

NORTH EAST BUSINESS MIRROR

Vol.No. 03 ■ Issue - 45 ■ North East Business Mirror ■ Thursday, 19 February 2026 ■ Edition - Guwahati

■ Pages - 6 ■ Price ₹ 3

Sensex, Nifty extend gains for 2nd day; PSU banks and IT stocks lead rally

Mumbai: Indian benchmark indices ended higher for the second consecutive session on Tuesday, supported by gains in public sector banks and information technology (IT) stocks, even as global cues remained largely muted. The 30-share Sensex closed at 83,450.96, rising 173.81 points or 0.21 per cent. The broader Nifty settled at 25,725.40, up 42.65 points or 0.17 per cent. Expert said that the recovery lifted the index above 25,700; however, upside momentum repeatedly encountered supply in the 25,760-25,800 resistance band, leading to intermittent profit booking.

On the downside, dips toward the 25,550-25,600 demand region attracted consistent buying interest, reinforcing this zone as a near-term support base and



preventing any sharp breakdown," an expert mentioned. In the Sensex pack, stocks such as ITC, BEL, Infosys, L&T, Asian Paints and Titan were among the top gainers, climbing up to 2.3 per cent during the session. On the other hand, Eternal, Trent, Tata Steel, RIL, M&M and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards, slipping as much

as 1.5 per cent.

The broader market also ended in the green. The Nifty Mid-Cap index gained 0.27 per cent, while the Nifty SmallCap index rose 0.56 per cent. Among sectoral indices, the Nifty PSU Bank index jumped over 2 per cent, emerging as the top performer of the day. The Nifty IT index also ended higher --

reflecting renewed buying in technology stocks.

However, the Nifty Metal index declined around 1 per cent, weighed down by weakness in metal counters. Analysts said IT stocks could see a rebound in the coming sessions after nearly Rs 5 trillion was wiped off their combined market capitalisation so far this year. According to market experts, the recent selloff in the sector may have made valuations attractive, signalling possible undervaluation and creating room for a recovery. Analysts said that the market managed to sustain gains for the second straight day, supported by selective buying in banking and IT shares despite the absence of strong global triggers.

Gold, silver prices continue to decline amid weakening safe haven demand

New Delhi: Gold and silver prices declined for a second consecutive session on Tuesday, as investors analysed mixed US economic data and waited for cues on the US Federal Reserve's policy path. MCX gold April futures dipped 0.56 per cent to Rs 1,53,889 per 10 grams on an intra-day basis.



Meanwhile, MCX silver March futures declined 1.18 per cent to Rs 2,37,064 per kg. Investors remain undecided on whether softer inflation readings will eventually translate into easier monetary policy or whether stronger labour market data will keep rates higher for longer, analysts said.

The dollar index surged 0.21 per cent to 97.12, tracking the moderation in US CPI (consumer price index) in January. A stronger dollar made greenback-priced bullion more expensive for other currency holders. In international markets, spot gold dipped below the \$5,000 mark to \$4,992 an ounce and spot silver slid nearly 3 per cent. The ease in prices came as US consumer prices in January rose less than expected even as job growth surprised on the upside, complicating the outlook for near term rate cuts.

COMEX Gold is trading within the \$4,850-\$5,100 range after a sharp correction from recent highs above \$5,500-\$5,600, analysts said.

Union Budget focuses on strengthening MSMEs for scale, competitiveness and global reach

New Delhi: Placing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises at the heart of India's growth strategy, the Union Budget 2026-27 has unveiled a comprehensive plan to help MSMEs scale up, compete globally and integrate deeper into domestic and international markets through financial, policy and professional support, according to the official statement on Sunday. The Union Budget 2026-27 has



underlined the government's commitment to strengthening Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises as key drivers of economic growth and employment.

MSMEs currently account for around 35.4 per cent of India's manufacturing output, nearly 48.58 per cent of exports and 31.1 per cent of the country's GDP. With more than 7.47 crore enterprises employing over 32.82 crore people, the sector remains the second-largest employer after agriculture. The Budget outlines three key "Kartavyas" aimed at accelerating growth, fulfilling the aspirations of citizens and building capacities across regions and communities. Under the first Kartavya, a focused three-pronged strategy has been proposed to help MSMEs grow as champions by providing equity support, improving liquidity and strengthening access to professional expertise.

To boost equity support, the government has announced a dedicated Rs 10,000 crore SME Growth Fund. The aim is to nurture future champions by incentivising eligible enterprises and supporting their expansion. In addition, the Self-Reliant India Fund, launched in 2021, will receive an additional Rs 2,000 crore to continue supporting micro enterprises with risk capital. As of November 30, 2025, the fund has supported 682 MSMEs with investments worth Rs 15,442 crore.

India's GCC footprint to surpass 350 million square feet within next 3-4 years: Report

Mumbai: Over 200 new global capability centres (GCCs) have entered India in just the last two years, with projections indicating that total GCC footprint will surpass 350 million square feet within the next 3-4 years, a report showed on Tuesday. India's GCC leasing activity reached a record 31 million sq ft in 2025, reflecting the evolution of a sophisticated ecosystem of specialised metropolitan hubs, each commanding distinct competitive advantages across critical industry verticals, according to new JLL report.

Bengaluru commands a 34-39 per cent market share through its over 900 GCC units, setting the benchmark as the leader of the pack, while Hyderabad's 20-23 per cent GCC market capture is built upon its status as the undisputed healthcarebiotech sector leader. "The numbers tell a compelling story of sustained growth and maturation. With over 90 per cent of current GCC activity concentrated in tier 1 cities, these centres have commanded more than 263 million sq ft of Grade A office stock across the top seven cities, while driving 40 per cent of all office leasing activity over the past decade," said Dr Samantak Das, Chief Economist and Head of Research and REIS, India, JLL.

This growth is particularly driven by US-headquartered firms, which represent 70 per cent of all GCC demand from 2018 to 2025, underscoring India's strategic importance to American enterprises, he mentioned. Pune has secured 15-20 per cent of the national GCC activity over the past four years, attracting major multinational corporations through superior quality-of-life metrics, talent availability and strategic sector positioning.



