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World requires global workforce can't escape this reality: EAM Jaishankar

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My lows in life have taught me more than my highs, says Bhumi Pednekar



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MARKET	
SENSEX	NIFTY
81159.68	24890.85
-555.95	-166.05
GOLD SILVER	
112,744.00	136,696.00
189.00	2,694.00

WEATHER	
Sunrise	6:12 AM
Sunset	6:14 PM
Moonrise	10:05 AM
Moonset	8:34 PM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	Minimum
35°C	27°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
37°C	28°C

## Ladakh violence: Uneasy calm, heavy police deployment in Leh; 50 detained

The protesters, according to officials, indulged in arson and violence, with mobs burning the BJP office, a number of vehicles, and ransacking the Hill Council headquarters.

The escalation of violence had led climate activist Sonam Wangchuk to abandon his fortnight-long hunger strike, which he was undertaking in favour of the demands.

**L**EH An uneasy calm prevailed in Ladakh on Thursday as police and paramilitary troops strictly enforced a curfew in Leh town, a day after clashes between security personnel and protesters demanding statehood and constitutional protection left four people dead and more than 80 injured.

At least 50 people have been detained so far in connection with the violence that broke out on Wednesday during the shutdown called by Leh Apex Body (LAB) to demand an extension of the Sixth Schedule and statehood for Ladakh.

The protesters, according to officials, indulged in arson and violence, with mobs burning the BJP office, a number of vehicles, and ransacking the Hill Council headquarters.

"The situation in the curfew-hit areas is under control. There are no incidents to report from anywhere," a police officer said confirming the detentions.

The escalation of violence



had led climate activist Sonam Wangchuk to abandon his fortnight-long hunger strike, which he was undertaking in favour of the demands. Wangchuk has denounced the violence.

"This is the saddest day for Ladakh...the path we are treading for the last five years was peaceful," Wangchuk said, appealing to the youth to 'stop

the violence forthwith as it only causes harm to our cause'.

The Centre, however, blamed the activist for the unrest, alleging that the mob violence was guided by his "provocative statements" and claiming that "politically motivated" people were unhappy with the progress of ongoing talks between the government

and Ladakhi groups. The Union Home Ministry, which reiterated its commitment to providing "adequate constitutional safeguards," also noted that police are probing the possible involvement of foreign hands, citing that three of the injured were Nepalese citizens.

Wangchuk termed the home ministry's alle-

gations against him as a "scapegoat tactic" intended to avoid dealing with the Himalayan region's core problems.

Reacting to the MHA's statement that had blamed him for provoking the mob violence, Wangchuk said he is prepared to be arrested under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA).

"They may be clever in making somebody else a scapegoat, but they are not wise. At this time, we all need wisdom rather than 'cleverness' because youths are already frustrated," Wangchuk said.

To prevent the escalation of unrest, strict prohibitory restrictions banning the assembly of five or more people were also placed in other major towns, including Kargil, where the Karგი Democratic Alliance (KDA) had called a parallel shutdown.

Kargil District Magistrate Rakesh Kumar issued prohibitory orders under the Bharatiya Naganrik Suraksha Sanhita, banning unauthorised processions and public

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## Govt scraps FCRA licence of Wangchuk's NGO



Sonam Wangchuk

**N**ew Delhi The Union Home Ministry on Thursday cancelled the FCRA licence of Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL) founded by climate activist Sonam Wangchuk with "immediate effect", a government order said.

The action of the ministry was based on several alleged discrepancies detected in the accounts of the organisation including a fund transfer from Sweden which the ministry found was against "national interest".

The development comes a day after four persons were killed in widespread clashes between protesters supporting the movement for statehood to Ladakh and security personnel amid a shutdown in Leh. The government blamed Wangchuk for the mob

violence. When contacted over phone, Wangchuk told PTI that he was just a donor for the organisation and that he teaches there. The activist also said he did not know about the cancellation of the FCRA licence.

Besides SECMOL, Wangchuk also founded Himalayan Institute of Alternatives Ladakh (HIAL) which is facing CBI inquiry for alleged violations of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, or FCRA, norms.

SECMOL was granted the licence to accept foreign contribution for undertaking cultural and educational programme, the order said.

The home ministry had earlier issued a show cause notice to SECMOL seeking explanation on various irregularities observed in the finances of the organisation. Agency

## IAF to finally retire MiG-21 fighter jets after 60 yrs

**N**ew Delhi The defence ministry on Thursday sealed a Rs 62,370 crore deal with the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) to procure 97 Tejas MK-1A light combat aircraft for the Indian Air Force.

The signing of the contract came over a month after the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi green-lighted the mega procurement.

"The delivery of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) would commence in 2027-28 and the supplies will have to be completed over a period of six years, officials said.

"The Ministry of Defence signed a contract with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for procurement of 97 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) MkIA, including 68 fighters and 29 twin



seaters, along with associated equipment, for the Indian Air Force, at a cost of over Rs. 62,370 crore (excluding taxes)," according to an official readout.

It is the second such contract awarded to the state-run aerospace behemoth.

