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Silver dips 1.30 pc, gold eases marginally over stronger dollar



Mumbai: Gold and silver prices eased on Monday amid a firmer US dollar and higher inflation expectations, trimming hopes of US Fed rate cuts in the near term. MCX gold April futures lost 0.16 per cent to Rs 1,61,380 per 10 grams around 11.10 am on an intraday basis. Meanwhile, MCX silver May futures declined 1.30 per cent to Rs 2,64,799 per kg. Earlier in the day, gold futures had dipped 1.1 per cent, while silver futures had declined 1.4 per cent, before a strong rebound by precious metals.

The US dollar strengthened to cross its three month high touching 99.34 up 0.36 per cent on an intraday basis, making dollar priced bullion costlier for holders of other currencies. Analysts said that US Treasury yields surging with the 10 year papers hitting a one month high, increased the opportunity cost of holding non yielding metals. Meanwhile crude oil surged around 27 per cent to \$116 per barrel marking the first time

since 2022 when both benchmarks crossed the \$100 mark. The spike followed escalating hostilities in the Middle East amid supply disruptions at the Strait of Hormuz. This raised inflation fears, leading to traders widely expecting the US Federal Reserve to hold interest rates steady at the conclusion of its two-day policy meeting on March 18. The probability that the central bank will keep rates unchanged in June rose to over 51 per cent, up from below 43 per cent last week.

Gold has support at Rs 1,48,000 while resistance at Rs 1,53,000, an analyst said. In COMEX Gold, strong buying interest is visible in the \$5,000 support band, while a sustained breakout above \$5,400-\$5,600 could open the path toward fresh record highs, he added. The medium to long-term outlook of silver also remains constructive amid favourable global cues from geopolitical developments, even with ongoing volatility, a market participant said.

NSE directs brokers to report, remit excess STT collected

Mumbai: The National Stock Exchange (NSE) on Tuesday directed its trading members -- brokers and sub-brokers -- to furnish details of excess Securities Transaction Tax (STT) collected but not remitted to the government for FY 2023-24 and preceding years, following instructions from the Income Tax Department. In a circular issued by the exchange's finance and accounts department, NSE said the Joint Commissioner of Income Tax, Range 7(1), had advised the exchange to draw attention to cases where some members collected excess STT from clients but did not deposit the amount with the government.

According to the notification, the tax authority requested the NSE to issue a circular asking members to disclose details of such excess STT retained and remit the amount to the exchange. Members have been directed to submit the details under the caption "Excess STT Retained-NSE" and comply with the circular within seven days of its publication. They must also remit the excess STT collected along with interest at 1 per cent for every month of delay to the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd, which will subsequently deposit the amount in the government account.

Sensex, Nifty snap 2-day losing streak as Trump signals Iran war may end soon

Mumbai: Indian benchmark equity indices rebounded on Tuesday, snapping a two-day losing streak as investor sentiment improved after US President Donald Trump indicated that the ongoing war with Iran could end soon. The comments eased global market concerns and supported buying across several sectors. The Nifty closed 0.97 per cent, or 233.5 points, higher at 24,261.6, while the Sensex rose 0.82 per cent, or 639.82 points, to settle at 78,205.98. Commenting on technical outlook, experts said that on the upside, immediate resistance is placed near 24,300, and a decisive breakout above this level could extend the recovery toward 24,600, which remains the next key short-term resistance.

"On the downside, the 24,000 level continues to act as an important support zone for the

index," an analyst stated. According to multiple media reports, Trump said that the conflict with Iran could be resolved "very soon," as he faces increasing political and economic pressure following sharp volatility in global energy markets over the past few days. Broader markets outperformed the benchmark indices during the session. The Nifty Midcap 100 advanced 1.62 per cent, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 climbed 2.12 per cent. On the sectoral front, the Nifty Auto index emerged as the top performer during the day. The Nifty Consumer Durables and the Nifty Financial Services ExBank indices also posted notable gains.

However, not all sectors participated in the rebound. The Nifty IT index was the worst hit among sectoral in-



indices, while the Nifty Oil & Gas index also lagged the broader market performance. The recovery in equities came as investors reacted positively to easing geopolitical concerns, which had recently triggered volatility in global markets and energy prices. Experts said that the market participants will continue to monitor developments related to the Iran conflict and global economic

signals for further direction.

"The rebound came after signs of potential de-escalation in the Middle East conflict, as President Donald Trump hinted at a possible early end to the Iran war," an analyst stated. This development eased geopolitical concerns and triggered a sharp correction in global crude oil prices, helping risk sentiment stabilise, experts explained.

Services exports, remittances may soften oil shock impact on India: Report

New Delhi: Strong services exports and steady remittance inflows could help cushion the impact of rising crude oil prices on India's economy, even as the country remains heavily dependent on imported energy, a report showed on Wednesday. According to the report by DSP Netra, crude oil continues to be one of the most critical variables for India's macroeconomic stability, particularly as the rupee has weakened recently amid rising global oil prices.

India consumes about 5.3-5.5 million barrels of crude oil per day, while domestic production stands at only around 0.6 million barrels per day, making the country nearly 85 per cent dependent on imports. Petroleum imports already account for around 25-30 per cent of India's total imports, making oil prices a key driver of the country's external balance, the report said. The report also pointed out that every \$10 increase in crude oil prices adds roughly \$12-15 billion to India's annual import bill. According to analysts, if crude prices were to rise towards \$120 per barrel and remain elevated through FY27, India's oil trade deficit could surge to nearly \$220 billion, pushing the current account deficit above 3.1 per cent of GDP.

LPG output rises 10 pc as refineries boost production after Centre's directions



New Delhi: In an effort to ensure adequate availability of cooking gas for households, India's oil refineries have increased liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) production by about 10 per cent after directions issued by the Centre, government sources said on Tuesday. The move has helped ease concerns raised by some groups about a possible supply disruption. Sources said the government has also increased the waiting period for new LPG cylinder bookings from 21 days to 25 days in order to curb malpractices and prevent misuse of domestic LPG supplies.