Adani Group commits \$100 billion to sovereign AI infrastructure

Ahmedabad: The Adani Group on Tuesday announced one of the world's largest integrated energy-compute commitments, a direct investment of \$100 billion to develop renewable-energy-powered, hyperscale AI-ready data centres by 2035. The initiative will establish a long-term sovereign energy and compute platform designed to position India as a global leader in the emerging Intelligence Revolution. The investment is expected to catalyse by 2035 an additional \$150 billion across server manufacturing, advanced electrical infrastructure, sovereign cloud platforms and supporting industries.

Together, this is projected to create a \$250 billion AI infrastructure ecosystem in India over the decade. "The world is entering an Intelligence Revolution more profound than any previous Industrial Revolution," said Gautam Adani, Chairman of the Adani Group. "Nations that master the symmetry between energy and compute will shape the next decade. India is uniquely positioned to lead," the Adani Group Chairman said. He added that at Adani, we are building on our foundation in data centres and green energy to expand into the complete five-layer AI stack focused on India's technologi-



cal sovereignty. This roadmap builds on AdaniConnex's existing 2 GW national data centre, expanding toward a 5 GW target that positions India at the epicentre of the global AI economy.

This vision is anchored by landmark partnerships with Google to establish the nation's largest gigawatt-scale AI data centre campus in Visakhapatnam, alongside additional campuses in Noida, and with Microsoft spanning Hyderabad and Pune. The Adani Group is also in discussion with other major players seeking to establish large scale campuses across India thereby further cementing its position as India's premier AI infrastructure partner.

In line with this vision, the Group will also deepen its data centre partnership with Flipkart, advancing the collaboration toward the development of a second AI data centre purpose-built to support Flipkart's next-generation digital commerce, high-performance computing and large-scale AI workloads.

HP launches new DeskJet Printer range for home users in India

Guwahati: Technology company HP Inc. has launched a new range of DeskJet All-in-One (AiO) printers in India, targeting students, parents, and professionals seeking affordable and easy home printing solutions. The new lineup spans HP DeskJet, HP DeskJet Ink Advantage, and HP DeskJet Ultra Ink Advantage series, offering plug-and-play printing, scanning, and copying with low-cost inks and dual-band self-healing Wi-Fi connectivity.

The printers deliver printing speeds of up to 7.5 pages per minute (ppm) in black and 5.5 ppm in colour, while the DeskJet Ink Advantage 4388 offers up to 8.5 ppm and includes an automatic document feeder. All models feature a 60-sheet input tray, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi multi-device connectivity via the HP App, and at least 70% post-consumer recycled plastic content, making them sustainable by design. Select models also come with a complimentary one-year HP Print



Learn Center subscription valued at INR 899.

Satish Kumar, Senior Director, India Market – Print Category, HP Inc., said the new DeskJet range combines compact design, vibrant accent colours, and intuitive connectivity to meet evolving household needs.

Guwahati is expecting steady demand for the new printers, driven by growing home-based learning, remote work, and small home office setups. Competitive pricing starting at INR 6,999 and easy availability through HP World stores and the HP Online store are expected to boost adoption across the Northeast region.

DSP Mutual Fund unveils Multi-Asset Omni Fund of Funds powered by DSP Netra

DSP
ASSET MANAGERS

Guwahati: DSP Mutual Fund has announced the launch of the DSP Multi Asset Omni Fund of Funds, an open-ended fund-of-funds scheme designed to simplify investing for individuals who find it challenging to track markets or manage asset allocation across cycles. The New Fund Offer (NFO) will open on February 5, 2026, and close on February 19, 2026.

The fund is powered by DSP Netra, the fund house's in-house market intelligence framework that analyses market data, valuations and long-term historical patterns to assess risk and margin of safety across asset classes. Based on these signals, asset allocation is dynamically adjusted as market conditions evolve.

At a time when markets are witnessing frequent shifts in leadership, interest rate cycles and global uncertainty, the scheme aims to offer a structured way for investors to remain diversified without relying on forecasts or reactive decisions. The fund will invest across equity-oriented schemes, debt-oriented schemes and commodities-oriented schemes such as gold and silver ETFs, seeking to balance growth potential with risk management.

A key feature is its flexibility to invest in funds and ETFs across multiple AMCs, allowing it to adapt to changing opportunities. Equity exposure can be reduced to as low as 25% during periods of high volatility. The fund is expected to invest 25–75% in equity, 15–50% in debt and 10–50% in gold and silver ETFs, depending on market conditions.

In Guwahati, the interest in multi-asset products has been steadily rising as local investors look for professionally managed solutions amid volatile equity markets. Distributors noted that a diversified fund-of-funds structure could appeal to retail investors in the city seeking long-term stability without active portfolio monitoring.

Croma launches summer sale with up to 71% discounts on ACs and premium TVs

Guwahati: Tata Group's omni-channel electronics retailer Croma has announced its Summer Sale 2026, offering discounts of up to 71% on air conditioners, large televisions, and seasonal electronics across stores nationwide until February 28. The sale includes exchange benefits, cashback offers, easy EMI options, and up to 10% additional discount for HDFC Tata Neu credit card users, subject to applicable terms.

Cooling appliances dominate the campaign, with several inverter AC models available at reduced prices. The Lloyd

Inverter AC (1.25T) starts at ₹26,990, while the LG Inverter AC (1.0T) is priced from ₹30,490 with additional cashback benefits. Croma's own 1.5T inverter split AC begins at ₹29,990, and Samsung, Blue-star, and Voltas models are also offered with discounts ranging from 35% to 57%, along with exchange bonuses and bank offers. Attractive deals are also available on air coolers from Symphony and Croma.

The retailer is also promoting large-screen televisions during the ongoing T20 World Cup season, including a Samsung

croma
A TATA Enterprise

100-inch Neo QLED TV priced from ₹3,84,990, alongside major discounts on TCL, LG, and Samsung premium TV models.

Retailers in Guwahati expect strong demand for cooling appliances and big-screen televisions as early summer purchas-

ing begins. Local Croma outlets anticipate higher footfall driven by exchange offers, financing schemes, and rising consumer interest in energy-efficient ACs and home entertainment upgrades ahead of the peak summer season.

PM flags off 200 JBM electric buses from Guwahati, boost India's green mobility push

Guwahati: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today flagged off 200 JBM Ecolife electric buses from Guwahati under the PM e-Bus Sewa Scheme, marking a major step in India's transition toward clean and sustainable public transport. The deployment spans Guwahati, Bhavnagar and Nagpur, with 100 buses allocated to Guwahati and 50 each to the other two cities. With this rollout, JBM's total electric bus fleet in India has crossed 3,200 buses operating across multiple states.

