

India achieves 50 pc clean power capacity five years ahead of target

New Delhi: India has achieved a landmark in its energy transition journey by reaching 50 per cent of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources - five years ahead of the target set under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy announced on Monday. This significant milestone underscores the country's steadfast commitment to climate action and sustainable development, and signals that India's clean energy transition is not only real but also accelerating, the statement said.

Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi said, "In a world seek-

ing climate solutions, India is showing the way. Achieving 50 per cent non-fossil fuel capacity five years ahead of the 2030 target is a proud moment for every Indian. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership continues to drive Bharat's green transformation - paving the path towards a self-reliant and sustainable future." This achievement reflects the success of visionary policy design, bold implementation, and the country's deep commitment to equity and climate responsibility. Flagship programmes such as PM-KUSUM, PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, solar park development, and the National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy have laid a strong foundation for this transformation.



ansformation. The bioenergy sector, which was once on the margins, has now become an important contributor to both rural livelihoods and clean energy generation, the statement explained. The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Ma-

habhiyan (PMKUSUM) has empowered lakhs of farmers by providing solar-powered pumps, enabling energysecure and sustainable agriculture. The scheme has also opened avenues for agrovoltatics and feeder-level solarisation. The PM Surya Ghar scheme,

launched in 2024, has brought about a rooftop revolution by making solar energy accessible to one crore households, fostering decentralised energy generation and empowering citizens as energy owners.

Solar parks across the country have facilitated utility-scale renewable energy installations at record-low tariffs. Wind energy, particularly in states such as Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, continues to play a vital role in meeting the country's evening peak power demand. The bioenergy sector has advanced considerably, contributing to circular economy objectives and providing significant employment opportunities in rural areas.

Gold, silver prices decline amid global tariff uncertainty

New Delhi: The gold and silver prices declined on Tuesday after having an upward rally for the past two days, amid escalating uncertainties around the US tariffs. The price of 24-carat gold dropped by over Rs 300, according to the India Bullion Jewellers Association (IBJA).

Ten grams of 24-carat gold cost Rs 387 less, from Rs 98,303 to Rs 97,916. The price of 10 grams of 22-carat gold also decreased, going from Rs 90,045 to Rs 89,691, a decrease of Rs 354. Additionally, the price of 18-carat gold fell, from Rs 73,727 to Rs 73,437 during the previous trading session, a decrease of Rs 290.

HDB Financial's net profit declines 2.4 pc annually to Rs 567.7 crore in Q1

Mumbai: HDB Financial, a subsidiary of HDFC Bank and a recently listed upper-layer NBFC, on Tuesday posted a net profit of Rs 567.7 crore for the quarter ended June 30 (Q1 FY26) -- a 2.4 per cent drop compared to Rs 581.7 crore in the same quarter previous year (Q1 FY25). However, the profit showed improvement on a sequential basis, rising 7 per cent from Rs 530.9 crore in the March quarter of FY25, according to its stock exchange filing.

The company's net interest income (NII), which is the difference between the interest it earns and the interest it pays, rose 18.3 per cent YoY to Rs 2,091.8 crore. It was also higher compared to Rs 1,972.8 crore in the previous quarter, as per its filing. Total revenue from operations grew 15 per cent year-on-year to Rs 4,465.4 crore and increased 4.6 per cent compared to the March quarter.

HDB's pre-provisioning operating profit stood at Rs 1,402 crore in the June quarter, up 17.2 per cent from Rs 1,196 crore a year earlier. However, the company's loan losses and provisions rose significantly to Rs 670 crore in Q1 FY26 from Rs 412 crore in Q1 FY25.

Ola Electric may gain market share due to less impact of rare earth magnet shortage: Report

Mumbai: Ola Electric could gain market share in the near term with relatively less disruption expected due to rare earth magnets shortage, according to a report by Goldman Sachs.

The company has successfully developed heavy rare earths (HRE) free motors which are scheduled for production deployment in Q3 FY26. Ola Electric expects relatively low disruption from rare earth shortages and could gain market share in the near term as a result, Goldman Sachs stated.

The company management's FY26 guidance to

sell between 3,25,000 to 3,75,000 vehicles and generate revenue of Rs 4,200-4,700 crore in the current fiscal, reflects a conservative yet stable outlook, as the company builds toward breakeven, it stated. The report also noted that Ola Electric's momentum on in-house technology development - such as its cost-efficient ABS kit - and its vertical integration in cell manufacturing, is expected to drive structural cost advantages and faster go-to-market execution.

The report noted that the company expects to become free cash flow (FCF) positive by Q4 FY26, with its cell business to follow suit by Q4 FY27.

Ola Electric has reported 35.5 per cent increase in revenue from operations for the June quarter to Rs 828 crore, as against Rs 611 crore during the quarter ended March 31, 2025.

The Bengaluru-based firm said it delivered a total of 68,192 vehicles in Q1 FY26, as against 51,375 units delivered in Q4 FY25, marking an increase of 32.7 per cent quarter-on-quarter.

Shares of Ola Electric Mobility on Tuesday ended 6.34 per cent down at Rs 44.14 apiece on BSE.

Markets decline in early trade tracking muted trend in global peers; Sensex dips 103 points

Mumbai (PTI): Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Wednesday in-line with a muted trend in global equities amid an uptick in US inflation. Tariff-related uncertainty also made investors to stay on the sidelines, experts said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 103.16 points to 82,467.75 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 56.75 points to 25,139.05.

