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Navratri sales of consumer goods surge to 10-year high as GST cuts boost demand

New Delhi: India's economy witnessed its highest Navratri sales of consumer goods in over a decade, propelled by the government's next-gen GST reforms that reduced tax rates and made products more affordable for the consumers. These measures not only lowered prices but also unlocked consumer aspirations, enabling families to upgrade vehicles, invest in home appliances, and spend more freely on lifestyle goods, turning festive cheer into record-breaking consumption, as per the data.

Leading car maker Maruti Suzuki clocked a 100 per cent

growth in Navratri, which doubled from last year -- best-ever in at least a decade. Maruti Suzuki reported 150,000 bookings and expects to reach 200,000 bookings. The company retailed 85,000 vehicles last Navratri. The automobile market leader also delivered a massive batch of 1.65 lakh vehicles in the first 8 days of Navratri. On Day 1 of Navratri, Maruti delivered record 30,000 cars, its best single-day performance in 35 years.

Homegrown auto major Mahindra & Mahindra, which sells popular SUVs such as the XUV700, Thar



and Scorpio N, saw sales jump 60 per cent year-on-year. At Hyundai, the surge in demand for models like Creta and Venue pushed SUVs' share of total sales to over 72

per cent, as per the data. Tata Motors retailed more than 50,000 vehicles during the festive period, with demand from Altroz, Punch, Nexon and Tiago models.

India's real GDP growth projected to grow at 6.7 pc this fiscal



New Delhi: Global professional services firm EY on Monday raised India's real GDP growth projection to 6.7 per cent -- up from its earlier estimate of 6.5 per cent, owing to robust GST 2.0 reforms. The upward revision reflects expectations of monetary easing and stronger domestic demand from GST rate rationalisation amid global uncertainties, according to EY's Economy Watch September edition.

"With Q1 FY26 real GDP growth at 7.8 per cent and stimulation of demand through GST reforms on the one hand, constrained by global headwinds affecting India's export prospects, both in goods and services, we expect India to

still show an annual real GDP growth of 6.7 per cent in FY26," according to the global professional services firm. "With GST 2.0 reforms boosting disposable incomes and domestic demand, and trade diversification efforts opening new opportunities, India is well positioned to sustain its growth momentum in FY26. Strategic investments in technology and targeted policy measures will be key to translating reforms into long-term economic gains," said DK Srivastava, Chief Policy Advisor at EY India.

In August 2025, manufacturing PMI increased to 59.3, its highest level since February 2008. Services PMI also increased to 62.9, its highest level since June 2010. Overall IIP growth improved to 3.5 per cent in July 2025 from 1.5 per cent in June 2025, led by significant improvement in the growth of manufacturing output. "Led by fading base effects and a moderation in the pace of contraction in food prices, CPI inflation increased from 1.6 per cent in July 2025 to 2.1 per cent in August 2025 whereas core CPI inflation rose from 4.2 per cent to 4.3 per cent during the same period," the report mentioned.

EPFO launches revamped return filing system for employers from September

New Delhi: The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has introduced a revamped electronic challan-cumreturn (ECR) facility from the wage month of September, aimed at making return filing easier and error-free for employers and establishments, as per the latest notification issued by the Central Provident Fund Commissioner. The new facility separates the process of submitting returns from payment generation. It also includes system-based validations to prevent the filing of incorrect returns.

The updated system will automatically calculate damages and interest under sec-

tions 14B and 7Q of the Employees' Provident Funds Act. It will also make it mandatory for employers to pay interest under section 7Q along with monthly contributions. Section 7Q requires employers to pay interest on pending dues until the date of payment, while section 14B allows EPFO to impose penalties for defaults in payment.

Despite the changes, the existing file format for returns (.txt) will remain the same. Employers will be able to file regular, supplementary, or revised returns through the system. An EPFO official said the move is part of efforts to make the organisation more user-friendly.

India's gold reserves rise by \$2.2 billion; forex stands at \$700.23 billion

New Delhi: India's gold reserves jumped by \$2.238 billion to \$95.017 billion during the week ended September 26, according to the latest data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday. The overall foreign exchange reserves stood at \$700.236 billion in the reporting week. In the previous week, the reserves had been placed at \$702.57 billion. Foreign currency assets, which form the largest share of the reserves, were valued at \$581.757 billion.

These assets fell during the week, and their dollar value also reflects changes in the valuation of major global currencies such as the euro, pound and yen. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were pegged at \$18.789 billion, while India's reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stood at \$4.673 billion in the reporting week, the data showed. India's forex reserves remain close to their record highs, providing a strong buffer against external shocks and giving confidence to global investors.

Analysts point out that the comfortable reserve position helps the RBI manage currency market volatility and supports the rupee during global uncertainties. Meanwhile, in the previous week, the gold reserves rose by \$360 million to \$92.78 billion. Foreign currency assets, the largest component of the reserves, were valued at \$586.15 billion during the previous week.

RBI MPC meet: Expect next rate cut in December, says Goldman Sachs' analyst

New Delhi: US investment banking company Goldman Sachs' Chief India Economist Santanu Sengupta said on Tuesday that the Reserve Bank of India is expected to maintain current rates and take a dovish approach in the current monetary policy committee, with potential cuts in December, if conditions permit. Investors await the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy decision on Wednesday, in hopes for a potential lending rate cut. Sengupta said that the RBI's stance will be impacted by the uncertain trade policy and external headwinds, despite a strong domestic growth outlook.

Sengupta anticipates a 25-basis-point rate cut in December, provided growth and inflation readings support it, according to multiple reports. He said that a rate cut is likely in December, citing stable domestic growth but external challenges such as US tariffs and H1B visa restrictions affecting sentiment. He said that GST reductions will initiate a "mass consumption revival" starting in the October-December quarter when "the consumption growth will be felt."

If you are an FII investor looking at India, then you have tariffs and H1B, leading to outflows, which is the real headwind India is facing, he added. Sengupta, however, downplayed concerns around US visa restrictions, calling the H1B visa rule impact "muted in the near term." He said the state of the domestic economy looks agreeable, adding that the GST reforms will feed into growth.