The 9-metre low-floor, air-conditioned buses are designed for intra-city operations and come equipped with commuter-centric amenities such as CCTV cameras, automatic doors and accessibility features for senior citizens and differently abled passengers. The buses will run on designated routes supported by modern depot and charging infrastructure, enhancing last-mile connectivity while reducing carbon emissions.

The deployment is expected to significantly strengthen Guwahati's public transport eco-



system by improving fleet availability and encouraging the adoption of electric mobility solutions. Industry observers say the move will also stimulate local demand for EV infrastructure, maintenance services and related supply chains, positioning the city as a key hub for green urban mobility in the Northeast.

JBM Auto Vice Chairman and Managing Director Nishant Arya said the milestone reflects the growing impact of public-private collaboration in building a zero-emission mobility ecosystem aligned with India's net-zero goals.

L&T Finance doubles gold loan network to 260+ branches, expands presence across India

Agartala: L&T Finance Ltd. (LTF) has expanded its gold loan operations nationwide, scaling its dedicated branch network to more than 260 locations within eight months of entering the segment. The company had initially entered the gold finance business through the acquisition of 130 branches in June 2025 and has since added another 130 branches, reflecting an aggressive retail expansion strategy.

The Non-Banking Financial Company said the expansion spans the North, West, East, and South regions, with the gold loan business now present in 18 States and Union Territories. LTF has also marked its strategic entry into key markets



including Assam, Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Odisha, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan, aiming to capture the rising demand for secured credit through faster loan approvals and flexible financing options.

In Guwahati, financial analysts note that the expansion into Assam is expected to boost access to formal credit, particularly for small traders, micro-entrepreneurs, and households that traditionally

rely on gold-backed borrowing. Increased competition among NBFCs in the region may also improve customer service standards and offer borrowers more competitive lending terms.

Chief Operating Officer Raju Dodti said the rapid expansion reflects the company's "Lakshya" strategy of building a digitally enabled, customer-centric retail lending ecosystem with strong security and operational standards.

Senco Gold & Diamonds opens new franchise store in Murshidabad's Kandi

Mumbai: Senco Gold & Diamonds, one of India's leading gold and diamond jewellery retail chains, has launched its 86th franchise store at Kandi in Murshidabad district, further strengthening its footprint in West Bengal to more than 100 outlets.

Located at the Kandi Bus Stand and spread across 2,400 square feet, the newly opened store is designed to offer customers a warm and inviting ambience along with an immersive shopping experience featuring gold, diamond, platinum and silver jewellery. The showroom presents a wide range of collections, including lightweight daily wear pieces, contemporary and handcrafted traditional designs, festive collections, bridal jewellery, statement creations, and jewellery for men.

Speaking on the occasion, Joita Sen, Director of Senco Gold & Diamonds, said the expansion reflects the brand's commitment to bringing its legacy of trust, craftsmanship and innovative design closer to customers in West Bengal, where jewellery holds strong cultural significance. Franchise partner Md. Zakir Hussain said the partnership would help showcase the brand's diverse designs and the craftsmanship of skilled karigars.

Senco Gold & Diamonds currently operates around 200 stores across India, including 86 franchise outlets and two international showrooms in Dubai, reinforcing its position as a trusted jewellery brand nationwide.

AI-powered discovery, curated selection, and ultra-fast delivery helps customers shop this Valentine's Day on Amazon.in

Mumbai: Amazon India said that customers embraced curated selection, AI-powered discovery tools, and ultra-fast delivery to shop for premium and personalized gifts ahead of Valentine's Day. Customers shopped across a wide range of categories, including chocolates, fresh flowers, fragrances, jewellery, beauty, fashion, electronics, and gift cards, driven by wide selection and fast delivery options. "This Valentine's Day, we saw a strong uptick in premium and curated gifting options across categories like chocolates, fresh flowers, fragrances, jewelry, beauty, fashion, electronics, and gift cards. Furthermore, trends reflect the growing enthusiasm among Gen Z and millennial customers

for celebrating special occasions," said Saurabh Srivastava, Vice President, Amazon India. Gifting emerged as one of the most popular categories with a 1.2X YoY growth, with premium segments such as luxury chocolates and curated hampers seeing over 1.3X YoY growth. Other popular gifts were cakes & flower combos and experiential gift sets. Popular brands in this category were FlowerAura, Healthy Treats, Lindt, and Cadbury. Fresh flowers category saw a 1.4X YoY growth, with rising customer demand for curated floral gifting. Among the top-selling products, the pack of 50 Red Roses saw the highest growth at over 1.7X YoY, followed by the pack of 24 Red Roses at over 1.3X



YoY and the pack of 12 mixed roses at more than 1.2X YoY, reflecting a clear preference for premium, thoughtfully curated floral arrangements. Popular gifting brands were FlowerAura, IGP, The FloralMart, EG2i, Floralbay, and Shades of Spring, offering customers a wide selection of fresh and premium floral options. This Valentine's Day saw increased participation from young shoppers, driving a 1.3X YoY growth.

Furthermore, 2X growth was witnessed by leading youth-focused brands such as Tokyo Talkies, Sassafras, Highlander, Fastrack, Bewakoof, GAP, The Souled Store, Lavie, Puma, Casio, and Salty. Jewellery emerged as another top-selling product category with a 1.4X increase in demand, followed by Watches and Beauty at 1.3X each and Apparel at 1.2X, reflecting a growing preference for expressive, occasion-led fashion and accessories among younger customers. Customers across Delhi NCR, Mumbai, and Bangalore turned to Amazon Now for chocolates and gifts delivered within minutes, with thousands of products reaching their special loved ones while they enjoyed exclusive offers.

Medanta posts 19% jump in Q3 FY26 income; Noida expansion weighs on profit

Guwahati: Global Health Limited, which operates the Medanta hospital network across North and East India, on Tuesday reported a 19.1 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated total income to ₹11,428 million for the quarter ended December 31, 2025 (Q3 FY26), driven by strong patient volumes and improved realizations.