"The government has invoked the Essential Com-

modities Act to monitor the situation and ensure proper distribution of LPG," a government source said. However, they emphasised that the Essential Services Maintenance Act has not been invoked. "India is currently in a much better position compared to several other countries when it comes to energy availability," a government official said. The officials added that the government is in constant touch with multiple countries to ensure that India's energy requirements are met without disruption. While acknowledging that there were concerns earlier, sources said the situation has now been resolved, and supply chains are functioning

normally.

All refineries across the country are operating at full capacity to maintain steady production, they added. Sources also said that the government is closely monitoring the situation and is fully prepared to deal with any challenges if they arise. "Household consumption remains the top priority," a source said. The government also urged people not to believe unverified information circulating on social media regarding a possible LPG shortage.

Sources said that while some associations had written letters highlighting concerns about LPG availability, the government has still taken note of the issues raised and acted promptly to address them. "The government feels that the letters written by a few associations highlighting the LPG crisis are by so-called associations, but still the government is acting on the concerns expressed by them," a source said. "There is no crisis at all. We have enough energy sources available," the source noted.

NutriChoice promotes easy snack ideas as Guwahati consumers turn to light evening bites

Guwahati: Britannia's NutriChoice range is encouraging consumers to rethink their evening snack routine with simple and quick recipes that combine taste with mindful eating. The initiative highlights how small food choices during Guwahati's lively evenings can help people enjoy lighter snacks without compromising on flavour.

According to the company, starting snack time with NutriChoice products can be an easy step toward balanced eating habits. The biscuits can be enjoyed on their own or paired with quick toppings to create convenient snack options that require minimal preparation. The idea is to keep the snack light while avoiding excessive sugar intake in beverages such as tea and simplifying everyday food choices.

As part of the campaign, a simple sevpuri-style snack rec-



ipe has been suggested using Britannia NutriChoice 5 Grain Digestive biscuits. To prepare the dish, sprouted moong and boiled potatoes are mixed with red chilli powder, chaat masala and salt. Green chutney and tamarind chutney are then added to create a flavourful moong chaat. The mixture is placed on NutriChoice biscuits and topped with nylon sev and chopped coriander, creating a quick homemade snack.

In Guwahati, demand for quick and healthier snack alternatives has been steadily rising, particularly among urban households and young professionals. Retailers say products positioned as lighter or digestive options are gaining popularity in the city's grocery and modern retail outlets, as consumers increasingly look for convenient yet mindful snack choices during evening tea time.

Aon report flags rapid digital push but gaps in awareness, affordability in India's health insurance sector

Mumbai: Aon plc has released insights from its inaugural 2025 Insurer Wellbeing Benchmarking Report, highlighting rapid digitalisation and expanding coverage in India's health insurance sector, while flagging gaps in awareness, affordability and standardisation.

Based on a survey of six insurers and analysis of over 600 data points across 10 wellbeing domains, the report said 83 percent of insurers now offer telehealth services, including access to general practitioners, chronic disease management and e-prescriptions. However, only one-third reported tangible outpatient claims savings, ranging between 1.1 percent and 1.5 percent.

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) are offered by 67 percent of insurers, though utilisation varies

widely from 1 percent to 50 percent. Mental health services are provided by half of the insurers surveyed, with most reporting engagement rates between 11 percent and 20 percent.

Health screenings remain underutilised despite half of insurers offering them. Only one insurer reported claims savings exceeding 5.1 percent through early detection initiatives.

Susan Fanning, Head of APAC Wellbeing Solutions at Aon, said India's market is at a "pivotal moment" amid rising employer expectations. Ashley D'Silva, Head of Health and Wealth Solutions, India, said reforms such as Ayushman Bharat and regulatory changes are accelerating sector transformation, urging insurers to adopt predictive analytics and greater customisation for large employers.

Isuzu Motors India appoints Takeshi Hirano as Deputy Managing Director

Mumbai: Isuzu Motors India (IMI), a subsidiary of Japan-based Isuzu Motors Limited, has announced a key change in its top management with the appointment of Mr. Takeshi Hirano as the new Deputy Managing Director. Hirano succeeds Mr. Toru Kishimoto, who will take up a new assignment at the parent company in Japan.

Hirano, currently associated with the Isuzu Business Division at Mitsubishi Corporation, Japan, brings more than two decades of experience in distribution and marketing across global markets for ISUZU. He has held several key positions overseeing operations in different regions for both Isuzu Motors and Mitsubishi Corporation. Hirano is also familiar with the Indian automotive landscape, having earlier served as Vice President – Sales and Marketing at Isuzu Motors India, where he played a crucial role in establishing the brand's early foundation in the country. The management change has been made in line with the company's business plan.

Isuzu Motors India, established in August 2012 and headquartered in Chennai, manufactures vehicles at its Sri City plant in Andhra Pradesh. The facility, spread across 107 acres, began operations in April 2016 and later expanded with a press shop and engine assembly plant in 2020. The company sells models such as the ISUZU D-MAX V-Cross, Hi-Lander pick-up, mu-X SUV, and several commercial pick-up variants. Recently, the company also introduced a fully-built ambulance model compliant with AIS-125 Type C standards.

Tata AIA launches 'Shubh Flexi Pension Plan' offering guaranteed lifetime income with market-linked growth



Guwahati: Tata AIA Life Insurance has launched the Shubh Flexi Pension Plan, a retirement solution designed to offer policyholders guaranteed lifetime income along with the potential for market-linked growth, as changing demographics and rising healthcare costs reshape retirement planning in India.

