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Sensex, Nifty end higher as India-EU trade deal boosts sentiment

Mumbai: India's benchmark stock market indices ended higher on Tuesday after a highly volatile trading session, supported by improved investor sentiment following the announcement of a bilateral trade deal between India and the European Union. At the close of trade, the Nifty rose 0.51 per cent, or 126.75 points, to settle at 25,175.40. The Sensex also ended higher, gaining 319.78 points, or 0.39 per cent, to close at 81,857.48. "A sustained breakout above 25,400 would be required to revive a stronger bullish trend, while a decisive breakdown below 25,000 could invite accelerated selling toward the 24,900-24,600 zone," an expert stated. "Until a directional trigger



emerges, the index is likely to remain confined within the 24,900-25,200 consolidation band," as per the expert. Under the deal, EU goods exports to India are expected to double by 2032, as tariffs on nearly 96.6 per cent of EU goods ex-

ported to India will be eliminated or reduced. At the same time, the European Union will remove or lower tariffs on about 99.5 per cent of goods imported from India, boosting trade prospects for both sides. Despite the overall positive

finish, several heavyweight stocks weighed on the market. Shares of Mahindra & Mahindra, Asian Paints, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Eternal, ITC and Maruti Suzuki India ended lower, with some stocks declining by as much as 4 per cent. On the other hand, buying interest was seen in stocks such as Axis Bank, Adani Ports, NTPC, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel and State Bank of India, which rose by up to 5 per cent and supported the indices.

Broader markets also reflected positive sentiment. The Nifty Midcap 100 index ended 0.59 per cent higher, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 gained 0.41 per cent by the end of the session.

Gold, silver continue to touch new highs as US dollar weakens

Mumbai: Gold and silver prices surged to record highs on Tuesday, amid persistent weakness in the US dollar and expectations of rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve. MCX gold February futures rose 1.48 per cent to Rs 1,58,343 per 10 grams. Meanwhile, MCX silver March futures rose 6.56 per cent to Rs 3,56,670 per kg. Earlier in the day, gold had peaked to Rs 1,59,820 per 10 grams, up 2.4 per cent, before profit-booking eased the price level. International markets also saw gold and silver touching record highs, as geopolitical risks drove investors to safe-haven assets. Renewed fears of a government shutdown in the US and President Donald Trump's new threats of 25 per cent tariffs on South Korean automobiles, lumber, and pharmaceutical imports added fuel to trade tensions. Trump also warned Canada of a 100 per cent tariff if it makes a deal with China.

US gold futures April contracts rose around 1 per cent to \$5,113.70 per troy ounce as the dollar index eased by 0.1 per cent, making bullion cheaper in overseas currencies. Persistent safe-haven demand, steady central bank accumulation, and expectations of accommodative global monetary conditions continue to underpin prices.

India's plastics exports projected to double to \$20 billion by 2030

New Delhi: India's plastics industry is projected to reach \$44.5 billion by 2030 at a CAGR of 11 per cent, with exports surging from about \$10 billion in 2025 to \$20 billion by 2027, a report said on Tuesday. Apex body of plastic industry, PlastIndia Foundation, said the growth of industry valued at \$26.5 billion in 2025 will be driven by largescale infrastructure programmes and accelerating consumer demand across packaging, automotive, construction, electronics and healthcare. Packaging accounts for nearly 42 per cent of the market, supported by rapid e-commerce expansion, underlining the plastics industry's critical role in modern commerce, said Ravish Kamath, President, PlastIndia Foundation. 'PLASTINDIA 2026' billed as the "world's largest international plastics exhibition" and "India's first 100 per cent zero-waste" expo will be held at Bharat Mandapam here from February 5-10.

The event will feature over 2,000 exhibitors and an expected footfall of over 6 lakh, where the scale, strength and global competitiveness of the Indian plastics industry will be showcased, Kamath said. The event will showcase plastic films, industrial parts and specialty polymers and aims to "further boost exports and position India as a global plastics leader" by connecting Indian manufacturers with global buyers, investors and technology partners.

Budget 2026: Business leaders seek lower tax for manufacturing units, sector-specific incentives

New Delhi: Business leaders in India voiced strong demand for targeted tax incentives and manufacturing linked lower tax rate regime in anticipation of the Union Budget 2026 and the implementation of the New Income Tax Act, a report said on Tuesday. The report from KPMG India said 34 per cent of respondents called for the return of the manufacturing-linked lower tax rate regime, as many income-tax incentives already expired or approached sunset. Earlier a lower tax rate of 15 per cent was available u/s 115BAB to manufacturing units. Meanwhile, 50 per cent respondents wanted the government to focus on targeted sector-specific incentives, the report said.

"The launch of the New Income Tax Act has certainly been a big step towards a simplified income-tax law," most respondents said, however, when asked where rationalisation is needed most, respondents ranked TDS and TCS compliances followed by the assessment and litigation process, and the capital gains tax regime among top priorities. The business consultancy firm said that the survey of over 100 industry respondents showed that 51 per cent of them wanted "some form of safe harbour provisions" for International



Financial Services Centre (IFSC) structures. Roughly 73 per cent respondents wanted a significant hike in the standard deduction for salaried individuals. Nearly 50 per cent of respondents shared their view of the Dispute Resolution Panel route not effectively reducing unwarranted litigation, the report said.

"The increase in slab rates for individuals in the last Budget coupled with GST rate cuts have enhanced disposable incomes and raised consumption. However, stakeholders continue to look forward to furthering reforms and tax incentives," Sunil Badala, Partner and National Head of Tax, KPMG in India. A major expectation is the overhaul of the dispute resolution mechanism under direct tax laws, including the introduction of manda-

tory timelines for the disposal of appeals, Badala noted.

Around 71 per cent of respondents said they believed transfer pricing safe harbour rules need a revamp, particularly in terms of margins and thresholds across different business categories. Almost 82 per cent of respondents supported a review of the GST Invoice Management System and provide enhanced reconciliation capabilities to reduce the mismatches and increase in GST tax liabilities. The survey took responses from 100 respondents including C-Suite leaders and senior management of diverse sectors including financial services, technology, life sciences, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, and consumer markets, the report noted.

Apple iPhone shipments surge 24 pc in India in 2025

New Delhi: Apple had a strong year in 2025 in India as iPhone shipments grew 24 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in 2025 compared to 2024, data showed on Saturday. According to data by CyberMedia Research (CMR) accessed by IANS, the iPhone shipments in 2025 outperformed iPads, which saw a modest growth of 2 per cent.