Regarding room for one more economic lever being enforced by the government, other than the GST rate cuts, Sengupta said that he doesn't see much room for the government, as it has to maintain the fiscal deficit target of 4.4 per cent.



Nil GST boost: LIC sees Rs 1,100 crore inflows on first day of life insurance relief



Mumbai: Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) attracted strong investor interest on the first day after the government scrapped goods and services tax (GST) on individual traditional life insurance policies. The insurer drew inflows of over Rs 1,100 crore in a single day, according to reports. This development is significant as LIC usually receives around Rs 5,000 crore of monthly premium income from retail policyholders.

The inflows seen on the very first day after the tax relief highlight the positive sentiment among policyholders and the potential boost for the insurance sector. Industry experts said that the removal of GST has made traditional life insur-

ance policies more affordable and attractive for individual buyers, which is expected to push up sales in the coming months. Earlier this financial year, LIC had reported a steady rise in both profit and premium income.

The company posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 10,957 crore in the April-June quarter (Q1) of FY26, a 3.91 per cent increase compared to the same period previous year 9Q1 FY25). Its net premium income also grew by 4.7 per cent to Rs 1,19,618 crore, the insurer informed the exchanges. LIC continues to maintain its leadership in the life insurance industry with a market share of over 63 per cent in first-year premium income.

Mahindra Logistics strengthens Eastern India network with 4 lakhsq. ft. warehousing in Guwahati and Agartala

Guwahati: Mahindra Logistics Limited, one of India's largest integrated logistics providers, on Thursday unveiled over 4 lakh sq. ft. of Grade-A warehousing capacity in Eastern India, including North-East India's largest multi-client facility in Guwahati and a state-of-the-art facility in Agartala. The expansion is part of the company's 'Go-East' strategy, aimed at enhancing regional connectivity, operational capabilities, and integrated supply chain solutions.

The Guwahati facility, spread across 3 lakh sq. ft., is strategically located near NH 17, just 11.7 km from Guwahati International Airport and 7.1



km from Mirza Railway Station. It houses the region's first Community Center of Excellence, in partnership with the Logistics Skill Council, and is designed to serve key industrial clusters including Uparhali, Palasbari, and Rampur Indus-

trial Parks. From a Guwahati market perspective, the facility is expected to significantly boost warehousing efficiency, reduce supply chain lead times, and support industries such as FMCG, e-commerce, pharmaceuticals, and retail, positioning

the city as a pivotal logistics hub in the North-East.

Meanwhile, the 1.3-lakh sq. ft. Agartala facility strengthens connectivity across Tripura, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Manipur, while facilitating cross-border trade with Bangladesh. HemantSikka, MD & CEO, said the move "redefines logistics in Eastern India, expanding nationwide distribution to tier-II and tier-III cities and enhancing connectivity in remote locations."

With these launches, Mahindra Logistics plans to create over 2,000 jobs and deliver future-ready, integrated supply chain solutions across the region.

Honda launches CB125 Hornet, Shine 100 DX in Guwahati with mega deliveries

Guwahati: Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India (HMSI) has launched two new motorcycles—the CB125 Hornet and Shine 100 DX—in Guwahati, Assam, marking a significant expansion of its portfolio in the Northeast market. Priced at Rs. 1,12,000 for the CB125 Hornet (introductory offer) and Rs. 77,668 for the Shine 100 DX (ex-showroom Guwahati), the company also rolled out grand customer deliveries on Saturday.

Designed for next-gen riders, the CB125 Hornet comes with sporty styling, golden USD front forks, all-LED lighting, a 4.2-inch TFT display with Honda RoadSync Bluetooth connectivity, and a 123.94cc fuel-injected engine delivering 8.2 kW power and 11.2 Nm torque. Honda claims it is the fastest in its class, sprinting from 0–60 km/h in 5.4 seconds.

The Shine 100 DX continues Honda's legacy in the commuter segment with refreshed styling, chrome garnishing, digital LCD display, and a 98.98cc engine featuring Enhanced Smart Power (eSP) technology, producing 5.43 kW power and 8.04 Nm torque.

In Guwahati, the launches have generated strong interest, with dealers reporting robust bookings from both young riders seeking performance and daily commuters prioritising affordability and reliability. Industry observers say the Northeast market, led by Guwahati, offers strong growth potential for Honda.

MoSPabitraMargherita inaugurates 'Best of India' textile fair in Moscow, boosts export vision

Guwahati: India is strengthening its global textile footprint with the inauguration of the "Best of India – Indian Apparels and Textile Fair" in Moscow by Minister of State PabitraMargherita on October 1. Organised by the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC), the three-day fair from October 1–3 is designed to boost Indian textile exports to Russia, enhance bilateral cooperation, and unlock opportunities in the wider CIS region.

Calling the initiative "a showcase of India's strength in handlooms and textiles," Margherita said the event reflects Prime Minister Narendra-Modi and Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh's vision of expanding exports while highlighting Indian craftsmanship. On social media, he added, "This fair will deepen cooperation and open new gateways to CIS markets."

Guwahati, known for Assam's globally acclaimed muga and eri silks, views the Moscow fair as a major opportunity. Local traders believe



the platform could help regional weavers secure greater access to Russia's growing demand for natural and sustainable fabrics, potentially boosting Assam's role in India's textile export story.

During his Moscow visit, Margherita also engaged with the Indian diaspora and marked Mahatma Gandhi's 156th birth anniversary, linking Gandhian ideals with government initiatives like Swachh Bharat and Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Godrej Agrovetsigns MoU with MoFPI, invests Rs 960 crore to boost food processing and innovation

Guwahati: Godrej Agrovet Limited, one of India's leading agri-food companies, has signed a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) to establish advanced manufacturing and upstream innovation facilities, with an estimated investment of ₹960 crore. The MoU was signed on the sidelines of World Food India 2025 in the presence of ShriAvinash Joshi, IAS, Secretary, MoFPI, and Rakesh Swami, Group President – Corporate Affairs, Godrej Industries Group.