In February 2021, the defence ministry sealed with HAL for procurement of 83 Tejas MK-1A jets for the IAF.

"The aircraft will have an indigenous content of

over 64 per cent, with 67 additional items incorporated, over and above the previous LCA MkIA contract signed in January 2021," the defence ministry said.

"The integration of advanced indigenously developed systems such as the Uttam Active Electronically Scanned Array (ESA) Radar, Swayam Raksha Kavach, and control surface actuators will further strengthen the Atmanirbharta (self-reliance) initiatives," it said. Agency

## PM Modi highlights GST reforms and Atmanirbhar Bharat at UPITS

**T**SN/Lucknow/Noida Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the third edition of the five-day Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS) at the India Expo Centre & Mart on Thursday, describing the newly implemented 'Next Generation GST reforms' as a landmark in India's economic journey.

Addressing investors, entrepreneurs, and business leaders, Modi said the reforms have provided significant relief to consumers while energizing trade and industry. "Monthly savings are directly reaching the pockets of common families, strengthening India's growth story," he noted. Highlighting the investment potential in Uttar Pradesh, Modi said the state had emerged as a vibrant hub of progress



PM addressing at the inauguration of Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh on September 25, 2025.

under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, adding that its rapid development forms the foundation of a self-reliant India.

The Prime Minister underscored the importance of Swadeshi and Atmanirbhar Bharat, urging citizens and entrepreneurs to support

products made in India. "Self-reliance is no longer an option but a necessity. Entrepreneurs should design durable, user-friendly products to strengthen Atmanirbhar Bharat and build credibility for Indian manufacturing," he said.

Modi detailed Uttar Pradesh's transformation into an industrial powerhouse, citing its enhanced connectivity through expressways, international airports, the Dedicated Freight Corridor, and the Defence Corridor, which have reduced logistics costs and fueled industrial growth. He highlighted initiatives such as Namami Gange and One District One Product (ODOP), which are promoting tourism and putting the state on the global map. Agency

### HIGHLIGHT

PM Modi urges investors to back Uttar Pradesh's growth, calls for self-reliance through Atmanirbhar Bharat and highlights benefits of Next Generation GST reforms.

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## 40 minor girls found locked inside UP madrassa toilet

**B**ahraich Forty girls aged between nine and 14 years were found confined inside a toilet of an unregistered madrassa in Bahraich during an inspection, officials said on Thursday.

Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Payagpur Ashwini Kumar Pandey told that the district administration received repeated complaints regarding the functioning of an illegal madrassa inside a three-storey building in Bahawalra village under Payagpur tehsil.



"On Wednesday, when we went to the building for an inspection, the madrassa operators initially tried to stop us from going upstairs. In the presence of police,



we entered the premises and found the toilet on the terrace locked," he said. When the door was opened by female police personnel, 40 girls,

aged between nine and 14, hiding inside the toilet came out one by one. The girls looked frightened and were unable to say anything clearly, he added.

The SDM said District Minority Welfare Officer Mohammad Khalid has been asked to verify the registration and legality of the institution.

According to Khalid, locals said that the madrassa had been running for around three years without registration. "The management and staff could not produce any document related to

registration or legality. During the 2023 survey, 495 unregistered madrassas were identified in Bahraich and it appears this one escaped the survey team's notice then," he said.

The state government has not issued a clear policy regarding such illegal madrassas so far. While some were sealed last year, their managers obtained a stay from the high court, Khalid said, adding that a new regulatory framework is expected from the government soon. Agency

## SC stays execution of IM operative in Hyderabad blasts case

**N**ew Delhi The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the execution of an alleged Indian Mujahideen operative who was sentenced to death in connection with the 2013 Dilsukhnagar blasts that left 18 dead and 131 injured.

The plea filed by convict Asadullah Akhtar was heard by a bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and N V Anjaria.

"There shall be stay of execution of the death sentence of the appellant," the bench said. Two powerful explosions in Hyderabad's Dilsukhnagar, a crowd-



ed shopping area, took place on the eve of February 21, 2013. The first blast took place at a bus stop and another blast was near an eatery in Dilsukhnagar.

Akhtar, lodged in a Delhi jail, challenged the April verdict of the Telangana High Court upholding the death penalty to five operatives

of banned terror outfit Indian Mujahideen, including its co-founder Yasin Bhatkal, in the case.

The apex court directed the Delhi government to place before it the report of all probation officers relating to Akhtar within eight weeks.

The superintendent of prison of the prison concerned, shall submit a report with regard to the nature of work which has been performed by the appellant while in jail and a report with regard to the conduct and behaviour of the appellant while in jail, within a period of eight weeks," it said. Agency

Ladakh violence: Uneasy calm, heavy police deployment in Leh; 50 detained

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statements likely to disturb peace.

Ladakh Lt Governor Kavinder Gupta chaired a high-level security review meeting, calling for heightened vigilance and inter-agency coordination, while terming the Wednesday's events "heart-wrenching" and a result of a "conspiracy".

The tragic events triggered sharp political reactions with Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, while appealing for peace in Ladakh, came out in strong defence of the Congress, saying the BJP was habitual for blaming others for their failures.