"Apple's full-year 2025 performance in India reflects healthy underlying demand dynamics," Prabhu Ram, VP-Industry Research Group, CMR, said. "iPads remained resilient, supported by refreshed iPad launches, reinforcing Apple's strength across both productivity and premium segments," Ram added. The standout performer was the iPhone 16 series, which became Apple's most successful smartphone lineup of the year. It accounted for 57 per cent of total iPhone shipments, making it the bestperforming iPhone model of the year, according to the report.

The iPhone 15 series followed with a 24 per cent share, while the newer iPhone 17 series captured 10 per cent of the market. The iPhone 16e also made a notable contribution with a 6 per cent share. However, in Q4 2025, iPhone shipments dipped slightly by 3 per cent compared to Q4 2024.

Amazon announces to lay off 16,000 employees globally

New Delhi: New Delhi: E-commerce giant Amazon on Wednesday said it was laying off 16,000 employees globally as part of "additional organisational changes". This is the second major round of layoffs at the company in about three months in the AI era. Beth Galetti, Senior Vice President of People Experience and Technology at Amazon, said that "we're making additional organisational changes across Amazon that will impact some of our teammates". In a blog post, she said that "I recognise this is difficult news, which is why I'm sharing what's happening and why"

"As I shared in October, we've been working to strengthen our organisation by reducing layers, increasing ownership, and removing bureaucracy. While many teams finalised their organisational changes in October, other teams did not complete that work until now," said Galetti. The reductions "we are making today will impact approximately 16,000 roles across Amazon, and we're again working hard to support everyone whose role is impacted". The job cuts start with offering most US-based employees 90 days to look for a new role internally (timing will vary internationally based on local and country level requirements). Then, for teammates who are unable to find a new role at Amazon or who choose not to look for one, "we'll provide transition support including severance pay, outplacement services, health insurance benefits (as applicable), and more," said Amazon.

Tata AIA Life enhances Fortune Guarantee Supreme with premium offset, guaranteed income options

Guwahati: Tata AIA Life Insurance has enhanced its long-term savings plan, Fortune Guarantee Supreme, to make disciplined saving easier and more affordable for customers facing rising household expenses and changing financial priorities.

The enhanced plan introduces a 'Premium Offset' feature, under which policyholders need to pay premiums only for the first six years of a 12-year premium-paying term. The income benefit offered by the insurer can be used to offset the remaining six pre-

miums, reducing the out-of-pocket burden and helping customers stay invested for the long term.

The plan also offers a guaranteed income option known as the 'Power of 6', which provides assured benefits with an Internal Rate of Return of over 6 per cent, subject to policy terms and conditions. The option is aimed at individuals seeking predictable income for goals such as retirement, children's education and long-term family security.

Commenting on the enhancement, Amit Dave, Pres-



ident and Chief Distribution Officer – Proprietary Business and Allied Channels, said the product combines guaranteed benefits, income visibility and life protection, allowing families to plan for future milestones without financial strain.

Fortune Guarantee Supreme is a non-linked, non-partici-

pating life insurance savings plan that provides guaranteed benefits along with life cover throughout the policy term. Eligible premiums qualify for tax benefits under Section 80C, while maturity and death benefits are exempt under Section 10(10D) of the Income Tax Act, subject to prevailing tax laws.

What is L-Carnitine? Benefits, uses, and sources explained

Guwahati: L-Carnitine is a nutrient essential for energy production through the transport of long-chain fatty acids into mitochondria for β -oxidation, making it valuable for wellness routines focused on fat utilization. Found in foods like red meat, dairy, and avocados, the body also synthesizes it from lysine and methionine, though supplementation addresses the sufficient supply of L-Carnitine through diet. Scientific evidence establishes its role in facilitating fatty acid breakdown, which may aid in reducing stored body fat alongside diet and exercise, with green tea providing complementary support by blocking malonyl-CoA.

Studies, including those referenced in wellness research, show L-Carnitine can contribute to burn fat, aid weight management, and improve endurance when combined with a balanced diet and standard physical activity. In India, where urban consumers seek simple weight management solutions, Tetley Green Tea, one of Tata Consumer Products' trusted brands, has pioneered its use in Tetley Green Tea Slim Care. This breakthrough variant infuses premium green tea with added L-Carnitine, which, when combined with a balanced diet and regular physical activity, assists in reducing body fat alongside a refreshing taste. It is not your regular green tea; it is purposeful wellness in every sip.

Amway India targets beauty-from-within economy with launch of Nutrilite Biotin C Plus

Kohima: Amway India has expanded its nutraceutical portfolio with the launch of Nutrilite™ Biotin C Plus (with Zinc & Beta Carotene), aligning its strategy with the fast-growing beauty-from-within and preventive nutrition economy. The launch reflects shifting consumer spending patterns as lifestyle stress, long work hours and nutrient-deficient diets drive demand for daily wellness solutions.

Positioned as a "beyond biotin" formulation, the product delivers 100 per cent of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) of Biotin, Vitamin C and Zinc, along with Beta Carotene. Developed using Nutrilite's 90+ years of nutrition expertise, the formulation underscores

Amway's focus on science-backed, plant-forward nutrition that meets everyday dietary gaps rather than single-ingredient supplementation.

Commenting on the launch, Rajneesh Chopra said consumers increasingly recognise the economic value of investing in long-term well-being, linking internal health with external appearance. He added that the product strengthens Amway's innovation-led pipeline and its beauty-from-within nutrition portfolio.

From a formulation standpoint, Biotin supports hair growth, Zinc aids nail strength and skin health, Vitamin C supports collagen production and antioxidant protection, while algae-de-

rived Beta Carotene helps reduce the impact of UV exposure and supports photoprotection against skin redness.

In Kohima, rising health awareness, increasing disposable incomes and a gradual shift toward preventive healthcare are creating steady demand for nutraceuticals. With consumers becoming more informed and open to daily nutrition products, Kohima represents a growing micro-market for science-led wellness offerings.

Nutrilite™ Biotin C Plus is intended for adults aged 18 and above and is available through Amway Business Owners, Amway stores across India and online at amway.in.

ICICI Prudential unveils Smart Insurance Plan Plus to help young India build long-term wealth

Imphal: As India stands at a crucial demographic and economic phase, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited has rolled out ICICI Pru Smart Insurance Plan Plus, a market-linked life insurance product aimed at meeting the long-term financial goals of the country's young population. With nearly 65 per cent of Indians below the age of 35, as per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), disciplined savings and long-term financial planning are seen as essential for turning aspirations into reality.

