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Mortal remains of musician brought to Imphal

AGENCY
Imphal, Sep 10

The body of Manipuri musician Chongtham Vikram Singh, who died following an alleged assault in New Delhi on September 7, was brought to Imphal on Wednesday for his final rites.

Hundreds of his friends, well-wishers joined the family members and relatives to receive his mortal remains upon arrival at the Imphal airport in the forenoon. Several mourners broke down while receiving the mortal remains.

The 54-year-old Manipuri guitarist and music teacher died after an alleged assault in Delhi. He was a son of renowned veteran Manipuri singer Chongtham Kamala.

As per the FIR registered at New Delhi's Sunlight Colony police station, on September 7, the accused allegedly entered the building and chased Singh up three floors before assaulting him with kicks and blows after he allegedly objected to loud noise and nuisance outside his residence.

The tragic incident triggered widespread condemnation not only in Mani-



pur and other northeast states but also in the national and state political circle.

The bereaved family expressed deep sorrow over his death and called for justice to be delivered at the earliest and greater safety for people from the Northeast.

They urged the authorities to ensure a fair investigation and stringent punishment for all those responsible for the alleged killing.

Vikram's mother recalled her son's childhood and while sharing his emotion-

al memories of the musician said that his (Vikram's) last call was a joyful one.

"He (Vikram) spoke happily about his son securing distinction in his semester examination," Kamala said, adding that it made the call particularly memorable for her.

Brother of the deceased, Chongtham Vivek, said that strict punishment must be awarded to those responsible for the death while completing the investigation and legal proceedings at the earliest.

According to Vivek, his brother received

death threats and told his son that the men who assaulted him had come from a dhaba located opposite their residence in Kilokari, southeast Delhi. Meanwhile, artistes, singers and musicians who converged at the airport to receive the lifeless body of the guitarist called for capital punishment for those responsible for the killing of their fraternity member while expressing concern over racial discrimination faced by people from the north-east region in the mainland.

Renowned singer Sadananda Hamom said that the incident renewed the concerns over racial discrimination faced by people from the region in Delhi and other cities of the country.

He demanded that the authorities must take the strongest possible action against those responsible and ensure an end to racial discrimination against people from the region. The singer described Vikram as a "very loveable and down-to-earth person" and added that his death following an alleged assault was deeply unfortunate. The mortal remains were taken to the family residence at Thangmeiband Lourungpurrel in Imphal West, where the last rites will be performed.

Northeast key driver of country's growth: VP Radhakrishnan

AGENCY
Imphal, Sep 10

Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Wednesday said Arunachal Pradesh was integral to India's unity, with the Northeast region, aided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Act East policy, emerging as a key driver of the country's growth.

Addressing a special session of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly here, he said the state stands as a "proud guardian" of India's borders, and its development is closely linked to the progress of the country. He also said Arunachal Pradesh is culturally rich with "boundless potential". Radhakrishnan said the Northeast has been given increasing priority by successive governments, recalling that former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had created the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER). "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Act East policy and his description of the eight northeastern states as 'Ashta Lakshmi' demonstrate the tremendous potential of the region. The Northeast is emerging as a key driver of the country's growth," he said. The vice president said the Union Budget this year has allocated more than Rs 6,800 crore to the DoNER Ministry, reflecting the Centre's continued focus on the region. Highlighting Arunachal Pradesh's development, Radhakrishnan said the state has around

79 per cent forest cover and is endowed with rich biodiversity, forests, rivers and ecological resources that are vital for the country's environmental security and climate resilience. "Arunachal Pradesh has an important role in India's future. The state is integral to India's unity. The development of Arunachal Pradesh is linked to the progress of India," the vice president said. He noted that the state has emerged as the country's number one producer of kiwi fruit and that more than one lakh soil health cards have been issued to farmers. He called for collective efforts to build a strong Arunachal Pradesh and a strong India in the spirit of "Rashtra Pratham" (Nation first). Radhakrishnan, who reached here on Tuesday evening on a two-day visit to the state, said rural road connectivity in Arunachal Pradesh has increased from around 4,000 km to more than 14,000 km in the last decade, while the length of national highways has grown from about 1,000 km to over 2,500 km. The state's per capita income has more than doubled, while the pace of road construction has reached around 1,800 km a year, he said. More than 800 schools have been upgraded during the period and enrolment in government schools has risen to over 1.7 lakh, he said. He said there are now around 16,000 'Lakshpati Didis' in the state and hoped that they would become 'crorepatis' in the future.

Supreme Court Seeks Report on All Aspects Arising from Satya Niketan Building Collapse

AGENCY
New Delhi, Sep 10

The Supreme Court has issued significant directions in connection with the Satya Niketan building collapse incident, seeking a report on all aspects arising from the mishap. The Court has sought reports from the Delhi Government, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and other agencies concerned with the case. The matter will be heard next on September 15. However, the Supreme Court said that the Delhi High Court would continue to hear the matter. The apex court directed the Delhi High Court to regularly monitor the case at short intervals and said that the concerned authorities should continue to comply with the High Court's directions.

The Supreme Court also sought reports regarding illegal construction in La-



jpat Nagar, Sarojini Nagar, Saket and Malviya Nagar in Delhi, as well as Aliganj in Lucknow. The Court said its focus would remain on the misuse of residential areas in Delhi for commercial activities.

Amicus curiae Ajit Sinha had filed a report before the Supreme Court on September 8, seeking a comprehensive inspection of all paying guest (PG) accommodations and hostels in Delhi. The report stated that the repeated occurrence of accidents in the area was a matter of serious concern. The amicus curiae recommended a comprehensive safety au-

dit of PG accommodations, private hostels and student residences located around all colleges and universities in Delhi. The report also noted that similar incidents had occurred in the Satya Niketan area in the past.

The repeated accidents in the area have raised questions over why regulations are not being properly enforced there. The proposed inspection would examine various aspects in detail, including building plans, construction quality, the use of basements, structural stability, fire-safety arrangements and the availability of emergency exits.

Cong alleges Rs 10,000 cr IT 'scam' through unrecognised pol parties

AGENCY
New Delhi, Sep 10

The Congress on Wednesday attacked the Modi government, alleging a Rs 10,000 crore income tax evasion "scam" involving unrecognised political parties and demanded a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into it.