Speaking to reporters in Reasi district of Jammu region, the chief minister urged the LG-led administration of Ladakh to introspect on its "own failure" to maintain peace.

"The government in Ladakh is theirs (the BJP's). When they fail, they blame someone else. If the Congress is so powerful that it can cause riots in Ladakh, then why did they not form a council?" Abdullah said.

Opposition parties strongly condemned the violence in Ladakh and placed the blame squarely on the Central government for allegedly creating the circumstances that led to the unrest.

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti attributed the violent protests in Ladakh to the "wrong policies" of the Centre and argued that the unrest was an "outburst" resulting from a breach of public tolerance following six years of unfulfilled promises by the Union Home Ministry.

"What we saw yesterday was a breach in the barrier of their tolerance," Mehbooba told reporters.

Brushing aside BJP's claims that the Congress had instigated the violence, Mehbooba asserted, "It was a spontaneous reaction to apprehensions of losing their identity, land and jobs."

The CPI(M) criticised the "brutal repression" of the UT administration, which the party alleged caused the "tragic loss of four lives".

In a statement, the Left party alleged that the Union government was responsible for bringing about the situation that led to violence in a hitherto peaceful region.

# Revanth Reddy says will launch TN's breakfast plan

Chennai  
Chief Minister MK Stalin and his Telangana counterpart Revanth Reddy on Thursday together inaugurated the expansion of a Tamil Nadu scheme of Rs 1,000 per month financial support to college students.

Addressing a mega state government education event, Stalin slammed the powers that be in the union government for thinking to pose obstacles to education in Tamil Nadu as they are unable to tolerate the big awakening in the state due to a string of initiatives to boost education.

Stalin said his government is ready to implement Telangana government's good schemes and declared that it is "healthy development policies".

He mentioned that like Tamil Nadu, Telangana too has a fare-free bus travel scheme for women.

Reddy said he drew inspiration from the Tamil Nadu CM's Breakfast scheme and described it as heart touching as it helps the children of poorest of the poor.

He said his government would implement the breakfast scheme from the next academic year and added that the entire country should emulate TN's education initiatives.



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The Telangana government will implement 69 per cent reservation, including 42 per cent for OBC, in local bodies, Reddy said. This also envisages a 27 per cent reservation for SC/ST. "Put together, the Telangana government will implement 69 per cent reservation in the local bodies, inspired by Tamil Nadu," he said.

The 'Pudhumai Penn' and 'Tamil Pudhalvan' schemes for college going women and men respectively, is set to benefit 2,66,318 students this year, who are fresh beneficiaries, according to the government.

Stalin said, "we have been continuously underscoring the importance of education," and traced the education journey of Tamil Nadu.

The peak of the 1,000 year struggle against denial of education opportunities due to caste eventually saw the Dravidian movement's revolution.

About a 100 years ago, during the Justice Party's (the precursor to the DK and the DMK) regime, midday meal programme was introduced in Chennai.

It was further expanded across Tamil Nadu during K Kamarajar's tenure as chief minister and

decades ago, late Chief Minister, M Karunanidhi introduced the free bus pass scheme for students following his request, Stalin said.

Also, Karunanidhi launched free-free education for first-generation students to pursue education at the level of college and increased reservation to all communities.

Such initiatives have led to the Dravidian model regime's CM's Breakfast Scheme. "Our education journey is full of such struggles. In order to move to the next level, our government has launched Pudhumai Penn, Tamil Pudhalvan,

Naan Mudhalvan, Model Schools (Smart classrooms, special attention to sports) and a string of schemes."

The Stalin-led DMK government, in order to highlight its work on education, hosted a grand event that showcased the state government's flagship initiatives and achievements in the field of education.

The theme of the event is "TN excels in education," and the celebratory programme showcased key schemes, including the CM's Breakfast Scheme, Naan Mudhalvan (skill development programmes and also provides scholarships), and the Pudhumai Penn and Tamil Pudhalvan schemes.

Agency

Akhilesh to visit Azam Khan on Oct 8 UP minister says 'Muslims will not be misled' by this



Lucknow (UP) Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav will visit Rampur on October 8 to meet party founder member Azam Khan, who was recently released from jail after approximately two years.

"We have finalised the visit, and I will be going to meet him," Yadav stated when asked about his plans to visit Rampur.

According to party sources, Yadav will depart for Bareilly via private plane from Chaudhary Charan Singh Airport and will then travel to Rampur by car. He is expected to be accompanied by Rampur MP Mohibulla Nadvi, who was given a ticket for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections against Khan's wishes.

Khan, who was released from Sitapur jail on Tuesday, firmly rejected speculations about his joining the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP).

A ten-time MLA from Rampur, Khan faces several criminal charges, including allegations of land grabbing and corruption, which he claims are politically motivated.

His recent release followed the Allahabad High Court granting him bail last week in the Quality Bar land encroachment case, where his name was added during a reinvestigation nearly five years after the FIR was filed.

The 77-year-old spent only about a day and a half at his Rampur residence before departing for Delhi late Wednesday night, accompanied by his younger son, Abdullah Azam Khan. While supporters gathered at his home seeking to meet him, no senior SP leader visited.