Designed for young earners, first-time investors, and professionals, the plan combines wealth creation with life insurance protection. Premiums start at ₹1,000 per month, making it an affordable entry point for those looking to begin early and stay invested to benefit from India's growth story. The plan offers 25 fund options and four portfolio strategies, allowing customers to choose asset allocation based on their risk appetite. It also allows partial withdrawals for immediate financial needs and includes a



'Waiver of Premium' add-on to protect family goals in case of unforeseen events.

Vikas Gupta, Chief Product Officer at ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited, said the product is cost-effective, with the entire premium invested as per the customer's chosen strategy.

In Imphal, financial planners note a growing interest among salaried youth and small entrepreneurs in structured, long-term investment products. With rising awareness about financial security and future planning in Manipur, ULIPs are increasingly being viewed as suitable tools for disciplined savings, especially as India is expected to become the world's third-largest economy by 2028, according to Morgan Stanley.

NSDC International sends 39 trained youth to Japan, boost India-Japan skilled mobility push



Guwahati: In a step strengthening the India-Japan skilled mobility corridor, NSDC International, under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, on Tuesday organised a send-off ceremony for Indian candidates who have completed Japanese language training and are departing for employment in Japan.

Held at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi, the ceremony marked the departure of 39 candidates trained under NSDC International's structured Japanese language and cultural readiness programme. The candidates will take up opportunities in caregiving, hospitality and agriculture across Japanese prefectures including Tokyo, Ibaraki and Hokkaido. The initiative aims to ensure smooth workplace integration through language proficiency, cultural orientation and employer alignment.

Economic Advisor MSDE Archana Mayaram referred to the joint India-Japan vision adopted during the Prime Minister's visit to Japan last year, which envisages human resource exchange of five lakh personnel over five years, including 50,000 skilled professionals from India. She said the departing youth would act as ambassadors of India's growing role in the global services economy.

NSDC CEO Arun Kumar Pillai said skilled workforce mobility has become central to international cooperation, adding that India's trained youth are gaining global trust. NSDC International has trained over 400 candidates so far, with 185 already working in Japan, while more than 100 additional candidates are being prepared.

In Guwahati, the programme signals rising demand for foreign language training, overseas placement services and skill certification. Training partners and youth from Assam and the Northeast are expected to benefit as global mobility-linked skilling opens new employment and income avenues, strengthening the region's participation in international labour markets.

Bajaj Auto launches new Chetak C25 electric scooter at Rs 91,399

Mumbai: Bajaj Auto Ltd. has expanded its electric two-wheeler portfolio with the launch of the all-new Chetak C25, positioning it as a youthful, city-focused offering amid rising demand for compact and easy-to-ride EVs. Priced at ₹91,399 (ex-showroom Delhi), the new model will be retailed across Chetak stores pan India.

The Chetak C25 is aimed at evolving urban mobility needs, particularly shorter trips, dense traffic conditions and growing multi-scooter ownership within households. While designed to appeal to younger riders, the scooter remains rooted in Chetak's core DNA of solidity, sturdiness and reliability. In a segment dominated by plastic and fibre-bodied scooters, Bajaj continues to differentiate the Chetak range with a premium

metal body and mono-body construction.

From a product standpoint, the C25 features a neo-classic design, signature DRL headlamp, superior paint finish and six vibrant colour options with youthful, street-art-inspired graphics. Powered by a 2.5 kWh battery, it offers a claimed range of up to 113 km, a top speed of 55 kmph and 80 per cent charging in 2.25 hours. Practical additions include a 25-litre boot, disc brakes, hill-hold assist and guide-me-home lighting.

The C25 completes Bajaj's Chetak portfolio alongside the 35 and 30 Series, enabling the company to address varied consumer segments. Commenting on the launch, Eric Vas said the model reflects changing urban travel patterns while continuing to deliver the trust the Chetak brand has built over generations.

Tata AIA Life boost savings portfolio with premium offset, 'Power of 6' as market seeks certainty

Aizawl: In a market environment marked by rising household costs and demand for predictable returns, Tata AIA Life Insurance has enhanced its long-term savings plan, Fortune Guarantee Supreme, to address affordability and income certainty concerns among consumers.

A key feature of the enhanced plan is the 'Premium Offset' proposition. Under this structure, customers pay premiums only for the first six years of a 12-year premium-paying term, with the income benefit from the policy used to offset the remaining six years. This reduces long-term cash outflow while helping policyholders remain invested over the full term.

The plan also offers the 'Power of 6' option, providing guaranteed income and benefits with an Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of over 6 per cent, subject to policy terms and conditions. The option is positioned for individuals seeking steady future income for retirement,

children's education and long-term financial stability, combining assured returns with life insurance protection.

Commenting on the move, Amit Dave, President and Chief Distribution Officer – Proprietary Business and Allied Channels, said the enhanced plan offers guaranteed benefits, income visibility and life cover, enabling families to plan key milestones without straining daily finances.

Fortune Guarantee Supreme is a non-linked, non-participating savings plan offering guaranteed benefits and life cover throughout the policy term. Premiums qualify for tax benefits under Section 80C, while maturity and death benefits are exempt under Section 10(10D), subject to prevailing laws.

Tata AIA, a joint venture between Tata Sons and AIA Group, reported total premium income of ₹31,484 crore in FY25, ranking among the top private life insurers with strong persistency performance.

Maithan Steel marks 25 years with dealers' meet, outlines expansion roadmap

Itanagar: Maithan Steel, a leading name in the Indian steel industry, celebrated 25 years of operations with its dealers' meet Jashn-E-Maithan 2026, highlighting its growth journey and future expansion plans.

Founded in 2001 with a 60,000-tonne sponge iron unit, the company expanded into TMT bar manufacturing in 2012 and has

since grown into a 5,00,000-tonne integrated steel plant with operations across 25 states and Union Territories.

The company currently works with over 250 institutional buyers and a network of more than 2,500 channel partners, serving over 25 lakh home builders and consumers. Maithan Steel has also generated direct and indirect employment for over 25,000 people. Looking ahead, the company announced ongoing expansion across sponge iron, ferro alloys and allied segments, and confirmed it has received environmental clearance for a 9,00,000-tonne steel plant, with construction expected to begin in 2027–28.

The milestone celebrations, held in Dhanbad, brought together over 1,000 stakeholders and featured brand engagements led by brand ambassador The Great Khali. A wrestling showcase under "Maithan Mania" and an international challenge issued by US wrestler Parker Boudreaux added to the event's highlights. The company also announced two new television commercials scheduled for January 2026.