From the Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors, Tata Steel, Eternal, Bajaj Finance and Bajaj Finserv were among the major laggards. However, Trent, Tech Mahindra, Adani Ports and HDFC Bank were among the gainers.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index quoted lower while Hong Kong's Hang Seng traded in the positive territory. The US markets ended mostly lower on Tuesday.

"The market has been oscillating in a narrow range during the last two months. A breakout above the upper band of the range, well beyond Nifty



25,500, needs positive triggers. Such a trigger may come from an India-US trade deal with tariffs on India pegged at around 20 per cent. If this happens, can it trigger a sustained rally in the market? Unlikely. A sustained rally in the market needs earnings support," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

There are no signs of a strong earnings support and earnings growth visibility, he said. "Two big segments of the market - IT services and consumption, particularly FMCG - are struggling with tepid earnings," Vijayakumar added.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 120.47 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. "The Nifty is likely to open cautiously as traders digest sticky US inflation data and ongoing tariff threats..." Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said in his pre-opening market commentary.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude went up by 0.20 per cent to USD 68.85 a barrel.

On Tuesday, the Sensex climbed 317.45 points or 0.39 per cent to settle at 82,570.91. The Nifty edged higher by 113.50 points or 0.45 per cent to 25,195.80.

Toyota Glanza's safety and style upgrade signals strategic push in premium hatchback market

Shillong: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has announced a significant product update for its Glanza hatchback, aiming to consolidate its position in India's competitive premium hatchback segment. The move comes at a time when consumer preferences are shifting toward vehicles offering enhanced safety and personalization.

All variants of the Toyota Glanza will now feature six airbags as standard—an upgrade likely to appeal to safety-conscious urban buyers. Alongside this, TKM has rolled out a limited-time 'Prestige Pack-



age'—available till July 31, 2025—which includes chrome-styled accessories, illuminated door sills, rear lamp garnishes, and a rear skid plate. These value additions are designed to in-

crease buyer appeal without drastically impacting cost.

The Glanza, powered by a 1.2-litre K-Series petrol engine, delivers strong mileage figures (22.94 km/l for AMT and 30.61 km/kg for CNG)

and is equipped with segment-leading features such as a 360-degree camera and Toyota i-Connect technology.

In Shillong, where young professionals and nuclear families are increasingly seeking vehicles that blend reliability, efficiency, and premium features, Toyota's strategy is expected to pay off. Dealers anticipate higher footfall and conversion rates, driven by the upgraded safety and styling appeal of the Glanza.

The updated Glanza starts at ₹6.90 lakh (ex-show-room).

ICICI Prudential Life Launches Affordable Market-Linked Product for Youth



Imphal: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has introduced the ICICI Pru Smart Insurance Plan Plus, a market-linked product aimed at young investors. With a minimum monthly premium of just ₹1,000, the plan offers an accessible route to long-term wealth creation, coupled with life cover for financial security.

Mr. Amit Palta, Chief Product and Distribution Officer, highlighted India's youth as a driving force in the economy, making this product a timely initiative. The plan features 25 funds and four portfolio strategies, allowing customers to adjust their asset allocations without cost or tax implications.

The digital-first approach caters to tech-savvy customers, ensuring a seamless purchase experience. An optional Waiver of Premium add-on benefit further supports long-term savings goals. This launch underscores ICICI Prudential's commitment to meeting the evolving needs of its customers.

As Market Volatility Shifts Strategy, Guwahati Investors Pour Rs 15.5 Cr into Tata Arbitrage Fund in 3 months

Guwahati: Arbitrage funds have gained traction as an investment option amid equity market volatility, particularly for those seeking low risk investment opportunity. By capitalising on price differences between the cash and futures markets, these funds seek to perform better in turbulent conditions, giving fund managers greater scope for intra-month trading opportunities. "In the current environment, arbitrage funds are uniquely positioned to capture the potential benefits of market volatility while shielding investors from direct equity risks," said Sailesh Jain, Fund Manager, Tata Asset Management. According to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), arbitrage funds attracted Rs



43,077 crore between April and June 2025, surpassing inflows into other hybrid and equity categories.

Reflecting the broader industry trend, the Tata Arbitrage Fund too, saw inflows of Rs 5,217 crore between

April and June 2025, with Rs 15.5 crore coming from Guwahati. The fund had assets under management of Rs 14,274 crore as of June 30, 2025. The environment is especially conducive for arbitrage strategies, as elevated volatility and strong roll spreads have opened potential return opportunities. As global and domestic uncertainties continue to cloud market outlook, arbitrage funds are a choice for investors to help them navigate choppy waters. Arbitrage funds also offer tax efficiency, as they are taxed like equity mutual funds—giving them an edge over short-term debt instruments, particularly for high-income investors looking to optimise post-tax returns.

HP unveils Laser M300 series in India, targets SMBs with fast, eco-friendly printing

Guwahati: HP has launched its new Laser M300 Series printers in India, designed to cater to the evolving needs of small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs), print shops, and enterprises seeking high-volume, low-maintenance printing solutions. The series includes five models—Laser MFP 323sdnw, 323dnw, 323d, 303dw, and 303d—each offering auto-duplex printing, high-speed output, and energy-efficient features.

With print speeds up to 30 pages per minute and first-page-out in just 8.5 seconds, the M300 Series delivers

quick, sharp, and reliable results. Equipped with high-yield toner cartridges capable of printing up to 3,000 pages, the printers also reduce operational costs and paper waste through automatic two-sided printing. All models are compact, easily installable in small office spaces, and support mobile printing via the HP Smart app.