The company said the plan addresses growing concerns among retirees about maintaining financial independence while coping with longer life expectancy and inflation. The Shubh Flexi Pension Plan provides annuity payouts for life while allowing a portion of the pension corpus to benefit from equity-linked returns tied to the NIFTY 50 index.

Jeelani Basha, President and Chief Distribution Officer (CDO) for Alternate & Emerging Channels, Tata AIA Life said, "Retirement planning in India is evolving. With longer life expectancies, rising healthcare costs and fluctuating interest rates, people want solutions that not only provide stability but also grow with them. The Shubh Flexi Pen-

sion Plan is our answer giving customers both guaranteed income and the opportunity to grow their savings."

The plan offers guaranteed income for life while enabling customers to allocate between 10% and 40% of their pension funds to market-linked investments. Customers can choose combinations such as 60% guaranteed debt with 40% equity exposure, or lower equity allocations for greater stability.

The launch could find strong traction in Guwahati, where rising financial literacy and growing participation in insurance and retirement products are reshaping long-term investment habits. Professionals, entrepreneurs and NPS subscribers in the city are increasingly seeking retirement solutions that combine guaranteed income with growth potential to counter inflation and rising living costs. Industry observers believe hybrid pension products such as Tata AIA's Shubh Flexi Pension Plan may appeal particularly to early planners, lifestyle aspirants and pre-retirees looking for a structured long-term retirement strategy.

Walmart opens registration for India Growth Summit 2026 to boost MSME exports

Guwahati: Global retail giant Walmart has opened registrations for the India Growth Summit 2026, aimed at helping Indian businesses expand both domestically and internationally through eCommerce and global supply chains. The summit will be held on May 7, 2026, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

Registration for the event will remain open until April 23, 2026, inviting micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), digital-first brands, direct-to-consumer (D2C) sellers, and supply-chain innovators to explore global trade opportunities through Walmart's ecosystem. The initiative aligns with the Government of India's Make in India program and focuses on boosting exports across sectors such as home textiles, consumables, health and wellness, food, general merchandise, jewellery, apparel, footwear, toys, and stationery.

The summit will feature executive sessions with Walmart leaders, curated learning workshops, and networking opportunities designed to help Indian sellers scale operations and access international markets through the Walmart Marketplace. A dedicated Resource Center will pro-

vide one-on-one advisory support on onboarding, regulatory requirements, and cross-border trade.

"At Walmart, we are passionate about helping businesses thrive on the global stage," said Manish Joneja, Senior Vice President of Walmart Marketplace. He said the summit reflects the company's commitment to innovation and supporting sellers to grow in global markets.

Since its launch in 2019, Walmart's Vriddhi Supplier Development Program has trained over 70,000 MSMEs, with a target of training 100,000 more by 2028. The summit will also highlight opportunities available through Flipkart, which currently hosts more than 1.4 million sellers.

In Guwahati, the summit could open new opportunities for MSMEs and entrepreneurs in Assam and the Northeast region to access global retail networks. Businesses involved in textiles, handicrafts, processed food, and wellness products in the Guwahati market may benefit from exposure to Walmart's international marketplace and export-oriented supply chains, potentially helping regional sellers scale their products to global consumers.

DGT and Bajaj Auto Sign Flexi-MoU for Skill Development

Guwahati: The Directorate General of Training (DGT) under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has signed a Flexible Memorandum of Understanding (Flexi-MoU) with Bajaj Auto Ltd. This partnership aims to enhance industry-driven skill development in the automotive sector.

Under this agreement, Bajaj Auto will serve as an Industry Training Partner, offering NSQF-aligned training programs at its facilities in Ma-

harashtra and Uttarakhand, targeting 1,000 trainees in its first year. The training will combine classroom instruction with hands-on experience in advanced manufacturing.

Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State for Skill Development, emphasized the initiative's role in ensuring job readiness and aligning education with industry needs. The Flexi-MoU allows for customized training aligned with evolving technologies, aiming to create a sustainable talent



pipeline.

Bajaj Auto's existing CSR initiatives already impact over 90,000 students annually, reflecting its commitment to skill

development. The collaboration is set to last for ten years, promoting a skilled workforce in line with India's manufacturing ambitions.

Petrol, diesel prices unlikely to be raised in near term amid supply disruption

New Delhi: Petrol and diesel prices in India are unlikely to be raised immediately despite global crude oil crossing \$110 a barrel amid the escalating Middle East tensions. Government currently expects state run oil marketing companies (OMCs) to absorb the impact for now and pump prices of fuels will remain the same. OMCs may have to accept lower profits amid the spike in international oil prices, according to sources. West Texas Intermediate rose 27 per cent to \$116 per barrel, while Brent crude gained 28 per cent to \$116, marking the first time



since 2022 that both benchmarks crossed the \$100 mark. The spike followed escalating hostilities in the Middle East amid supply disruptions at the

Strait of Hormuz.

Despite the rally, domestic pump prices remained unchanged nationwide. Though India typically adjusts retail

fuel prices in line with global crude movements, the government has occasionally asked oil companies to absorb price changes amid huge volatility. Earlier, government sources said on Saturday that petrol and diesel prices will not increase, adding that India's energy stock position is improving and the situation is becoming more stable. The improving energy stock situation has given the government greater confidence in managing fuel supplies. India has also taken steps to diversify its crude oil imports to reduce dependence on vulnerable routes.