Only Haji Rizwan, a former SP candidate from Kunderi Assembly, and Mohammad Faheem, an MLA from Bilari, met with Khan.

Khan also visited Johar University before leaving for Delhi in a private car. His close aide Rizwan Khan informed reporters, "Azam Khan is going to Gangaram Hospital in Delhi for a medical check-up. He needed to see doctors, so he was sent to Delhi without delay."

On Tuesday, Akhilesh Yadav vowed that all "false" cases against

Khan would be withdrawn once the SP comes to power in Uttar Pradesh, stating that Khan has "finally got justice." He criticised the ruling BJP, claiming, "Those who file false cases should now learn that every lie has an expiry date."

Meanwhile, UP Minority Welfare Minister Danish Azad Ansari, the state government's former Muslim minister, addressed the cases involving Azam Khan and fellow SP leader Irfan Solanki, who is also embroiled in legal issues.

Speaking to reporters in Ballia on Thursday, he said, "The court sent them to jail. The court is releasing them. The government has no role in this. Evidence was presented in court, and the judicial process took its course. How does the BJP government have any role?"

Ansari also criticised the SP for mobilising support around Azam Khan, asking, "Why did the SP not remember him when he was in jail? The SP has deceived not just Azam Khan but every Muslim in the state. Now that he is out, the party has again started playing on emotions, but Muslims will not be misled. His own words show how much pain he feels in his party."

Regarding Khan's future in the SP, Ansari remarked, "The path to power seems to be the only aim for Muslims in the SP. The party has always misled and kept people in ignorance, blocking their development and exploiting emotions for political gain."

On Wednesday, Khan, while briefly interacting with reporters, expressed confidence, stating, "I have faith that I will come out clean. I am confident that I will get justice from the high court, and not from the Supreme Court. Perhaps that stage will not come."

Dismissing rumours about him switching to BSP, the SP founding member remarked, "We have something called character. Character does not mean whether we hold a post or not; it means people love and respect us. And we are not for sale, we have proved that."

Complex showcasing Bengal's Durga Puja crafts culture to be ready in 2 yrs: Mamata



Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said the proposed 'Durga Angan', a complex exhibiting the state's Durga Puja crafts and culture, will be completed in two years.

Speaking at the inauguration of the Durga Puja pandal at the Alipore Bodyguard Lines residential complex, Banerjee said land for the project has already been identified and the state cabinet has approved it.

"Durga Puja is now included in UNESCO's heritage list. Within the next two years, we will build 'Durga Angan', which will be world-class like the Jagannath Dham. People will be able to visit it throughout the year. The land has been identified, the cabinet has cleared it, and the trust has been

formed. Only the construction time is left," Banerjee said.

UNESCO had, in 2021, accorded the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) tag to Durga Puja in Kolkata.

The complex will come up near New Town's Eco Park, adjacent to the Ramakrishna Mission premises.

Banerjee also took the occasion to emphasise respect for the Bengali language.

"I believe in all religions. I love all communities, all languages. But our language must not be disrespected. We have recognised many languages, Hindi, Kurukh, Ol-Chiki, Rajbanshi and Khatapuri. That is Bengal's humanism, inclusiveness and spirit of harmony, which we have inherited from our great thinkers," she said.

The puja pandal at the Alipore Bodyguard Lines, which houses several battalions and residential quarters for staff and officers of the Kolkata Police, has been modelled on the Jagannath temple in Digha.

Dr. Nitu inspired people of Patna to adopt clean habits through her folk songs



PATNA

During the Swachhotsav event, the Patna Municipal Corporation organized a Swachhta Talk and cultural program in Sheikhpura and Raja Bazar.

Dr. Nitu Kumari Naavegt, the Swachhta Brand Ambassador, spoke about the importance of cleanliness, describing it as a virtue that reflects respect for ourselves, our city, and our country.

She pointed out that maintaining clean hab-

its is essential for better health and enhances the city's and nation's reputation worldwide. Dr. Nitu emphasized that cleanliness is a shared responsibility that requires collective effort from all citizens.

Dr. Nitu inspired attendees to adopt clean habits through her folk songs.

Dr. Dayanidhi led participants in a cleanliness pledge to encourage voluntary labor for cleanliness. Many community members took

part in the program and shared their views during the Swachhta Talk.

The attendees responded positively to Dr. Nitu's performance, motivating them to embrace cleanliness as a lifestyle.

This event supports the Patna Municipal Corporation's ongoing efforts to improve public health and cleanliness through programs like "Swachh Survekshan" and community engagement.

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Congress reaches out to NSS after its support for LDF on Sabarimala

Thiruvananthapuram  
Stunned by the Nair Service Society (NSS)'s open support to the ruling LDF's stance on the Sabarimala issue, the Congress top brass on Friday stepped in, saying any communication gaps with its leadership would be resolved.