In Guwahati, where digital transformation is rapidly expanding across business hubs and educational institutions, HP's M300 series is expected to resonate well



with local enterprises seeking budget-friendly, sustainable print solutions. The region's growing reliance on efficient documentation and reduced downtime makes this lineup a timely addition.

Prices range from ₹20,250 to ₹35,250 and are available on HP's eStore.

Skill India Mission marks decade of empowerment, 6 crore trained



Guwahati: Union Minister of State (I/C) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Jayant Chaudhary, today inaugurated a week-long celebration commemorating the 10-year milestone of the Skill India Mission. Coinciding with World Youth Skills Day, the event underscored the mission's profound impact, having trained over 6 crore individuals across the nation.

Minister Chaudhary, describing the journey as 'Kaushal ka Dashak' (Decade of Skill), highlighted the mission's role in transforming India's youth into a dynamic workforce, both domestically and globally. He noted the consolidation of fragmented skilling efforts into a unified "whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach."

Significant achievements include the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), which has trained over 1.64 crore youth, and comprehensive reforms supporting more than 14,500 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). Chaudhary announced the forthcoming National Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Policy, poised to redefine skilling, upskilling, and reskilling in India. He also detailed the Cabinet-approved ₹60,000 crore ITI Revamp Scheme, which includes ₹10,000 crore from CSR contributions, emphasizing industry-led curriculum development.

Further reforms include the de-affiliation of 4.5 lakh vacant ITI seats and a proposed 36% increase in stipend support under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS), alongside a new pilot scheme for the North Eastern Region. The week-long celebrations will culminate in the 'Bharat SkillNext 2025' event on July 22, where new initiatives, including AI skilling for schoolchildren, will be launched.

Durian Furniture expands footprint with first Meghalaya store in Shillong

Shillong: Durian Furniture, one of India's leading names in luxury furniture, has launched its first store in Meghalaya, further cementing its national retail presence. Located on Meccabe Road near Assam Rifles Signal Unit in Demseiniong, Shillong, the store was inaugurated on July 5 by Chief Guest Mr. Bhim Sen Sethi. With this addition, Durian now operates over 55 stores across the country.

Spread across 3,060 sq. ft. and managed by Bolivia Nongbri, the new showroom offers Durian's signature range of home and office furniture, including sofas, recliners, beds, dining sets, and ergonomic office solutions. Designed as an immersive retail experience, the store showcases complete living, dining, and workspace setups.

Commenting on the expansion, Mr. Sajjan Dokania, Chairman & Managing Director, Durian Industries Ltd., said, "Our expansion into Meghalaya marks a proud moment in our journey. With every new store, we aim to bring thoughtfully designed, high-quality furniture closer to our customers across India. Shillong, with its rich culture and growing design sensibilities, is a wonderful addition to our retail footprint."

In Shillong, the demand for luxury and ergonomic furniture is growing steadily, driven by urban development and rising design awareness among consumers. Durian's entry is poised to meet this evolving demand with style and quality.



Screen Academy launched to empower India's next generation of filmmakers

Guwahati: The Indian Express Group has launched Screen Academy, a not-for-profit initiative aimed at discovering and nurturing India's next wave of cinematic talent. Backed by the Lodha Foundation, the academy will annually offer postgraduate fellowships to promising students from top film institutes who lack financial resources.

The initiative is supported by renowned figures like Oscar winners Guneet Monga and Resul Pookutty, Cannes Grand Prix winner Payal Kapadia, and screenwriter Anjum Rajabali. Fellows will receive mentorship from industry veterans, access to internships, and



opportunities for professional development.

Institutes like FTII, SRF-TI, and Whistling Woods International have welcomed the initiative, citing its role in bridging educational gaps for aspiring storytellers from diverse regions.

Anant Goenka, Executive Director of The Indian Express Group, called it "a bold step to institutionalise excellence." Abhishek Lodha said the Academy aligns with India's ambition to become a

creative superpower by 2047.

In Guwahati, the launch is expected to inspire regional talent in the Northeast, where interest in filmmaking and digital content creation is growing. Aspiring artists from Assam and nearby states now have a promising national platform to showcase their stories.

The Academy will also host the prestigious Screen Awards, further cementing its role in promoting cinematic excellence.

Flipkart Food Fest 2.0 drives gourmet commerce with 100M+ impressions and iconic brand showcases

Guwahati: Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce giant, successfully concluded the second edition of its flagship Food Fest 2025, held on July 8-9 at its Bengaluru campus. With over 25,000 on-ground footfalls, 100 million+ online impressions, 40+ engagement zones, and participation from leading brands, the event reinforced Flipkart's growing dominance in gourmet food commerce.

The fest featured culinary icons like Chef Ranveer Brar and Pooja Dhingra, live performances by Rosemary & The Herbs, and insights from top food creators and wellness brands. Signature

launches and immersive activations by brands such as Dabur, Sugar Free, Happilo, Saffola, Nutralite, and True Elements highlighted the evolving tastes of Indian consumers.

In Guwahati, consumer response to Flipkart's curated online gourmet sale was strong, with rising demand for healthy snacking, artisanal baking goods, and premium wellness products. The Northeast market, particularly Guwahati, reflected the national trend of growing interest in clean-label and lifestyle-driven food choices, supported by better digital accessibility and awareness.

Flipkart executives empha-



sized the platform's vision to fuse technology, storytelling, and food discovery. Partner brands praised the scale and engagement of the event, calling it a transformative platform for building community-led food experiences.