In Itanagar, Maithan Steel has seen steady demand driven by rising housing activity and infrastructure development in Arunachal Pradesh. Dealers noted growing preference for branded TMT bars as consumers increasingly prioritise quality, strength and long-term reliability in construction materials, positioning the company favourably in the region.

Speaking on the milestone, Director Madhur Agarwalla said the company's journey had been built on trust, while Director Kaushal Agarwalla highlighted the role of strong partnerships in sustaining growth.



Indian textiles sector almost doubles to Rs 16 lakh crore, exports rise over 25 pc: Minister

New Delhi: The textiles sector in India has seen tremendous growth in the last decade — from Rs 8.4 lakh crore in 2014 to around Rs 16 lakh crore today, becoming one of the biggest platforms for generating employment, according to the government. Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh said the domestic market also increased from Rs 6 lakh crore to Rs 13 lakh crore in 2025, while the country's exports also witnessed over 25 per cent rise postpandemic. Addressing the 74th Edition of India International Garment Fair (IIGF) here, the minister said the IIGF is a trusted platform, and "I can say that the India International Garment Fair has now become a major global platform for international garment buyers."

He further said the Narendra Modi government has re-

moved all barriers in textiles, be it QCO, increasing RoD-TEP and RoSCTL schemes, reducing import duty by six months and rectifying the inverted duty structure, etc. "We have supported the industry with Rs 50,000 crore via RoD-TEP and RoSCTL schemes," the minister said. Singh further stated that the challenges have allowed us to remain resilient and stable despite headwinds. "Our export diversification drive to 40 new countries is showing positive results," he mentioned.

The minister further informed that in Argentina, we grew by 77 per cent, Egypt by 30 per cent, Poland and Japan by 20 per cent and Sweden and France by 10 per cent, which is a very encouraging sign. The positive news is that the India-EU free trade agreement will be signed in the next few days, he added. "We



have a young workforce, raw material and foreign exchange surplus, therefore, we must see that we achieve all targets," the minister noted.

India is moving away from reliance on foreign benchmarks and is developing its own standards through indigenous initiatives such as VisionNxt and IndiaSize. Dr A Sakthivel, Chairman of AEPC said that the presence of exhibitors from all parts of the

country highlights the depth and breadth of our manufacturing ecosystem, while the enthusiastic participation of international buyers reaffirms confidence in Indian capabilities. "I am happy to share that cumulative RMG exports during April–December 2025–26 stood at \$11,584.3 million, registering a growth of 2.4 per cent over the corresponding period of the previous year," he added.

Shyam Steel Appoints Harmanpreet Kaur as Brand Ambassador

Mumbai: Shyam Steel, a leading Indian TMT bar manufacturer, has named Harmanpreet Kaur, Captain of the Indian Women's Cricket Team, as its brand ambassador.

The partnership aligns with the company's campaign "Strong Woman. Strong Steel. Strong India," recognizing women's growing role in home-building and construction decisions. Kaur will also promote Shyam Steel's ApnaGhar App, a digital platform guiding homeowners through the construction process from foundation to completion.

"This partnership represents shared values of discipline, determination, and reliability," said Lalit Beriwal, Director at Shyam Steel. Megha Beriwal Gupta, also a Director, emphasized that women are now key decision-makers in home construction.

Kaur stated the brand's vision of building a stronger India "resonates deeply with my own journey as a sportsperson and leader."

The collaboration was facilitated by KPRD Fiberboard Advertising. Shyam Steel operates across multiple Indian states including Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and expanding into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Medanta highlights advanced cardiac care as heart disease burden rises in Assam

Guwahati: With cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) emerging as a major public health concern in Assam, especially among adults above 40 and increasingly among younger urban populations, Gurgaon-based Medanta – The Medicity showcased the future of advanced heart treatment in Guwahati on Wednesday. Studies indicate that people living in urban and hilly regions are becoming vulnerable to heart ailments well before the age of 40, underscoring the need for early detection and timely intervention.

Addressing doctors and patients, Dr. Praveen Chandra, Chairman, Interventional Cardiology, Cardiac Care at Medanta, highlighted recent advances in the treatment of Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) and Valvular Heart Disease (VHD). He spoke on evolving therapies, including valve repair and replacement, minimally invasive small-access surgery, robotic-assisted procedures, and interventions to control high blood pressure and cholesterol. He stressed that com-

binning technology, clinical expertise and community outreach can shift heart care from reactive to preventive.

Earlier in the day, Dr. Chandra held a special OPD in Guwahati, offering specialist consultations and diagnostic services to patients from across Assam.

In Guwahati, the rising incidence of lifestyle-related heart diseases is driving strong demand for advanced cardiac diagnostics and treatment options in the city. Healthcare experts say Guwahati is steadily emerging as a regional medical hub for the Northeast, reducing dependence on metros outside the region. Medanta's upcoming 400-plus bed super-specialty hospital, whose construction began after a recent Bhoomi Poojan, is expected to strengthen the city's healthcare ecosystem and create new opportunities for specialized medical services. Medanta has also launched a dedicated helpline for the Northeast at 8904395588.

Little's puts baby's voice at the forefront with new digital campaign

Mumbai: Piral Consumer Healthcare (PCH), a division of PiralPharma Limited, has launched a new digital campaign for its baby care brand Little's titled "Life is Hard. Switch to Softer", marking a shift in category storytelling by placing the baby's experience at the centre of communication. Unlike conventional baby care advertising that speaks primarily to parents through advice and checklists, the campaign highlights everyday discomforts babies endure but cannot express, such as irritation from rough diapers, dryness from bathing products, and sensitivity caused by harsh ingredients. The narrative underscores how these seemingly small moments influence a baby's sense of comfort and security.

The campaign unfolds through three digital films focused on Little's Fluffy Soft Diapers, Little's Organix Moisturizing Baby Bathing Bar,

and Little's Organix Baby Lotion. Told through a baby's internal monologue, the films depict routine situations from the baby's perspective, encouraging parents to reflect on the impact of everyday product choices.

The initiative is anchored in the brand's 3S philosophy—Soft, Safe, and Sensitive—which guides product development across diapers, personal care, feeding products, wipes, and toys. From a business standpoint, the campaign aims to drive awareness and trial while reinforcing Little's positioning among modern, digitally engaged parents. Commenting on the launch, Abhishek Kumar, Vice President, Piral Consumer Healthcare, said the campaign seeks to shift the lens from parents to babies, highlighting how gentler choices can significantly improve a baby's comfort and well-being.

