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SBI lists \$500 million bonds on NSE-IX



New Delhi: India's largest lender, State Bank of India on Tuesday announced the listing of its recently issued \$500 million Regulation S bonds at NSE International Exchange (NSE-IX) at GIFT City. The bonds were issued at a coupon rate of 4.50 per cent at NSE-IX. The bond that has also been approved for listing on Singapore Exchange Securities Trading Limited (SGX-ST), is priced at a spread of 75 bps over the benchmark, a release from the bank said.

Regulation S bonds have received credit ratings of BBB from S&P and BBB- from Fitch. "The successful issuance of \$500 million is a testament to the strong appetite for bonds of SBI. It reflects the confidence of the global investors in India's growth story and credit quality of the bank," said Rama Mohan Rao Amara, Managing Director (IB, GM & T), SBI. The listing at NSE-IX enhances market visibility while reinforcing SBI's commitment to support the vision of strengthening the GIFT City ecosystem as an evolving international financial hub, he added.

Gold surges Rs 1,700, silver jumps Rs 1,200 to hit fresh all-time highs

New Delhi: Gold and silver prices witnessed a sharp surge on Monday, with both precious metals touching all-time highs, buoyed by geopolitical uncertainties, including ongoing US tariff concerns. According to the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA), the price of 24-carat gold jumped by Rs 1,699 to Rs 1,08,037 per 10 grams, compared to the earlier rate of Rs 1,06,338. Similarly, 22-carat gold rose to Rs 98,962 per 10 grams, up from Rs 97,406, while 18-carat gold climbed to Rs 81,028 from Rs 79,754 per 10 grams. Silver prices also recorded a significant increase, rising by Rs 1,243 to a record Rs 1,24,413 per kilogram, against the previous rate of Rs 1,23,170. The precious metals mirrored the upward trend in future markets as well. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), the gold contract expiring on October 3 was trading 0.39 per cent higher at Rs 1,08,147, while the silver for December 5 expiry rose 0.70 per cent to Rs 1,25,569. The yellow metal too saw a significant gain in the global market.



On Comex, gold edged up 0.20 per cent to \$3,660.42 per ounce, while silver advanced 0.87 per cent to \$41.915 per ounce. "Gold took positive cues with gains of \$28 at \$3615 on COMEX and Rs 300 at Rs 1,08,000 on MCX, after last week's weak Non-Farm Payrolls data strengthened expectations of a Fed rate cut in the upcoming meeting," said Jateen Trivedi of LKP Securities.

Sensex ends 70 points higher, Nifty nears 24,800

Mumbai: The Indian equity indices ended the session slightly up on Monday, amid buying in auto and metal stocks. The domestic indices soared high in the early trade, boosted by the GST reforms announcement, optimism around the ease in India-US relationship, and the rate cut announced by major Indian automakers.

However, the indices lost most of their gains in the last trading hours due to a sell-off in IT heavyweights and profit booking. Sensex closed at 80,787.30, up 76.54 points or 0.09 per cent. The 30-share index opened the session with a decent gap-up at 80,904.40 against the last session's closing of 80,710.76, buoyed by GST rationalisation and bullish momentum in auto and metal stocks. The index jumped



around 400 points to hit an intraday high at 81,171.38. Nifty settled the session at 24,773.15, up 32.15 points or 0.13 per cent. "The domestic market failed to sustain its early gains as a late-session sell-off reflected the prevailing 'buy-on-dips, sell-on-rallies' strategy, highlighting investor caution," said Vinod Nair,

Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited. Auto and ancillary stocks continued to rally on expectations of demand recovery following GST rate cuts, while IT remained weak amid global uncertainties. Globally, sentiment improved after soft US jobs data raised hopes of a Fed rate cut in September, Nair added.

Two-wheeler industry passes full GST cut benefits



New Delhi: Yamaha Motor India on Tuesday announced that it will pass on the complete benefits of the recent GST rate cut on two-wheelers to its customers from September 22. With this, Yamaha joins other major players like TVS, Bajaj Auto and Royal Enfield, which had already confirmed that they will extend the full benefit of the tax cut to buyers. The GST Council, in its 56th meeting, had reduced the

tax rate on internal combustion engine (ICE) two-wheelers from 28 per cent to 18 per cent.

This decision is expected to make motorcycles and scooters more affordable ahead of the festive season, giving a boost to demand. India Yamaha Motor said its models, including the R15, MT15, FZ series, Aerox 155, RayZR and Fascino, will see price cuts of up to Rs 17,500. Chairman Itaru Otani thanked the government for the "timely reduction" and said Yamaha is happy to pass on the full benefits to customers. TVS Motor Company also confirmed that all popular motorcycles such as the Apache, Ronin, Raider, and Sport, along with scooters like Ntorq, Jupiter and Zest, will become cheaper from September 22.

However, prices of its electric vehicles, including iQube, Orbiter and TVS X, will remain unchanged as GST rates on EVs are the same.

UPI transactions exceed 20 billion in August, PhonePe and Google pay retain top spots



New Delhi: The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) network processed over 20 billion transactions in August 2025, marking the first time it has crossed the 20 billion monthly transaction thresholds. According to data released by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the total value of these transactions was Rs 24.85 lakh crore. The market distribution for UPI transactions continues to be led by a few key applications. In terms of transaction volume, PhonePe was the market leader with an estimated 9.6 billion transactions, followed by Google Pay with 7.4 billion transactions and Paytm in third place with 1.6 billion transactions.

Their shares of the total transaction value reflected a similar trend, with PhonePe holding 48.64 per cent, Google Pay contributing 35.53 per cent, and Paytm accounting for about 8.5 per cent. Other notable platforms in the ecosystem include Navi and CRED, which also featured among the top five applications by transaction volume.