Aplastic Anemia Awareness Week: BSV Advocates for Action



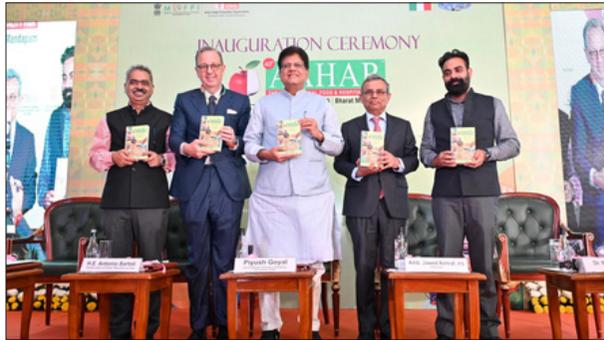
Mumbai: Bharat Serum and Vaccines Limited (BSV) has launched a call to action during Aplastic Anemia Awareness Week (March 1-7) under the theme "Voices of Strength and Hope." Addressing the urgent need for early screening, accurate diagnosis, and coordinated treatment, BSV highlights that India sees approximately 20,000 new cases of aplastic anemia each year, with many patients lacking access to essential therapies like stem cell transplants.

Dr. Santosh Kumar from Medanta Hospital, Patna emphasized the importance of thorough diagnostic evaluations, noting that many patients are misdiagnosed due to low awareness. Sivani Sarma Deka, COO of BSV, stated the company's commitment to collaboratives with healthcare professionals to improve disease management through a national registry aimed at bridging knowledge gaps.

Key recommendations include routine hemoglobin screening, clear referral pathways for persistent cytopenias, and enhanced access to diagnostics nationwide. BSV urges all stakeholders to unite in raising awareness and improving care for individuals affected by this serious condition.

India's annual food exports nearing Rs 5 lakh crore mark: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday called upon stakeholders from the food, agriculture and hospitality sectors to work collectively towards making India the world's largest exporter of agricultural and processed foods, highlighting the vast opportunities created by India's expanding trade agreements and the growing global demand for the Indian products. Addressing the gathering at the inauguration of the 40th edition of 'AAHAR – The International Food & Hospitality Fair' in the national capital, Goyal said that India's exports of food and agricultural products — including farm produce and fisheries — have reached nearly Rs 5 lakh crore (over \$55 billion) annually, making the country the seventh largest exporter of agricultural produce in the world.



025, India's agri and food exports have witnessed significant growth. Exports of processed foods have increased fourfold, fruit and pulses exports have tripled, processed vegetable exports have quadrupled, cocoa exports have tripled, and cereal exports have doubled. Rice exports alone have grown by 62 per cent during this period. Goyal said these achievements should inspire India to aspire for the top position globally in agricultural and processed

food exports. He emphasised that the goal is achievable and aligns with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that India should become the "food basket of the world." The Minister highlighted that the nine Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) concluded by India over the past three and a half years have opened access to 38 developed and prosperous countries, providing vast market opportunities for Indian exporters.

Govt buys back G-Secs worth Rs 6,309 crore in RBI switch auction

Mumbai: The government on Monday announced that it has bought back government securities worth Rs 6,309 crore through a switch auction conducted by the Reserve Bank of India, replacing nearterm maturing bonds with longer-term instruments to manage its repayment obligations more smoothly. Government securities, commonly known as G-Secs, are debt instruments issued by the government to raise funds. These instruments are considered low-risk as they are backed by a sovereign guarantee and typically offer fixed returns to investors. The bonds repurchased during the auction were part of securities scheduled to mature in the next financial year.

These included Rs 1,684 crore of 7.33 per cent GS 2026, Rs 1,035 crore of 5.74 per cent GS 2026, Rs 590 crore of 8.15 per cent GS 2026 and Rs 3,000 crore of 8.24 per cent GS 2027. In exchange, the government issued longer-term bonds. These included Rs 1,719.236 crore of

6.57 per cent GS 2033, Rs 986.526 crore of 7.62 per cent GS 2039, Rs 605.609 crore of another tranche of 6.57 per cent GS 2033 and Rs 3,120.426 crore of 7.40 per cent GS 2062. A switch auction allows the government to replace bonds that are nearing maturity with bonds that mature later. This helps spread out repayment obligations over a longer period and reduces pressure on the government's finances in the near term. The latest operation is the fourth such switch auction conducted by the RBI since February.

Prior to this, three similar auctions had already taken place, through which securities worth Rs 98,591.701 crore were bought back, according to RBI data. The switch operation is aimed at easing redemption pressure in the next financial year, when government bond maturities worth about Rs 5.47 lakh crore are due. The move is also significant as the government has already budgeted gross market borrowing of Rs 17.2 lakh crore.

Govt approves Rs 3,630.77 crore for greenfield connectivity to Jewar International Airport



New Delhi: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Tuesday approved the revised total capital cost of Rs 3,630.77 crore for the construction of greenfield connectivity to the Jewar International Airport from Delhi-Faridabad-Ballabhgarh-Sohna spur of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway on hybrid annuity mode in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. This 31.42 km-long project corridor will provide direct and high-speed connectivity from south Delhi, Faridabad, and Gurugram to Jewar International Airport, thereby promoting economic growth and logistics efficiency across the National Capital Region (NCR). The corridor intersects the Eastern Peripheral Expressway, the Yamuna Expressway, and the Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC), enabling multimodal transport convergence.

The elevated corridor is not merely a structural enhancement but a strategic enabler for urban transformation, regional connectivity, and national logistics efficiency. "Its construction is imperative to unlock the full potential of the Jewar Airport-Delhi-Mumbai Expressway corridor and to ensure sustainable urban development in Faridabad," a Cabinet note said. According to the statement, about 11 km length of this project is to be developed as an elevated highway, which forms a critical segment of the greenfield connectivity between DND-Ballabhgarh Bypass and the Jewar International Airport, linking it to the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.

This corridor traverses the area earmarked for high-density urban development and future infrastructure expansion under the Faridabad Master Plan, 2031. The additional cost of the proposed elevated corridor is Rs 689.24 crore, and the Haryana government has agreed to bear Rs 450 crore for the elevated corridor.