Mother's Recipe Launches Festive Campaign for Ready to Cook Spice Mixes

Shillong: Mother's Recipe, a trusted brand for Indian families, is enhancing its presence in the North East with a festive outdoor campaign for its Ready to Cook spice mixes. The campaign features eye-catching hoardings in cities like Agartala, Imphal, and Shillong, emphasizing the ease of recreating restaurant-style dishes at home.

Addressing the growing demand for authentic flavors and convenience, the campaign caters to busy consumers looking for quality meals without complex preparation. Sanjana Desai, Executive Director, stated, "With our spice mixes, we're making delicious food accessible, combining traditional taste with modern ease."

The initiative aims to resonate with working professionals and families, encouraging trial and reinforcing brand recall for Mother's Recipe's evolving spice portfolio amidst changing food habits.

Honda road safety campaign engages over 2,400 students in Guwahati

Guwahati: Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India (HMSI) continued its nationwide road safety awareness drive with an interactive learning programme in Guwahati, engaging over 2,400 students from Army Public School. The initiative aimed to build awareness on responsible road behaviour and promote safe riding habits among young citizens.

The programme focused on practical understanding of road safety through structured sessions covering traffic discipline, safe riding practices and the importance of awareness in daily commuting. Participants were encouraged to view road safety not just as a set of rules, but as a daily habit that impacts both personal and public well-being. Interactive formats, including safety riding theory sessions, helped participants connect lessons with real-life road situations commonly faced in the region.

With two-wheelers being a major mode of transport in Assam, HMSI said the initiative was designed to sup-



port informed and responsible behaviour among present and future road users. The campaign aligns with Honda's global safety slogan, 'Safety for Everyone', and its vision of achieving zero traffic collision fatalities involving Honda vehicles by 2050.

In Guwahati, where two-wheelers play a crucial role in everyday mobility for students, working professionals and families, such awareness programmes are seen as timely. Growing traffic density and rising vehicle ownership in the city have increased the need for early road safety education. Initiatives like HMSI's campaign are expected to contribute positively by nurturing a safety-first mindset among young commuters, supporting safer roads in the long run.

Blenders Pride launches Zenith Black Edition, unveils limited one-million bottle release

Shillong: Blenders Pride, one of India's leading premium whisky brands, has announced the launch of the Blenders Pride Zenith Black Edition, a limited-edition offering capped at one million bottles nationwide. The new edition brings together the brand's iconic blend with a bold black design, aimed at whisky consumers seeking exclusivity and refinement.

The Zenith Black Edition features a striking all-black aesthetic that reflects sophistication, power and modern luxury. According to the company, the design is not merely a packaging update but a fresh expression of the brand's long-standing association with black as a symbol of aspiration and distinction. With its limited availability, the release is positioned as a collector's offering for discerning whisky drinkers.

Commenting on the launch, Debashree Dasgupta, Chief Marketing Officer of Pernod Ricard India, said the new edition represents the brand's most refined expression to date, translating its legacy into a bold design language while staying rooted in craftsmanship and quality.

The Blenders Pride Zenith Black Edition is planned for a pan-India rollout and is currently available at select exclusive retail outlets.

In Shillong, premium whisky sales have shown steady growth, driven by rising urban consumption and a preference for limited-edition spirits. Retailers in the city expect the Zenith Black Edition to attract premium buyers and gifting demand, particularly among consumers looking for exclusive and visually distinctive offerings in the premium whisky segment.

Indian Bank reports 7.33% rise in Q3 profit to Rs 3,061 crore

Guwahati: Indian Bank today reported a 7.33 per cent year-on-year rise in net profit to ₹3,061 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2025, compared to ₹2,852 crore in the same period last year. Operating profit for the quarter improved by 5.79 per cent to ₹5,024 crore, while net interest income grew 7.50 per cent to ₹6,896 crore.

Fee-based income rose 7.20 per cent to ₹998 crore, supported by higher business volumes. The bank's cost of deposits declined by 25 basis points to 4.93 per cent, helping improve profitability. Return on Assets stood at 1.30 per cent, while Return on Equity was recorded at 19.11 per cent.

Gross advances grew 14.24 per cent year-on-year to ₹6.39 lakh crore, led by strong growth in retail, agriculture and MSME (RAM) segments, which together rose 16.65 per cent and accounted for over 66 per cent of domestic advances. Total deposits increased 12.62 per cent to ₹7.91 lakh crore, with domestic CASA ratio at 39.08 per cent.

Asset quality improved, with gross NPAs declining to 2.23 per cent and net NPAs to 0.15 per cent. Capital adequacy strengthened to 16.58 per cent.

For the nine months ended December 2025, net profit rose 13.69 per cent to ₹9,053 crore. The bank also reported growth in digital banking, branch network expansion, and multiple national and international awards during the period.

Advanced radiation systems launched at BBCI, mark major boost to cancer care in Northeast

Guwahati: In a step towards strengthening cancer treatment infrastructure in Northeast India, Dr. B. Borooah Cancer Institute (BBCI) on Thursday unveiled a suite of advanced radiation therapy and diagnostic systems, enhancing precision and safety in oncology care.

The newly introduced facilities include a CT Simulator, a TLD Reader, an upgraded Elekta Synergy Linear Accelerator, and a Surface Guided Radiotherapy (SGRT) system. The upgrades have been supported under the CSR initiative of SBI Funds Management Limited, reinforcing its commitment to improving healthcare infrastructure in the region.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Nand Kishore, Managing Director and CEO of SBI Funds Management Limited, along with senior officials, clinicians, faculty members, and other dignitaries. Addressing the gathering, Kishore said the initiative reflects SBIFML's belief that robust healthcare systems are vital for building resilient communities, particularly in regions with limited access to advanced care.

Notably, the TLD Reader, first of its kind in the Northeast for clinical hospital use will aid accurate radiation dose monitoring during Bone Marrow Transplant procedures. The CT Simulator will strengthen radiotherapy planning, while the SGRT



system will enable real-time patient positioning, reducing errors. The linear accelerator upgrade has extended its operational life by five years.

In Guwahati, the upgrade further cements the city's role as the region's primary healthcare hub. Enhanced cancer care facilities are expected to reduce patient outflow to metro cities, boost medical services demand, and support the growth of allied healthcare services in the local market.

Mahindra refreshes Bolero Camper and Bolero Pik-Up with new design, comfort features

Shillong: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. has launched refreshed versions of its Bolero Camper and Bolero Pik-Up range, adding updated styling along with new comfort, convenience and connected technology features.