"Congress is a party that reflects deeply on its concerns. If there has been any lack of communication, it will be addressed," AICC general secretary K C Venugopal told the media in Delhi, after NSS general secretary G Sukumaran Nair openly said that he trusts the Pinarayi Vijayan-led government,



which had assured NSS that the age-old ritual in Sabarimala would be preserved.

After the Congress declined to participate in the Global Ayayappa Sangaman organised by the Left government

in Pamba on September 20, and following allegations of the party favouring minorities in the state, Nair, known for his close ties with Congress-led UDF leaders, also criticised the party, saying it appears

reluctant to secure Hindu votes.

Venugopal claimed that the NSS General Secretary has made it clear that there is no change in their stand of equidistance towards all parties for the elections.

"In every matter, political parties and community organisations will have their own opinions and decisions. The two should not be confused or mixed up," the AICC general secretary said.

He said Congress takes a stand based on political perspective and experience, and NSS does the same. "Congress respects their positions," Venugopal said.

D Raja re-elected CPI general secretary at party's 25th Congress

Chandigarh  
Senior leader D Raja on Thursday was re-elected as the general secretary of the Communist Party of India on the concluding day of the party's 25th Congress here.

The party also announced the formation of a 11-member national secretariat comprising Amarjeet Kaur and Girish Sharma, among others, along with a 31-member executive committee.

Senior CPI leader from Punjab, Hardev Arshi, was elected as a member of the Central Control Commission, a party statement said.



the CPI was held here from September 21 to 25 in which over 800 delegates from across the country took part.

It also coincided with the party's centennial. During the proceedings on Thursday, the CPI adopted a slew of resolu-

tions with Punjab leader Arshi demanding the restoration of trade with Pakistan through the Atari-Wagah border.

The party noted that although Partition drew a dividing line at Wagah, people on both sides of the border have shared

culture, language, and heritage for centuries.

Resumption of trade, it emphasised, would greatly benefit Punjab's farmers, traders and industries, especially the tourism sector.

Another resolution was moved by CPI's state secretary Bant Brar, demanding the release of all prisoners who have completed their sentences.

The party said that many prisoners in the country have been in jails for years without chargesheets being filed against them, or due to trials proceeding at an extremely slow pace.

Agency

NEWS IN BRIEF

**Boney Kapoor shares Film City details with PM**

**Noida**  
Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday visited the exhibition stalls here at the UP International Trade Show and gathered information from entrepreneurs.  
During the event, the Prime Minister and Chief Minister visited the Yamuna Authority stall where film producer Boney Kapoor and actor Arjun Kapoor briefed the PM about the proposed Film City in sector 18 of Yamuna City.

Apart from the Film City, he also spoke to officials concerned about the Noida Airport. YEIDA CEO Rakesh Kumar Singh welcomed the Prime Minister. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister also met Noida International Airport Limited CEO Christoph Schellmann, besides industrialists Shekhar Agarwal, M.L. Jaiswal, Rajiv Govil, Harshvardhan Govil.

The CEO told him that the Noida Airport is ready for its inauguration. After the inauguration of the airport, the development of this entire region will also reach new heights. The Prime Minister also spoke about the plans for Medical Device Park, Fintech City, Semiconductor Park, Education Hub and Heritage City. Anushka Robot was also the centre of attraction here for the convenience of visitors.

**Gupta gov't's cleanliness campaign is a gimmick: Delhi Cong**

**Staff Reporter New Delhi**  
Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav here on Thursday said that the 'Triple Engine' BJP government's 15-day 'Seva Parv 2025' or cleanliness campaign to mark PM Narendra Modi's 75th birthday was yet another gimmick.

Yadav said that if the cleanliness campaign was executed with purpose, initiative and sensitivity by the Rekha Gupta government, Delhi would have come up with a clean look in two months of cleanliness drive, but the CM and her ministers used it only as a publicity stunt by wielding the broom at designated places which had already been cleaned by the workers for the VIPs to indulge in their photo-shoot theatrics.

He said that the BJP's 'Triple Engine' government has woefully failed to get the city rid of heaps of filth and garbage. He said that post-monsoon, water-borne diseases like malaria, dengue, chikungunya and flu have been on the rise, and all people are suffering. He said that cases of malaria and dengue are on the rise with a large number of patients getting admitted to the hospitals but the Delhi health minister has been busy participating in publicity campaigns instead of providing affordable treatment to patients.

**Delhi Govt. Approved ₹100 crore budget to improve roads & utilities in Rajouri Garden: Sirda**

**Staff Reporter New Delhi**  
A budget of ₹100 crore has been approved by the government led by Rekha Gupta to improve roads and utilities in Rajouri Garden.  
The initiative was announced by Minister Manjinder Singh Sirda during inaugurations at Punjabi Market, Mangal Bazar, Sant Nagar Extension, and T-Block Vishnu Garden. This effort is part of Seva Pakhwada, a public welfare event running from September 17 to October 2, celebrating the

**Sood leads gratitude march in Janakpuri, highlights GST reforms & Swadeshi call**

**Diksha New Delhi**  
On the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, Seva Pakhwada is being celebrated across the country from 17 September to 2 October. As part of this, Delhi Education Minister Ashish Sood on Wednesday led a Gratitude March in Posangpur Market, Janakpuri, to spread awareness about the new GST reforms, the call for adopting Swadeshi, and the vision of a developed India.