India's mobile phone exports jump 127 times in a decade: Ashwini Vaishnaw

New Delhi: India's mobile phone exports have surged sharply over the past decade, rising more than 127 times from about Rs 0.01 lakh crore in 2014-15 to nearly Rs 2 lakh crore in 2024-25, the Parliament was informed on Wednesday. Replying to a question in the Lok Sabha, Union Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the sharp growth in exports reflects the success of the government's push to expand electronics manufacturing under initiatives such as 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. The policies aim to build a complete ecosystem for electronics production in the country.

According to the government, India has transformed from being a net importer of mobile phones to becoming a net exporter over the past 11 years. "The country is now the world's second-largest mobile manufacturing hub," he said. During the same period, the overall production of electronics goods in India increased about six times from around Rs 1.9 lakh crore in 2014-15 to about Rs 11.3 lakh crore in 2024-25.

"Electronics exports also rose nearly eight times from Rs 0.38 lakh crore to around Rs 3.3 lakh crore," the minister mentioned. Vaishnaw said India started its electronics manufacturing journey by producing finished products, and the focus has now moved towards developing modules, sub-modules, components and even raw materials, tools and machinery used in the manufacturing process.



Women take lead in investing as confidence outpaces planning: DSP Winvestor Pulse 2025–26

Guwahati: Women in India are increasingly taking charge of their financial decisions, with 56% now making investment choices independently, up from 44% in 2022, according to the DSP Winvestor Pulse 2025–26 study released by DSP Mutual Fund in partnership with YouGov. The nationwide survey covered 5,050 urban investors across 13 cities and highlights a growing shift in India's investment landscape.

The report found that while men still lead with 68% making independent investment decisions, the rise among

women marks the most significant change recorded in the study. Women are also more likely than men to consult their spouses when making investment decisions, reflecting a blend of autonomy and collaborative financial planning. The proportion of women describing themselves as self-taught investors has also risen from 13% to 16%.

However, the study also highlights a gap between confidence and structured planning. While 84% of investors say they are confident about investing on their own, only 33% have both a clear finan-

cial goal and a structured investment plan. Nearly half of the respondents define "long-term investing" as three years or less.

Lifestyle priorities are also shifting, particularly among women aged 25–44, with 41% preferring travel over buying a home. The emotional meaning of money is evolving too, with the association of money with "freedom" rising from 27% in 2022 to 35% in 2025.

The findings also reflect trends visible in Guwahati, where participation of women investors in mutual funds and digital investment platforms

has increased steadily in recent years. Financial advisors in the city note that while investor confidence is rising, many new investors still lack long-term planning discipline, indicating the need for greater financial awareness and advisory support.

Commenting on the findings, DSP Mutual Fund Chairperson Aditi Kothari Desai said Indian women are moving "from participation to ownership" in their financial journeys, increasingly engaging with markets and advisors while shaping their financial aspirations independently.

From Meghalaya village to financial independence: NidaiohiBiam's inspiring journey

Guwahati: The journey of NidaiohiBiam from a remote village in Meghalaya to becoming financially independent reflects a story of resilience, determination, and self-belief. Born into a modest family with four sisters and five brothers, Nidaiohi grew up facing economic challenges and early responsibilities. While still in school, she worked to support her education and contributed to her family's income, determined to create a better future for herself.

Her professional journey began as a helper in an IT shop in Jowai. Seeking broader opportunities, she stepped outside her hometown to gain new exposure and develop skills. However, she later chose to return home and resume her studies, believing that continuous learning would help her achieve long-term stability.

A turning point came in November 2016 when a mentor introduced her to Oriflame's social-selling platform. At the time a student, she recognised the platform's potential for financial independence and flexible growth. With consistent effort, she began building her network, participating in seminars, workshops, and leadership programmes to strengthen her skills and confidence.

Today, Nidaiohi is financially independent and socially empowered. She has earned recognition for her achievements and now mentors aspiring entrepreneurs in her community,



helping many women take their first steps toward financial self-reliance.

Guwahati continues to see growing interest in social-selling and direct-selling platforms, especially among young entrepreneurs and women seeking flexible income opportunities. Industry observers note that success stories like Nidaiohi's are inspiring individuals across the region to explore entrepreneurship and network-based business models.

Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water Launches 'The One And Only' Campaign

Shillong: Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water has launched its latest campaign, 'The One And Only,' celebrating distinctive success in a crowded world. The campaign features three protagonists—Avanti Nagrath, Kirandeep Chahal, and Mahieka Sharma—each representing unique traits of confidence, allure, and poise.

Rooted in style and cultural leadership, the campaign aims to resonate with a new generation of achievers who prioritize admiration over mere recognition. Launched across digital



platforms and major city advertising, including the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup, it reinforces Blenders Pride's position as a respected cultural icon.

Debasree Dasgupta, Chief

Marketing Officer at Pernod Ricard India, stated that the campaign encapsulates a modern definition of success, urging youth to embrace their individuality and influence.

Chef Yogendra Negi shares traditional Khandsari Gujiya recipe for Holi celebrations

Guwahati: As the festival of Holi approaches, Chef Yogendra Negi of Organic India has shared a traditional recipe for Khandsari Gujiya, highlighting the use of organic ingredients and classic festive flavours. The recipe features a crisp pastry crust made using two cups of all-purpose flour, a pinch of salt, and one-fourth cup of melted Organic India ghee mixed to a breadcrumb consistency before kneading into a firm dough with chilled water. The dough is then rested for at least 30 minutes.



For the filling, 200 grams of crumbled mawa is roasted in one teaspoon of ghee until light golden and aromatic. Roasted semolina, finely chopped almonds, cashews and pistachios, desiccated coconut, and cardamom powder are added to enhance the flavour. After the mixture cools to room temperature, three-fourths cup of Organic India DesiKhandsari Sugar is mixed in, ensuring the filling remains dry and textured.