The company said the new Bolero Camper is now equipped with the advanced iMAXX telematics solution on select variants, offering real-time vehicle insights to improve operational efficiency and fleet management. The Camper also gets a bolder exterior with new decals, body-coloured ORVMs and door handles. On the comfort front, it now offers rear-seat headrests, air conditioning, a heater and a Bluetooth-enabled music system.

Mahindra has also standardised several features across all Bolero Camper variants, including a recliner



driver's seat with headrest, a wider co-driver seat, central locking and rear seat belts, aimed at improving everyday usability.

The Bolero Pik-Up range has been refreshed with a new front design, a reclining driver's seat with headrest and a wider co-driver seat. For the first time, heating and air-conditioning systems have been introduced on select variants to ensure better

comfort in different weather conditions.

Mahindra said the updates strengthen its leadership in the pickup segment, targeting customers who depend on these vehicles for daily business and livelihood needs. Prices for the refreshed range start at ₹9.19 lakh (ex-showroom) for the Bolero Pik-Up and ₹9.85 lakh for the Bolero Camper, depending on the variant.

Mother's Recipe Launches "MOM FU" Campaign for Recipe Sauces in North East

Shillong: Mother's Recipe is launching a digital-led campaign across India's North East promoting its Recipe Sauces range under the tagline "MOM FU: Maa ka pyaar in a new avatar."

The campaign targets Guwahati, Dimapur, Agartala and Aizawl, positioning the sauces as a quick way to cre-

ate Pan Asian flavors at home while retaining the comfort of traditional home cooking.

Executive Director Sanjana Desai said the campaign combines "exciting flavour and the comfort of Maa ka pyaar," noting the North East's strong food culture makes it ideal for the launch.

The festive season push

uses social media posts, stories and influencer partnerships to demonstrate simple cooking applications—dipping, mixing and tossing—aimed at building brand awareness and everyday usage during the year-end period when households cook and entertain more frequently.

Tetley expands slim care green tea range with L-carnitine for everyday wellness push



Guwahati: Tetley has introduced its Green Tea Slim Care range with added L-Carnitine, aiming to offer consumers a simple, everyday option to support weight management and overall wellbeing when combined with a balanced diet and regular physical activity. The new range blends premium green tea antioxidants with L-Carnitine and is positioned as a practical addition to daily routines rather than a short-term solution.

The product is available in two flavours — Lemon & Honey, and Ginger, Mint & Lemon — designed for consumption at different times of the day. While Lemon & Honey is positioned as a mid-morning or afternoon beverage to replace sugary drinks, Ginger, Mint & Lemon is pitched as a post-meal or evening option to support mindful habits and hydration. The company said the idea is to help consumers build small, sus-

tainable wellness practices.

According to the release, L-Carnitine, when taken along with regular physical activity and a balanced diet, assists in reducing body fat. Tetley has also clarified that “Slim Care” is a brand name and does not represent the product’s stand-alone nature.

In Guwahati, demand for green tea and wellness-focused beverages has been rising, driven by increased awareness around fitness, yoga, and lifestyle-related health concerns. Retailers say consumers are looking for affordable, daily-use wellness products rather than expensive supplements, making green tea-based offerings particularly attractive in the city’s urban and semi-urban markets.

The Tetley Green Tea Slim Care range is available in 25 tea bag packs priced at ₹195 and 10 tea bag packs at ₹80, across retail stores and e-commerce platforms.

Jayant Chaudhary reviews Skill India International Centre at IIE Guwahati

Guwahati: Jayant Chaudhary, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, visited the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) here during his two-day visit to Assam. During the visit, he reviewed the newly operationalised Skill India International Centre (SIIC) at the IIE campus.

The SIIC is a flagship initiative aimed at promoting international skill standards and expanding overseas employment opportunities for Indian youth, with a special focus on the North Eastern Region. The Minister said that India’s future growth will depend on skilled, adaptable and confident youth, and noted that institutions like IIE and SIIC are helping local talent access

global opportunities through language training and entrepreneurship development.

The Centre currently has language classrooms, an IT laboratory and a skill lab, and is training two batches under the Japanese Language programme aligned to JLPT N5/JFT-equivalent standards. Future batches for higher Japanese language levels and English training are also planned. Hostel facilities are available for trainees.

During the visit, the Minister interacted with trainees preparing for employment in Japan and toured facilities such as the Mountaineering Sports Arena, Apparel Incubation Centre and TRIS-SAM outlet. He also met a successful mushroom entrepreneur supported by IIE and planted a sapling on the campus.

Medantaties up with Mizoram government to offer cashless treatment to MUHCS beneficiaries

Aizawl: In a major boost to healthcare access in the North-East, Medanta has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Government of Mizoram to provide cashless treatment to beneficiaries under the Mizoram Universal Health Care Scheme (MUHCS). The empanelment allows registered beneficiaries to avail treatment across all six Medanta hospitals located in Gurugram, Noida, Lucknow, Patna, Indore and Ranchi.

Under the agreement, MUHCS beneficiaries from Mizoram will be able to access advanced and specialised medical care without upfront payment, significantly reducing financial stress associated with tertiary treatment. Medanta Chairman and Managing Director Naresh Trehan said the partnership reflects the hospital group’s commitment to equitable healthcare, noting that quality treatment should be a right and

not a privilege, especially for underserved regions like the North-East.

Mizoram continues to face serious healthcare challenges, including limited access to specialised services and the highest cancer incidence rate in the country, as highlighted by long-term studies. Low screening rates, driven by geographical and infrastructure constraints, further underline the need for improved access to advanced care.

Welcoming the MoU, Lalhriatuali Ralte, CEO of the Mizoram State Health Care Society, said the partnership creates a clear pathway for patients to seek timely, quality treatment while easing the emotional and financial burden on families.

Mizoram represents a high-need but under-penetrated region, with rising demand for specialised oncology and tertiary care services. The MUHCS-Med-



anta tie-up is expected to bridge critical gaps by linking patients to established multi-specialty centres outside the state, while also increasing awareness and trust in institutional healthcare among Mizoram’s population. The move could gradually shape patient referral patterns and strengthen organised healthcare penetration in the state.

Reinforcing its long-term focus on the region, Medanta has announced plans for a 400-plus bed super-specialty hospital in Guwahati, and has launched a dedicated helpline for North-Eastern states to facilitate patient support and coordination.

Zuventus Healthcare denies closure speculation, says operations continue uninterrupted

Guwahati: Zuventus Healthcare Limited on Tuesday issued a formal clarification dismissing reports and messages circulating about the company’s alleged closure or rebranding, calling them false and misleading.