The investment will focus on the company's Oil Palm and Pet Food businesses across Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Tripura, Telangana, and Maharashtra. Sunil Kataria, CEO & MD of Godrej Agrovet, said the move aligns with the company's strategy to enhance food processing and R&D capabilities while creating sustainable value across the supply chain. Shri-Avinash Joshi emphasized the collaboration's role in advancing India's agri-food ecosystem and supporting rural development goals.

In Guwahati, the investment is expected to



boost regional employment and provide local farmers and suppliers with improved market access for oil palm and related products. Industry experts believe that such initiatives will strengthen the food processing sector in Assam, creating opportunities for innovation-led growth and increasing consumer availability of high-quality processed foods in the city's retail markets.

The facilities are expected to be operational by FY2026-27, contributing to skill development and regional economic growth.

Soha Ali Khan shares festive wellness tips: Almonds, fruits and staying active

Guwahati: As India gears up for the festive season, actor, author, and mother Soha Ali Khan has shared her wellness guide to enjoy celebrations without compromising health. Emphasizing mindful eating, Soha advises never attending parties on an empty stomach to avoid bingeing on unhealthy foods. Her tip: carry a handful of California Almonds, a nutrient-rich snack that keeps hunger at bay while providing dietary fiber, vitamin E, and vitamin B12.

Soha also recommends including a bowl of fresh fruits like apples, oranges, chikoo, muskmelon, and grapes in daily routines. "They're low in fat and calories, rich in fiber, and help regulate digestion amid indulgent festive meals," she explains. She suggests juices or smoothies garnished with almonds as simple alternatives to calorie-heavy snacks.

Maintaining physical activity is key, she says. Short walks, light stretches, or a quick run can help burn extra calories and boost energy levels. Hydration is equally important, with water intake helping control acidity from fried and oily foods.

In Guwahati, consumers are increasingly showing interest in health-conscious festive products. Local stores report a surge in sales of nuts, fresh fruits, and low-calorie snacks, indicating that wellness-focused choices are becoming an integral part of festive preparations in the region.



IIM Shillong secures finalist spot at SBI Life's IdeationX 2.0

Shillong: The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Shillong has earned a place among the top eight finalists at SBI Life Insurance's IdeationX 2.0, a national-level innovation contest for B-schools. The semi-finale, held at Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) in Bhubaneswar, saw IIM Shillong's team—comprising Namita Gupta, Nitika Bansal and Sakshi Agarwal—emerge victorious against 40 competing teams.

SBI Life said the competition attracted over 3,500 entries from more than 100 premier B-schools across India, including institutes from Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Pune and Visakhapatnam. After rigorous multi-stage evaluations, eight teams, including those from XLRI Jamshedpur, IIFT Kolkata, IIM Calcutta, XIMB Bhubaneswar and KIIT Bhubaneswar, advanced to the grand finale.

In Shillong, the achievement brings fresh optimism. Local entrepreneurs and academic circles see IIM Shillong's success as a boost to the city's growing reputation as a hub of management talent. With rising student participation in national-level competitions, Shillong's education-driven economy is expected to draw more attention from recruiters and industry players seeking innovative minds.

Ravindra Sharma, Chief of Brand, CSR and Corporate Communications at SBI Life, said, "The semi-finale has been an inspiring showcase of young India's potential to reimagine the future of insurance." He added that with insurance penetration in India still under 4%, such initiatives could play a critical role in achieving "Insurance for All by 2047."



Vi Business launches IoT Innovation Lab with AWS and C-DOT to drive enterprise transformation

Guwahati: Vi Business, the enterprise arm of telecom giant Vi, has launched the Vi Business IoT Innovation Lab in collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS) and the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), marking a major step in India's IoT-led enterprise transformation. The Lab will serve as a hub for co-creating and testing IoT solutions across connected vehicles, smart manufacturing, and enterprise automation.

The Mumbai-based facility offers live demonstrations of connected vehicles, smart grids, real-time manufacturing monitoring, and edge AI-driven IoT applications. Start-ups, device makers, and enterprises across BFSI, IT/ITES, logistics, utilities, retail, healthcare, and smart city domains will be able to design, test, and scale industry-grade IoT use cases. By combining Vi Business' connectivity, AWS's cloud capabilities, and C-DOT's standards expertise, the Lab aims to accelerate time-to-market, optimize costs, and improve



operational efficiency.

Arvind Nevatia, Chief Enterprise Business Officer, Vi, emphasized the Lab's role in empowering enterprises to innovate faster and scale securely, while V.G. Sundar Ram of AWS highlighted cloud and AI integration for next-generation solutions. Dr. Rajkumar Upadhyay of C-DOT stressed adherence to national IoT standards and secure data exchange.

In Guwahati, the launch has sparked interest among local enterprises exploring IoT solutions for smart infrastructure and industrial automation. The Lab is expected to provide startups and SMEs in Assam access to scalable IoT frameworks, enabling faster adoption of connected technologies in the region.

Myntra's Big Fashion Festival bets on 4M+ styles, 100+ launches to drive festive growth



Itanagar: Myntra has kicked off its flagship Big Fashion Festival (BFF), unveiling an expansive collection of over 4 million styles from 15,000 brands. The platform has lined up more than 100 exclusive festive launches, including SouravGanguly'sSouragya, Inddu X MalaikaArora, Chaap X Adah Sharma, and Laxmipati X RashmikaMandanna. Other marquee debuts include Levi's X Alia Bhatt, Crocs Miami Bae, Puma X Levi's, STARTER, Hopscotch, Taneira, and Molten Beauty.

The event reflects Myntra's strategy to capture festive spending across categories—ethnic wear, sportswear, beauty, and luxury. With M-Now hyper-speed deliveries in major metros offering 30-minute fulfillment, the company is reinforcing last-mile agility. High-value additions in beauty—YSL, Prada, Huda Beauty, MAC, Estée Lauder—and sportswear launches like Puma Speedcat and New Balance 530 are expected to widen consumer appeal.

