic clash with the Netherlands in February 2025, held at the iconic Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. India had been trailing 0-2 when the 21-year-old forward pulled off a masterclass in individual skill to bring the team back into contention. The goal — now etched in the memory of Indian hockey fans — happened in the 35th minute of the game. Receiving the ball on the left flank, Deepika showed sublime control and footwork, weaving her way past multiple Dutch defenders. She hugged the baseline, smartly dinked the ball over a defender's stick with a deft touch, and unleashed a fierce strike that zipped past the goalkeeper and into the net. The moment not only electrified the crowd but also played a key role in India forcing a 2-2 draw, eventually winning in the shootout.