There was no immediate reaction from the government to the allegations.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh asked who was the "Chanakya" behind the 3,260 "sham political parties" and who was the "true mastermind" of the alleged scam.

"The Modi government must answer to the nation," Ramesh said in a post in Hindi on X.

"Prime Minister (Narendra Modi), you failed to bring back black money from abroad, and citizens have yet to receive the promised Rs 15 lakh each; yet, it now appears that a scheme to launder black money — turning it 'white' — is underway right here in the country under the BJP's patronage," he said.

Ramesh asked why, despite cases of tax evasion and money laundering through



fake political parties coming to light, the government had not taken action against the alleged tax evaders and such parties.

He said Congress colleague Shaktisinh Gohil had questioned the government's failure to impose 200 per cent penalties and initiate criminal proceedings against those guilty, despite the alleged revelation of tax evasion exceeding Rs 10,000 crore involving 3,260 Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs).

"We recall how, just before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the Congress party — India's principal opposition — had its bank accounts frozen and was slapped with massive tax notices in a highly undemocratic move aimed at financially crippling the party," Ramesh said.

"So, why is there no in-

vestigation into these 3,260 sham political parties and the associated cases of tax evasion?" he asked.

"Is it because these fraudulent parties enjoyed the patronage of the BJP leadership and were orchestrating this entire scam with the government's tacit approval?" he alleged.

Addressing a press conference here, Gohil claimed that there were 3,260 Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs) in the country being used to evade income tax. He said Section 80GGC of the Income Tax Act states that if an individual donates the amount they owe in income tax to a political party, it becomes zero, while the other section, 80GGD states that if a company donates its tax money to any registered political party, its tax also becomes zero.

Centre partners with 4 spiritual organisations under NMBA

AGENCY
New Delhi, Sep 10

Expanding its partnerships under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA), the government on Wednesday signed agreements with four spiritual organisations to strengthen grassroots awareness, prevention, recovery and social mobilisation against substance abuse.

The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment signed Memoranda of Understanding with Adhyatm Vigyan Satsang Kendra, Chinmaya Mission, Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan and Hare Krishna Movement in the presence of Ministry Secretary Sudhanshu Pant.

Astik Kumar Pandey, Director (Drug Prevention), signed the agreements on behalf of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.

The respective organisations were represented by: Chandra Singh for Adhyatm Vigyan Satsang Kendra; Prema Vishwanath for Chinmaya Mission; Sadhvi Shitabha Bharti for Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan; and Fateh Chand Sharma for Hare Krishna Movement.

The partnerships form



part of the department's continuing efforts under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) to leverage the extensive reach, influence and community networks of spiritual and value-based organisations to strengthen awareness, prevention and social mobilisation against substance abuse, the ministry said in a statement.

On the occasion, Pant said collective efforts of the organisations already associated with the ministry have helped initiatives under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan reach more than 34.42 crore citizens. He called upon the newly partnered organisations to maximise their outreach and utilise their extensive networks to spread the message

against substance abuse. Reiterating the importance of spiritual organisations in advancing the vision of a Nasha Mukh Bharat, Pant said their extensive grassroots presence can play a significant role in fostering resilience among individuals and families, reducing the stigma associated with substance use disorders, and encouraging affected persons to seek timely help, treatment and rehabilitation. The ministry has previously entered into MoUs with The Art of Living, Brahma Kumaris, Sant Nirankari Mission, ISKCON, Shri Ram Chandra Mission, All World Gayatri Pariwar, Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Dhanwantari Ashram and the University of Patanjali.

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authorities should continue to comply with the High Court's directions in the area was a matter of serious concern. The amicus curiae recommended a comprehensive safety audit of PG accommodations, private hostels and student residences located around all colleges and universities in Delhi. The report also noted that similar incidents had occurred in the Satya Niketan area in the past.

The repeated accidents in the area have raised questions over why regulations are not being properly enforced there. The proposed inspection would examine various aspects in detail, including building plans, construction quality, the use of basements, structural stability, fire-safety arrangements and the availability of emergency exits.

PM Modi Holds Talks with German Chancellor Merz, Agrees to Further Strengthen Strategic Partnership

AGENCY
New Delhi, Sep 10

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephone conversation with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on Thursday. The two leaders reiterated their commitment to further strengthening the strategic partnership between India and Germany as the two countries mark 75 years of diplomatic relations. The discussions covered enhancing cooperation in several key areas, including trade and investment, defence, clean energy, advanced technology, and the mobility of talent. Sharing details of the conversation on social media platform X, Prime Minister Modi said that India and Germany are completing 75 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations. On this occasion, the two countries agreed to further strengthen their strategic partnership across various important areas, including trade and investment, defence, clean energy, advanced technology, and

the mobility of talent. Modi said that the scope of India's partnership with Germany is continuously expanding. The two leaders also discussed taking bilateral cooperation forward in line with future requirements and exploring new opportunities in the interests of the people of both countries. Describing Germany as an important pillar of India's engagement with Europe, the Prime Minister said that Germany is an important and valued partner of India in promoting global peace, stability, and prosperity.

He said that India and Germany will continue to work together to further deepen their forward-looking strategic partnership. The growing cooperation between the two countries will contribute not only to mutual prosperity but also to strengthening peace and stability at the global level. It may be recalled that India and Germany established diplomatic relations in 1951. In 2026, the two countries are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations.

Trump asserts in a long convention speech that if Republicans win the midterms, US residents will receive \$5,000

Washington DC

In a lengthy speech at the Republican midterm convention in Dallas, Donald Trump called Democrats "radical" and defended his unpopular war in Iran, promising to provide \$5,000 to every adult citizen in the United States if Republicans win the House and Senate. Ethical questions were raised right away by the absurd plan, which would cost more than \$1 trillion. However, it revealed how worried the Republicans were about their chances in the crucial November elections. "If the Republicans win, you win with us, and you get \$5,000," Trump told a roaring crowd, during a nearly two-hour long speech in which he also urged voters to "pretend that I'm on the ballot" – despite his historic unpopularity causing many vulnerable Republican politicians to avoid the event. Surrounded by supporters waving American flag placards, Trump claimed, without evidence, that his second term had been "the most successful two years, financially and every other way, in the history of the presidency", but devoted much of his speech to fearmongering about what would happen should Democrats win the House or the Senate for the final two years of his presidency. "There is a crazy little sick cloud over our country," Trump



said. "We will defeat communism in America." The president and Republicans are gambling that throwing a midterm convention – the first the GOP has ever held – can buoy the party, which is predicted to lose control of the House.