In Itanagar, local retailers and analysts anticipate strong consumer traction as digital shopping gains ground. Ethnic wear and affordable western fashion are emerging as growth drivers, while beauty and accessories are expected to attract younger buyers. The city's market sentiment suggests a steady shift toward e-commerce, especially during festive cycles, where Myntra's promotions could reshape purchasing behavior.

With bank discounts, Myntra Insider rewards, and blockbuster prizes like iPhones and holiday trips, this year's BFF positions itself as both a shopping bonanza and a significant contributor to festive retail growth.

Škoda Octavia RS returns to India; pre-bookings open October 6

Guwahati: Škoda Auto India has officially announced the return of its iconic performance sedan, the Octavia RS, with pre-bookings set to open on October 6, 2025, through its official website. The model, available in limited volumes as a Fully-Built Unit (FBU), marks a significant step in the company's strategy to expand its premium portfolio in India.

Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Škoda Auto India, said, "The Octavia RS is more than just a car. It is an emotion that has inspired driving enthusiasts for over two decades. With its return, we reaffirm our promise of bringing back a global icon that defines performance and aspiration."

Since its introduction in 2004, the Octavia RS has built a cult following, recognized as India's first turbocharged petrol passenger car. The RS badge, rooted in Škoda's rally heritage, continues to symbolize performance and engineering precision.

In Guwahati, dealers expect strong traction for the RS as demand for luxury and performance-oriented vehicles grows among young professionals and business owners. The model's exclusivity and heritage are likely to appeal to the city's emerging premium buyers, complementing the popularity of the Kushaq and Slavia in the region.

Škoda Auto India currently operates across 177 cities with more than 310 touchpoints, aligning with its global Next Level Strategy to strengthen presence in key growth markets.

Nissan India reports 9.3% YoY sales growth in September, Magnite leads the charge

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. (NMIPL) reported consolidated sales of 10,500 units in September 2025, marking a 9.3% year-on-year growth compared to 9,629 units in September 2024. The growth was powered by strong demand for the New Nissan Magnite and festive season momentum boosted by GST revisions.

The company sold 1,652 units in the domestic market, while exports stood at 8,872 units. Notably, sales to South Asia hit a record 1,120 units, Nissan's highest-ever monthly performance in the region. The company credited its success to the launch of a segment-first 10-year extended warranty on the GNCAP 5-Star rated Magnite and GST-driven price cuts of up to



₹1 lakh.

In Guwahati, dealers reported robust inquiries and booking surges for the Magnite, particularly the Kuro Special Edition and new Metallic Grey variant. Industry experts noted that Northeast markets like Guwahati are fast emerging as key demand centers for compact SUVs, with customers responding positively to affordability, safety, and style.

Looking ahead, Nissan plans to expand its dealership network to 180 outlets by FY 2025-26 and 250 by FY 2026-27, while preparing for launches of a 7-seater B-MPV, a 5-seater C-SUV, and a 7-seater C-SUV. The Made-in-India Magnite, now exported to over 65 countries, remains central to Nissan's global "One Car One World" strategy.

Zomato champions para-athletes as World Para Athletics Championship makes historic India debut

Dimapur: Zomato, India's leading food delivery and restaurant discovery platform, has partnered with the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) to mark the historic debut of the World Para Athletics Championship in India. The collaboration is highlighted through a powerful new campaign under Zomato's "Fuel Your Hustle" initiative, celebrating Indian para-athletes who exemplify resilience, discipline, and determination.

The campaign shines a spotlight on seven athletes—Rinku Hooda, Hokato Sema, Pranav Soorma, Simran Sharma, Praveen

Kumar, Preethi Pal, and Yogesh Kathuniya—showcasing their relentless training routines, mental battles, and journey to excellence. Through films, print, digital media, and outdoor campaigns, Zomato emphasizes that perseverance and self-belief define champions, inspiring millions beyond the realm of sports.

Sahibjeet Singh Sawhney, Zomato Marketing Head, said, "These athletes show up with crazy discipline, day in and day out. That's what inspired us to partner with the Paralympic Committee of India. Seeing homegrown talent compete at the highest

level reminds us what real hustle looks like."

In Kohima, the campaign is generating excitement among local residents, with many expressing pride in seeing athletes from the Northeast, like Hokato Sema, celebrated on national platforms. Local cafes and digital communities have amplified the campaign, highlighting the growing awareness and support for para-sports in the region.

Through this initiative, Zomato reinforces its commitment to inclusivity, grit, and championing India's athletes in their pursuit of excellence.

Bingo! TedheMedhe brings Rockanjali to Guwahati for a high-octane Durga Puja

Guwahati: ITC's Bingo! TedheMedhe is leveraging Assam's Durga Puja season to launch Rockanjali, a high-energy music-on-wheels initiative designed to blend live rock performances with festive fervor. The campaign, featuring Assam's renowned bands Barnali Collective and Blue Wings, aims to engage youth audiences while boosting visibility and brand presence during the state's most celebrated festival.

The Rockanjali tour will roll through Guwahati's busiest areas, with performances scheduled at Latasil Park on Sasthi (28 September) and Nehru Park on Saptami (29 September), both from 3 PM to 8 PM. Each show merges Assamese rock culture with traditional Puja energy,

creating a unique experiential marketing opportunity for brands looking to capitalize on the festival season.

In Guwahati, the event is expected to stimulate local economic activity, driving increased footfall to surrounding retail and food outlets. Vendors and nearby businesses are preparing for a surge in consumer spending as the city's residents and visitors flock to the performances, highlighting the growing impact of lifestyle-driven events on urban commercial ecosystems.

With a digital-first approach, Rockanjali will document live performances and street-level excitement through reels, amplifying engagement beyond the physical venues. The initiative showcases



how cultural events can serve as strategic business platforms, combining entertainment, brand promotion, and market activation in Assam's key urban centers.