The dough is rolled into small puri-sized circles, filled with the mixture, folded, and sealed using water or milk. The gujias are then shaped with a mould or fork pattern and fried in ghee or vegetable oil on low to medium heat until golden brown and crisp.

Chef Negi recommends frying on low heat to avoid bubbles and maintain crunchiness. He also suggests lightly blending Khandsari sugar for a smoother texture if desired. Once cooled completely, the gujias can be stored in airtight containers and remain fresh for up to 10 days.

In Guwahati, sweet shops and grocery stores are witnessing rising demand for traditional Holi ingredients such as mawa, dry fruits, ghee and Khandsari sugar. Traders say the festival season has boosted sales of festive sweets and cooking essentials as households prepare traditional dishes like gujiya ahead of Holi celebrations.

Bandhan Mutual Fund expands northeast presence with new branch in Guwahati



Guwahati: Bandhan AMC Limited has expanded its footprint in the Northeast by opening a new branch office in Guwahati, aimed at strengthening services for investors and mutual fund distributors (MFDs) in the region. The new office is located on the first floor of Ganapati Enclave at Bora Service, Ulubari, Guwahati (PIN: 781007).

According to the company, the branch has been designed to enhance customer engagement and investor outreach. It includes a fully equipped meeting-cum-training room that will be used for investor awareness initiatives and training sessions for distributors. The facility is expected to support the company's efforts to improve financial literacy and expand mutual fund participation in the region.

Commenting on the launch, Bandhan AMC Chief Business Officer Gaurab Parija and Bandhan Group Founder Chandra Shekar Ghosh said Guwahati has emerged as a high-growth market for the fund house. "We are happy to have received strong feedback and support from our partners and investors over several years. Our new office strengthens our commitment to this key market and will help increase financial awareness and interest in mutual funds," they said.

In Guwahati, the expansion reflects the growing appetite for mutual fund investments in the city and across the Northeast. With rising investor participation and increasing financial awareness, Guwahati is emerging as an important hub for asset management companies looking to expand their presence in the region.

Skill Ministry mandates 150-hour OJT for ITIs, restructures CTS to boost industry-ready workforce

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has introduced a major reform in Industrial Training Institute (ITI) training by making 150 hours of On-the-Job Training (OJT) or a Group Project compulsory under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS). The guidelines were issued by the Directorate General of Training on March 3, 2026, and the provision has been effective since the 2022-23 academic session.

Under the revised structure aligned with the National Education Policy 2020, the annual CTS training duration has been reduced from 1,600 hours to 1,200 hours, with 150 hours reserved for structured OJT or project work. Trainees will be eligible after completing three months of ITI training. Performance will be assessed through mentor evaluation, logbook review and



viva during practical exams, with grades reflected in mark-sheets and industry-approved certificates issued by ITIs.

Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development, Jayant Chaudhary, said the reform would enhance practical competence and deepen industry-institution linkages to make youth "job-ready and future-ready."

In Guwahati, the move could strengthen local manufacturing,

service and small-scale industrial units by ensuring ITI graduates possess hands-on skills aligned with current technology demands. The reform is expected to improve employability in Assam's growing industrial clusters and reduce the gap between training and workplace requirements.

The CTS, launched in 1950, continues to play a key role in building India's skilled workforce.

MG Motor rolls out '5-5-5' ownership programme for India's first D+ SUV MG Majestor



Guwahati: JSW MG Motor India has introduced a new 5-5-5 ownership programme for the MG Majestor, described as India's first D+ SUV, aimed at providing long-term ownership assurance and lower running costs for customers. The programme combines a 5-year unlimited kilometre warranty, free 5-year roadside assistance for unlimited kilometres, and five labour-free services, offering a unified ownership package designed to deliver hassle-free maintenance and financial predictability.

The company said the initiative is intended to support buyers in a premium SUV segment where customers invest significantly in performance, size and advanced technology. The programme ensures nationwide breakdown support, reduced service costs during the early years of ownership, and warranty coverage without kilometre limits.

Commenting on the initiative, Vinay Raina, Chief Commercial Officer, JSW MG Motor India, said, "The MG MAJESTOR has been created as an SUV that is rugged in its capability, refined in its comfort, and dependable in its engineering. For us, delivering a strong product was only one part of the commitment and ensuring complete peace-of-mind in ownership was equally important. With the 5-5-5 programme, we have built structured, long-term assurance into the proposition from day one. This reflects our customer-first philosophy and our confidence in the MAJESTOR as a true full-size SUV engineered for Indian conditions and usage patterns."

In Guwahati, large SUVs with strong off-road capability are seeing rising interest among buyers in Assam and the wider Northeast, where terrain and long-distance travel requirements favour robust vehicles. Industry observers believe MG's 5-5-5 programme could appeal to regional buyers seeking lower maintenance uncertainty and stronger service support.

SBI General Insurance Launches Campaign with Pankaj Tripathi

Mumbai: SBI General Insurance has launched an integrated brand campaign titled "Chuniye Bharosa, Apno Sa," featuring acclaimed actor Pankaj Tripathi as its Brand Ambassador. The campaign emphasizes trust and resonant family support in health insurance, highlighting the importance of everyday care in safeguarding loved ones.

Tripathi embodies the qualities of responsibility and empathy, reinforcing the brand's commitment to transparency and customer care. A new film showcases him as a source of strength within his family, mirroring SBI General's promise to stand by families during critical times.

Naveen Chandra Jha, MD & CEO of SBI General Insurance, noted that rising medical costs and health awareness make comprehensive insurance essential, while Tripathi expressed pride in promoting the brand's heartfelt narrative. The campaign will engage audiences through various platforms including Print, TV, and social media, aiming to enhance brand recall and emotional connection across India.