Navi processed around 406 million transactions, while CRED handled approximately 219 million. On average, the UPI network handled more than 645 million transactions each day throughout August. An analysis of UPI transaction data from August reveals a spending landscape weighted towards financial payments and essential goods.

Lexus India slashes car prices by up to Rs 20.8 lakh over GST rate cut

New Delhi: Lexus India on Monday announced big price cuts across all its models after the recent reduction in GST rates.

The new prices will come into effect from September 22, just in time for the festive season. With this move, the luxury carmaker is passing on the full benefit of the tax cut to its customers, making its cars more affordable. The Japanese luxury brand has slashed prices by amounts ranging from just over Rs 1 lakh to as much as Rs 20.8 lakh, depending on the model. The entry-level



el ES 300h sedan is now cheaper by up to Rs 1.47 lakh, while the popular NX 350h SUV sees a price drop of up to Rs 1.58 lakh. In the RX range, the RX 350h is lower by up to Rs 2.1 lakh and

the RX 500h by Rs 2.58 lakh. Larger luxury vehicles also come with major reductions. The LM 350h now offers savings of up to Rs 5.77 lakh, while the flagship LX 500d SUV has become more attractive with a massive cut of up to Rs 20.8 lakh. This makes it one of the biggest price adjustments in India's luxury car segment following the GST 2.0 rollout. Commenting on the announcement, Hikarulkeuchi, President of Lexus India, said the company is delighted to pass on the full benefit of the reform to its customers.

Godrej aer launches aer Plug, India's most affordable electric room freshener at Rs 2.5/day

Guwahati: Godrej aer, the country's leading fragrance brand under Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL), on Tuesday unveiled its latest innovation – the aer Plug, touted as India's most affordable electric room freshener. Priced at just ₹149, the device delivers continuous fragrance for up to 60 days, costing only ₹2.5 per day, and comes in two premium variants: Violet Bloom and Rose Blossom.



Designed by GCPL's in-house studio Disco, aer Plug combines sleek, modern aesthetics with smart heater technology, making electric room fresheners accessible to a broader Indian audience. The launch addresses a key gap in India's ₹3,000 crore air freshener market, where electric diffusers have been traditionally expensive, leaving sprays dominant with a ₹1,000 crore market share. "The aer Plug bridges the price gap, offering premium fragrance at an affordable cost, potentially attracting new consumers while upgrad-

ing existing spray users," said Shilpa Suresh, Head of Marketing – Home Care, GCPL. In Guwahati, the aer Plug is expected to resonate strongly with urban households and office spaces, where demand for affordable yet premium home care products is growing. Retailers in the city's leading modern trade outlets have reported early interest, highlighting the device's potential to transform the local electric diffuser segment. Available across modern trade, e-commerce, and general trade channels nationwide, the aer Plug starter kit is priced at ₹149, with refills at ₹99, bringing premium fragrance within reach of every home.

Nissan cuts prices of Magnite variants by up to Rs 1 lakh after GST rate reduction

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. (NMIPL) has announced a significant price reduction across its New Nissan Magnite range, passing on the full benefit of the revised GST rates to customers. The top-end CVT Tekna and Tekna+ variants will now be cheaper by nearly ₹97,300 and ₹1,00,400 respectively, while the entry-level Visia MT is now priced below ₹6 lakh.

The company highlighted that the new pricing will come into effect from September 22, coinciding with Navratri, though customers can book at revised rates immediately. The N-Connecta CVT and KURO CVT variants are now available under ₹10 lakh, expanding affordability in the compact SUV market. Nissan has also lowered the price of the CNG retrofit kit to ₹71,999, ensuring additional savings for eco-conscious buyers.

In Guwahati, one of the fastest-growing automobile hubs in the Northeast, dealers expect strong demand for the Magnite lineup. Local retailers said the festive price cuts could attract both first-time buyers and upgraders, especially with the SUV's 5-star GNCAP safety rating and 10-year extended warranty offering added assurance.

Calling the GST reduction a "timely stimulus," Nissan MD Saurabh Vatsa expressed optimism that the festive season will drive higher customer enthusiasm and boost retail momentum nationwide.

Renault sees strong festive push as GST cuts slash car prices

Guwahati: The GST Council's landmark decision to streamline the indirect tax regime into two slabs of 5% and 18% has generated optimism across sectors, with the automobile industry among the biggest beneficiaries. The reform is expected to ease household budgets, spur rural consumption, and strengthen India's growth momentum.

A major highlight is the reduction of GST on entry-level cars from 28% to 18%. The revised rate, applicable to petrol cars under 1200 cc and diesel cars below 1500 cc, is set to make personal mobility more affordable for millions of first-time buyers.

"This is a transformative move that makes personal mobility significantly more affordable for the masses," said Venkatram Mamillapalle, Managing Director of Renault India. He added that the uniform 18% GST on auto components would simplify costs and benefit both manufacturers and consumers.

Beyond cars, lower taxes on tractors, farm inputs, and equipment are expected to re-



duce costs for farmers and boost semi-urban demand. "The GST reform will boost rural demand, strengthen agri-linked enterprises, and create new growth avenues in Tier 2 and Tier 3 markets," Mamillapalle said.

Tata AIA launches 'Health Buddy' and Health SIP to redefine insurance with wellness

Aizawl: Tata AIA Life Insurance has announced the launch of Tata AIA Health Buddy, India's first 24x7 health and wellness companion from a life insurer, alongside Tata AIA Health SIP, a pioneering health insurance plan that integrates long-term protection with wealth creation.