EBITDA excluding the newly commissioned Noida hospital rose 10.9 per cent year-on-year to ₹2,814 million, with margins of 25.4 per cent. However, consolidated EBITDA including Noida declined 1.7 per cent to ₹2,494 million, reflecting initial operating losses at the new facility. Medanta Noida, which began operations in September 2025, reported revenue of ₹343 million and an EBITDA loss of ₹320 million during the quarter.

Profit after tax stood at ₹950 million in Q3 FY26, impacted



by depreciation and finance costs related to the Noida hospital, as well as a one-time exceptional expense of ₹366 million arising from the statutory implementation of new Labour Codes.

During the quarter, the company added 144 beds—42 in Patna and 102 in Noida—while inpatient and outpatient volumes grew 14.3 per cent and 19.5 per cent, respectively. International patient revenue surged 29.9 per cent to ₹703 million.

For the first nine months of FY26, total income increased 17.6 per cent to ₹33,131 million, with PAT rising 8.5 per cent to ₹4,124 million, despite losses at the Noida facility.

Ride in style: Jawa 42, the neo-classic disruptor, now in Ivory

Mumbai: Jawa 42, the motorcycle from Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles that pioneered the neo-classic segment, has debuted the all-new Ivory, a fresh pastel shade reflecting the growing appetite around the world for softer, unhurried colours as respite from cultural noise, and echoed by the Colour of the Year 2026. The retro livery and decals of the number 42 further define the new Jawa 42 Ivory's understated cool. The Jawa 42, in itself a statement for the youth who value individuality, disrupted the monochrome classic segment in 2018 with its design-first silhouette and iconic pastel shades. The 42's playful colour palette and sporty stance redefined authentic retro-cool, backed by serious performance engineering under the tank. The original pastel range cut through the greys of mid-size classics, then ruled by predictable design and monotonous performance. Anupam Thareja, co-founder, Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles, said, "Those who choose a Jawa 42 are stepping back from the noise to craft a story of their own, unhurried by trends, unbothered by curation.

We are recognising this mood with the Ivory, a colour that lets riders discover Jawa's understated cool at their own pace." The words 'forty-two', in a vintage font, run across the rear fender and fuel tank of the 2026 Jawa 42 Ivory. The Jawa 42 Ivory's side panel sports a completely new design,



and along with the headlight nacelle, will bear the number 42 in striking contrast, making the pastel ivory pop. The Jawa 42 Ivory delivers up to 40 percent more power than other 350cc motorcycles with the powerful 294-cc liquid-cooled J-Panther engine that produces 27.32 PS of power and 26.84 Nm of torque, matched to a first-in-class, smooth 6-speed gearbox. The Jawa 42 has been blazing a trail in neo-classics with a commanding road presence and an expressive colour palette. Ownership Assurance Programme for every rider: 4-year/50,000-km standard warranty, Extended warranty options for up to 6 years, Up to 8 years of roadside assistance, Up to 5 years AMC with nationwide coverage. The 2026 Jawa 42 Ivory is available across all 450+ authorised Jawa Yezdi dealerships at Rs 1,84,950/ (ex-showroom New Delhi).

India's goods & services exports clock 13 per cent rise in January



New Delhi: India's combined merchandise and services exports recorded a 13.16 per cent increase to \$80.45 billion in January this year, compared with \$71.09 billion in the same month of the previous year, data released by the Commerce Ministry on Monday showed. The country's merchandise exports rose 0.6 per cent year-on-year to \$36.56 billion in January, despite the global economic uncertainties, the data showed. Cumulative exports of both merchandise and services (April-January) recorded a 6.15 per cent rise to \$720.76 billion.

Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal told journalists that merchandise and services exports have remained in positive territory. "We will be nearing \$860 billion in overall exports in the current financial year." However, imports of goods during January recorded a 19 per cent increase to \$71.24 billion due to the sharp rise in gold and silver shipments. As a result, the merchandise trade deficit widened to \$34.68 billion compared to \$23.43 billion in January 2025 and \$25 billion in December.

Montra Electric Delivers Rhino EV Tractor Trailer to UltraTech Cement Ltd.

Mumbai: Montra Electric has delivered India's first PM E-DRIVE certified electric heavy-duty truck, the Rhino 5538 EV 6x4 tractor trailer, to UltraTech Cement Limited.

In a January 2026 ceremony, Chairman Arun Murugappan flagged off the N3-category certified vehicle, marking Montra Electric (Murugappa Group's e-M&HCV arm) as the nation's first heavy-duty EV truck maker under the government's INR 10,900 crore PM E-DRIVE scheme. The certification unlocks up to ₹9.6 lakh in incentives per vehicle from the scheme's ₹500 crore e-truck allocation, boosting viability for logistics, mining, and infrastructure fleets.

Union Heavy Industries Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy hailed it as progress toward "Atmanirbhar Viksit Bharat" and net-zero logistics. Murugappan emphasized decarbonizing high-emission freight, praising PM Modi's policies. The truck features a 282 kWh LFP battery, 380 HP, 2000 Nm torque, and up to 198 km range, with battery swapping options for hub-to-hub routes. This advances India's EV adoption in heavy transport.

India-America cable connect initiative to bolster AI ties: Google CEO Sundar Pichai

New Delhi: Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai on Wednesday announced the India-America Connect Initiative, a major step aimed at strengthening artificial intelligence (AI) connectivity between the two nations through new sub-sea cable routes. Speaking at an event here on the sidelines of the 'India AI Impact Summit 2026,' Pichai said the initiative will create new undersea cable connections to boost digital and AI connectivity, not only between India and the US but also across several locations in the southern hemisphere.

He described the move as important for supporting the growing demand for AI infrastructure and faster data flows. Highlighting the opportunities this initiative will create, Pichai stressed the need to invest in skilling people to use AI effectively. He announced Google's most ambitious skilling push in India so far, including a new Google AI Professional Certificate programme. The programme is designed to help students and professionals learn how to use AI tools in their everyday work and build future-ready skills.



In another key announcement, Pichai said the Central government and Google DeepMind will partner on frontier AI development, marking a significant collaboration between the government and one of the world's leading AI research organisations. Pichai described the current phase as a "transformational moment".

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Manipal Hospitals expands oncology outreach, strengthens cancer care access for Mizoram patients

Aizawl: Manipal Hospitals has strengthened access to advanced oncology services for patients from Mizoram by expanding coordinated cancer care through its integrated oncology centres in Eastern India. Leading oncologists from the Manipal network visited Aizawl to participate in the Association of Oncologists, North East India (AONEI) conference, reaffirming the hospital group's commitment to improving early detection, treatment access and continuity of care across the region.