Aviva India unveils Bharat Bal Vikas Yojana to empower semi-urban families

Guwahati: Aviva India has announced the launch of its new life insurance savings plan, Aviva Bharat Bal Vikas Yojana, aimed at supporting families in rural and semi-urban areas in securing their children's future. With affordable premiums starting at just ₹1,000 per month, the plan offers a unique blend of life cover and guaranteed maturity benefits.

Designed for parents planning for their children's higher education, skill development, or business aspirations, the policy caters to individuals aged 3 to 50 years, with terms ranging from 12 to 30 years and coverage up to age 80. Flexible premium payment options—monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or annually—ensure the plan suits a variety of household budgets.

In case of the policyholder's death, the nominee will receive the highest of the death sum assured, the surrender value, or a minimum of 105% of total premiums paid. Maturity benefits come as a guaranteed sum assured, with additional tax advantages under current laws.

In Guwahati, a key semi-urban market, financial advisors have welcomed the product's simplicity and relevance. With rising aspirations among middle-income families, the plan is seen as a timely tool to support long-term educational and entrepreneurial goals for children.

Sony unveils WF-C710N earbuds with dual noise cancelling and smart AI features



Guwahati: Sony India has launched its latest truly wireless earbuds—WF-C710N—designed for everyday comfort, seamless calling, and immersive audio experiences. Priced at ₹8,990, the earbuds are available starting today across Sony Centers, retail outlets, and online platforms, with an introductory cashback of ₹1,000 valid till July 31.

The WF-C710N features Dual Noise Sensor technology, allowing users to enjoy music without external distractions. The Ambient Sound mode offers 20 levels of sound adjustment, enabling users to remain aware of their surroundings. The earbuds also come equipped with AI-powered Precise Voice Pickup, trained on over 500 million voice samples to ensure crys-

tal-clear calls even in noisy environments.

With Sony's 5mm driver unit, DSEE sound enhancement, and customizable EQ, the earbuds deliver rich bass and well-balanced audio. The sleek, compact design is offered in four colours—Glass Blue, Pink, White, and Black.

In Guwahati, retailers expect strong consumer interest in the WF-C710N, especially among college students and professionals looking for affordable, high-performance earbuds with long battery life and stylish aesthetics.

The earbuds offer up to 40 hours of playtime, multi-point connectivity, IPX4 water resistance, and plastic-free packaging, underscoring Sony's focus on innovation and sustainability.

Embrace Ayurveda this monsoon; expert shares natural diet tips for glowing skin

Guwahati: As the monsoon brings humidity and dullness to the skin, Ayurveda expert Dr. Madhumitha Krishnan emphasizes a return to natural, internal remedies rather than superficial quick-fixes. She advises incorporating nutrient-rich foods like almonds, herbal teas, leafy greens, and turmeric to balance the body's doshas—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—and support overall skin health from within.



According to Dr. Krishnan, almonds, which help balance Vata dosha, play a vital role in skin rejuvenation and tissue nourishment. Herbal teas made from tulsi, ginger, and chamomile detoxify the body, while seasonal fruits like pomegranates and pears enhance digestion and restore glow. Leafy greens, with their bitter and astringent properties, purify blood and improve skin clarity. Turmeric and ghee, both staples in Ayurvedic practice, offer anti-inflammatory and rejuvenating benefits.

In Guwahati, where humid monsoon weather commonly triggers skin issues, local wellness experts report growing consumer interest in Ayurvedic dietary solutions. Guwahati's health-conscious population is increasingly turning to traditional remedies like turmeric milk and almond-based snacks, reflecting a shift toward natural skin care from within. This growing trend highlights Ayurveda's relevance in urban wellness markets, especially during seasonal transitions.

Nothing launches flagship Phone (3) and Headphone (1) in India, available nationwide from today

Guwahati: London-based tech brand Nothing has launched two major products in India—its flagship Nothing Phone (3) and debut over-ear Nothing Headphone (1)—with nationwide sales beginning today at 12 noon. These launches mark Nothing's bold foray into flagship smartphones and high-end audio, combining intentional design with premium engineering.

The Nothing Phone (3) introduces a modular design, pro-grade triple camera system, and a 6.67-inch AMOLED display with ultra-slim 1.87 mm bezels. Powered by the Snap-



dragon® 8s Gen 4 chipset, it features the unique Glyph Matrix for intuitive interaction and cinematic 4K 60fps video recording across all lenses.

Prices start at ₹62,999, with exclusive bank offers and up to 24 months no-cost EMI.

The Nothing Headphone (1), co-developed with KEF,

is priced at ₹21,999 (₹19,999 on launch day) and offers spatial audio with head tracking, Hi-Res Audio, and a premium ergonomic build using aluminium and memory foam. Buyers can enjoy dual-device pairing, ANC, and a 35-hour battery life.

In Guwahati, early demand is already visible at major electronics retailers like Croma and Vijay Sales. Tech enthusiasts in the city have shown strong interest, especially among Gen Z consumers attracted by the brand's distinctive design and Glyph interface.

73% in East India wary of illegal mosquito incense sticks, reveals Good Knight Study

Guwahati: A recent study by Good Knight, India's leading mosquito repellent brand under Godrej Consumer Products Ltd. (GCPL), reveals that 73% of citizens in East India feel uneasy using illegal mosquito repellent incense sticks. The study, titled "One Mosquito, Countless Threats", was conducted by YouGov to understand consumer attitudes toward mosquito repel-

lents and the rising concern over unregulated products.

The survey shows East India, including Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand, expresses the highest discomfort nationally, surpassing regions like North (69%), South (67%), and West (67%). Additionally, 56% of respondents in East India are highly particular about their choice of repellents, and 71% prefer using govern-



ment-approved products.