Health Buddy, accessible via the Tata AIA Life Insurance App, provides preventive health check-ups, doctor consultations across 24 specialties, dental and women's wellness care, second medical opinions, fitness and diet sessions, and discounts on medicines and lab tests. The company also introduced a friendly mascot to embody trust and approachability.

"Tata AIA Health Buddy is designed to empower consumers with holistic solutions that protect their health and support healthier, more fulfilling lives," said Amit Dave, Chief Distribution Officer, Tata AIA.

In Aizawl, where rising healthcare costs



and limited specialty services often challenge families, Tata AIA's Health Buddy is expected to bring timely medical access and preventive care within reach. Local businesses also see potential demand growth for digital health solutions, reflecting a shift towards integrated health-financial products.

Complementing this, Tata AIA Health SIP offers long-term critical illness cover, tax-free withdrawals from the sixth year, no premium allocation charges, and maturity boosters. Available in Health SIP Plus and Health SIP Plus Pro variants, it combines protection with wealth-building, reinforcing Tata AIA's strategy of health-and-wealth-first insurance.

Education and skilling leaders chart roadmap for Aatmanirbhar Bharat

Guwahati: In a high-level deliberation today at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi, leaders from the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) outlined strategies to advance India's vision of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The session, themed "Swadeshi Se SamriddhaaurViksit Bharat – Strategies in Education and Skilling," was chaired by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, in the presence of Ministers of State Jayant Chaudhary and Dr. Sukanta Majumdar.



Officials from school and higher education departments, MSDE, and heads of autonomous institutions discussed integrating education and skilling as twin pillars of Mission Swadeshi. The deliberations emphasized nurturing self-reliance from the school level, promoting local entrepreneurship, indigenous products, and cultural heritage through projects, exhibitions, debates, and community campaigns. The NEP 2020 framework was highlighted as a foundation for holistic, skill-based learning and innovation.

Shri Pradhan stressed that students will become ambassadors of Swadeshi and cultural pride, while Shri Chaudhary called for equipping youth with future-ready skills in AI, technology, and design. Dr. Majumdar highlighted the role of higher education and skilling institutions in transforming India into a global Skill Capital.

In Guwahati, education and skill-driven initiatives are expected to boost local enterprise, with vocational training and ITI-driven programs empowering youth to participate actively in regional economic activities, enhancing the city's innovation ecosystem and market competitiveness.

The session concluded with actionable recommendations for aligning curricula and outreach with the objectives of Mission Swadeshi, reaffirming India's commitment to a SamriddhaaurViksit Bharat by 2047.

Godrej Jersey promotes paneer as protein powerhouse this Nutrition Week

Guwahati: Godrej Jersey has launched a special campaign this Nutrition Week to highlight the nutritional and culinary potential of paneer, positioning it as an indispensable source of protein for vegetarian households across India.

Paneer, long regarded as a vegetarian superfood, provides a natural and wholesome protein option. While it has been a staple in northern diets, its versatility allows it to adapt to regional cuisines across India. From Paneer Chettinad in Tamil Nadu to Paneer Tikka in Punjab and Paneer-stuffed Dhokla in Gujarat, the ingredient continues to find innovative roles on plates nationwide.

Speaking on the importance of paneer, Shantanu Raj, Head of Marketing, Godrej Jersey, said, "Paneer is not just a packaged food item, but a must-have ingredient in a balanced diet. A single pack has almost the same protein content as six eggs, making it an essential dish in the great Indian food thali. At Godrej Jersey, we ensure our paneer is soft, fresh, and made



from real milk to bring wholesome goodness to every household." He added that the brand has partnered with celebrity chef TejaParuchuri, popularly known as Vismai Foods, to inspire consumers through new recipes accessible via QR codes on packaging.

Chef Teja emphasized paneer's versatility, noting that it can be grilled, stir-fried, blended into curries, or even transformed into desserts, ensuring both taste and nutrition.

In Guwahati, a growing urban middle-class and rising demand for high-quality vegetarian protein are pushing paneer sales upward. Local retailers note that consumers are increasingly open to experimenting with new recipes, reflecting how paneer is no longer limited to traditional dishes but is now part of innovative meals across Assamese households.

Axis Max Life reimagines life advisor role in India's phygital era

Guwahati: Axis Max Life has unveiled a transformative vision for life advisors, positioning them as digitally empowered, emotionally intelligent partners at the heart of India's evolving life insurance landscape. Over the past two decades, the industry has shifted from urban-centric penetration to one of the fastest-growing protection markets globally, with life advisors emerging as crucial drivers of trust and financial literacy.

In line with IRDAI's agenda of 'Insurance for All by 2047', Axis Max Life has focused on expanding its agency force into Tier 2 and 3 cities, leveraging digital tools and platforms like Bharat Stack to enhance accessibility. The company is recruiting from diverse talent pools, including graduates, homemakers, retirees, and mid-career professionals, while adopting AI-led learning systems and gamification to accelerate skill development and productivity.



In Guwahati, the agency model is gaining traction as local advisors blend technology with personal engagement to reach households previously underserved by conventional insurance channels. Axis Max Life has strengthened its presence in the city, enabling advisors to educate communities, foster financial protection awareness, and deliver solutions tailored to the city's growing middle-class aspirations.

Axis Max Life emphasizes that technology complements, rather than replaces, human advisors. The company's mission is to build a scalable, sustainable, and trusted advisory network, ensuring that every advisor continues to inspire confidence, safeguard dreams, and contribute meaningfully to India's life insurance growth story.