BSNL launches Intelligent Swadeshi 4G Network, connects 26,700 more villages

Guwahati: Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), in partnership with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) (BSE: 532540, NSE: TCS), Center for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), and Tejas Networks Limited (BSE: 540595, NSE: TEJASNET), has unveiled the Bharat Telecom Stack, a modern, secure solution designed and developed entirely in India. This initiative draws inspiration from Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of a digitally connected and self-reliant India. With this launch, India becomes the fifth country in the world to have built a self-reliant, indigenous telecom technology stack supporting 4G and beyond. As a mission mode program, TCS spearheaded its execution by establishing data centers, installing and commissioning C-DOT's EPC Core Application, Tejas's Base Stations and Radio infrastructure over 100,000 sites and leveraging TCS'



Cognitive Network Operations (TCS CNOPSTM) platform for 24/7 real-time network management.

The project is governed in 'mission-mode' by TCS, BSNL, Department of Telecommunications, active McKinsey & Co, C-DOT, Tejas, I&C Partners, among others. It was completed within two years, making it one of the fastest 4G network deployments with full integration into the existing 2G/3G network infrastructure at BSNL. Sh. A Robert J Ravi, CMD, BSNL said, "The nationwide rollout of our indigenous 4G network, built on the strength

of collaboration with TCS, Tejas Networks, and C-DOT, is a resounding declaration of an Atmanirbhar Bharat." Sh. Sandeep Govil, Director (Consumer Mobility - CM), BSNL, said, "Our customers will now experience a new standard of connectivity, powered by a network that is truly our own." N Ganapathy Subramaniam, Advisor - Telecom Strategic Initiatives at TCS & Chairman, Tejas Networks, said, "We are proud that we have put India on the map of only a handful of countries to have developed a comprehensive, trusted and software upgradable telecom technology stack."

Grand ShopsyMela2025 ignites festive shopping frenzy in tier 3 & 4 towns

Guwahati: Shopsy by Flipkart has set the tone for the festive season with its Grand ShopsyMela 2025, registering a strong surge in orders and app installs from Tier 3 and 4+ towns. Over 70% of activity came from smaller cities, underscoring the growing appetite for affordable, quality products in Bharat. Millennials and Gen Z shoppers accounted for more than 80% of buyers, driving record growth in household essentials, men's fashion, and footwear. Repeat buyers rose 44%, reflecting increasing shopper loyalty.

The festival sale featured over 1 crore products priced under ₹149 across 1,300 cat-

egories, including festive kurtas, home décor, earbuds, and men's analog watches. Household items saw a 108% jump in demand, while men's casual wear and footwear grew by 95%, highlighting shoppers' value-conscious yet style-focused choices. Shopsy also launched its Seller Rewards Program to recognize top-performing sellers and empower local businesses.

In Guwahati, the Grand ShopsyMela recorded strong engagement, with significant orders for household essentials, ethnic wear, and footwear. Local sellers reported increased visibility and repeat orders, demonstrating the



platform's growing penetration in Assam and its role in strengthening digital commerce in the northeast.

KapilThirani, VP, Shopsy and Flipkart Marketplace, said, "The overwhelming response reinforces our commitment to democratizing e-commerce and delivering value to every Indian household."

Siemens Healthineers India launches 'Knowing is Comforting' campaign to reduce scan anxiety

Guwahati: Siemens Healthineers India has rolled out its new 'Knowing is Comforting' campaign, aimed at addressing Scanxiety – the anxiety patients experience before, during, and after medical imaging scans. The initiative seeks to empower patients by raising awareness about diagnostic procedures such as Mammography, MRI, CT, and PET CT, while highlighting innovations that have made imaging faster, safer, and more comfortable.

The campaign features a se-

ries of awareness videos in English and nine regional languages, including Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu. "Early and precise diagnosis leads to better outcomes and timely treatment. Our goal is to make healthcare approachable and trusted, equipping patients and caregivers with knowledge to undergo scans confidently," said Hariharan Subramanian, Managing Director of Siemens Healthcare Pvt. Ltd.



Pranav Patil, Head of Communications-Zone India, added that the videos simplify complex imaging technologies,

Godrej Agrovet launches upgraded Pride Hog feed to boost pig immunity and farm productivity

Guwahati: Godrej Agrovet has upgraded its specialized pig feed range, 'Pride Hog', to strengthen immunity and enhance productivity for pig farmers across North East India, which houses nearly 28% of the country's pig population. Since the emergence of African Swine Fever (ASF) in 2020, farmers have struggled with disease management in the absence of a vaccine, prompting a focus on nutrition-driven solutions.

The Pride Hog range, now fortified with Immuno-modulators and essential nutrients, provides stage-wise feeding for piglets, growers, and finishers, helping reduce production costs per kilogram of live weight. Early field trials report faster growth, improved piglet survivability, controlled mortality below 1%, and market-ready fatteners achieving 100 kg in six months. Breeder gilts also showed better reproductive performance, including larger litter sizes and shorter inter-farrowing intervals.

In Guwahati, local pig farmers and traders are optimistic. The city's pork supply had been



affected by ASF outbreaks, leading to price volatility and supply gaps. With Pride Hog, farmers anticipate healthier pigs, higher yields, and improved profitability, which could stabilize the Guwahati pork market and meet rising consumer demand.

Capt. (Dr.) A.Y. Rajendra, CEO – Animal & Aqua Feed Business, Godrej Agrovet, said, "Pride Hog empowers farmers with science-backed, innovative solutions that promote animal well-being and boost farm profitability."

DSP Mutual Fund launches India's first Flexi Cap ETF for long-term investors

Guwahati: DSP Mutual Fund has unveiled India's first Flexi Cap Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) – the DSP Nifty 500 FlexiCap Quality 30 ETF – aimed at simplifying long-term investing while ensuring exposure to quality companies across large, mid, and small caps. The ETF tracks the Nifty 500 FlexiCap Quality 30 TRI, a benchmark that dynamically adjusts allocations based on market momentum, automatically increasing exposure to mid and small caps when they outperform and shifting towards large caps in leading phases.