Yet, Trump's deep unpopularity among Americans – his approval rating is hovering at about 38% – meant many Republican candidates running in competitive races skipped the two-day confab entirely. Even so, Trump's speech made it clear he thinks he will be the deciding factor in November. Noting that the party which holds the White House traditionally strug-

gles in the midterm elections, Trump said: "We've got to change that, because we have something going that's so good. "If we lose, you're going to lose your border, you're going to lose your tax cuts, you're going to lose your safety and security, you're going to lose your wealth. Our country is going through hell – we will be going through hell, just like we did, just two years ago," he said. The build-up to the midterm convention had somewhat of a chaotic air. Trump was initially scheduled to speak on the second night, before the Republican National Committee announced that he would deliver the keynote on Wednesday, and instead give closing

remarks on Thursday after his vice-president JD Vance speaks. Trump made several references to the war in Iran, warning Tehran "not to get cute" or the US "will have to hit them very hard". But he also appeared to acknowledge the economic pain caused by the soaring price of oil. Trump re-enacted the way he told his economic advisors that the US needed to start the conflict because Iran was "two, maybe three weeks away from having a nuclear weapon". "I hate to do this to you," he said he told them, noting the economy had been doing well. At the convention center, there were signs of middling enthusiasm among

the rank and file. Compared with the four-day traditional convention in Milwaukee two years ago, the first day felt muted. There were no long queues to enter, no eternal waits for food or bathrooms. Swathes of empty seats were visible throughout Trump's speech. Visible, except to Trump, who claimed, wrongly, that the arena was full. "Not only is this packed but you have an equal number of people standing outside," Trump declared. This was not observed by Guardian reporters. The RNC had announced in mid-August that Americans could apply for tickets to attend the event, suggesting that applicants would enter a lottery and only a lucky few would be granted access. Yet on Wednesday, with the convention underway, applications for tickets were instantly being granted on an RNC sign-up page. Trump himself, however, appeared energized in his call to action on the first night, cracking jokes, including at the expense of Ken Paxton, his handpicked candidate for Senate in Texas who won a primary against the incumbent John Cornyn earlier this year. "He may not dress right. He may not talk exactly perfectly, and he may not be the best-looking guy I've ever seen," Trump said of Paxton. "But you know what he is? He's the greatest attorney general in America."

After 2,000 cancelations due to UK flight congestion, the head of air traffic control was given a week to report

London

The transport secretary stated that she "did not believe the issue was unavoidable," and the head of the air traffic control company Nats has been given a week to present an explanation for the technological malfunction that caused thousands of aircraft to be grounded. Heidi Alexander announced on Tuesday that she had also asked the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to conduct an independent investigation into the most recent Nats meltdown, which seriously hampered hundreds of thousands of passengers' ability to travel. Despite Downing Street's statement that the government still had faith in Martin Rolfe during a morning meeting with Alexander and as the number of flight cancelations surpassed 2,000, the remarks will put additional pres-

sure on the Nats chief executive. "Safety must remain air traffic controllers' overriding priority," the minister told the Commons. "This morning, I spoke with Nats chief executive, Martin Rolfe, who informed me that this outage was due to a technical issue at their Swanwick site." "So, I do not think this issue was unavoidable, even though my understanding from Nats is that we can rule out a cyber-attack on this occasion." Passengers were "unlikely to be entitled to compensation for delays and cancellations," since the issue was probably caused by "extraordinary circumstances." Airlines have urged action, with Rolfe facing increasing pressure to quit, after the third large-scale stoppage to flights in just over three years. According to the most recent industry estimates, around 330,000 passengers experienced flight dis-

ruptions and delays, with many of them spending hours aboard grounded aircraft. Overnight, other travelers were stuck at airports in the UK and elsewhere. Over 155,000 passengers experienced flight cancelations, and over 180,000 passengers experienced flight delays. Alexander had requested that Rolfe "carry out a full investigation into what happened to make sure that lessons are learned, so that this doesn't happen again," according to a Downing Street spokesperson. "Leave absolutely no stone unturned in understanding what has happened here, and what can be done to drastically reduce the likelihood of something like this ever happening again," Alexander declared. "I do believe that the durability of Nats systems has to be questioned.

We also need to consider concerns

related to consumer redress." "We have confidence in him and he's been tasked with the investigation, which will report in a week's time," the prime minister's spokesperson continued. Airlines like Ryanair and Wizz demanded that Rolfe step down or be fired by Alexander. He had previously defended the robustness of Nats' systems, which serve 15 airports in the United Kingdom. He stated on BBC Radio 4's Today program, "We will be doing a very thorough and full investigation." "At this point, a cyberattack has been ruled out. We haven't seen anything like this in over 50 years of business. According to Nats, the flight processing system malfunction was distinct from the problems that led to outages and widespread disruption in 2023 and 2025. Lessons had not been

learned, according to Ryanair, which questioned the rationale. The airline announced on Tuesday that it had canceled 50 flights, disrupting over 65,000 customers. As of right today, it has canceled over 250 flights, and its expenses are expected to reach millions. The airline's chief executive, Michael O'Leary, said: "Martin Rolfe's position as Nats CEO is untenable. We don't need more investigations, we don't need more reports, and we don't need another parliamentary committee hearing where Martin Rolfe will promise change, will promise resilience, and will promise an effective backup system." He said the UK's air traffic control services were one of the most expensive in Europe "and yet it keeps repeatedly failing". O'Leary said Alexander should "today demand that failing Martin Rolfe must quit, or be dismissed".

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EDITORIAL

Authorities Must Act Against Deadly Noise Pollution

What could be more shockingly symptomatic of India's noise pollution epidemic than a musician who protesting a musician who protesting loudness? The death of Chongtham Vikram Singh, a Manipuri musician in Delhi, at the hands of a mob that included an adolescent boy is the latest extreme manifestation of a growing disregard for the health and peace of others among Indians who equate celebration with loud noise. The disturbing irony in Singh's case was compound-

ed by the silence of his neighbours as he was chased and beaten near his apartment. The 47-year-old musician's death was not an isolated incident. Loud music has become de rigueur at private functions and communal festivals, while complaints against it are increasingly provoking violent reactions. Last week, 45-year-old Satish Sharma succumbed to injuries sustained after he was pushed down a staircase following his complaint about loud music from a neighbour's house in Noida.