The march saw active participation from traders, residents, and customers of the market. Sood personally visited shops, interacted with traders, and explained how the GST rate cuts would



benefit both businesses and consumers. Welcoming the reforms, many traders said

diagnostic kits has been reduced from 12% to 0%, while Ayurveda, Unani, and Homeopathy medicines now attract only 5%. Lower rates on cement, auto parts, handicrafts, and medical equipment will also benefit citizens.

During the visit, Sood also directed officials to demolish and rebuild a neglected public toilet in the market with modern facilities, including a separate section for women. He said that through initiatives like the GST Savings Festival, the government's aim is to provide direct relief and convenience to the public.

Explaining the rate cuts, Sood shared that essential educational items such as pencils, workbooks, and crayons have been placed under the 0% GST slab. GST on 33 life-saving drugs and

**Delhi gets a healthcare boost: CM inaugurates key health services**



Staff Reporter New Delhi

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday launched several important health services in Delhi on September 25, 2025, during the Seva Pakhwada event, which celebrates Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday.

The launch, attended by health officials and beneficiaries, aims to improve healthcare accessibility and modernization in the city.

The new services include 40 TrueNat machines, 10 Patho-Detect machines, and 27 hand-held X-ray machines to enhance early detection and treatment of tuberculosis (TB). Additionally, 11 new CATS ambulances

**CM Rekha Gupta hails Ramililas as Delhi's cultural heart**

Staff Reporter New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta attended the 14th Ramilila festival organized by the Dwarka Shri Ramilila Society in West Delhi.

Gupta was accompanied by Prataprao Jadhav, Minister of State for AYUSH (Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, and Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh, Delhi's Health Minister.

She emphasized that Ramililas are an important part of Delhi's cultural identity and called for the community to uphold its grandeur.

Gupta highlighted that these events allow millions to connect with the ideals of Lord Shri Ram, and announced the implementation of a single-window system for obtaining permissions for Ramililas and other religious events, making it easier for committees to organize.

The Chief Minister praised



the Dwarka Ramilila as one of the largest and finest in Delhi, recognizing Rajesh Gehlot for his foundational work and his son, Akash Gehlot, for continuing his legacy.

She noted that the event not only serves a religious purpose but also promotes social and cultural awareness, inspiring future generations toward positive values. This year's festival has attracted thousands of devotees who witness the performances daily.

On the fourth day of Ramilila, key scenes including the Dasharatha-Kaikayi dialogue, Ram's exile, and the Boatman episode were performed impressively. Earlier, the third day featured the birth of Sita, the defeat of Tadakka, and Ahalya's rescue, which deeply moved the audience. Akash Rajesh Gehlot mentioned that this year's Ramilila combined modern technology with traditional elements, including advanced lighting and sound systems. Attention was given to audience comfort with spacious seating, sanitation, and medical services.

**Delhi Govt's Doors Are Open for Every Concern of Senior Citizens: Ravinder Indraj**

Staff Reporter New Delhi

The Delhi Government, led by Social Welfare Minister Ravinder Indraj Singh, held an event during Seva Pakhwada where free assistive devices were given to nearly 100 senior citizens and people with disabilities under the Rashtriya Vayoshree Yojana.

The devices, valued at about ₹8 lakh, were distributed at the Panchayat Bhawan in Nangal Thakran, Bawana. This event took place on the birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya and is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Antyodaya vision.

Singh reiterated the commitment of the Delhi Government to serve senior citizens and stated that programs like this will continue. He highlighted the im-



portance of ensuring that development reaches the most vulnerable members of society, aligning with the goals of the Antyodaya mission. During this initiative, the government announced 50,000 pension vacancies for senior citizens and

opened the Savitribai Phule Old Age Home in Paschim Vihar, which will provide safe living accommodations for 96 senior citizens.

Eligible senior citizens who do not receive a pension can apply for one, and those in need of assistive

devices are encouraged to inform the department. The assistive devices distributed included wheelchairs, walkers, hearing aids, and other essential items to support the needs of the elderly and disabled communities.

"Sharma and his associates launched a pre-launch housing project, Big Bull Ashiana, at Chandwaji, on the Jaipur-Delhi highway and lured investors with promises of lucrative returns and assured plots," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Economic Offences Wing) Ravi Kumar Singh said in an official statement.

**Delhi Police nabs private firm's director in housing project scam**

New Delhi

The Delhi Police has arrested a 38-year-old director of a private infrastructure firm for alleged-

duping more than 30 investors of over Rs 2.3 crore in the name of a housing project in Rajasthan, an official said on Thursday. Yogesh Sharma, a resident of Noida and director of M/s Big Bull Infrastructure Project Pvt Ltd, was caught in Noida, police said in its official statement, adding that he had been declared a pro-

**Showroom owner gets Rs 1 cr extortion threat probe on**

New Delhi

A showroom owner in northeast Delhi's Jafraabad received a Rs 1 crore extortion threat, police said on Thursday as they launched a probe into the matter.