The ETF offers investors a low-cost, single-product solution that combines flexibility, quality, and transparency. Since its inception in October 2009, the underlying index has delivered a 17.6% CAGR, outperforming the broader Nifty 500 TRI while cushioning investors during market downturns, including 2011, 2018, and the 2020 COVID crash. The New Fund Offer (NFO) is



open from September 25 to October 6, 2025.

The fund provides a "true-to-label" Flexi Cap strategy, addressing a gap in the Indian market where most diversified funds remain confined to narrow allocation ranges. Investors can gain exposure to a concentrated 30-stock portfolio built on strict quality criteria, offering potential long-term wealth creation with minimal monitoring.

In Guwahati, local investors and wealth advisors have welcomed the launch, noting the ETF's potential to attract retail participation from the city's growing investor base. Brokers report early interest from long-term savers seeking an all-weather product that balances growth and risk across market cycles.

KFC unveils 'Pujo'rUlaah' menu across Northeast, boosts festivesales with up to 30% discount

Kohima: KFC has rolled out its special Pujo'rUlaah menu to mark the festive season, offering fans across Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Tripura a chance to enjoy their signature chicken at discounted prices. Available until October 5, the limited-time offer provides savings of up to 30% on select favourites.

The menu features a festive combination of 12 pieces of chicken priced at ₹499, including 6 Boneless Chicken Strips, 4 Hot Wings, 2 pieces of Hot & Crispy Chicken, and 2 dips. KFC has also reintroduced its limited-edition Pujo bucket, designed to reflect the vibrancy of the celebrations—from the beat of the dhak to gatherings of friends and families in their festive best.

In Kohima, the festive offering has been welcomed with enthusiasm, with local KFC outlets reporting increased footfall over the first few days. Residents have shown particular interest in dine-in and takeaway options, while delivery orders via the KFC app and leading food platforms have surged, reflecting the city's growing appetite for convenient festive dining.

Customers can pre-order via the KFC app, dine-in at nearby outlets, or order through food delivery services, ensuring that the Pujo'rUlaah menu reaches families and friends looking to celebrate the festivities with finger-lickin' good chicken.

touchpoints, with all content available on Siemens Healthineers' website.

In Guwahati, diagnostic centers have welcomed the initiative, highlighting the city's rising demand for advanced imaging services. Local hospitals note that patient anxiety often delays scan appointments, and awareness campaigns like this are expected to boost patient confidence, improve scan adherence, and enhance overall healthcare outcomes in Assam.

Janhvi Kapoor reveals who was the most entertaining on the sets of 'Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari'

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor, who is all set to appear in the upcoming comedy 'Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari', has revealed who she found to be the most entertaining coactor on set. In an exclusive conversation with IANS ahead of the release of Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari, Janhvi Kapoor was asked, "The film features a big ensemble. Who was the most entertaining on set?" Responding to the question, Janhvi said, "I think it was Maniesh Paul. He's such a fantastic actor and an even better human being. He would leave his vanity van fully in charac-

ter and just start performing — whether the camera was rolling or not!"

Director Shashank Khaitan echoed the sentiment, adding that Maniesh often kept the mood on set alive with his dedication and humour. "Yes, he would often joke, 'Shashank, whether you call it cut or not, I am going to keep performing until I reach my van.' And he actually meant it. He kept performing even during queue lines," Khaitan revealed, calling Paul the life of the shoot. While Paul's energy clearly stood out, Varun Dhawan also had his own fun take when



asked who entertained the cast the most. "That has to be Janhvi," Varun said.

"Even when she wasn't trying to be funny, she ended up entertaining all of us," he added, pointing out the camaraderie that kept spirits high throughout the filming process. Reflecting on how special the project felt, Janhvi, calling it a dream chance, said, "I have been wanting to do a commercial family entertainer for a while, and I don't think anyone does it better than Shashank. I debuted with him in Dhadak, and in a way, this is my debut in this genre too. And with Varun in this space, I couldn't have asked for a better team," she said.

Alia Bhatt reveals her favourite tourist destination where she can't yet take Raha



Mumbai: Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt has revealed her favourite travel destination. The actress, who was last seen in 'Jigra', has said that she loves visiting Maasai Mara National Reserve. However, she is waiting to take her daughter, Raha Kapoor as she has not yet reached the threshold age to visit the national reserve. Alia recently appeared on the streaming chat show 'Two Much with Kajol and Twinkle', and spoke about her fondness for the national reserve.

She said, "I love Maasai Mara. I can stay there for days together. Being around the animals, the greenery everywhere, it's one of my most precious places to visit. I can't wait to take Raha there. I haven't taken her there so far because you can't take kids there till they reach a certain age". Maasai Mara National Reserve is located in southwest Kenya, and is one of Africa's most renowned wildlife conservation areas. It covers about 1,510 square kilometers. It is named after

the Maasai people and the Mara River that runs through it. The reserve is globally famous for the Great Migration, when over 1.5 million zebras, and gazelles cross from Serengeti between July and October. It hosts the big five of lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo, along with hundreds of bird species.

Elsewhere in the show, the actress shared that the thought of entering the Kapoor family, the first film dynasty of Hindi cinema, never crossed her mind until recently. When she was asked about the same by Kajol. Alia said that when a person is so strongly drawn into a relationship then the legacy of the family of their spouse is the last thing they think of. She said, "I feel like when you're so internally into it, when the relationships are so personal, you don't really look at it from a professional perspective, about which legacy you're going into.

Rashmika Mandanna reveals what her heart craves after a long schedule

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna is currently in Sicily, Italy, to shoot for her much-hyped sequel, "Cocktail 2", where she will be sharing the screen with Shahid Kapoor and Kriti Sanon. Through her latest social media post, Rashmika revealed what her heart craves the most after wrapping up a long schedule. Taking to the Stories section of the Instagram handle, Rashmika dropped a pic of a table filled with some delicious culinary treats. The photo of the

lavish spread was accompanied by the caption, "After a long schedule a big meal is a much needed!!! (red heart emoji) (sic) "

ijan's Maddock Films, the story of the sequel has been penned by Luv Ranjan. The details regarding the plot of the drama have been kept under wraps for now. "Cocktail 2" is being made under the direction of Homi Adajania. Being preoccupied with the "Cocktail 2" shoot, Rashmika missed



the trailer launch event for the forthcoming horror comedy "Thamma", co-starring Ayushmann Khurrana.