Flipkart expands supply chain in Northeast, empowers MSMEs, farmers ahead of festive season



Shillong: Flipkart has significantly expanded its supply chain footprint in Northeast India, announcing over 6 lakh sq. ft. of warehousing capacity across Guwahati and Agartala. With nine Micro Fulfillment Centers (MFCs) now operational in Guwahati under its quick commerce arm, Flipkart Minutes, customers can access essentials and groceries within minutes.

The company has created more than 5,000 direct jobs in the region, with a focus on women, PwDs, and youth skilling. Assam has emerged as a major growth hub with over one lakh sellers on board on the Flipkart marketplace, reporting 100% year-on-year growth in listings. Meanwhile, through Samartha Krishi, more

than 300 farmers from Meghalaya, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh are supplying pineapples, strawberries, lemons, and baby kiwi to national markets.

North-east responded positively to Flipkart's initiatives, particularly in categories like ethnic wear, footwear, and home furnishings. Local sellers see new opportunities to scale their businesses, while farmers are leveraging Flipkart's network to reach larger markets such as Kolkata and Patna, boosting rural incomes.

Flipkart also announced that over 2,000 distributors and retailers in the region are active on its Reset for Business platform, contributing nearly 30% of overall business, further strengthening the circular economy.

Godrej Agrovet opens first Samadhan Center in Mizoram, pioneer oil palm growth

Aizawl: Godrej Agrovet Limited's Oil Palm Business has inaugurated its first Samadhan center for oil palm farmers in Bukvannei, Kolasib district, signaling a major push to modernize the state's palm oil sector. Samadhan, a one-stop solution (OSS) center, provides farmers with end-to-end support—from seed to harvest—offering access to advanced tools, advisory services, and productivity-enhancing solutions.

The launch was attended by Joseph Lalnunluanga, District Agriculture Officer, Kolasib; Lianthanzauva, Assistant Director of Agriculture; and Sougata Niyogi, CEO – Oil Palm Business, Godrej Agrovet. Mizoram, under the National Mission on Edible Oil – Oil Palm



(NMEO-OP), has a cultivation potential of 60,000–70,000 hectares. The center will guide farmers on balanced fertilizer application, soil testing, irrigation solutions including drip systems, and overall farm management to address seasonal water challenges.

Sougata Niyogi emphasized, "Sa-

madhan reinforces our commitment to sustainable development and empowers farmers with access to government schemes, developmental finance, and modern agricultural technologies." Each center targets support for around 2,000 hectares of oil palm cultivation, ensuring sustained productivity in mature gardens.

In Aizawl, the Samadhan center is expected to boost demand for quality oil palm seedlings and related inputs. Local farmers now gain easier access to expert guidance, modern technologies, and financial assistance, fostering wider adoption of oil palm cultivation and strengthening the regional agribusiness ecosystem.

Tata AIA launches 'health buddy' and health SIP, redefines insurance with wellness-first approach

Guwahati: Tata AIA Life Insurance has unveiled "Tata AIA Health Buddy", India's first 24x7 virtual health and wellness companion from a life insurer, aimed at combining continuous healthcare with insurance protection. Alongside, the company also announced the launch of Tata AIA Health SIP, a unique health insurance plan integrating long-term protection with wealth creation.

The Health Buddy comes with a friendly mascot to symbolize care and trust. Available on the Tata AIA Life Insurance app, it offers preventive check-ups, 24x7 doctor consultations across 24 specialties, vaccinations, women's care, dental consultations, discounts on lab tests and medicines, fitness and diet sessions, and support for critical illness cases.

"Tata AIA Health Buddy ensures consumers are supported not just in crises, but in living healthier, more secure lives every day," said Su-

jeetKothare, Chief of Products, Marketing, Corporate Communications & Business Mid Office, Tata AIA Life Insurance.

The newly launched Tata AIA Health SIP further strengthens this offering with no premium allocation charges, maturity boosters, tax-free withdrawals for health expenses from the 6th year, and critical illness cover with locked premiums for up to 30 years. Two variants—Health SIP Plus and Health SIP Plus Pro—provide additional disability and terminal illness protection.

In Guwahati, where healthcare costs are steadily rising, the launch is expected to resonate strongly with families seeking reliable and affordable medical support. The integration of preventive care with financial planning could significantly influence urban middle-class households and working professionals in the city's expanding insurance market.

JSW Group, Assam government to build world-class museum in Guwahati for Vrindavani Vastra

Guwahati: The JSW Group, one of India's leading corporate promoters of arts and culture, has partnered with the Government of Assam to build a state-of-the-art heritage museum in Guwahati. The facility will initially showcase the Vrindavani Vastra, the 17th-century devotional silk textile woven under the guidance of Srimanta Sankardev, which is currently preserved at the British Museum in London.

The British Museum has consented to loan the Vastra for public display in Assam in 2026–27, where it will remain for 18 months. The Government has allotted land at Khanapara's Sericulture Farm for the project, which will be fully funded by JSW Group. Designed by architect Abin Chaudhuri, the museum will feature international



conservation protocols and advanced climate-control systems.

In Guwahati, the project is expected to significantly enhance the city's economy by boosting cultural tourism, hospitality, and retail trade. Local businesses anticipate higher footfall from domestic and international visitors, positioning Guwahati as a

cultural hub of the Northeast and opening new opportunities for allied industries.

JSW Foundation Chairperson Sangita Jindal called the initiative "a priceless contribution to Assam's cultural heritage," while Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma hailed it as a milestone in realizing a long-cherished aspiration.