Assam's Green Cess Must Become a Meaningful Price on Ecological Damage and Environmental Losses

Assam's decision to operationalise a Green Cess Policy marks an important shift in environmental governance. The State Cabinet has approved a framework for levying the cess on stone-crushing units, brick kilns, imported timber, pollution-index-based industrial units, transfers of pre-owned motor vehicles and commercial extraction of groundwater. The proceeds are intended for embankment repair, solar power and other environmental investments. Activities that impose costs on nature and society should help finance their remediation. But a green cess can become either ecological correction or merely another tax. Its success will depend on what Assam does after collecting the money. The ur-

gency is already stark today. Assam's official data show that 4.27 lakh hectares have been lost to riverbank erosion since 1950, equivalent to 7.4% of the state's area, with nearly 8,000 hectares disappearing annually. Its flood-prone area is 31.05 lakh hectares, or 39.58% of the state's land, nearly four times the national proportion. The Water Resources Department has built 4,473.82 km of embankments and completed 911 anti-erosion and town-protection works, yet it acknowledges that long-term solutions have not been adequately implemented. The fiscal logic is compelling. Environmental degradation is already generating a public expenditure burden. If poorly regulated mining, construction materials, groundwater extraction and polluting industries accel-

erate that burden, the state should not make the general taxpayer bear all of it. Yet the polluter-pays principle must be applied carefully. A cess imposed without a transparent estimate of environmental damage can become arbitrary. Rates should reflect pollution intensity, resource consumption and ecological sensitivity. A stone crusher near a fragile river corridor should not face the same liability as a facility operating under strong safeguards. Groundwater extraction should be priced according to aquifer stress, not merely volume. Assam's groundwater position looks comfortable overall but hides local vulnerabilities. The Central Ground Water Board's 2024 assessment puts annual extractable groundwater resources at 20.89 billion cubic me-

tres and total extraction at 2.63 billion cubic metres, with an average extraction stage of only 12.61%. Yet Guwahati's assessment unit is already classified as semi-critical. Aggregate abundance can conceal urban and industrial hotspots where groundwater is under pressure. The cess should consequently be designed as a behavioural instrument, not simply as a revenue instrument. Higher charges for excessive extraction, cleaner production incentives for compliant industries, rebates for verified pollution-control investments and escalating penalties for repeat violations would make the levy economically meaningful. The state should publish a pricing schedule so businesses can anticipate costs and invest in cleaner technologies.

Quality Roads Transform Rural Economies Through Better Connectivity, Trade and Opportunities

Benefits of highways are optimised and reach villages' doorsteps only when the rural roads which provide the last mile connectivity are properly built, maintained and integrated into the highway network. The primary objective of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is to provide all-weather connectivity to unconnected rural habitations. For a state like Assam, which receives heavy monsoon rains, all-weather connectivity plays a crucial role in keeping the roads passable and safe throughout the year. Yet, questions being raised over the quality of 18% of PMGSY roads in Assam, which was highlighted in Wednesday's edition of this newspaper, reveal glaring shortcomings in construction and monitoring of rural roads in the state. The report brought to light that National Quality Monitors (NQM) have found, during inspection of 442 completed road works from 2012 to the last part of August, 2026, that construction quality of 70 roads is "unsatisfactory" and 24 roads met basic, minimum standards but require improvement. It also found 67 ongoing works "unsatisfactory" and 37 works requiring improvement. The PMGSY has a three-tiered quality control mechanism



to ensure that the construction quality of roadworks meets the basic standards of durability, making them truly all-weather. In the first tier, the Programme Implementation Units (PIUs) are required to ensure process control through mandatory tests on materials and workmanship at the field laboratory. The sec-

ond tier is a structured independent quality monitoring at the state level through State Quality Monitors (SQMs) to ensure that every work is inspected at the initial stage, middle stage and final stage of construction. Under the third tier, independent NQMs are deployed by the central government for random

inspections of road and bridge works to monitor quality and also to provide guidance to the field functionaries. The central government informed the Lok Sabha that as per Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) guidelines, maintenance of roads constructed under the programme is the responsibility of the state or

union territory governments. The PMGSY Guidelines also mandate that the programme functions under fixed timeline frameworks, and there is no provision for the enhancement of the sanctioned cost or the payment of cost escalation due to time overruns. Any cost escalation arising from project delays, execution overruns, or tenders invited above the sanctioned cost must be entirely borne by the respective state government from its own budgetary resources. While this requirement is helpful in the timely construction of rural roads, rushing construction work to avoid cost escalation due to time overrun carries the risk of compromising quality in construction work, especially when monitoring is slackened. The Ministry of Rural Development accords clearance and sanctions project cost based on estimates presented in the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) formulated by the respective State Governments. This calls for meticulous DPR preparation so that construction quality is embedded into the project from the very first design stage until the completion of the construction. If such checks and balances fail to ensure quality, then it signals a persistent systemic gap that has been overlooked.

Fintech policy push seeks to widen credit access and take banking beyond branches

Imphal

The Department of Financial Services has unveiled three technology-driven measures at Global Fintech Fest 2026 aimed at strengthening India's financial inclusion architecture by expanding digital banking access, formal credit and last-mile cash services.

DFS Secretary Sanjay Lohiya launched an open-source Android ATM that can instantly issue personalised RuPay debit, credit

and NCMC cards and merchant UPI QR codes, reducing turnaround time from weeks to minutes. The machines will also support cheque deposits, account opening and loan applications. Banks are assessing their deployment as Digital Banking Units in semi-urban and rural areas, as well as airports, metro stations, educational campuses and corporate parks.

Nine banks, including State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, Punjab National Bank,

Bank of India, Central Bank of India, UCO Bank, Slice Small Finance Bank and Airtel Payments Bank, are evaluating the solution with NPCI and ATM OEMs Hitachi Payment Services, Perto India and Vortex Engineering.

The policy push also extends Credit Line on UPI to eligible Kisan Credit Card and PM MUDRA Yojana beneficiaries. The schemes together cover more than 7.7 crore operative KCC accounts with sanctioned limits exceeding ₹10 lakh

crore and over 57 crore PMMY loans worth more than ₹40 lakh crore.