Ankita Lokhande says 'acting will always remain my first love' as she steps into production

Mumbai: Actress Ankita Lokhande claimed that "Acting will always remain my first love" as she embarks on a new journey as a producer. Ankita has added a new feather to her cap - a producer. The 'Pavitra Rishta' actress is stepping into production under her home banner, Legend Studios, alongside Sandeep Singh and Vicky Jain. Talking about taking on the new challenge and if it means stepping back from acting, Ankita shared, "Acting will always remain my first love, but producing is my way of giving back".



For her, producing is not a replacement for acting but an extension of her creative journey. "My first single-lead film came from Sandeep, and today, he has also brought me my first film as a producer. And with Vicky by my side, I feel like everything has come full circle," Ankita added. However, Ankita definitely does not take lightly the responsibility of relaunching a cult film like "Chandni Bar". Expressing the magic of such an iconic film.

But with Legend Studios, I believe we are going to make it truly special."

Ankita believes producing is about carrying forward a legacy, creating new opportunities, and giving back to the very industry that made her who she is today. Made under the direction of Madhur Bhandarkar, "Chandni Bar" stars Tabu and Atul Kulkarni in lead roles, along with Ananya Khare, Rajpal Yadav, Minakshi Sahani, and Vishal Thakkar in supporting roles, among others.

Sunita Ahuja speaks about getting upset with rumours of Govinda's affairs



Mumbai: Sunita Ahuja, the wife of actor Govinda, has finally addressed the rumours of her husband's affairs. In her recent vlog, Sunita said that she heard rumours about Govinda's affairs. She also said that she would be the first person to reveal it to the media if she ever caught him cheating.

She said, "Problem yeh ki iski family main log hai jo mujhe aur Govinda ko saath nahi dekhna chahte. Wo sochte hain inki family itni khush kyun hai kyunki unke khudh ke biwi bacche mar gaye hain. Govinda acche logo'n ke saath uthta bethta nahi hai (The problem is that there are people in his family who don't want to see Govinda and me together. They wonder why our family is so happy, especially since their own wives and children have passed away. Govinda doesn't mix with good people)". She further mentioned, "Toh kya hai naa jaise main bolti hun, agar tum gande logo'n ke saath raoge toh vaise bann jaaoge. Aaj mera friend circle nahi hai, mere bacche mere dost hain (Like I always say, if you stay with bad people, you'll become like them.

Bhumi Pednekar talks about empowering India and uplifting communities through her work

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar opened up about the larger purpose behind her work, emphasising how she uses her platform to drive social change. In an exclusive quote to IANS, the actress shared that beyond entertainment, her work aims to shift mindsets and uplift communities across India. Reflecting on the recent floods in Jammu, Bhumi said the disaster reminded her of her roots and underscored the gratitude artists owe to their audiences. She shared, "I know that my work has more than just entertainment. It's helping in changing a mindset. It's helping in uplifting communities, especially in my country. I really want to do everything in my capacity to make sure that I can help as many as I can in my country."



In her speech, the 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' actress also highlighted that actors, singers, and other public figures often succeed because everyday people support their work — buying tickets, attending shows, and sharing their stories. Bhumi Pednekar recently attended Milken Institute Asia Summit, 2025 in Singapore. Earlier on August 15, the actress opened up about how her parents instilled in her a deep sense of patriotism. In an Instagram post, Bhumi shared that for them, the nation always came first. She posted a heartfelt video featuring her mother, who grew emotional while expressing her love for the country. In the caption section, the 'Badhaai Do' actress said she wears her "nationality as a badge of honour."

Kuldeep, Chakravarthy and Axar spin web as India skittle Pakistan for 146 in Asia Cup final

Dubai: India's spin trio of Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarthy and Axar Patel produced a collective masterclass to dismantle Pakistan's batting line-up, bowling them out for a modest 146 in 19.1 overs in a fiery Asia Cup final on Sunday. Pakistan appeared well placed at 113 for one, riding on a strong opening stand of 84 between Sahibzada Farhan (57 off 38) and Fakhar Zaman (46 off 35). But once Kuldeep struck to dismiss Saim Ayub, the innings unraveled spectacularly, with the last nine wickets tumbling for just 33 runs. Kuldeep was the chief destroyer, finishing with 4 for 30 in

his four overs, while Chakravarthy (2/30) and Axar (2/26) tightened the screws with clever variations and sharp control. The trio slowed down the pace, forced Pakistan's batters outside their hitting arcs, and choked the scoring in the death overs.

Jaspri Bumrah (2/25) added the finishing touches. Though not at his best for most of the innings, he yorked Haris Rauf late on and marked the dismissal with a half-plane gesture — a pointed send-off referencing the pacer's controversial celebration against India earlier in the tournament. Earlier, Pakistan had begun brightly, pun-



ishing the absence of Hardik Pandya in the Powerplay. Farhan once again attacked Bumrah, striking cleanly through the line, while Fakhar's slog sweep off Kuldeep for six un-

derlined their intent. Pakistan managed 45 runs in the first six overs without losing a wicket, setting up what looked like a competitive total.

Farhan brought up his fifty

from 35 balls, but his dismissal immediately after pulling a Chakravarthy halftrucker into Tilak Varma's hands sparked a collapse. Saim and Fakhar tried to steady things, but Kuldeep's guile proved too much. Salman Ali Agha and Hussain Talat perished trying to hit their way out of trouble, and from there the innings fell apart in a heap. What began as a strong platform for Pakistan ended in a procession, as India's spinners swung momentum decisively their way, leaving the Men in Blue with a belowpar target to chase in their bid for yet another Asia Cup crown.