Manipal Hospital EM Bypass in Kolkata, associated with the Mizoram Universal HealthCare Scheme (MUHCS), provides



cashless treatment for oncology and several other super-specialty services. With over 25 oncologists across multiple sub-specialties and advanced infrastructure in Kolkata and Siliguri, the hospitals have emerged as key referral centres

for patients from Mizoram and the wider North-East.

According to the National Cancer Registry Programme, Mizoram reports among the highest cancer incidence rates in the country, particularly lung, stomach, oesophageal

and head-and-neck cancers. Experts emphasized that early screening, precision-based therapies and coordinated multidisciplinary care are critical to improving survival outcomes.

In Aizawl, healthcare stakeholders noted growing awareness among patients about specialised oncology treatment, with increasing referrals to Eastern India centres. The strengthened collaboration between Manipal Hospitals and regional clinicians is expected to streamline referral pathways, reduce treatment delays and make advanced cancer care more accessible to patients from Mizoram.

Axis Max Life logs strong 9M FY'26 growth; VNB jumps 30%, market share rises to 9.8%

Guwahati: Max Financial Services Limited reported robust financial performance for the first nine months of FY'26, with consolidated revenue excluding investment income rising 18% year-on-year to ₹24,625 crore. Including investment income, consolidated revenue stood at ₹36,891 crore, while profit after tax was ₹137 crore.

Axis Max Life Insurance, the group's life insurance arm, continued to outperform the private industry, reporting a 20% year-on-year increase in Individual Adjusted First Year Premium (FYP) to ₹6,396 crore and gaining 53 basis points in private market share to reach 9.8%. Gross Written Premium grew 18% to ₹25,195 crore, while renewal premiums rose 17% to ₹15,551 crore. The company's profitability indicator, Value of New Business (VNB), increased 30% to ₹1,633 crore, with new business margins improving to 23.6%. Assets under management



expanded 12% to ₹1.93 lakh crore, and Embedded Value grew 16% to ₹28,110 crore.

Managing Director and CEO Sumit Madan said the company's "sustained double-digit growth" was driven by strong proprietary channels, digital innovation, and expansion of partnerships, including 51 new business alliances.

The steady growth in protection and savings products is also reflected in northeastern markets, including Guwahati, where rising financial awareness and increasing agency networks are contributing to stronger demand for life insurance products, supporting the company's regional expansion strategy.

J Infratech secures highway maintenance contract for NH-37 stretch in Assam

Guwahati: J Infratech Limited has secured a contract from a Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) for the repair, maintenance, and improvement of riding quality on selected stretches of NH-37 (Old) in Assam. The project was awarded following the company's successful bid, with the CPSU issuing a formal Letter of Acceptance under FY 2025-26 (2nd Call).

The identified highway stretch plays a key role in facilitating daily commuter movement and ensuring smooth transportation of goods across the region. Officials noted that improving riding quality is essential for enhancing traffic reliability, reducing vehicle operating

stress, and strengthening overall transport efficiency. The project forms part of broader infrastructure efforts aimed at maintaining and upgrading critical highway networks through timely rehabilitation and targeted improvements.

Commenting on the development, Rajat Jaggi, AGM - Planning & Monitoring at J Infratech Limited, said the project reflects the company's continued commitment to sustaining vital road infrastructure and delivering work within stipulated timelines while maintaining high-quality standards.

In Guwahati, improved highway conditions are expected to support faster cargo movement, benefiting lo-



gistics operators, wholesale traders, and supply chains linked to the city's expanding commercial hubs. Better connectivity could also reduce transit delays, improving distribution efficiency for goods moving in and out of the region.

J Infratech has executed multiple infrastructure projects across the North-East, and the latest contract further strengthens its engagement with central government highway programs.

IIFL Finance plans Rs 2,000 crore NCD issue offering up to 9% yield

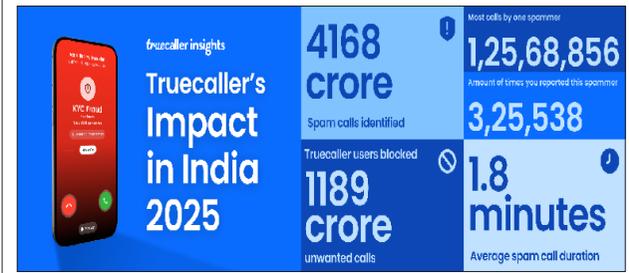
Agartala: IIFL Finance Limited has announced a public issue of secured redeemable non-convertible debentures (NCDs) to raise up to ₹2,000 crore, with the issue opening on February 17, 2026, and closing on March 4, 2026, subject to early closure. The base issue size is ₹500 crore, along with a green-shoe option of ₹1,500 crore to retain oversubscription. The funds will be used for business growth and capital augmentation.

The NCDs offer an effective yield of up to 9% per annum across tenors of 24, 36, and 60 months, with monthly, annual, and cumulative interest payment options. Rated CRISIL AA/Stable and BWR AA+ (Stable), the instruments reflect a high degree of safety and low credit risk. Founder and Managing Director Nirmal Jain said the fundraising would help expand credit access to underserved customers while diversifying funding sources.

As of December 31, 2025, the company reported consolidated assets under management of ₹98,336 crore, with Gross NPA at 1.60% and Net NPA at 0.75%. IIFL Finance posted a Q3 FY26 profit after tax of ₹501.3 crore, up 514% year-on-year, and operates through 4,761 branches nationwide.

Agartala is expecting a steady retail participation in the NCD issue, noting that fixed-income investors in the region are increasingly seeking relatively high-yielding, investment-grade debt products amid stable interest-rate expectations.

India's spam shield: Truecaller community blocked nearly 1,200 crore unwanted calls in 2025



Shillong: India witnessed an unprecedented surge in spam communication in 2025, with more than 4,168 crore spam calls recorded across the country, according to Truecaller's latest India Insights Report. The report revealed that the Truecaller community successfully blocked 1,189 crore unwanted calls, helping millions of users avoid fraud, wasted time, and financial risks in an increasingly digital economy.