TVS Apache marks 20 years with limited-edition lineup, targets growing premium motorcycle market



Guwahati: TVS Motor Company on Saturday marked 20 years of its flagship Apache motorcycle by launching limited-edition variants and introducing premium upgrades in the Apache RTR 160, 180, 200, RTR 310 and RR310 lineup. The celebratory models sport a black-champagne-gold anniversary livery, dual-tone alloy wheels, and a first-ever USB charger, making them collectible editions.

The new top-end Apache RTR 160 4V and 200 4V now feature Class-D projector headlamps with LED DRLs, an all-LED setup, 5-inch TFT cluster with Bluetooth-enabled SmartXconnect, voice assist, traction control, assist and slipper clutch, and refreshed colour schemes. Prices for the new models start at ₹1,28,490 for the RTR 160 4V and ₹1,59,990 for the RTR 200 4V (ex-showroom Delhi).

In Guwahati, the market for premium commuter and sports bikes has shown steady growth, with young riders increasingly prioritizing style, performance, and connectivity features. Dealers expect the limited-edition Apache range to generate strong demand among college-goers and professionals seeking a blend of racing DNA and everyday practicality.

K N Radhakrishnan, Director and CEO of TVS Motor, said, "We are grateful to the 6.5 million-strong Apache community whose passion has shaped this journey. We look forward to carrying forward the legacy with new innovations and markets."

Groww MF rolls out Multi Asset Allocation Fund backed by SHAASTRA

Guwahati: Groww Mutual Fund has launched the Groww Multi Asset Allocation Fund, an open-ended scheme that invests across equity, debt, gold, and silver. The New Fund Offer (NFO) will be open from September 10 to September 24, 2025, with a minimum investment of ₹500 and SIPs starting at ₹100. The scheme will be managed by ParasMatalia, KaustubhSule, and Wilfred Gonsalves.

The fund is powered by SHAASTRA (Strategic Holistic Asset Allocation and Systematic Technical Risk Assessment), Groww's proprietary platform that combines macroeconomic indicators, technical signals, and market trends to guide asset allocation. By maintaining over 65% equity exposure, the scheme qualifies for equity taxation, while also leveraging debt and commodities to balance risk.

Industry data shows that multi-asset portfolios have historically delivered comparable returns to equities with lower volatility. The allocation framework is designed to adapt to shifting cycles — overweighting equities during growth phases or leaning on debt, gold, and silver during uncertain times.

In Guwahati, retail investors are increasingly seeking diversified options that reduce portfolio stress. Advisors expect strong interest in the new fund, particularly from first-time investors looking for stable, adaptive strategies.

Skill trainers honoured with National Teachers' Awards 2025, boost to India's skilling economy

Guwahati: President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday conferred the National Teachers' Awards 2025 on 15 master trainers and instructors from the vocational training ecosystem, alongside teachers from schools and higher education institutions. The ceremony, held at Vigyan Bhawan and organised by the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) with the Ministry of Education (MoE), underscored the growing importance of skill trainers as key drivers of India's workforce readiness.

Awardees from ITIs, NSTIs, and other institutes were recognised for pioneering digital learning tools, advancing women's participation in non-traditional trades, building inclusive training models, and forging sustainable industry linkages. Ahead of the ceremony, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met the trainers and lauded their contribution to a "skilled and empowered India."

For Guwahati, industry voices noted that this recognition will boost confidence in the



Northeast's skill training ecosystem. With Assam positioning itself as an emerging hub for ITIs and vocational institutes, the awards are expected to inspire greater youth participation in market-ready skilling, aligning with regional job creation and entrepreneurship opportunities.

In total, 81 educators across schools, higher education, and skill training were honoured, reflecting NEP 2020's vision of integrating skilling into mainstream education and advancing India's Skill Capital ambition.

GST rate cut to boost FMCG demand, says Godrej Consumer Products

Guwahati: The GST Council's move to rationalize indirect taxes into a two-slab structure of 5% and 18% has been welcomed as a game-changer for India's fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. Industry experts believe the reform will ease household budgets, stimulate consumption, and provide fresh momentum to the economy.

One of the strongest endorsements came from Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL), a leading FMCG player with popular soap brands like Cinthol and Godrej No.1. The company said the tax cut will make essentials more affordable and boost overall demand. "We welcome the govern-



ment's initiative of lowering taxes to boost consumption. This is a positive trigger for demand and strong driver of volume growth. This move will ultimately contribute to overall economic momentum," said Aasif Malbari, Chief Financial

Officer of GCPL.

The company also assured that consumers will directly benefit. "We are fully committed to ensuring that the GST rates reduction benefits are passed on to consumers," Malbari added.

Renault slashes prices by up to Rs 96,000, fully passing GST 2.0 benefit to customers

Guwahati: Renault India has announced a sweeping price cut across its entire portfolio, passing on the full benefits of GST 2.0 to customers. Effective from September 22, 2025, the revised prices — reduced by up to ₹96,395 — will be available on all deliveries, just in time for the Navratri festive season. Bookings at the new rates have already begun nationwide.

The KWID now starts at ₹4.29 lakh, while the Kiger and Triber begin at ₹5.76 lakh, making Renault's lineup significantly more afford-



able. Variants of the Kiger have seen the sharpest cuts, with top-end models reduced by nearly a lakh.

Venkatram Mamillapalle,

MD of Renault India, said, "Passing on the full GST 2.0 benefit is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to our customers. This initiative

will energize demand during the festive season and reinforce our promise of innovation, value, and trust."

In Guwahati, one of Renault's key northeast markets, dealers anticipate a surge in festive bookings. Local automobile retailers noted that competitive pricing is likely to drive stronger footfall, especially among first-time buyers looking for compact SUVs like the Kiger. With fuel efficiency and affordability in focus, Renault expects solid traction in Assam's growing urban market.