Ambuja Cements, Adani Foundation drive sports development in rural Assam with football initiative

Umrangso: Ambuja Cements, part of the diversified Adani Portfolio and the world's ninth-largest building materials solutions provider, in collaboration with the Adani Foundation, has launched a football promotion programme to encourage sports development among rural youth in Umrangso of Assam's Dima Hasao district.

The initiative has been implemented across Borolokhindong, Tharvelangso and Chotolokhindong villages with the aim of nurturing local sporting talent and promoting holistic development among young

people in the region.

Football enjoys deep cultural significance in the North-East and continues to gain popularity among young players. However, many rural communities lack access to proper infrastructure, equipment and training opportunities, limiting the ability of aspiring footballers to develop their skills.

Recognising this gap, Ambuja Cements supported 81 rural youths through the programme, including 54 boys and 27 girls. The initiative involved improving playground facilities and distributing sports kits to help participants

engage in structured football training.

The programme has also encouraged greater participation of girls in sports by creating an enabling and supportive environment within the villages.

With improved exposure and access to resources, several participants are now exploring opportunities to compete at the district level, opening potential pathways for sports careers. The initiative reflects Ambuja Cements' continued commitment to youth development and community empowerment through meaningful CSR interventions in rural areas.

Sudipto Sen opens up on 'Charak' and 'The Kerala Story' controversies as folklore thriller hits theatres

Guwahati: Filmmaker Sudipto Sen, known for directing *The Kerala Story*, has said he never deliberately sets out to make controversial films, even though his projects often trigger intense public debate. Sen made the remarks while speaking at the trailer launch of his latest production *Charak*, a folklore thriller that is currently running in theatres.

Addressing the controversies surrounding his films, Sen said the stories he chooses are driven by personal experiences that deeply affect him. "Honestly, from the bottom of my heart, I do not set out to make controversial films; I simply choose subjects that genuinely move and disturb me," he said. Recalling the origin of *The Kerala Story*, Sen noted that the idea came after witnessing an incident in Kochi in 2014, which eventually evolved into the film released in 2023.

He also explained that *Charak* was inspired by his fascination with faith and intense rituals practiced in India's hinterlands. According to Sen, his travels exposed him to the emotional depth surrounding the traditional *Charak* festival, which later shaped the narrative exploring belief, devotion, and the thin line between faith and fear.

The film stars Anjali Patil, Sahidur Rahaman, Subrat Dutta, Shashi Bhushan, Nalmeesh Neel,



Shankhadeep, and Shounak Shyamal. Presented by PEN Studios, *Charak* is directed by Shieladitya Moulik and produced by Sipping Tea Cinemas in association with Sudipto Sen Productions, with Rajesh Bhatt as associate producer.

In Guwahati, curiosity around the film's theme and Sen's previous work has generated moderate audience interest, particularly among younger moviegoers and viewers drawn to socially provocative cinema. Industry observers note that films exploring regional folklore and controversial subjects often attract niche audiences in the Northeast, where discussions around faith, culture, and belief systems resonate strongly with viewers.

Nissan India sales jump 23% in February; Gravite deliveries begin from March

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. has reported a 23 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated sales for February 2026, with total dispatches reaching 10,565 units, reflecting steady momentum in both domestic and export markets.

Domestic wholesales stood at 2,230 units during the month, while exports accounted for 8,335 units, underlining India's growing role in the company's global supply strategy. The company said February marked a significant milestone with the launch of the all-new Nissan GRAVITE. Customer

deliveries of the model commenced nationwide from March 1 following strong booking momentum and positive market response.

Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, said February had been an "important and forward-looking month" for the company. He said the consolidated performance reflected stable demand and continued export strength, reaffirming India's strategic importance in Nissan's global operations. He added that the response to the new GRAVITE had been encouraging and that the coming months were expect-

ed to reflect stronger portfolio momentum.

The company said continued traction for the Nissan Magnite and the launch of GRAVITE would support sustained growth and network expansion.

In Guwahati, dealers reported steady enquiries for compact SUVs, with rising interest in newly launched models. Industry observers said improved infrastructure and growing urban demand in Assam and neighbouring northeastern states were expected to support Nissan's retail performance in the coming quarters.

MSDE to host breakout session on skilling 1.5 lakh caregivers at post-budget webinar

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) will host a breakout session on “Strengthening India’s Care Ecosystem: Skilling 1.5 Lakh Multiskilled Caregivers” during the Post-Budget Webinar on the theme ‘Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas – Fulfilling Aspirations of People’. The webinar is part of a series organised by the Ministry of Finance following the Union Budget 2026–27.

The day-long webinar will be led and coordinated by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to address the Post-Budget Webinar 2026–27 on March 9. The platform will bring together key stakeholders to discuss implementation strategies outlined in Para-54 of the Union Budget speech, which proposes building a strong care ecosystem cov-

ering geriatric and allied care services.

India’s skilling ecosystem—including NCVET, Sector Skill Councils, ITIs, NSTIs and flagship schemes such as PMKVY, PM-NAPS and Jan Shikshan Sansthan—will support the initiative. Thousands of candidates have already been trained in roles such as Geriatric Caregiver, Home Health Aide and General Duty Assistant.

In Guwahati, the initiative is expected to create new opportunities for skill development institutes and healthcare service providers in Assam and the wider Northeast. With the region witnessing growing demand for geriatric care and home-based healthcare services, training programmes for caregivers could open employment avenues for local youth while strengthening the healthcare support ecosystem in cities like Guwahati.

India, Finland explore deeper partnership in skill development and workforce mobility

Guwahati: India and Finland on Thursday discussed expanding cooperation in skill development, vocational education and workforce mobility during a bilateral meeting between Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Shri Jayant Chaudhary and Finland’s Minister of Employment Matias Marttinen in New Delhi.

The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration between institutions, industries and training systems in both countries to build a future-ready workforce and enhance opportunities for skilled mobility. Both sides highlighted the need to create structured frameworks that enable skilled professionals to access global opportunities while ensuring high standards of training, certification and worker welfare.