In Guwahati, consumers are reportedly checking for Central Insecticides Board & Registration Committee (CI-BRC) numbers before purchasing repellents. However,

the illegal incense stick market in East India has surged, now valued at over ₹600 crore and growing at 20% annually.

GCPL has responded with innovation by launching the Good Knight Flash liquid vaporiser powered by Renofluthrin; India's first indigenously developed and patented molecule claiming double the effectiveness of existing approved formulations.

Toyota expands Northeast presence with new dealership in Guwahati



Shillong: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has strengthened its footprint in Northeast India with the launch of a new dealership, Gargya Toyota, in Guwahati. The facility, inaugurated today, aims to meet the rising demand for mobility solutions and enhance customer accessibility in the region.

Located at GS Road, Dispur, the 5,100 sq. ft. 1S (sales) outlet will offer Toyota's full product lineup, including the Innova Hycross, Fortuner, Hilux, Urban Cruiser Hyryder, Camry Hybrid, and Vellfire. The dealership also houses Toyota U-Trust, enabling buying, selling, and exchange of used vehicles.

Speaking at the inauguration, Arun G Nair, VP & Chief Representative – East Region, TKM, said, "The Northeast holds immense market potential. This new facility brings us closer to our customers while ensuring a reliable and sustainable mobility experience."

Dealer Principal Rahul Dev Sharma emphasized the commitment to customer care, stating the outlet will serve as more than a sales point — it will build lasting relationships.

Shillong, too, is witnessing increased interest in premium and sustainable vehicles. With Guwahati serving as a hub, the expansion is expected to positively impact consumer choices and automotive trends across Meghalaya and adjoining states.

Life insurance sector ramps up consumer outreach as protection gap widens to 87%

Guwahati: India's life insurance industry has ramped up its awareness efforts with the Insurance Awareness Committee (IAC) launching the next phase of its nationwide Sabse Pehle Life Insurance campaign. The move comes in response to a growing protection gap, which now stands at 87%, up from 83% in 2019, and surpasses 90% among the 18–35 age group, as per a December 2023 NIA study.

The campaign, driven by 24 life insurers under the Life Insurance Council, is positioned to shift life insurance from an optional to an essential first step in financial planning. With strategic storytelling across TV, digital, print, and



outdoor platforms, the initiative aims to turn awareness into action. It also features an upgraded digital portal offering user-friendly resources to assess coverage needs.

In Guwahati, the campaign is gaining ground among salaried professionals and small business owners, who are increasingly recognising the importance of early protection

amid rising healthcare costs and financial volatility. Local insurers report increased footfall and digital inquiries, suggesting early traction.

With a 96.82% claim settlement rate and projected industry growth of 10.5% CAGR, the campaign aligns with IRDAI's rural mandates and supports India's \$5 trillion economic target.

ITC Aashirvaad launches 'Boga Atta' for its discerning consumers in Assam

Guwahati: ITC Aashirvaad, India's No 1 atta brand, has brought a uniquely crafted Aashirvaad Boga Atta for its discerning consumers in Assam. A premium fine white atta especially designed to meet the region's culinary needs. Continuing in its endeavor to provide quality products to the Assamese consumer, Aashirvaad has launched Boga Atta as the current products available in the Assam market are mostly sold in loose format, lacking hygiene and consistency leading to inferior consumer experience. Aashirvaad Boga Atta crafted with superior quality wheat and made using an advanced milling process, offers the perfect balance of taste and hygiene.

Its fine white texture makes it ideal for preparing a wide range of local favourites, from fluffy luchis and Rotis to other traditional Assamese dishes like pithas, ensuring a delicious and satisfying experience in every bite. Mr. Anuj Rustagi, Chief Operating Officer - Staples and Adjacencies, Foods Division, ITC Ltd., said, "With the launch of Aashirvaad Boga Atta, we are bringing Assamese families an atta that matches regional specifications of taste and quality. This launch is a testament to Aashirvaad's commit-



ment to regional relevance and our mission to bring uncompromising quality to every Indian kitchen." The product is available in a 1 kg convenient pack priced at MRP ₹ 60 across general stores in Assam.

Škoda Auto achieves new milestone with 300 customer touchpoints



Guwahati: Škoda Auto is revving to newer highs as it celebrates its 25-year legacy in India and 130 years globally. Earlier this month, the brand achieved its highest half-yearly sales ever in H1 2025. In yet another achievement, the company has now crossed 300 customer touchpoints, catering to customers across 172 cities in India. Providing an unmatched customer experience is central to Škoda Auto's India growth strategy. The rapid network expansion reflects this, along with the strong momentum the brand is building across India. Commenting on the achievement, Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Škoda Auto India, said, "Our growing network makes our product range more accessible to customers while enabling smarter, faster service with consistent quality across the country."

Continuing from the Kylaq: The Kylaq is a key driver of Škoda Auto's growth in In-

dia as it targets new customers in new markets that are now being catered to with the brand's network expansion. Combined with the Kushaq and Kodiaq, Škoda Auto India now has an SUV For Everyone. The path towards growth: Škoda Auto India's growth strategy is to go deeper in Tier 1 markets and expand further in Tier 2 and Tier 3 markets. In line with this strategy, in the past nine months, the brand has entered over 30 new cities, all in Tier 2 and Tier 3 markets, in addition to continued expansion in existing Tier 1 cities. Škoda: The company's endeavour to be closer to its customers by expanding its network and increasing its touchpoints is further defined by a slew of warranty, maintenance, and Road Side Assistance packages that ensure customers are provided a quality ownership and maintenance experience with a Škoda.