The police said they the owner on September 20 informed authorities that a note was pasted on his shop in which someone threatened to kill him if he doesn't pay Rs 1 crore.

"The note read: 'Rs 1 crore de do nahi to jaan se mar dege' (Give Rs 1 crore or we will kill you)," a senior police officer said.

The police said the note was given by a prisoner lodged in Mandoli jail. A case has been registered under sections 308 (4) (Extortion) and 351 (Criminal intimidation) of the BNS at Jafraabad Police Station.

On August 20, five men had also allegedly set the shop on fire and police are ascertaining if there is a link between the two cases.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

General public is hereby informed that MR. Mahipal Singh s/o. MR. Ghamandi Lal, owner of RESIDENTIAL Plot area measuring 50 sq. yds. out of Kharsa No. 240, situated at Village-Dharauti Khurd, Prakash Vihar, Pargana and Tehsil-Loni, Dist. Ghazabad, U.P. vide Gift Deed dt. 19.08.2025, Doc. No. 15313, executed by MR. Brajesh s/o Mahipal Singh, SR-Loni, Ghaziabad previously MR. Ghaziabad purchased the above said property from Mrs. Beena w/o Keshan Kumar vide Regd. GPA dt. 22.02.2019, doc. No. 942, further Mr. Mahipal transferred above property in fav. his son Mr. Brajesh vide GPA dt. 18.08.2025.

And now said property is being financed by Incred Financial Services Ltd., if anybody has any charge/lien/3rd party interest in the said property of any kind of dispute, kindly inform the undersigned in written with proof on the below mentioned address, failing which I am aware that in case any default with the mortgage property, that all borrowers/owners are responsible for the same.

Satvendra Gautam Advocate  
Property No. 126, Shop No. 03 Lal Kuan, Ghaziabad, (U.P.)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

UNDER THE INSTRUCTIONS OF My Clients namely Sh. Raj Kumar s/o Sh. Babul and Vinayesh W/o Sh. Raj Kumar both resident of 31/27, Block-31, Kue Wali Gali, TrilokPuri, East Delhi-110091 have disowned and debarred their Sons namely first Son Rohit and his wife Alka and their children namely Ishaan and Abhi Partha Second son namely Aman Kumar, Third son namely Pawan and Fourth son namely Gaurav all resident of 31/27, Block-31, Kue Wali Gali, TrilokPuri, East Delhi-110091 from their all movable and immovable properties due to his disrespectful behavior, quarrelsome, disobedience and is out of control of my Clients. My Clients have also severed all their relations with him. If anybody deals with him in any manner, he/she shall do so at his/her own risks, costs and consequences. My Clients shall not be liable or responsible for the same in any manner.

RAKESH KUMAR Advocate  
CHAMBER NO. B-113A, BGS BLOCK, TIS HAZARI COURTS, DELHI-110054

**NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE**

By Chief Electrical Engineer, Northern Railway, Alambagh, Lucknow for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed tender on the prescribed form for the following work:

1. Tender No.	Elect/WAM/187/2024-25
A. Name of Work	"Provision of various Nitrite rubbers, Access Doors and Solar Reflective Paints in AC coaches at Carriage workshop, Alambagh, Lucknow"
B. Approx. Cost of the work (Estimated Cost)	Rs. 44,24,635.50
C. Earnest Money	Rs. 88,500/-
D. Cost of Tender form	NIL
E. Period of Completion (Duration of Work)	12 Months

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Date & Time for submission of Tender (Up to 15:00 Hrs on 17.10.2024)
- Date & Time of opening of Tender (Any time after 15:00 Hrs on 17.10.2024)
- The tender form may be submitted at the website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) as per schedule for tender.
- All the terms & conditions and Tender Documents only can read at [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in).
- Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
- Contractors are allowed to make payment against this tender towards earnest money only through online payment available on IRPS's Portal. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker's Cheque, Deposit receipt, FDR etc. are not allowed.
- No post tender correspondence for submission of additional documents shall be entertained after opening of the offers. Open size photo post letter of the tender shall be treated as NULL & Void.

# Self-styled godman accused of harassment 'monitored CCTV feed to track students'

**New Delhi**  
Self-styled godman Chaitanyananda Saraswati, who has been booked for allegedly sexually harassing 17 female students of a private management institute here, would monitor the hostel and campus CCTV feeds, including cameras installed outside washrooms, on his phone, investigators said on Friday.



The last known location of Saraswati, who is on the run, was traced to Mumbai, police said, adding that a team has been dispatched there.

According to the FIR, Saraswati (62), a former chairman of the management institute in southwest Delhi, allegedly forced female students to visit his quarters late at night and sent them inappropriate text messages, such as "Baby, I love you" and "I adore you", at odd hours.

He allegedly kept track of the students' movements through his phone.

He also used his BMW car, valued at Rs 1.5 crore, to take female students to Rishikesh under the pretext of "industrial visits", said a senior police officer privy to the probe. Police seized the car on Thursday.