Harmanpreet, Harleen shine as India beat New Zealand in World Cup warm-up



Bengaluru: India Women signed off their warm-up campaign on a high as captain Harmanpreet Kaur and Harleen Deol powered them to a four-wicket win over New Zealand via the DLS method in their final practice game ahead of the Women's ODI World Cup. In a rain-truncated 42-overs-per-side contest at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, New Zealand posted 232 for eight, but India chased down a revised target of 237 with 10 balls to spare, riding on a commanding 132-run third-wicket partnership between Harmanpreet and Harleen.

After openers Pratika Rawal (15) and Uma Chetry (38) set the tone with a 54-run stand, the middle order consolidated. Harleen was fluent in her strokeplay, hitting 10 boundaries in a 79-ball 74 before retiring out, while skipper Harmanpreet played the anchor role with a classy 69 off 86 deliveries, laced with eight fours. Their stand put India firmly in control before the lower order completed the chase in 40.2 overs.

Earlier, New Zealand had looked shaky at 38 for two after pacer Kranti Goud struck twice inside the first eight overs. Amelia Kerr (40) and skipper Sophie Devine (54 off 54 balls) rebuilt the innings with a 91-run stand before falling in quick succession.

Swiatek eases into China Open third round, sets WTA Tour milestone



Beijing: World No. 1 Iga Swiatek cruised past local favorite Yuan Yue 6-0, 6-3 on Saturday to reach the third round of the China Open, adding another record to her already glittering career. With the victory, the Wimbledon champion became the first player in WTA history to notch 25 or more wins at WTA1000 events for three consecutive seasons. The top seed, fresh from her title win at the Korea Open in Seoul last week, showed no signs of fatigue as she dominated the first set without dropping a game before easing through the second. Swiatek, who owns six Grand Slam singles titles including four French Opens and one each at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open, is looking to extend her momentum deep into Beijing. Elsewhere in the women's draw, fourth seed Mirra Andreeva overpowered China's Zhu Lin 6-2, 6-2, while Amer-

ican Emma Navarro advanced past Elena Gabriela Ruse 6-3, 7-6 (0). Former U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu also impressed, dismissing Cristina Bucsa 6-3, 6-3. Naomi Osaka, however, saw her campaign cut short after taking the opening set, as Aliaksandra Sasnovich fought back to win 1-6, 6-4, 6-2.

On the men's side, the China Open is running concurrently with an ATP 500 event. U.S. Open finalist Jannik Sinner battled past Frenchman Terence Atmane 6-4, 5-7, 6-0 to book his place in the quarterfinals. The Italian, who brushed aside Marin Cilic in his opening round, showed resilience after dropping the second set before storming through the decider. With Swiatek's milestone victory and Sinner's continued resurgence, the joint event in Beijing is building into a compelling showcase of both the women's and men's games.

Sindhu must be selective with tournaments as she enters 30s, says Saina Nehwal

Mumbai: Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu still has the ability to win big tournaments, but as she enters her 30s, she must carefully choose the events where she wants to "go all out," believes London Olympics bronze winner Saina Nehwal. Sindhu, who has struggled this year with multiple early-round exits, showed glimpses of form with a quarterfinal finish at the World Championships last month. Saina feels that while age does not close the door on success, it demands a more strategic approach. "It's not that you cannot do well after a certain age. It is definitely possible, but you have to pick the tournaments you want to excel in," Saina told PTI during the launch of the CXO Pickleball League in Mumbai. "You can't target every competition because it's tough. At that age, you can manage to reach a certain round consistently, but if you want to win major events like the World Championships or Asian Championships, you have to give your everything there."

Drawing from her own experience, the 34-year-old explained how recovery slows down after 28 or 29. "The body doesn't recover as quickly. You train hard, but it's not easy to push for five days in a row," she said, adding that Sindhu's upcoming tournaments would be a good indicator of her form. Saina also emphasized the lack of depth



in Indian women's badminton, pointing out that Sindhu remains the only consistent performer. "In men's badminton, we have Lakshya Sen, Priyanshu Rajawat, HS Prannoy and Kidambi Srikanth. But in women's, only Sindhu is carrying the flag right now. The youngsters are promising but still not consistent enough," she said. With the World Championships returning to India next year for the first time since 2009, Saina hopes more Indian women will qualify and make their presence felt.

She heaped praise on the men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, calling them capable of winning "every tournament possible." "The way I see them, they can beat anyone. At the top level, the difference between gold and silver often comes down to luck and little margins, but Satwik and Chirag are right up there with the world's best," she added.

Suryakumar fined for post-match comments, BCCI appeals ICC verdict

Dubai: India captain Suryakumar Yadav has been fined 30 percent of his match fee for remarks made after his side's Asia Cup group stage win over Pakistan, where he dedicated the victory to victims of the Pahalgam terror attack and the Indian armed forces. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has lodged an appeal against the ICC's decision, tournament sources confirmed on Friday. "The ICC will not issue any official release on the sanctions until the end of the tournament," a source said, indicating that an official statement is likely on Monday. The Asia Cup final, featuring India and Pakistan, will take place here on Sunday.

The penalty followed a complaint filed by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), which claimed Suryakumar's post-match comments amounted to political messaging. During Thursday's hearing, overseen by match referee Richie Richardson, the In-

dian skipper pleaded not guilty but was reportedly cautioned against making further statements that could be deemed political during the remainder of the event. The controversy has unfolded amid heightened tensions between the two sides. India refused to take part in the traditional handshake with Pakistani players before and after their matches, a symbolic gesture of solidarity with the 26 victims of the Pahalgam terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir earlier this year.

The April attack, attributed to Pakistan-backed militants, killed civilians in the popular tourist hub. In response, India launched Operation Sindoor in May, targeting terror infrastructure across the border. The latest disciplinary sanction adds to the charged atmosphere surrounding the Asia Cup final, with political undertones once again casting a shadow over cricket's fiercest rivalry.