The AePS Three-Party Cash Deposit facility enables eKYC-registered customers to deposit cash directly into beneficiaries' accounts through participating AePS Touchpoint Operators.

Aadhaar biometric authentication and beneficiary validation strengthen transaction security. Fourteen banks currently support the facility, with more expected to join.

In three days, Novartis India surges 51%

Mumbai

In Thursday's intraday trading, Novartis India continued its upward trend, rising 13% on the BSE to a new high of ₹2,474.90.

The pharmaceutical company's stock price surged 51% in the last three trading days following the acquisition of Pfizer's Minipress brands for ₹1,250 crore. Novartis India was up 13% at ₹2,475.95 at 10:16 AM, while the BSE Sensex was down 0.04%. For ₹1,250 crore, Novartis India purchased the Minipress and Minipres trademarks in India as well as some associated intellectual property rights from Pfizer Inc. and Pfizer Products Inc., adding a well-known hypertension brand to its cardiovascular portfolio. On Monday, September 7, 2026, Novartis India signed an asset acquisition agreement and trademark assignment agreements with Pfizer Inc. and Pfizer Products Inc. after the company's board authorized the deal.

According to IQVIA MAT data from July 26, Minipress XL registered sales of ₹228.6 crore and has grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.3% over the previous four years, while the category has grown at a CAGR of 9%.

The ESDS dream run continues, rising 264% against the issue price in just one week

Mumbai

The market price of the information technology (IT) enabled services firm ESDS Software Solution (ESDS) increased fourfold against its issue price in just one week, continuing the company's stock market dream run. During Thursday's intraday trading on the BSE, the share price of ESDS surged 10%, reaching a record high of ₹1,560.35. In comparison to its issue price of ₹429 per share, it shot up 264%. With its shares listed for ₹895.55, a 109% premium over their September 4 issue price, the company had a successful stock market debut. ESDS was up 8% at ₹1,526.65 at 11:24 AM on Thursday, while the BSE Sensex was up 0.03%. With a total of

12.65 million equity shares trading on the NSE and BSE, the average trading volume at the counter increased by 1.5 times.

ESDS highlighted that there are currently no secret price-sensitive information or upcoming announcements or corporate actions that must be reported to the stock exchanges and that could affect the price and volume behavior in the company's scrip. Additionally, the corporation stated that it does not know of any particular cause for the notable fluctuation in the price of its security. The company's equity shares were launched on the stock exchanges on September 4, 2026, and the price and volume movement of the security is in line with what

is usually seen in trading activity for a freshly listed security.

Such movement is entirely driven by the market and may be caused by a number of variables, including the state of the market. According to ESDS, the company's management has nothing to do with changes in the share price. According to the company, "ESDS Software has, to date, disclosed to the Stock Exchanges all material information having a bearing on the operations/performance of the Company, including all necessary disclosures required under Regulation 30 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, within the stipulated time."

Analysts disagree about Veegaland Developers' IPO



Mumbai

Bidding for Veegaland Developers' initial public offering (IPO) began on Thursday, September 10. The deal is valid through Monday, September 14. Due to the company's reliance on outside contractors, analyst opinions on the IPO are mainly divided. At ₹164, the company's gray market premium (GMP) is currently indicating a listing pop of 17.14%. According to SBI Securities, Veegaland Developers is a residential real estate developer based in Kerala that operates under the "Veegaland Homes" brand. Its projects include mid-premium to premium, ultra-premium, luxe-series, and ultra-luxury homes.

Twelve existing projects totaling 994 units and three upcoming projects totaling 212 units are part of its development pipeline. With unit sales rising from 167 units in FY24 to 261 units in FY26 and sales value more than doubling from ₹187 cr to ₹394 cr, the company has shown impressive development. "We assign a NEUTRAL rating to the IPO and would prefer to

monitor cash-flow generation and execution consistency post listing, given VDL's high geographic concentration in Kerala, dependence on third-party contractors, and elevated working capital requirements," SBI Securities stated. The company is Kerala's fastest-selling real estate developer, with 100% sell-through on all finished projects and a 45.10% sales value CAGR, according to Swastika, who rated the IPO as "Subscribe." For the fiscal year 2026, Veegaland's price-to-earnings ratio is anticipated by Swastika Investmart to be between 14.8 and 16.0 times. This is below the industry average but marginally higher than Shriram Properties. Due to an increase in equity, the company's Return on Net Worth has decreased from 36.96 percent to 16.02 percent. According to Swastika, there have also been times when cash flows have been poor. Since Veegaland operates entirely in Kerala, it is more vulnerable to local real estate cycles and climate-related hazards. The brokerage pointed out that although low debt and strong promoter trust provide stability, the comparatively high valuation and restricted geographic reach reduce the possibility of a significant short-term increase in the stock upon listing. The IPO of Veegaland Developers is a ₹210 crore book build.

As the world's largest options boom wanes, the NSE reduces its IPO valuation target by 15%

Mumbai

One concern kept coming up when executives at the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. presented their eagerly anticipated IPO to investors around the world: How would the exchange continue to expand after authorities restricted its flourishing derivatives business?

Investors at meetings in Hong Kong, London, and New York voiced worry that the valuation the NSE was aiming for—roughly \$55 billion—was simply too high in the absence of that growth engine. Other persons



engaged in the process, who asked to remain anonymous because the information is confidential, claimed that investor pressure ultimately forced NSE executives to reduce the

maximum valuation they're seeking when they launch the IPO next week by around 15%. Based on earnings for the most recent fiscal year, NSE shares would still be more costly than the top 10 international exchanges even at the new price tag of \$47 billion.

John Ninia, a partner at Mobius Investments, stated that "NSE seems quite expensive over the short to medium term when compared to other exchanges globally," pointing to stricter trading regulations as a risk to derivatives volumes. "After a valuation reset, we would find the

risk/reward more appealing as long-term investors." NSE's IPO has been delayed for ten years due to legal and regulatory obstacles. The derivatives market, which had made India the world's top options hub, has cooled as a result of the regulator's crackdown on Jane Street Group last year and other steps taken to reduce excessive speculation. The environment has also deteriorated, with investors swarming to AI stocks that India does not have while rising oil costs and a postponed trade agreement with the US put further strain on the economy.