Oriflame expands optimals line with new Hydra Radiance range in India

Guwahati: Swedish holistic beauty and wellbeing brand Oriflame has launched its new Optimals Hydra Radiance Range in India, adding to its popular Optimals skincare line. The collection is designed to simplify routines while ensuring hydration, barrier strengthening, and microbiome balance for all skin types.

Dermatologically tested, the Hydra Radiance products aim to deliver results with minimal effort, in line with the growing trend of "skinimalism." Oriflame says the range combines science and sustainability, offering solutions for young professionals, parents, and consumers seeking healthier, glowing skin.

"The new Optimals Hydra Radiance range offers routines that are easy to follow yet deliver meaningful results, helping consumers feel confident in their healthiest, most radiant skin," said Edyta Kurek, Senior Vice President & Head, Oriflame India and Indonesia.

The range includes cleansers, moisturisers, sunscreens, and



targeted eye and lip care, priced between ₹829 and ₹1,999. Products are available online and through Oriflame's independent brand partners.

In Guwahati, beauty consultants note growing demand for premium yet accessible skincare solutions. With increasing awareness of hydration and protection against pollution, the Hydra Radiance line is expected to resonate strongly among working professionals and urban families in the Northeast.

Oriflame, present in over 60 countries, markets its nature-inspired beauty and wellbeing products through nearly 3 million brand partners worldwide.

EuroKids launches Harvard-inspired 'Heureka' curriculum, expands growth plans in Assam



Guwahati: EuroKids, India's leading preschool chain, has introduced its eighth curriculum version, Heureka — the Visible Thinking Curriculum, inspired by Harvard University's Project Zero and aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Designed to build curiosity and critical thinking, the curriculum emphasizes not just "what" children learn but "how" they think.

As part of its expansion strategy, EuroKids announced plans to open 20 new centres in Assam over the next five years, taking its presence in the state from 55 to 75. Developed over 18 months, Heureka integrates 20 structured Harvard-inspired routines and follows the EPICS model—focusing on Emotional, Physical, Intellectual, Creative, and Spiritual growth.

EuroKids CEO KVS Seshasai said the initiative reflects the company's vision of preparing children for lifelong learning, while Dr Anita Madan, Head of Curriculum Development, described Heureka as a transformative step in early education.

In Guwahati, a fast-growing education hub, parents and educators welcomed the launch, noting that demand for structured early learning programs is rising sharply. With many families seeking global-standard education locally, EuroKids' expansion is expected to intensify competition among preschools in the city.

With a network of over 1,700 preschools across 500 cities, EuroKids aims to strengthen its leadership in early childhood education while offering parents a research-backed, holistic curriculum.

Divya Khosla had gala time ‘bullying’ Neil Nitin Mukesh on new film



Mumbai: Actress-director Divya Khosla, who is gearing up for her upcoming film ‘Ek Chatur Naar’, has shared that working with co-actor Neil Nitin Mukesh was more fun on camera than off the camera. It went on to the extent that she enjoyed bullying her co-actor on the screen. The actress-director spoke with IANS in the Andheri area of Mumbai ahead of the film’s release, and said, “On the camera, it was a lot more fun. Off the camera, it was serious, because, you know, we both are very hardworking into our work. And we don’t take our minds around here and there”.

She told IANS, “It’s always work, work, work. But on screen, it was very fun because it was about the snake and the mongoose. And I had the most fun time of my life, bullying him”. ‘Ek Chatur Naar’ is a black comedy thriller film written by Himanshu Tripathi and directed by Umesh Shukla. It is set against the backdrop of a quirky smalltown Indian landscape, the story follows a seemingly charming woman with a naivety that masks her razor-sharp wit. Ambitious and cunning, she effortlessly outsmarts everyone around her. Earlier, the actress had shared that she always wanted to try her hands at comedy as she has got a comic bone in her.

Divyanka Tripathi tells what to do when there are ‘too many pictures to decide from’

Mumbai: Popular television actress Divyanka Tripathi has given a tip on what to do when there are too many pictures “to decide from.” Divyanka took to Instagram, where she shared a video montage featuring pictures of her dressed in a beautiful chikankari saree. For the background score, the actress used the track “Jutti meri” sung by Neha Bhasin. “They say, “when God gives you lemon, you make lemonade”... and when you have too many pictures to decide from, make a trending reel! (Reeled the trend Thumak Thumak),” she wrote as the caption.

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 runnerup. The actress is married to actor Vivek Dahiya. The two met on the sets of their show “Yeh Hai Mohabbatein” and fell in love. They got engaged in January 2016. A 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. Divyanka, who is one of the highest-paid television actresses in India, had earlier shared glimpses from her Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations, where she posed alongside her friends Sandip Sikand, Aly Goni, Jasmin Bhasin, Adah Sharma, Eijaz Khan, Rahul Sharma, Jeena Gupta and Waseem Mushtaq. A few days ago the actress was in the National Capital. Sharing an update on her social media, the actress posted a picture and wrote: “Bas yoon hi... Dilli mein.”