Assam-based slice SFB spurs job growth, 20.7% deposit surge and rural banking expansion

Guwahati: slice small finance bank (slice SFB), headquartered in Assam, has reported a significant 20.7% increase in its deposit base across the state over the past year, alongside the creation of over 400 local jobs. This strong growth highlights the bank's expanding footprint in Assam and the broader Northeast, bolstering financial inclusion and economic development in the region.

The bank is opening new branches in Wokha (Nagaland), and Bawngkawn and Serchhip (Mizoram), while modernizing several branches across Assam to offer a digital-first, customer-friendly experience. Tailored especially for rural households, women-led ventures, and new digital users,

these centres aim to bridge financial access gaps.

Guwahati has responded positively to slice SFB's customer-centric approach. Local entrepreneurs and MSMEs have benefited from easier credit access, faster disbursements, and pilot tools like voice box payment confirmations in regional languages, enhancing trust in digital transactions.

"Assam is not just our base; it's our inspiration," said MD & CEO Satish Kumar Kalra. The bank's future plans include deepening rural penetration, empowering women, and nurturing a digitally inclusive workforce — reinforcing Northeast India's role as a hub for next-generation banking innovation.

Tamannaah Bhatia redefines glamour with her bold take on layering

Mumbai: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia, in her latest Instagram post, spoke about embracing duality in both style and identity. Pairing a black sequined gown with a casual grey t-shirt, she highlighted how contrasting elements can coexist beautifully. The actress also explained that for her, fashion is not just about trends; it's a personal expression where glamour meets comfort and strength meets softness. On Sunday, the 'Baahubali' actress took to her Instagram handle and shared a couple of her stylish photos. She is seen wearing a chic black sequined gown that she teamed with a casual grey t-shirt. In the caption, Tamannaah Bhatia reflected on the power of layering, both in fashion and identity.



Divyanka Tripathi shares pictures from romantic getaway with husband Vivek Dahiya



Mumbai: As they have completed nine years of marital bliss, actress Divyanka Tripathi shared some glimpses from their romantic getaway as they celebrated the milestone.

Divyanka took to Instagram, where she shared a string of pictures. The first image showed the couple posing for a selfie from the balcony of their luxurious stay. Another showed the two standing on the balcony and posing for a picture.

A few other photographs were in the car as they were on route to their location. The couple were seen gorging on makhanas as they were on their way. The last picture was an adorable click of a stray dog.

For the caption, Divyanka wrote: "Tu aur main... Jee len zara... Zara Hi nahi...bohot ziyada... Kyunki zindagi milegi na dobara."

On July 11, Vivek shared that they choose each other everywhere, every time.

Vivek took to Instagram, where he shared a handful of pictures and videos from their romantic getaway to celebrate the milestone.

He captioned the post: "9 years of marriage and she still laughs at my jokes. Everytime. Almost. Grateful for the journey, the madness, the peace with Her. We still choose each other everywhere, everytime P.s Zero posts on the day coz we were busy living it (sic)."

Divyanka and Vivek met on the sets of their show "Yeh Hai Mohabbatein" and fell in love. They got engaged in January 2016. Few months later in the same year the couple got married in Bhopal.

Vivek has been seen in shows like Yeh Hai Mohabbatein and Qayamat Ki Raat. He emerged as winner of the reality series Nach Baliye 8 in 2017.

Talking about Divyanka, she is known for playing the double roles of Vidya Pratapsingh and Divya Shukla in Banoo Main Teri Dulhann and Dr. Ishita Bhalla in Yeh Hai Mohabbatein.

In 2017, participated in the dance reality show Nach Baliye 8 and emerged as the winner. In 2021, she participated at Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 11 as a contestant where she emerged as the runner-up.

Sara Ali Khan thanks the audience for 'accepting and loving Chumki' from 'Metro...In Dino'

Mumbai: Actress Sara Ali Khan thanked the audience for "accepting and loving Chumki", her character from the recently released romantic entertainer "Metro...In Dino".

Treating her InstaFam with some goofy behind-the-scenes photos from Anurag Basu's directorial, Sara penned a heartfelt gratitude note for the viewers. She wrote on her IG: "Grateful, blessed and so so happy... Thank you for all the love you've given our film and thank you accepting and loving Chumki too. P.S clearly there were was no middle ground with our moods."

Previously, during an exclusive interaction with IANS, Sara revealed that she was surprised after witnessing director Anurag Basu's process of put-

ting the film together. She stated that the filmmaker believes in giving his actors a lot of space and this often results in magical moments being created on the camera.

Speaking to IANS, the 'Kedarnath' actress said: "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".

The third and final chapter of Anurag Basu's trilogy after "Life in a... Metro"

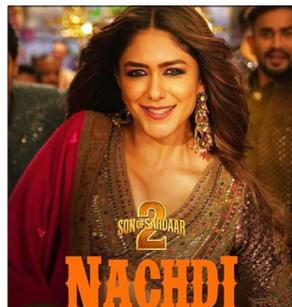


and "Ludo", features Aditya Roy Kapur, Pankaj Tripathi, Sara Ali Khan, Neena Gupta, Konkona Sen Sharma, Anupam Kher, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Ali Fazal, and Saswata Chatterjee in important roles, along with others.

Presented by Gulshan Kumar

& T-Series presents, in association with Anurag Basu Productions Pvt. Ltd., "Metro In Dino" has been jointly backed by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Anurag Basu, and Taani Basu. "Metro...In Dino" was released in the cinema halls on 4th July this year.