After an alleged building effort on Assamese territory close to the Meghalaya border, three people were apprehended



Guwahati, Sep 10:

On Wednesday, September 9, three persons were arrested in the Boko region of Assam after they reportedly tried to build on property that was purportedly part of Assam sovereignty, causing tension along the interstate line between Assam and Meghalaya. The three guys were allegedly working on building a school in Noapara, which is around

6–7 km from the Assam–Meghalaya border.

They were identified as Joseph Nongmin, 26, Synsharlang Nongspong, 30, and Dibanstar Rynjah, 25. Following the alleged building activity, Boko Police arrested the three and took them to the police station to be questioned. Boko Revenue Circle Officer Krishna Arjun Barman, Boko-Chaygaon Co-District Commissioner Priyanshu

Bhardwaj, and other authorities arrived at the location. Jankishore Gogoi, the superintendent of police for the Boko-Chaygaon Co-District, led a police squad that also made a visit. The building was then halted by the Assam government. Tension in Noapara increased as a result of the development, with locals voicing worries over the purported attempt to build in an area that Assam claims.

In a similar event, Nenggram Sangma, an Assam Power Department employee, was allegedly taken into custody by Meghalaya Police. Tensions around the event increased as a result of his arrest. Later in the evening, however, the arrested individuals were freed by police officials in both states. The episode takes place in the context of long-standing boundary-related sensitivities between Assam and Meghalaya, where territorial claims conflicts have occasionally caused tensions in places along the interstate border.

The Arunachal Congress objects to being denied a vise presidential appointment

Itanagar, Sep 10:

The Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) objected that it was not given the opportunity to meet with Vice President C P Radhakrishnan while he was in the state. They said that this prevented them from submitting a memorandum on important matters pertaining to the state. According to Bosiram Siram, president of the APCC, the party formally requested an appointment through the chief secretary on September 4 but got no answer. He called the refusal “deeply unfortunate” and asked why the main opposition party was not permitted to bring the people’s issues before the Vice President. In its proposed memorandum, the Congress sought the creation of a dedicated Arunachal Regiment to increase recruitment of local youth, particularly from frontier districts and villages, into the armed forces.

It said greater participation of local youth would strengthen national security while creating employment opportunities. The party also called for an all-party parliamentary and political delegation to visit Taksing and other vulnerable frontier areas to assess the ground situation concerning border communities, security forces, connectivity and essential services. The Congress demanded reliable all-weather road connectivity to Taksing and other strategically important areas, along with

improved healthcare, education, communication, emergency services and other infrastructure. It said development of frontier areas was closely linked to national security. Additionally, the APCC aimed to provide security troops stationed along the Himalayan boundary with continuous logistical support, including sufficient personnel, equipment, specialized clothes, food, gasoline, transportation, communication, and medical facilities. In order to improve protection for indigenous land, woods, water, customs, traditional institutions, cultural identity, and natural resources, the party called for a complete reform of Article 371H. Additionally, the Congress reaffirmed its support for small and medium hydroelectric projects that are both ecologically and scientifically sustainable, especially responsible run-of-the-river projects, while opposing mega and huge dam projects. The party vehemently opposed the proposed 11,200 MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), citing worries about potential downstream disasters, ecological harm, seismic vulnerability, relocation, and effects on indigenous territory and cultural heritage. Before making any more decisions, it demanded that the project’s seismic safety, environmental and cumulative basin-level impacts, displacement and rehabilitation requirements, and downstream risks be independently and transparently assessed.

The national Muay Thai body is led by Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma

Shillong, Sep 10:

Conrad K Sangma, the chief minister of Meghalaya, has taken on the role of chairman of the United Muay Thai Association of India (UMAI), which is anticipated to bolster initiatives to advance and advance combat sports in the nation. On September 9, the Commissioner and Secretary of the Chief Minister’s Secretariat made the announcement. Since 2019, the International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA) has recognized UMAI as the national governing organization for Muay Thai in India.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) recognizes IFMA. Welcoming Sangma’s appointment, UMAI General Secretary Dr ShriRam Choudhary said his leadership and vision would help expand the sport’s reach and popularity across India. Meghalaya has emerged as one of the prominent centres for Muay Thai in the country, with athletes from the state winning more than 50 medals at national and international competitions.

A doctor from Mizoram receives the US Consulate’s Citizen Liaison Volunteer of the Year Award

Aizawl, Sep 10:

The US Consulate General in Kolkata established the Citizen Liaison Volunteer of the Year Award, which Dr. Vanlalsiama Chhangte, Medical Director of Ebenezer Medical Center in Aizawl, is the first recipient in India. On September 7, Vice Consul Warren Newton gave the award to Dr. Vanlalsiama at the Hotel Regency in Aizawl. A souvenir and a certificate signed by US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor were part of the acknowledgment. The prize was granted in honor of Ebenezer Medical Center’s medical care for US citizen Collin Mayfield, who was transported to Mizoram on December 1, 2025, following injuries he sustained in Myanmar. Mayfield was treated at Ebenezer Medical Center for about a month and underwent surgery performed by Dr Lalrinliana Varte, an orthopaedic surgeon. He recovered and was subsequently able to return to the United States. Representatives of the US Consulate said the Citizen Liaison Volunteer of the



Year Award was being introduced in India for the first time, making Dr Vanlalsiama its inaugural recipient in the country. Speaking about the medical centre’s work, Dr Vanlalsiama said its mission was to “Transform Lives through Healthcare” and that its services were extended to patients irrespective of their economic background or nationality. He said recognition from an international institution for the work of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals was encouraging. Dr Vanlalsiama added that Ebenezer Medical Center would continue its efforts to contribute to the development of healthcare services in Mizoram.