In a statement, the pharmaceutical firm said there has been no closure, suspension, or transfer of its business operations. It also clarified that its field staff remains fully operational across the country and business activities are continuing as usual. The company categorically denied rumours suggesting any disruption to its functioning or future plans.

Zuventus further stated that it has no association or affiliation with any entity named Zorvia Healthcare Limited, adding that such claims are incorrect and have no factual basis. The company said these communications have caused unnecessary confusion among stakeholders.

Founded in 2002, Zuventus Healthcare is a subsidiary of Emcure Pharmaceuticals, which is listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange. The company reiterat-



ed its commitment to developing, manufacturing, and marketing high-quality and affordable medicines for patients across India.

Zuventus also said it is exploring appropriate legal remedies to safeguard its goodwill and protect the interests of its stakeholders against the spread of misinformation.

The company has a strong presence in branded generics and operates across key therapy areas, including cardiology, diabetology, gastroenterology, orthopaedics, pain management, and nutraceuticals. With a growing field force and a patient-focused approach, Zuventus said it remains focused on improving health outcomes and maintaining long-term trust with doctors, partners, and patients nationwide.

Call to reform pension taxation to boost post-retirement income: IAC-Life

Guwahati: The Life Insurance Council-Insurance Awareness Committee (IAC-Life) has called for reforms in the taxation of pensions, arguing that the current framework places a disproportionate burden on pension earners with fixed incomes.

Venky Iyer, Co-Chairperson of IAC-Life, said taxation has a “harder impact on income for pension earners,” limiting their post-retirement financial security. He pointed out that there is scope to align pension taxation with other fixed-interest instruments by taxing only the interest or gains, rather than the entire pension amount.

According to Iyer, such a move would directly enhance post-retirement income for pensioners while also encouraging long-term savings through life insurance-based solutions. “This approach would increase post-retirement income for pension earners and mobilise long-term savings through life insurance solutions,” he said.

The committee has also proposed the introduction of a standard deduction for pension earners who do not commute their pension corpus. This, Iyer noted, would help ensure tax parity across all pensioners, regardless of how their retirement benefits are structured.

The suggestions come amid broader discussions on retirement security and the need for a more equitable tax regime for senior citizens, as policymakers examine ways to strengthen long-term savings and financial stability for India’s ageing population.

Good Game launches India operations with Rs 1-crore prize, targets youth gaming economy

Guwahati: Good Game, billed as the world’s first as-live global gaming reality show, has officially launched in India with the aim of finding the country’s first Global Gaming Superstar. Actor and entrepreneur Samantha Ruth Prabhu has joined cricketer Rishabh Pant as a global brand ambassador, alongside popular gaming creator Ujjwal Chaurasia. The show has announced a prize money of ₹1 crore, among the highest for a reality show winner in India, along with an opportunity to represent the country at a global level.

The platform plans to invest up to ₹100 crore annually and is inviting brands and

sponsors to associate with the show, which is expected to reach at least 500 million young viewers across India. Designed as a competitive reality format, Good Game brings together esports, mainstream entertainment and real-world performance, testing contestants on gaming skills, creativity, screen presence and performance under pressure.

Founder Rai Cockfield said the initiative aims to bridge entertainment and gaming while opening global opportunities for Indian talent. Samantha Ruth Prabhu said the show reflects how ambition and creativity are evolving among young Indians today.

The launch is expected to resonate strongly in markets like Guwahati, where interest in online gaming, content creation and digital entertainment has grown rapidly in recent years. With a large youth population and rising smartphone and internet penetration, the Guwahati market is emerging as a key audience base for gaming-led content, making such national-level platforms relevant for aspiring gamers and creators from the Northeast.

Registrations for auditions are open to Indian citizens above 18, with in-person auditions scheduled in Mumbai and Delhi in February and March 2026.

Axis Max Life hosts Arunachal Pradesh's first state insurance plan workshop in Itanagar

Itanagar: Axis Max Life Insurance Limited, formerly known as Max Life Insurance Company Limited, on Wednesday hosted the first-ever state-level workshop on the State Insurance Plan (SIP) in Arunachal Pradesh, marking a key step towards expanding insurance awareness and coverage in the state. Appointed by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) as the Lead Insurer (Life) for Arunachal Pradesh, the company is leading efforts to strengthen insurance penetration across the region.

The workshop, held in Itanagar, was attended by Shri Satyajit Tripathi, Member (Distribution), IRDAI, along with senior officials of the Arunachal Pradesh government, including Shri Karluk Ronya, Director, Accounts & Treasuries, and Shri Nabam Rajesh, Deputy Director of Panchayati Raj. Senior leadership from Axis Max Life Insurance Limited, including Managing Director

and CEO Mr. Sumit Madan, also participated.

Addressing the gathering, Madan said the initiative aligns with IRDAI's vision of "Insurance for All by 2047", focusing on simplifying insurance and building long-term financial security at the household level. The event also saw the unveiling of the State Insurance Plan Report 2025, outlining a roadmap for universal insurance coverage.

The workshop highlighted the implementation of the Bima Trinity—Bima Sugam, Bima Vistar and Bima Vahak—to ensure last-mile delivery of insurance services, especially in remote areas.

In Itanagar, the rollout of the State Insurance Plan is expected to boost awareness among small traders, salaried professionals and self-employed individuals, creating fresh demand for affordable life and composite insurance products. Increased institutional engagement



is also likely to strengthen trust in formal financial services, gradually expanding the city's insurance and financial protection ecosystem.

TVS Motor posts record Q3FY26 performance with strong sales, profit growth

Guwahati: TVS Motor Company has reported its highest-ever quarterly sales, revenue and profits for the third quarter of FY26, reflecting strong demand across domestic and international markets. For the quarter ended December 2025, the company's operating revenue surged 37 per cent to Rs. 12,476 crore, compared with Rs. 9,097 crore in the corresponding quarter last year.

Operating EBITDA rose 51 per cent to Rs. 1,634 crore, while the EBITDA margin improved to a record 13.1 per cent. Profit before tax (PBT), before exceptional items, climbed 57 per cent to Rs. 1,315 crore during the quarter. Overall two- and three-wheeler sales, including international business, grew 27 per cent to an all-time high of 15.44 lakh units. Motorcycle sales increased 31 per cent, scooter sales rose 25 per cent, and three-wheeler sales more than doubled. Electric vehicle sales also touched a record 1.06 lakh units, marking a 40 per cent growth year-on-year.