'Nachdi' from Ajay Devgn-starrer 'Son of Sardaar 2' is the bridal anthem of the season



Mumbai: The song 'Nachdi' from the upcoming Ajay Devgnstarrer 'Son of Sardaar 2' was unveiled on Monday.

The song, which is touted to be a bridal anthem, features the lead pair of the film with Mrunal Thakur radiating grace and glamour. The song adds more fun to the soundtrack line-up of the film. It is a catchy, foot-tapping song that promises to get everyone grooving. The song is crooned by Neha Kakkar, with music composed by Jaani, who doubles up as the lyricist. It also features Ajay Devgn, Kubbra Sait, Roshni Walia, and Deepak Dobriyal. Prior to this, the song 'Pehla Tu' from the film went viral on social media owing to the hook step of the song featuring Ajay Devgn's signature minimalistic dance. The film is directed by Vijay Kumar Arora, and also stars Ravi Kishan, Sanjay Mishra, Neeru Bajwa, Chunky Panday, Deepak Dobriyal, Vindu Dara Singh, Roshni Walia, Sharat Saxena, Sahil Mehta and the late Mukul Dev.

Ananya Panday welcomes Jaggu Dada to the 'Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri' family

Mumbai: Actress Ananya Panday welcomed Jackie Shroff aka Jaggu Dada to the "Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri" family. Re-sharing a post of costar Kartik Aaryan, Ananya wrote on her Insta stories, "The coolest ever! Welcome to the TMMT-MTTM family Jaggu dada @apnabhidu." On Saturday, Kartik introduced the netizens to the 'OG Hero' of "Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri."

The 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2' actor took to his Instagram and shared a video introducing Jackie as the new addition to the cast of "Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri". The clip opens with Kartik in the frame, who later pans



the camera to Jackie showering flying kisses on the board of the film.

Kajol talks about why recall value of movies have lessened

New Delhi: Bollywood star Kajol, who has given several memorable performances in films such as Baazigar, Dilwale Dulhania Le Jaayenge, Gupt, Ishq, Dushman and Kuch Kuch Hota Hai to name a few, said that earlier, films had a lasting impact because cinemas were the only way to watch stars, creating stronger memories.

She added that today, with the boom of social media and OTT, that exclusive excitement and recall value has lessened.

Asked why the films released today do not have the same kind of recall value as the earlier films, Kajol told IANS: "I think there are a few films like that. I wouldn't say there aren't any at all."

"But I think that was also a time when everybody went to the cinemas to see who they wanted to see. I mean, if you



wanted to see Shah Rukh Khan, you went to the theater to see him. If you wanted to see Ajay Devgn, you went to the theater to see him. There was no other way to see them."

The actress added: "There was no social media, no OTT—nothing. So if you wanted to see them, it had to be in a cinema hall. And when you have only one way of experiencing something, that becomes the strongest memory you form."

"But when there are 15 different ways of watching something, maybe it doesn't stay with you as strongly, or maybe you don't remember it as well," said the actress, whose latest release is the mythological horror "Maa". Looking forward, Kajol has "Sarzameen", helmed by Kayoze Irani and is expected to be out on "JioHotstar" on July, 25th. The film also stars Ibrahim Ali Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran.

She will also be seen in "Maharagni: Queen of Queens" an action thriller film directed by Charan Tej Uppalapati in his directorial debut.

It stars Kajol in the title role, alongside Prabhu Deva, Naseeruddin Shah, Samyuktha, Jishu Sengupta, Aditya Seal, Pramod Pathak, and Chhaya Kadam. It is the story of a mother and daughter.

Messi Scores Twice Again as Inter Miami Ends Nashville's Unbeaten Run with 2-1 Win

Fort Lauderdale: Lionel Messi continued his remarkable run of form, netting two goals for the fifth consecutive match as Inter Miami handed Nashville SC a 2-1 defeat, halting Nashville's impressive 15-game unbeaten streak on Saturday night at Chase Stadium. With this result, Miami (11-3-5) celebrated its fifth straight victory and climbed to fifth place in the Supporters' Shield standings, strengthening their bid for back-to-back league titles. Messi, who recently set an MLS record by scoring multiple goals in four straight games, extended that streak to five, further cementing his status as the most dangerous player in the league at 38 years old.

Messi opened the scoring in the 17th minute with a trademark free kick, bending a low shot around the wall and past the Nashville defense for his 55th goal in just 66 matches for Inter Miami. The moment marked yet another highlight in a season that's seen him redefine MLS scoring records. Nashville, who entered the match in red-hot form and sitting third in the standings, responded early in the second half. In the 49th minute, Andy Najar whipped in a dangerous cross that Hany Mukhtar met with a precise header, leveling the score and briefly breathing new life into Nashville's campaign.

But Messi wasn't finished. In the



62nd minute, Nashville goalkeeper Joe Willis made a costly error, passing the ball straight to Messi. The Argentine pounced on the mistake, calmly slotting the ball home for his second of the night and 16th goal in 16 MLS matches this

season—tying him for the league lead with Nashville's Sam Surridge, who has 16 goals in 21 games. Nashville (12-5-5) saw their longest unbeaten run in club history—stretching back to mid-April—come to an end, along with their five-game winning streak. The loss snapped the longest active unbeaten streak in Major League Soccer and served as a reminder of just how much Messi can influence the outcome of a match.

Inter Miami's relentless push for the Supporters' Shield continues, driven by Messi's record-breaking scoring run and their growing momentum as the league heads into the heart of the season.