The findings also highlighted that 770 crore fraudulent calls were detected, many impersonating banks, government authorities, payment platforms, and popular brands. In addition, over 12,903 crore spam SMS were identified during the year, reflecting the growing sophistication of scam

networks. Truecaller estimates that blocking these calls helped Indians save nearly 21.7 lakh hours every day, preventing urgency-driven decisions that often result in financial loss.

Shillong is increasingly relying on caller-identification tools to maintain customer trust, particularly as e-commerce, banking, and tourism-related services expand in the region. Market analysts say improved spam protection is becoming essential for sustaining digital transactions and consumer confidence in North-east India's growing communication-driven economy.

Truecaller CEO Rishit Jhunjhunwala said strengthening trust in communication remains key as fraud tactics continue to evolve.

Mizoram social activist Sangkhumi Bualchhuak honoured with Mahaveer Award 2026

Aizawl: Distinguished Mizoram social activist Smt. Sangkhumi Bualchhuak has been conferred the Mahaveer Award 2026 for Community and Social Service by the Bhagwan Mahaveer Foundation, recognising her decades-long contribution to women's empowerment, social justice, and grassroots community development. The annual award, presented in four categories—Non-Violence & Vegetarianism, Education, Medicine, and Community & Social Service—carries a cash prize of Rs. 10 lakh, along with a citation and memento.



A pioneer of the women's movement in Mizoram, Bualchhuak played a key leadership role in the Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl, the state's largest women's organisation. Her efforts significantly contributed to legislative advancements related to marriage, inheritance rights, and local governance, while also promoting health awareness, education, and social welfare initiatives across communities.

Other recipients of the 29th Mahaveer Awards include Sarahad (Maharashtra), CORD (Himachal Pradesh), Sri Shankara Cancer Foundation (Karnataka), and NIRMAN (Odisha). The awardees were selected from 267 nominations evaluated by an eminent jury chaired by former Chief Justice of India Justice M. N. Venkatachaliah.

In Aizawl, local civil society groups, educational institutions, and business communities welcomed the recognition, noting that Bualchhuak's advocacy for women's participation in governance and economic activities has strengthened grassroots entrepreneurship and community-led development across the city and surrounding districts.

Couple rises to top leadership ranks in Oriflame India, turns shared dreams into success story

Guwahati: A couple's journey from modest beginnings to national recognition in the direct-selling industry is drawing attention as a story of perseverance, partnership, and ambition. ShanyoHoram and her husband Worchinan Kasar have emerged among the Top 13 Leaders in Oriflame India, achieving significant professional milestones through years of sustained effort.

Shanyo, who grew up in a small village with limited opportunities, had to discontinue her formal education early to support her family. Determined to achieve financial independence and stability, she worked in various roles before being introduced to Oriflame in 2011 by her aunt. The company's social-selling model and structured success plan offered her a flexible pathway to build a career while managing family responsibilities.

Her husband Worchinan, a banker by profession, initially supported her ambitions while continuing his own career. Inspired after attending a Director Seminar, he later joined her full-time, transforming their professional journey into a joint venture. Over the years, the couple steadily progressed from Gold Director



to Diamond Director, strengthening their leadership network.

Today, the duo has earned multiple rewards, travelled to more than 16 international destinations, purchased their dream car, and built a stable life while raising their children demonstrating how shared vision and resilience can shape long-term success.

Toing launches in Guwahati, promises lowest food delivery prices with zero extra charges

Guwahati: Affordable food delivery platform Toing has officially launched its services in Guwahati, expanding its presence to six emerging cities across India, including Pune, Agra, Vadodara, Nagpur and Nashik. The app, introduced in the second half of 2025 with Pune as its first market, guarantees the lowest item prices by matching or beating restaurant table menu prices while charging no packaging or platform fees.

Designed primarily for students, early job-goers and value-conscious Gen Z consumers, Toing aims to make food delivery an everyday option rather than an occasional indulgence. Users can order a wide range of dishes such as biryanis, burgers and bowls-

for under Rs. 99. Popular Guwahati restaurants including Rang De Basanti Dhaba, Burger King, Govindam and Fat Belly are already listed on the platform, offering cuisines ranging from North Indian and Chinese to chaat and continental fast food. The launch ahead of Valentine's Day allows customers to order local favourites such as pizzas, momos, rolls and biryani.

In Guwahati, the entry of Toing is expected to intensify competition in the city's fast-growing online food delivery segment, particularly among price-sensitive student and young professional communities, potentially pushing restaurants and competing platforms to offer more value-driven deals.



Sidharth Bhakoo, Chief Business Officer, Swiggy Food Marketplace, said the expansion targets Gen Z and college-goers, noting that Guwahati's strong student population makes it "the perfect landscape for Toing." With over one million downloads nationwide and a 4.5 rating, the platform is positioning itself as a strong alternative in the value-driven delivery space.

Manipal Cigna expands Northeast footprint, boosts healthcare access with 'Sarvah' plan

Guwahati: Manipal Cigna Health Insurance has strengthened its presence in Northeast India with the expansion of its award-winning health insurance product, Manipal Cigna Sarvah, aimed at improving access to quality healthcare across the region. The product was recognised as Product of the Year 2025 – Health Insurance following a consumer survey conducted by NielsenIQ.

The company said the Sarvah range has been designed to make health insurance

more accessible, offering flexible coverage options tailored to the needs of families, including plans with zero waiting period benefits and comprehensive protection features. To support regional expansion, Manipal Cigna has scaled its network to eight branches across key Northeast cities and plans to onboard around 10,000 advisors over the next three years, including a focused initiative to empower 3,000 women advisors. The insurer has also partnered with football icon Bhaichung

Bhutia to strengthen local engagement around health and financial protection.

In Guwahati, the company's expansion is expected to deepen insurance penetration as demand for affordable healthcare financing grows among urban households and small businesses. Industry observers note that the increasing advisor network and customer-centric plans could improve awareness and accessibility of health insurance products across Assam's largest commercial hub.

Godrej Enterprises wins major aviation security upgrade contract at Cochin airport

Guwahati: The Security Solutions business of Godrej Enterprises Group has secured a major contract from Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) to deploy next-generation gate and perimeter security systems across key access points of the airport, marking a significant step in aviation security modernisation. The project includes installation of advanced Under Vehicle Scanning Systems (UVSS) integrated with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology and high-performance tyre killers to strengthen vehicle screening, deterrence, and access control.