Shamita Shetty wishes “Jiju” Raj Kundra on 50th birthday: May life continue to surprise you

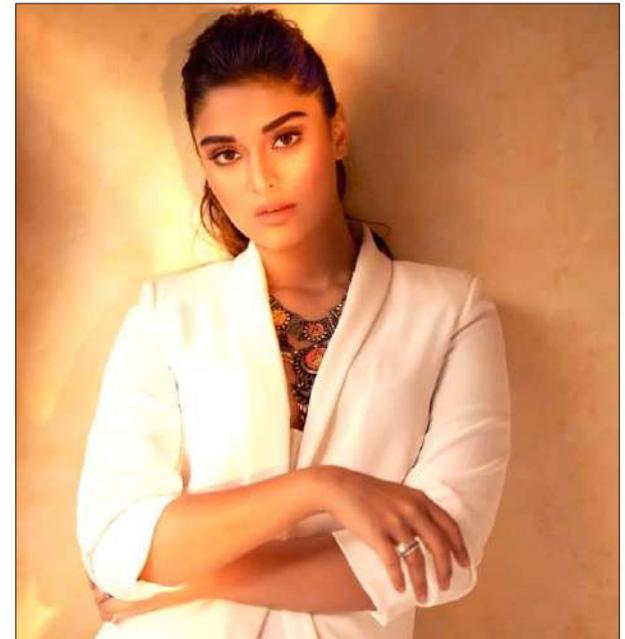


Mumbai: Businessman and actor Raj Kundra turned 50 years old today and his fans and family took to their social media accounts in wishing the birthday boy. Bollywood actress and Raj Kundra’s sister-in-law Shamita Shetty also took to her social media in wishing her brotherlike “Jiju” on his special day. “50 years of laughter, learning, loving and living As you enter this golden chapter, may life continue to surprise you, bless you with more happiness, success and

love and bring you peace Happy birthday Jiju.. this world is better because your in it,” she wrote.

She shared a beautiful compilation video of Raj and a few beautiful memories. Raj Kundra thanked Shamita in the comments section and also appreciated the video. Shamita and Raj share a very beautiful rapport and are always seen hanging out with families. Shamita has always maintained that Raj, to her, has always been like a brother she never had. Her sister and Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty also took to her social media account in wishing her husband Raj on his birthday. “My darling Cookie On this milestone birthday, I pray you always stay blessed and protected. We’re so lucky to have you in our lives. Wishing you miles of smiles, great health and success. Rab MEHAR kare,” she wrote. For the uninitiated, Shilpa and Raj got married in November 2009 at Lonavala.

Saiee Manjrekar chalks out difference between south cinema, and Bollywood



Mumbai: Actress Saiee M Manjrekar, who is known for her work in films like ‘Dabangg 3’ and ‘Major’, has spoken up about what makes every film industry unique in India. She also spoke about balancing work across different film industries of India. The actress has already made her mark in Hindi and south cinema, and is clear about her priorities. For her, cinema is all about good stories and inspiring collaborations, not just language barriers. Talking about the same, she said, “I believe cinema has no language, it’s the story and the way it connects with people that matters. Right now, I’m focusing on my journey in Bollywood and the South, but I would definitely like to do a meaningful Marathi film at some point too. As long as the script excites me and the director has a strong vision, I’m open to exploring different industries”. On drawing a comparison between Bollywood and the South industries, Saiee shared, “Having had the chance to work in both, I feel each industry carries its own unique pulse and magic. Bollywood celebrates larger-than-life emotions and the way stories are presented, while in the South.

Hina Khan struggles with swollen feet while wearing her strap heels

Mumbai: Television superstar Hina Khan has always been synonymous with grit, gumption and strength. The actress who has been diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer has been giving a tough fight against the disease and is seen putting up her best foot forward with all her strength. The actress recently shared a video on her social media story wherein she was seen in pain while wearing her strap heels. The actress earlier had stated how she had constant infusions through her feet as

a part of her cancer treatment. The constant infusions led to Hina’s feet getting swollen, making it extremely difficult for her to wear any footwear.

Hina, on the 8th of September, had shared a post on her social media sharing her life update and gave a glimpse into all that she’s been doing on her professional and personal front. In the glimpses shared, Hina showcased a sneak peek and photos and videos of her juggling between shooting for the reality show “Pati Pati Aur Panga” with husband



Rocky Jaiswal and her cancer treatments. The first photo of the post gave an insight into her vanity and makeup, followed by a picture of her infusion therapy.

Navneet's last-gasp strike helps India hold Japan 2-2 in women's Asia Cup thriller

Hangzhou: Navneet Kaur struck a dramatic equaliser off a penalty corner in the final seconds as India came from behind twice to hold defending champions Japan 2-2 in a pulsating Pool B clash of the Women's Asia Cup hockey tournament on Saturday. Japan drew first blood through Hiroka Murayama in the 10th minute, capitalising on a sweeping move after India's early attacking surge. Despite sustained pressure from the Indian forwards, the Japanese defence stood firm until just before halftime, when Rutu-

ja Dadaso Pisal levelled the scores in the 30th minute, ensuring parity at the break.

The second half saw both sides trade attacks with little to separate them. Japan's resilience finally paid off in the dying minutes as Chiko Fujibayashi converted a penalty stroke in the 58th minute, putting the defending champions 2-1 up. But India refused to buckle. With seconds left on the clock, Navneet pounced on a penalty corner opportunity to slam home the equaliser in the 60th minute, sparking celebrations in the Indian



camp and frustrating the Japanese, who thought they had secured victory. India, ranked 10th in the

world, had begun their campaign with an emphatic 11-0 rout of Thailand and will next face Singapore in their final pool match on Monday. Japan, ranked 12th, remain unbeaten as well. With the top two teams from each pool advancing to the Super 4s stage, India's spirited draw against the reigning champions keeps them firmly in contention for the semifinals. The eventual winners of the Asia Cup will secure qualification for the 2026 Women's World Cup in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Olympians Ramita and Divyansh headline India's Shooting World Cup squad in China

New Delhi: A 24-member Indian team comprising shooters ranked primarily between four and six in the national rankings, is all set to take on the world's best, as the season's fourth and final International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol stage got underway in Ningbo, China. Over six competition days beginning Tuesday, a total of 320 shooting athletes from as many as 42 nations will take aim for a shot at the 10 medal sets up for grabs.