Kudermetova and Mertens Claim Women's Doubles Crown at Wimbledon



London: Veronika Kudermetova captured her maiden Grand Slam title as she and Belgian partner Elise Mertens staged a spirited comeback to defeat Hsieh Su-Wei and Jelena Ostapenko 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 in the women's doubles final at Wimbledon on Sunday.

For Kudermetova, the victory marked a moment of redemption, having lost in the 2021 Wimbledon final in a dramatic contest where Mertens and then-partner Hsieh Su-Wei triumphed after saving two match points against Kudermetova and Elena Vesnina. This time, paired together for the first time at Wimbledon, Kudermetova and Mertens found themselves on the same side of the net, fighting back from a set down and a 2-4 deficit in the decider.

Demonstrating remarkable composure, the duo rattled off the last four games of the match, securing the championship in style under the bright lights of Centre Court. Ku-

dermetova, who was visibly emotional at the trophy ceremony, admitted the memory of the 2021 heartbreak had fueled her determination. "I lost that final and it was so painful," she said. "Today I said to myself, I really want it. And it's mine now."

For Mertens, the win brings her fifth Grand Slam doubles trophy and her second at Wimbledon, further cementing her reputation as one of the top doubles specialists of her generation. Hsieh Su-Wei, who boasts four Wimbledon doubles titles with three different partners, and Ostapenko, a 2017 French Open singles champion and reigning US Open doubles winner, ultimately fell just short of adding another major to their impressive résumés. The triumph for Kudermetova and Mertens capped an eventful fortnight at the All England Club, where resilience and teamwork proved decisive in crowning new champions.

PT Usha Forms IOA Panel to Investigate BFI Election Delay, Seeks Roadmap for Timely Polls

New Delhi: Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha has taken action to address the long-standing stalemate over the Boxing Federation of India's (BFI) elections by setting up a three-member Fact-Finding Committee. This move is aimed at investigating the causes behind the repeated postponements of the BFI elections and formulating recommendations to ensure that future polls are fair, transparent, and timely.

The committee, announced in an official IOA order dated July 11, is chaired by IOA Treasurer Sahdev Yadav, and includes IOA Executive Council mem-

ber Bhupender Singh Bajwa and Advocate Payal Kakra. Their mandate is to examine the current legal and administrative status of the BFI and assess how the election delay has impacted the governance and overall functioning of boxing in India. The panel is also tasked with recommending the necessary actions to move forward, including working with World Boxing, and providing a clear roadmap to conduct free and fair elections without further delay.

The fact-finding committee has been given a week to submit its report, with the aim of



presenting a factual account to World Boxing, the international governing body. This development follows a letter from the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, dated July 5, which urged PT Usha to devise a workable solution—in consultation with World Boxing—to ensure that elections.

Bumrah gets new workload management advice: Play last 2 Tests in England, rest later

London: Former India captain Anil Kumble has urged Jasprit Bumrah to push himself and play both of the remaining Tests in the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy, adding that the fast bowler could manage his workload by skipping the upcoming home series later this year. Kumble stressed that India will need their pace spearhead in Manchester and London (The Oval), especially after the heart-breaking defeat at Lord's on Sunday. When Bumrah was named in the squad for the England tour, chief selector Ajit Agarkar stated that the pacer was expected to feature in three or four Tests. On arrival in England, Bumrah confirmed he was targeting just three matches, having already declined the captaincy offer to focus on workload management.

Even after India's loss in the series opener at Leeds, head coach Gautam Gambhir reiterated that there would be no change in plans and that Bumrah would feature in only three Tests. Bumrah was rested for the second Test in Birmingham, which India won comprehensively by 338 runs. He returned for the Lord's Test and picked up a five-wicket haul



in the first innings. "I would certainly, if I'm part of that group, push Bumrah to play the next game," Kumble told JioHotstar after the match.

"That's crucial. If he doesn't play and then we lose the Test, that's it—the series is done and dusted. I think Bumrah should play both the remaining Tests. I know he's said he's going to play only three, but there's a long break after this. He doesn't have to play the home series—he can take a break if needed. But I believe he should be out there for the next two."

Rocky Flintoff's 93 Keeps England U19 Afloat After India Pile Up 540 in Youth Test

Beckenham: Rocky Flintoff, son of England great Andrew Flintoff, showed impressive temperament with a gritty 93, but the England U19 team struggled to 239 for five in response to India's mammoth first-innings total of 540 on Day 2 of the four-day Youth Test at Beckenham. England still trail by 310 runs and face an uphill task against a confident Indian unit. At stumps, Thomas Rew (3) and Eknath Singh (0) remained unbeaten, with much work to be done to avoid a follow-on or collapse. After the early exits of Archie Vaughan (son of Michael Vaughan) and Jaydn Denly (nephew of Joe Denly), Rocky Flintoff found solid support in captain Hamza Sheikh, who contributed a stylish 84 from 134 balls. The pair put together a crucial 154-run partnership for the third wicket, briefly steadying England's chase and lifting the home side from 37 for two to 191 for three. However, the breakthrough came when Indian part-timer Vaibhav Suryavanshi, bowling left-arm spin, enticed Sheikh into a shot that found Henil Patel at deep. That wicket opened the floodgates: Flintoff was soon dismissed after an admirable knock that lasted 152 balls, and Ben Mayes (11) also fell cheaply, putting India firmly back in control late in the day. Earlier, India resumed their first innings at 450 for seven, and stretched their total to an imposing 540, thanks in large part to RS Ambarish.