The installations will cover entry and exit points of both Terminal 1 and Terminal 2, enabling automated undercarriage scanning, real-time threat detection, and enhanced traceability of vehicular movements in line with Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) guidelines. This will be CIAL's first large-scale vehicular access management deployment.

Godrej Enterprises Group said the project reinforces its growing presence in the aviation security segment, following similar deployments at several major airports across India. Company officials noted rising demand for automated access



management and smart vehicle screening solutions across critical infrastructure sectors.

The growing adoption of advanced aviation security technologies at major airports is expected to drive demand in emerging aviation hubs such as Guwahati, where airport modernisation and expansion projects are creating opportunities for security technology providers and infrastructure solution firms.

NCB enters North-east luxury jewellery market with Guwahati flagship launch

Guwahati: The luxury jewellery retail segment in Northeast India is set for a notable expansion with Nemichand Bamalwa Jewellers (NCB) launching its flagship showroom in Guwahati, strengthening the region's premium retail landscape. The nearly 40-year-old jewellery brand has opened its new store at Ganeshguri, GS Road, with public access beginning February 7, 2026, following an unveiling by noted personality Nishita Goswami.

NCB, widely regarded as a pioneer of the 22/22K gold jewellery standard, has positioned itself around transparency and purity assurance. The company's innovation ensures jewellery maintains full 22K purity even after melting without deduction in gold weight, addressing earlier industry practices where lower-purity solder reduced overall gold content to 18K–20K and impacted customer value.

The Guwahati flagship outlet will offer wedding, bridal and party wear collections, including jewellery crafted in natural diamonds, gold, jadau and polki designs, targeting customers seeking high-value, heirloom-grade products. Directors Pramod Bamalwa, Vinay Bamalwa and Ravi Bamalwa said the company invested three years preparing for the Northeast expansion, aiming to build a market presence anchored in fair pricing, transparency and long-term customer trust.

MSDE showcases inclusive AI skilling vision at India AI Impact Summit 2026

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has set up a dedicated pavilion at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, placing skilling at the centre of India's inclusive artificial intelligence strategy. The pavilion, located at Booth Nos. 3F 26 and 3F 20, highlights the theme "AI for Inclusive Development" and demonstrates how artificial intelligence can enhance livelihoods rather than displace jobs.

Addressing the summit, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Jayant Chaudhary, said hosting one of the largest AI gatherings in the Global South reflects India's commitment to building a responsible and inclusive AI future while equipping youth with AI-ready skills. The pavilion presents initiatives under three pillars—skilling in AI, skilling with AI and skilling for AI—featuring programmes such as SOAR (Skilling for AI Readiness), AI-enabled career guidance tools, personalised course recommendation engines and computer vision-based assessment systems.

Interactive demonstrations illustrate how AI tools can support farmers, electricians, construction workers and weavers, showing the technology's role in boosting productivity across sectors.

In Guwahati, expanding AI-focused skill programmes could accelerate demand for digital training institutes, tech-enabled services and startup innovation in Assam, potentially creating new employment avenues and strengthening the region's participation in India's growing AI-driven economy.

Mars appoints Manish Syag as India Pet Nutrition MD; Salil Murthy moves to global role

Mumbai: Mars, Incorporated has announced the appointment of Manish Syag as Managing Director of its Pet Nutrition division in India, while the current Managing Director Salil Murthy has been elevated to Global Vice President, Enterprise Transformation, Mars Pet Nutrition, based in London.

Syag, an alumnus of IIM Lucknow, brings over two decades of FMCG leadership experience, having held senior roles at Hindustan Unilever and GSK Consumer Healthcare. He joined Mars in 2024 as Chief Sales Officer and will now lead the company's India Growth Agenda, focusing on expanding operational capabilities and strengthening leadership in the fast-growing pet food category. Mars' portfolio in India includes brands such as PEDIGREE®, WHISKAS® and SHEBA®. The company expects the Indian pet food market to grow into a USD 2-billion category within the next decade.

Murthy, in his new global role, will drive long-term transformation initiatives, including strengthening digital and AI capabilities and building a future-ready operating model for the global pet nutrition business. Mars Pet Nutrition has been present in India since 2002 and operates one of the country's earliest pet food manufacturing facilities established in 2007.

Nissan Motor India launches the all-new Nissan GRAVITE at an attractive introductory price of INR 5.65 lakhs

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India has announced the launch of the all-new Nissan GRAVITE at an attractive introductory price of INR 5.65 Lakhs. A bold and game-changing 7-seater MPV, the GRAVITE marks the beginning of a new chapter in Nissan's India journey. Inspired by India, Made in India, Made for India, the GRAVITE is the first product to roll out under Nissan Motor India's renewed product offensive—underlining the company's strengthened commitment and presence in India. The name "GRAVITE" draws inspiration from 1.4 billion Indians and the 19,000 vernaculars and rituals that shape the nation's diversity, the GRAVITE has been purpose-built to meet the evolving aspirations of Indian families. It combines space, versatility, comfort, and everyday practicality with a commanding road presence. Thierry Sabbagh, Divisional Vice President and President, Middle East, KSA, CIS, and India – Nissan and Infiniti, said, "The All-New Nissan GRAVITE is not just a



product launch; it marks the beginning of a sustained growth phase for Nissan in India." Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, said: "For us, GRAVITE is more than a product introduction. It is a promise that Nissan will continue to design, manufacture, and invest in vehicles that truly resonate with India's mobility aspirations." The All-New Nissan GRAVITE establishes a distinct and confident identity aligned with Nissan's global design language.

Its elevated proportions, muscular body lines, pro-

nounced wheel arches and high ground clearance create a commanding road presence suited to diverse Indian driving conditions. The GRAVITE is the only vehicle in its segment to feature distinctive hood branding along with unique rear-door badging—a bold design expression that reinforces exclusivity and strong visual recall. Exterior highlights include: All-round LED treatment, Signature LED headlamps with Integrated DRLs, Crystal Edge LED tail lamps, LED fog lamps, etc. The Nissan GRAVITE re-

defines family mobility with exceptional cabin roominess and pioneering modularity. Designed to seamlessly adapt to daily commutes and long journeys alike, it delivers intuitive comfort across all three rows. The GRAVITE also offers best-in-class cabin storage in its segment. The All-New Nissan GRAVITE integrates modern technologies to enhance convenience and driving confidence. Safety remains a core pillar of the GRAVITE's value proposition, with 30+ standard safety features designed to deliver peace of mind for families. Standard safety features include: 6 Airbags, Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Traction Control System (TCS), Hill-Start Assist (HSA), etc. The All-New Nissan GRAVITE is powered by an efficient and refined petrol engine, thoughtfully calibrated to meet the everyday mobility needs of Indian families. Bookings open today. Please visit www.nissan.in for more information.