74 CAPF businesses were approved, and 10,889 nominations were accepted for the Tripura Village Committee elections

Agartala, Sep 10:

The Tripura State Election Commission (SEC) announced on Thursday, September 10, that 10,889 nomination papers submitted by 10,889 candidates for the forthcoming Village Committee elections under the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) had been deemed legitimate after examination. Elec-

tions for the Village Committee are planned on September 28. The nomination procedure ran from September 1 until September 8. By the deadline, 10,936 applicants submitted 10,958 nomination papers, according to the SEC. After examination in every block on Wednesday, 10,889 nominations were deemed legitimate. With 4,361 candidates, the Tipra Motha Party has the most valid nomina-

tions, followed by the CPI(M) with 2,456, the BJP with 1,971, the Congress with 465, the IPFT with 483, the CPI with four, and the “Others” category with 1,149. September 11 has been set as the deadline for withdrawing one’s candidacy. State Election Commissioner P.K. Chakraborty stated that the Commission was taking all necessary steps to guaranty free, fair, and peaceful elections, and that scru-

tiny started at 11 a.m. on Wednesday throughout all blocks. “We have held two meetings with DGP-in-Charge G.S. Rao and sought deployment of CAPF personnel. We have also requested the State Government, which has taken up the matter with the Union Home Ministry,” Chakraborty said. He said 74 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) had been sanctioned for election security.

The iPhone Duo from Apple costs around Rs.3 lakh, but these vacations are all less expensive

Every iPhone launch brings a new number to absorb, but this year Apple has handed India two numbers worth pausing on. The iPhone 18 Pro opens at ₹1,64,900, the Pro Max at ₹1,79,900, both a step up from last year, but still within familiar flagship territory. Then comes the iPhone Duo, Apple's first foldable iPhone, starting at ₹2,99,900. Push it to the top-end 2TB variant, and the number climbs to ₹4,49,900. Apple's entry point into foldables in India isn't a premium over a regular iPhone; it's nearly double the price of the Pro Max. And ₹2,99,900 happens to be a number the travel industry knows well. It's almost exactly the ceiling most "international trip under 3 lakh" guides are built around. So before the pre-order window opens on September 12, it's worth asking what that fold actually costs you elsewhere. Mauritius remains one of the simplest holidays to plan on this budget, largely because the paperwork barrier doesn't exist. Indian passport holders get a free visa on arrival, valid for up to 60 days, with no embassy visit or advance application required. Return flights run ₹32,000-50,000 per person since direct connections from India are limited. A comfortable 7-night trip for two, including resort stays, water activities, a few private tours built in, lands between ₹1.5 lakh and ₹2.26 lakh all-in. Indonesia is one of the few destinations on this list that does charge Indians a visa fee, though it's a modest one: the visa-on-arrival costs IDR 500,000, roughly ₹2,700-3,000, plus a separate Bali Tourist Levy of IDR 150,000, about ₹750-800. Both can be paid at the airport or arranged online in ad-

vance through the e-VoA system to skip the immigration queue. Flights are the bigger variable; the direct routes from India are from Delhi and Bengaluru, with return fares between ₹50,000-₹70,000 depending on the routing and how early it's booked. A solid mid-range week in Bali, covering Ubud and a beach base like Seminyak, costs ₹1.1-2 lakh per person, meaning a couple can do it together for roughly what one iPhone Duo costs, sometimes less. Singapore is the one entry here where the visa process runs through an agent rather than an embassy or an on-arrival counter: Indian passport holders need an e-visa before travel, submitted via ICA-authorized agents, with the government fee fixed at ₹2,100 and total costs (agent charges included) typically landing between ₹3,100 and ₹4,500. Flights are short and reasonably priced, with return fares from Chennai, Delhi or Mumbai ranging ₹14,000-30,000.

A 5-day trip with mid-range hotels, hawker-centre meals and a handful of paid attractions comes to ₹70,000-1.5 lakh per person, making Singapore one of the more efficient options if the goal is a shorter, cleaner city break rather than a full week away. The Maldives offers the lightest entry requirements on this list: visa on arrival is entirely free, with no fee for any nationality including Indians. Flights are equally accessible, with return economy fares from Mumbai, Bangalore or Chennai starting as low as ₹20,000 and typically topping out around ₹40,000-45,000 depending on season. Where the Maldives math gets interesting is accommoda-



tion – a budget local-island route (Maafushi and similar guesthouse stays) can bring a full trip, flights included, to under ₹80,000 per person, while a proper overwater resort experience for a couple runs ₹2-3.5 lakh for 3-4 nights. That range straddles the Duo's price point almost exactly: the budget version leaves enormous headroom, while the resort version sits right at the ceiling. Greece is the only Schengen destination on this list, and the visa reflects that: the consular fee is a flat €90 (roughly ₹8,300-9,900) for all applicants, plus a VFS service charge specific to Greece of around ₹1,900-3,100, bringing the

realistic total to ₹9,500-12,000 per person with insurance factored in. Processing takes 10-15 working days, faster than several other Schengen countries. Flights from Delhi or Mumbai run ₹45,000-70,000 return, and a 7-day trip spanning Athens and the islands costs ₹1.2-1.8 lakh per person on a budget plan, or ₹1.9-2.7 lakh mid-range – both comfortably inside the Duo's starting price, visa and flights included. Japan has become one of the most accessible premium destinations for Indian travellers, largely because of its visa cost – just ₹1,300-2,000 all-in for a single-entry tourist visa, among the cheapest of any developed-country visa available to Indians, though it does require advance application since there's no visa-on-arrival option. Flights are the bigger line item, with return fares from Delhi or Mumbai ranging ₹45,000-90,000 depending on season, with the cherry blossom window in spring pushing prices toward the higher end. A full 7-8 day trip, including a JR rail pass, mid-range hotels and sightseeing, totals ₹1.5-2 lakh per person on a moderate budget, meaning even Japan, often assumed to be unreachable on a mid-range budget, fits inside the Duo's price with room left for a proper cherry blossom season splurge. Thailand is currently the simplest big beach getaway on this list for Indians: passport holders get visa-free entry for up to 60 days at zero cost, a policy in effect since February 2026, though

the only step needed is filling out the free Thailand Digital Arrival Card online before departure. (Thailand's entry rules for Indians have shifted more than once in recent years, so it's worth a quick check closer to travel dates.) Flights are frequent and competitively priced – return fares from Delhi, Mumbai or Bangalore to Bangkok run ₹18,000-35,000 in advance booking, climbing to ₹45,000-55,000 in peak season. A 6-7 day mid-range trip covering Bangkok and a beach stop like Phuket or Krabi costs ₹70,000-1.15 lakh per person, or roughly ₹1.45-1.6 lakh for a couple, leaving substantial room under the Duo's ₹2,99,900 price even before flights are booked. Sri Lanka is another cheap entry on this list by a clear margin, and it's gotten cheaper still: the Electronic Travel Authorisation, once a paid formality, became completely free for Indian nationals from 25 May 2026, requiring only a short online form. Flights are equally light on the wallet, being under two hours from several Indian cities, return fares from Chennai or Bangalore start around ₹8,000-15,000, with Delhi or Mumbai departures running ₹12,000-22,000. A full 7-day trip (with Colombo, the hill country, a stretch of coast) costs ₹35,000-55,000 per person on a budget plan or ₹60,000-90,000 mid-range, meaning a couple can comfortably do Sri Lanka twice over, flights, visa and all, for less than the price of one iPhone Duo.