Some of the world's top shooters, including at least four reigning Olympic champions, will be seen in action in Ningbo, where many will look to gain confidence ahead of the world championships in Cai-



ro in November. Shooters will also be looking to book their spot in the season-ending ISSF World Cup Finals in Doha in December, with a top performance. The 10m air rifle and air pistol mixed team events are the first two finals scheduled for Tuesday, and India will field new combinations in both events.

Harbhajan Singh pitches in with relief work in flood-hit Punjab

Chandigarh: Former India cricketer and Rajya Sabha MP Harbhajan Singh has extended support to flood-affected regions of Punjab by arranging boats, ambulances, and mobilising funds through personal and professional networks. According to a source close to him, Harbhajan sanctioned eight steamer boats from his MPLAD fund and personally added three more, taking the total to 11. Each boat cost between ₹4.5 lakh and ₹5.5 lakh. He also procured three ambulances to ensure the smooth transfer of critical patients to hospitals.

Punjab has been reeling under severe floods caused by incessant monsoon rains and breaches in river embankments. The calamity has displaced thousands, destroyed crops, and left several districts waterlogged, prompting coordinated relief and rescue efforts by the state government and voluntary organisations. The 44-year-old former off-spinner, who now represents the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the Rajya Sabha, also tapped into his wide network of friends and sporting connections for additional support. A sports organisation responded with a donation of ₹30 lakh, while two of his close friends contributed ₹12 lakh and ₹6 lakh respectively. "In all, around ₹50 lakh has already been collected and donated," the source said, noting that essential supplies such as food and medicines are being distributed regularly to affected families.

FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifiers: Ronaldo shines as Portugal, England, Austria, Serbia impress

New Delhi: Cristiano Ronaldo took centre stage in Portugal's opening victory of UEFA qualifying for the FIFA World Cup 2026, striking twice in the emphatic 5-0 victory over Armenia. The 39-year-old forward extended his record international tally to 140 and moved within one goal of Carlos Ruiz's all-time World Cup qualifying record of 39. Joao Felix also netted a brace, while Joao Cancelo was on target as Roberto Martinez's side signalled their intent early in Group F. The day's most dramatic contest unfolded in Dublin, where the Republic of Ireland mounted a spirited comeback to draw 2-2 against Hungary. Early strikes from Barnabas Varga and Roland Sallai had the visitors cruising,



but Evan Ferguson halved the deficit shortly after the break before Sallai was dismissed. Deep into stoppage time, Adam Idah headed home to rescue a point for the hosts.

Austria kept their flawless start alive in Group H, edging Cyprus 1-0 courtesy of a Marcel Sabitzer penalty after

Christoph Baumgartner was fouled. Bosnia and Herzegovina stayed top with a ruthless 6-0 dismantling of San Marino, led by Edin Dzeko's quick-fire double in the second half. The victory secured their fourth straight win, maintaining a three-point cushion at the summit.

Asia Cup: I am very excited to take the field on the front foot, says Suryakumar Yadav ahead of opener

Abu Dhabi: Both captains – India's Suryakumar Yadav and Pakistan's Salman Ali Agha – made it clear during the captains' press conference that aggression will be a defining feature when their teams take the field as the anticipation is building for the India-Pakistan showdown at the Asia Cup 2025 on September 14 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. India begin their campaign against the UAE on September 10, while Pakistan will line up against their archrivals four days later in Dubai.

Speaking on the eve of the tournament, Suryakumar Yadav responded to questions



about player temperament by underlining his philosophy, "Temper? Sir, aggression is always there on the field when we take the field. Without aggression, I do not believe one can play this sport. And I am sure, I am very excited to take the field on the front foot." Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha echoed similar

views, stressing that players should express themselves freely: "Well, you do not need to say anything to any player. Everyone is individually very different. If someone wants to be aggressive on the field, they are more than welcome to do that. When it comes to fast bowlers, they are always aggressive."

Annika Chendira edges Aanya Dandriyal to win second leg of US Kids Golf India Local Tour



Gurugram: Rising star Annika Chendira continued her fine form as she claimed her second straight victory on the US Kids Golf India Local Tour, winning the second leg at the Classic Golf and Country Club with a hard-fought onestroke win over Aanya Dandriyal. After opening the tour with a superb three-under 69, Annika followed it up with an even-par 72 on Friday to stay ahead of the field. Aanya, who finished two shots behind Annika in the first leg, mounted a stronger challenge this time but narrowly missed out with a card of 73. The contest between the two young golfers was among the highlights of the day. Annika's round was a roller-coaster — featuring four birdies and a second successive eagle, but also a run of five bogeys between the eighth and 12th holes. Aanya too impressed with two birdies and an eagle, though five bogeys dented her title push. Overall, the second leg witnessed nine repeat winners from the opening event, underlining the consistency of the young golfers. Four came from the boys' categories — Keon Aggarwal (Boys 7), Kabir Kanwar (Boys 9), Upraj Singh Mehdiratta (Boys 10), and Drona Singh Dhull (Boys 11). Among the girls, all first-leg winners maintained their dominance. Besides Annika in Girls 11-12, the winners were Tashi Jain (Girls 8), Aaradhya Bhatnagar (Girls 9-10), Shubhika Sachdeva (Girls 13-14), and Verushka Shah (Girls 15-18). Notably, Upraj Singh Mehdiratta showed the biggest leap in performance, improving his first-leg winning score by nine strokes while securing another win in Boys 10.