As demand surges, AM/NS India aims for 75% revenue from value-added steel

Mumbai: ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) has announced the strengthening of its value-added portfolio with AM/NS Vibrance and AM/NS Optima—two world-class, premium branded steel solutions engineered to meet the increasingly design-led needs of Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) across appliance and industrial manufacturing ecosystems. With demand rising for steel that combines consistent surface quality, tight tolerances, and reliable performance at scale, AM/NS India is expanding its value-added portfolio with branded offerings that reduce reliance on imports and make premium, internationally benchmarked quality available domestically. These two branded coated offerings now form part of a value-added product portfolio that includes Optigal®, Magnelis®, Optigal® Prime, Optigal® Pinnacle, and others—each validated for consistency, efficiency, and durability across diverse applications. India's consumer durables market—expected to become the world's fourth-largest by FY27—is rapidly premiumising, driven by rising demand for appliances with flawless finishes and that complement design-led living spaces. Annual coated steel demand in India—currently at 11.1 million tonnes—is projected to grow at an 8–10% CAGR in the coming years.

Within the appliance segment, coated steel consumption is growing at about 10% annually, driven by rising consumer aspirations, rapid urbanisation, accelerating premiumisation, and supportive national



initiatives such as the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme and import-substitution efforts. Demand for coated steel in industrial applications is projected to grow at an 8–12% CAGR through 2030, supported by government policies that drive PLI, self-reliance initiatives, and the expansion of the automotive, electronics, and engineering sectors. Mr Ranjan Dhar, Director and Vice President – Sales & Marketing, ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India), said: "For Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) focused on precision manufacturing and consistent brand quality, material choice directly impacts productivity, cost, and long-term performance. Against this backdrop, the addition of AM/NS Vibrance and AM/NS Optima is a significant step in expanding our branded steel portfolio to support OEMs productivity and value creation. These two coated steel offerings strengthen our position as a preferred solution provider with innovative, high-quality steel solutions in line with our brand promise – 'Smarter Steels, Brighter Futures'."

Bharat1.AI announces 'Humanity-First' AI city plan in Bengaluru, launches B1 AI Superpark

Mumbai: Bharat1.AI on Tuesday unveiled plans to build what it describes as the world's first "Humanity-centric AI City" in Bengaluru, aimed at advancing safe and verifiable artificial intelligence systems through real-world testing environments. The announcement was made at the India AI Impact Summit.

The initiative will begin with the development of the B1 AI Superpark, a 500,000 sq. ft. research and innovation campus in Sarjapura designed to host over 10,000 AI researchers, startups, universities, and global technology firms by the end of the year. The facility will support AI model training, fine-tuning, and inference while enabling large-scale experimentation using high-quality multimodal datasets. Bharat1.AI said the campus will feature high-density compute infrastructure with connectivity of up to 400 Gbps and sub-millisecond latency to major AI cloud platforms.

The project will involve research collaborations with institutions including IIT Kanpur, IISc, BITS Pilani, IIT Ropar, and the iSPIRT Foundation, focusing on robotics, autonomous infrastructure, and human-machine interaction systems. Over the next 36 months, the initiative is expected to expand into a city-scale AI testing ecosystem.

ITC's Sunrise Spices launches first-of-its-kind Til Chicken Masala in Assam

Guwahati: ITC Ltd.'s Sunrise Spices, a leading spice brand in eastern India, has launched Sunrise Til Chicken Masala in Assam, introducing a first-to-market spice blend aimed at simplifying the preparation of the region's popular traditional dish, Til Chicken. The ready-to-use masala is designed to preserve the authentic regional taste while offering convenience for modern households.

The launch strengthens Sunrise's region-focused portfolio, which already includes Assam-specific spice blends such as Haah Sal-kumra (Duck Curry with Ashgourd) masala and other traditional meat masalas developed using local consumer insights. Til Chicken, a winter favourite widely served during family meals and festive occasions, typically involves a time-consuming preparation process requiring sun-drying, roasting and grinding sesame seeds. Made using pre-roasted black til and a curated blend of spices, the new masala aims to deliver the dish's signature nutty flavour, smoky aroma and thick blackish gravy with consistent taste and freshness.

Commenting on the launch, Piyush Mishra, Business



Head, Sunrise Spices, ITC Ltd., said the product seeks to preserve Assamese culinary traditions while making the cooking process simpler and more accessible. The brand has also introduced a WhatsApp-based chatbot experience that allows consumers to create personalised avatars with a Til Chicken thali, adding an interactive engagement layer.

In Guwahati, retailers expect steady traction driven by rising demand for convenient regional spice mixes. Priced at Rs. 20 for an 18g pack, Sunrise Til Chicken Masala is now available across retail stores in Guwahati.

ICICI Prudential launches ICICI Pru SmartKid 360 to strengthen child future planning solutions

Imphal: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has launched ICICI Pru SmartKid 360, a long-term savings product designed to help parents plan for their children's future financial milestones with guaranteed benefits. The plan provides Money Back or pre-decided payouts aligned with key stages such as school education, higher studies, or early adulthood needs. Customers can choose either fixed or increasing payout options depending on their financial goals.

Commenting on the launch, Vikas Gupta, Chief Product Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "ICICI Pru SmartKid 360 has been designed to cater to the parents need to financially secure their child's future. In addition to the Money Back benefits, the product provides a guaranteed maturity benefit in the form of a lump-sum payout, at the end of the policy tenure, which can support the child's transition into adulthood."

The product also includes an inbuilt waiver of premium feature, ensuring continuity of benefits if the life assured passes away. Future premiums are waived, the life cover amount is paid to the nominee, and policy benefits continue uninterrupted. Optional add-ons such as the Family Income Benefit provide regular income support to families.

In Imphal, rising awareness of long-term education planning and financial security for children is expected to drive demand for structured savings-cum-protection products like ICICI Pru SmartKid 360, especially among young working parents seeking guaranteed returns.