Jayant Chaudhary said that under the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is steadily moving towards becoming the “Global Skill Capital of the world.” He noted that India’s young and dynamic workforce, supported by an expanding skilling ecosystem, can contribute sig-



nificantly to global industries. Marttinen said Finland values its partnership with India and acknowledged the contribution of highly skilled Indian professionals working across sectors in Finland.

The ministers also discussed cooperation in sectors such as healthcare, construction, green technologies and advanced manufacturing. The dialogue highlighted the need to strengthen partnerships between vocational institutions, promote knowledge exchange, enhance trainer capacity and integrate language training to support international mobility.

In Guwahati, enhanced global skill partnerships could create new opportunities for youth in Northeast India. With

growing participation in government skilling programmes, training institutes in Guwahati and nearby regions may benefit from international collaborations, especially in sectors like healthcare services, construction and emerging green technologies.

The Finnish delegation included senior officials from labour migration, innovation and workforce development agencies, while the Indian side was represented by officials from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, NCVET and the Directorate General of Training. Both sides agreed to continue dialogue to identify priority sectors and practical areas of collaboration.

Aon Study: Barriers Limit Women’s Leadership in Corporate India

New Delhi: Aon’s recent study, ‘Gender and Leadership at India Inc’, reveals systemic barriers hindering women’s advancement to senior roles in corporate India. Surveying 1,500 leaders, including over 400 women, the findings show women are often confined to enabling functions with limited access

to core business roles, critical for leadership.

Key statistics reveal that only 20% of women over 50 achieved senior positions in the same organizations compared to 49% of men. Women also average more career transitions and report lower perception of fairness in promotion decisions. Aon

emphasizes that the issue lies not in women’s ambition but in the structural inequities of leadership opportunities.

“India does not lack capable women; it has a leadership design issue,” stated Nitin Sethi, Aon’s head of Talent Solutions in India, advocating for intentional placements of women in core roles.

Renault unveils ‘futuREady’ strategy, plans 36 new models and strong push for electrification by 2030

Guwahati: Renault Group has announced a new global strategic plan titled “futuREady”, marking the next phase of its transformation as the company aims to strengthen its position as the reference European carmaker in an increasingly competitive automotive industry. The strategy builds on the success of the Renault plan launched in 2021, which helped the company regain momentum through product renewal and stronger brand positioning.

Under the new roadmap, Renault Group plans to launch 36 new models by 2030, including 22 in Europe with 16 electric vehicles, while expanding its presence in key growth markets such as India, South America and South Korea. The strategy is structured around four pillars—Growth Ready, Tech Ready, Excellence Ready and Trust Ready—focusing on product innovation, customer



experience, technology and operational efficiency.

Group CEO François Provost said the futuREady plan aims to deliver sustainable performance and innovation while maintaining strong partnerships with employees, suppliers and dealers. The company is targeting an operating margin between 5% and 7% of revenue, along with automotive free cash flow of at least €1.5 billion annually over the medium term.

In Guwahati, the announce-

ment reflects the growing demand for electrified and technologically advanced vehicles in Northeast India. Automobile dealers in the Guwahati market note increasing consumer interest in hybrid and electric mobility, especially as infrastructure and awareness improve. Industry observers say Renault’s global electrification push and future model launches could strengthen its presence in the region’s expanding passenger vehicle market.

Turkish Airlines Partners with Google for Enhanced Baggage Tracking

Mumbai: Turkish Airlines has announced a partnership with Google as the launch partner for the new Find Hub “share item location” feature, aimed at improving baggage recovery processes. By utilizing Find Hub-compatible trackers, passengers can generate a secure location link for their baggage, which can be shared with airline representatives for quicker resolution of misplaced or delayed luggage.

Passengers control the sharing process through the Find Hub app, with links auto-expiring after seven days and data encryption ensuring privacy. Mehmet Yildirim, Turkish Airlines’ Ground Operations VP, emphasized the airline’s commitment to leveraging cutting-edge technology to enhance the travel experience.

Erik Kay from Google highlighted the open ecosystem of Find Hub, enabling seamless tracking through a vast network of devices. This collaboration reinforces Turkish Airlines’ dedication to digital innovation in enhancing passenger convenience across its global network.

Usha launches Smash Plus and Smash Deluxe Mixer Grinders to power everyday cooking



Mumbai: Usha International, one of India’s leading consumer durables brands, has expanded its kitchen appliance portfolio with the launch of the 750W Usha Smash Plus and the 500W Usha Smash Deluxe mixer grinders, designed to support everyday cooking needs with improved performance and convenience.

Built for Indian kitchens where freshly ground chutneys, masalas, and pastes are essential, the new mixer grinders aim to deliver consistent grinding results while simplifying daily kitchen tasks. In West Bengal, grinding ingredients remains a regular requirement for traditional dishes such as shorsheish and shorshe begun, which require finely ground mustard seeds, as well as poppy seed (posto) paste and smooth fillings used in delicacies like luchi and pithe.

The Usha Smash Plus features a 750W 100% copper motor, while the Smash Deluxe is powered by a 500W motor, enabling efficient grinding of both wet and dry ingredients. The Smash Plus comes with three stainless steel jars – a 1.5-litre wet jar, 1.0-litre dry jar, and 0.4-litre chutney jar. The Smash Deluxe includes a 1.2-litre wet jar, 0.8-litre dry jar, and 0.4-litre chutney jar.

Both appliances feature three speed settings, a pulse function, overload protection, spill-over motor protection, shock-proof ABS bodies, and anti-skid suction feet for safe and stable operation.

The Usha Smash Plus is priced at ₹5,890 (MRP), while the Usha Smash Deluxe is priced at ₹4,990 (MRP). Both products come with a five-year motor warranty and a two-year product warranty.