Rybakina Battles Past Zheng to Reach US Open Semifinals and Claim World No. 1 Ranking

NEW YORK, SEPT. 10

Elena Rybakina halted Zheng Qinwen's remarkable run at Flushing Meadows on Wednesday, securing a hard-fought 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory to advance to the US Open semi-finals and guarantee her ascension to the WTA world No. 1 ranking.

The milestone ensures that the 27-year-old Kazakh star will overtake Aryna Sabalenka at the summit of the women's professional standings, a status secured regardless of whether the reigning Belarusian champion captures a third consecutive title in New York. Despite the monumental career achievement, Rybakina remained characteristically grounded about claiming the top spot. "It's just a number right now," Rybakina said. "It's a different achievement ... but

mostly you think about the titles at the end of the day." With the ranking milestone secured, Rybakina's immediate focus shifts to a high-stakes semi-final showdown against Coco Gauff. Gauff booked her own ticket to the final four in dramatic fashion, saving two match points during a gripping tiebreaker to complete a 2-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-2 comeback victory over 19-year-old Russian star Mirra Andreieva. Gauff admitted drawing inspiration from compatriot Frances Tiafoe's heroic five-set comeback earlier in the week to fuel her resilient turnaround. The other half of the women's semi-final bracket features Sabalenka locking horns with third-seeded Jessica Pegula in Thursday night's marquee clash. This elite final-four lineup marks a historic milestone: it is the first time

since 1975 at the US Open that the top four seeded women have all advanced to the penultimate round. For Rybakina, the journey to world No. 1 cements a stellar season that already includes a triumphant Australian Open campaign in January, complementing her breakthrough Wimbledon title four years prior. She becomes the first player representing Kazakhstan to capture the coveted top ranking. Her quarter-final opponent, Zheng Qinwen, exited to widespread acclaim. The reigning Olympic champion entered New York ranked No. 121 after enduring an eight-month injury layoff due to elbow surgery. Forced to battle through the qualifying rounds, Zheng won seven consecutive matches on her improbable US Open tear, highlighted by sensational comeback victo-



ries over six-time Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek and former Australian Open winner Madison Keys. The decider proved a tense, high-tension affair where Zheng missed a critical chance to break in the third game.

Rybakina immediately capitalized, breaking her opponent in the next game and accelerating toward the finish line. "I got a lot of

chances in the third set, but I didn't take them," Zheng reflected.

"That was a bit of a pity for me to lose this match, but obviously I can take positive things from the US Open this year." Meanwhile, the men's singles draw saw top-seeded Alexander Zverev cruise into the semi-finals with a commanding 6-2, 7-5, 6-1 victory over Dutch veteran

Botic van de Zandschulp. The reigning French Open champion avoided the lengthy late-night battles that plagued his opening rounds, wrapping up the contest in straight sets and clinching the final frame in just 37 minutes after saving a set point in the second.

Zverev will square off against veteran Karen Khachanov for a coveted spot in Sunday's final.

India Aim for Batting Stability Against Bangladesh in Women's Asia Cup Clash

DUBAI, SEPT. 10

Seven-time champions India will look to shore up their middle-order stability when they face a spirited Bangladesh side in the Women's Asia Cup semi-final at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

The winner of the high-stakes encounter will secure a spot in Sunday's title clash. While India enter the match as firm favorites, having won their last eight T20I meetings against their neighbors, past encounters serve as a warning. Bangladesh famously stunned India twice during the 2018 edition—including an upset in the final—demonstrating their capacity to disrupt the tournament heavyweights. India advanced as Group A toppers, but underlying batting vulnerabilities have persisted. A dramatic collapse of eight wickets for 46 runs against Thailand earlier in the tournament highlighted middle-order frailties that previously hurt the side during their early exit at the recent T20 World Cup.

Bangladesh finished second in Group B and will look to exploit these



gaps, spearheaded by in-form pacer Marufa Akter. Akter has claimed a breakthrough wicket in her opening spell during every match of the tournament while maintaining an exceptional economy rate of 3.27. Her ability to swing the new ball poses an immediate challenge to India's top order, featuring Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, and Pratika Rawal. Rawal, stepping in at number three for the injured Jemimah Rodrigues, has accumulated 36 runs across three innings and faces a crucial test to

deliver a defining performance. Conversely, India's bowling attack has thrived in Dubai's spin-friendly conditions. The spin unit leads the tournament with 21 wickets at an exceptional average of 4.42, anchored by left-arm spinner N. Sree Charani, who has captured 21 wickets across her last eight T20I outings. With a balanced attack and familiar continental dominance, India remain favored to advance, provided their middle-order answers the call against a disciplined Bangladeshi bowling unit.

GSA Youth & Kids League Football Tournament Set to Kick Off in Guwahati on September 12

GUWAHATI, SEPT. 10

The fifth edition of the GSA Youth & Kids League Football Tournament 2026 is scheduled to kick off on September 12, running through October 11 across two primary venues: the Judges' Field and the GTC Academy Ground at Fulung.

Organized by the Guwahati Sports Association (GSA) in strategic partnership with Indian Super League club NorthEast United FC, the tournament serves as a cornerstone grassroots initiative for the region. The competition is designed to offer young aspiring athletes structured, regular competitive exposure to refine their technical skills and gain vital match experience. This year's edition has drawn an overwhelming response from the regional sporting community, registering



approximately 130 teams comprising nearly 2,000 young participants. To accommodate the vast turnout across different developmental stages, matches will be fiercely contested across seven distinct age categories: U-7, U-9, U-11, U-13, U-15, U-17, and U-19. By combining grassroots participation with structured professional pathways alongside NorthEast United FC, the league continues to function as a vital talent pipeline for nurturing the next generation of football stars in Northeast India.