For the nine months ended December 2025, operating revenue stood at Rs. 34,463 crore, up 29 per cent, while PBT rose 43 per cent to Rs. 3,594 crore and PAT reached Rs. 2,625 crore.

Dealers in Guwahati noted sustained demand for scooters, motorcycles and EVs, driven by rising urban mobility needs and growing interest in electric two-wheelers. Improved financing options and expanding charging infrastructure are further strengthening TVS Motor's market position in the Assam capital and nearby towns.

slice backs early-stage founders at IIT

Guwahati, boosts Assam's startup ecosystem

Guwahati: slice Small Finance Bank (slice SFB) has extended support to early-stage startups at IIT Guwahati, strengthening Assam's growing startup and innovation ecosystem. As part of its continued engagement with young founders, the bank awarded non-dilutive startup grants to two ventures—Picapool and Impact Weaver—during Disrupt, the startup pitching platform of UDGAM, the annual entrepreneurship festival organised by the Entrepreneurship Cell of IIT Guwahati.

The selected startups were recognised for developing technology-driven solutions addressing real-world challenges. Picapool is building a collaborative commerce plat-

form that allows users with similar purchasing needs to pool demand and access better prices. ImpactWeaver, an Assam-based venture, focuses on creating technology-led solutions and partnerships to improve social impact and the effectiveness of social investments in the region.

slice said its participation at UDGAM reflects its strategy of engaging early with academic institutions, particularly in the Northeast, to help convert campus ideas into viable ventures. Addressing students and founders, slice Chief Technology Officer Nitin Basant highlighted the importance of early capital, mentorship, and ecosystem access for young entrepreneurs.

The initiative coincides with slice completing one year since its merger with North East Small Finance Bank. The bank has entered its second year as slice SFB and plans to open Assam's first digital bank branch in Guwahati, underlining its long-term commitment to the region.

Guwahati is fast emerging as a key startup and fintech hub in the Northeast, driven by increasing digital adoption, a young talent pool, and growing institutional support. Initiatives like slice's early-stage backing are expected to encourage more local entrepreneurs, strengthen access to capital, and boost confidence in the city's startup-friendly business environment.

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches 'EZY' to strengthen digital banking for retail customers

Agartala: Ujjivan Small Finance Bank has announced the launch of Ujjivan EZY, its upgraded mobile and internet banking platform, marking a key milestone in the Bank's digital-first strategy. Designed exclusively for retail customers, the unified platform offers a secure, intuitive and personalised banking experience across mobile and web channels.

Available in nine languages, EZY brings together over 200 banking features, including more than 90 newly introduced capabilities. Built on a next-generation microservices architecture, the platform enhances speed, scalability and system resilience, enabling faster rollout of new services and improved responsiveness to customer needs.

The platform integrates core banking services such as account management, fund transfers, fixed and recurring deposits, bill payments, debit card controls, GST payments and investment options including Demat and NPS. New additions include loan services, smart statements, enhanced digital tools and personalised interfaces based on customers' product relationships, delivering an end-to-end digital banking experience.

Security has been strengthened through the integration of AppProtectt, an advanced security SDK offering protection against fraud, device-level threats and emerging cyber risks. The platform also focuses on accessibility and inclusion, catering to customers across regions, age groups and varying levels of digital literacy.

Commenting on the launch, Deepak Agarwal, Head – Strategy and Transformation, said the move reflects the Bank's shift towards a unified digital ecosystem aligned with trust, simplicity, security and financial inclusion.

In Agartala, the launch is expected to support growing demand for seamless digital banking among retail customers and small businesses, as digital payments and online financial services continue to gain traction in Tripura's capital.

Digital channels currently account for over 95 per cent of the Bank's total outward transactions, underlining strong customer adoption.

Bandhan Bank lowers MAB for standard savings account to Rs 2,000 from February 1

Agartala: On the occasion of India's 77th Republic Day, Bandhan Bank announced a reduction in the Monthly Average Balance (MAB) requirement for its Standard Savings Account, reaffirming its focus on inclusive and customer-friendly banking. The bank said the MAB has been lowered from ₹5,000 to ₹2,000, with effect from February 1, 2026, while all existing product features and benefits will remain unchanged. The move is aimed at making formal banking more affordable and accessible, particularly for customers in semi-urban and rural areas. By easing the balance requirement, the bank hopes to reduce financial pressure on account holders and allow more individuals to benefit from a full-service savings account without compromising on features.

Commenting on the decision, Rajinder Kumar

Babbar, Executive Director and Chief Business Officer, said Republic Day symbolises equality and empowerment. He added that lowering the MAB is part of the bank's effort to strengthen financial inclusion and help customers save and grow without unnecessary barriers. In Tripura, the revised MAB is expected to benefit a large base of small savers, salaried individuals, traders, and self-employed customers in the state. With many households in Tripura maintaining modest balances, the lower requirement could encourage wider adoption of savings accounts and greater participation in formal banking, supporting everyday financial needs and local economic activity. The bank has advised customers to visit its official website for further details on the Standard Savings Account.

Royal Enfield brings Hunter Hood to Shillong, expand street culture footprint in the Northeast

Guwahati: Royal Enfield will bring its street culture platform HunterHood to Shillong on February 7, 2026, marking the festival's debut in the Northeast after successful editions in Chennai, Delhi and Mumbai. Built around the spirit of the Hunter 350 motorcycle, the event aims to celebrate urban expression through music, art, sport and community-led creativity.

The one-day festival will feature BMX and skateboarding showcases, street football, slam dunk zones and interactive challenges, alongside custom motorcycles by JD Customs. Skate showcases curated by the Shillong Skate Mag community and live graffiti by the Mixed Media Art Crew and Art of Motorcycling 2024 winner Amit Kumar will add visual

depth. Indigenous dance forms led by the Shlem Institute of Music will share space with hip-hop cyphers anchored by local dancer IamonKharjana. Works by Gauhati Art Project founder Abhishek Choudhury and interactive installations by Sameer Hazari and St+art India are also part of the lineup.

Music performances include hometown artist Reble, Grammy-nominated rapper Raja Kumari, Nagaland-based indie-pop band Trance Effect, and sets by DJ Knack, Smokey, SawaJam Sound System and Gauley Bhai. A flea market and curated food experiences will showcase talent from across the Northeast.

In Guwahati, there is a note growing enthusiasm for lifestyle-led motorcycle communities and street culture festivals.



Guwahati's expanding youth demographic, rising custom motorcycle scene and contemporary art collectives make the city a natural next destination for platforms like HunterHood, reflecting a broader shift towards experiential brand engagement in Assam's urban markets.