"Multiple teams are conducting raids in different states. A lookout circular has been issued to ensure that he does not flee the country. Based on his recent foreign travel and return, Saraswati's last location was found to be in Mumbai, where a team has been dispatched."

"The Delhi Police has seized Saraswati's car and will check the footage of its dashcam," an officer said. Police said apart from the

cameras installed in the institute, CCTV surveillance was also placed in the hostel lobby and outside the bathrooms.

The hostel houses around 75 female students from the economically-weaker section.

The FIR was registered after the administration of the Sri Sharada Institute of Indian Management (SRISIM) got a police complaint lodged, alleging that during a virtual interaction with more than 30 female students, instances of sexual harassment, manipulation and threats by Saraswati — who was earlier known as Swami (Dr) Parthasarathy — were revealed.

One of the women associates of the accused, working as an associate dean at the institute, allegedly asked the female students to stand in a queue on Holi and told them that no one would put colour on each other before Saraswati.

"They were asked to say 'Hari Om to Swami and bow down in front of him. After

that, he put colour on their 'maang' (partition of the hair) and cheeks," the FIR alleges. The complainant further alleged that one female student was even "forced to change her name" and made to delete messages from her phone to erase evidence.

According to the FIR, one of the victims, who joined the institute in October 2024, said the harassment began shortly afterwards.

She said Saraswati first interacted with the students on December 1, 2024 at the institute's ground-floor office. "That day, instead of motivating us, Swamiji demotivated us. He introduced a woman as an associate dean and his devotee," she said.

In the FIR, the complainant has alleged that she contacted Saraswati over WhatsApp to share her X-ray reports when she suffered a hairline fracture in her toe. "Since then, Swamiji started sending me inappropriate messages at odd hours, saying things such as 'Baby, I love you', 'I adore you', 'You are looking beautiful today',

the complainant has alleged in the FIR. When she ignored the messages, the accused allegedly pressured her further by involving faculty members. "Whenever I protested, Swamiji threatened me with action by the Superintendent of Police, Haldwani," she has said in the FIR.

"He would tell the associate dean and she would ask me to reply to his messages. Swamiji also instructed sensors to ensure that all girls responded to him, warning that those who did not would face manipulated attendance or unnecessary deduction of marks in exams," she has alleged.

The complainant has said in March this year, Saraswati took some female students for a ride in his BMW car and continued to allegedly send inappropriate messages to them even past midnight. "At 3:30 am, he would message us with odd comments and would often delete those chats," the FIR reads.

According to the com-

plaint, when she complained to the associate dean, instead of supporting her, she was asked to write an e-mail apologising to Saraswati.

"After that, he forced me to send e-mails and threatened me, saying I was not in the queue for passing. He openly said that he could file an FIR if I did not comply," the FIR says.

The complaint has also accused Saraswati of misbehaving with her during Holi celebrations by forcibly applying colour on her, calling her "Baby" repeatedly and touching her inappropriately during handshakes, the FIR says.

In June, during an industrial visit to Rishikesh with 35 other female students, Saraswati allegedly called them to his room at odd hours. "He even blocked parents' phone numbers when they tried to reach him. He harassed us mentally, physically and emotionally," the complainant has alleged in the FIR.

The investigators said the accused tampered with the institute's digital video recorder (DVR) system, leading to destruction of crucial CCTV evidence.

However, police believe the dashcam of the BMW may provide some material evidence. Police said their investigation has found that Saraswati allegedly tightened his control over the institute by sub-letting the properties of Jagadguru Shankaracharya Mahasanthan Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, which runs it to private companies and would often delete those chats," the FIR reads.

He reportedly used the proceeds to purchase high-

# PM Modi Inaugurates Third UP International Trade Fair



Staff Reporter  
Greater Noida

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the third edition of the UP International Trade Fair at the Expo Mart Exhibition Center in Greater Noida, highlighting the state's growing industrial and infrastructural initiatives.

Accompanied by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the Prime Minister visited Hall No. 03, which featured prominent displays from the Yamuna Expressway Authority, Noida International Airport, Havells Group, Minda Spark Group, and International Film City, among others.

The in-charge officer of Hall No. 03, Mr. Rakesh Kumar Singh, CEO of Yamuna Expressway Authority and Noida International Airport, personally welcomed the Prime Minister. The stalls of the Yamuna Expressway Authority emerged as the center of attraction, drawing attention from business leaders, industry representatives, and the general public.

At the View Film City stall, noted film personalities including Boney Kapoor, Arjun Boney Kapoor, and Ashish Bhutani engaged with visitors, while the Noida International Airport stall hosted Christoph Shellman, CEO of Yamuna International Airport Limited, alongside industrialists such as Shekhar Agrawal of Priya Gold Group, R.L. Jaiswal of DS Group, Rajeev Goyal of Havells Group, and Harsh Vardhan Goyal of S.A.L.E. Group. These leaders interacted with Mr. Singh and commended the Au-

thority's efforts in driving regional industrial growth.

The Yamuna Expressway Authority's exhibition space featured a wide range of participants, including Priya Gold, S.A.E.L. Solar, NAEC Trust, Minda Spark, Havells, International Film City, Galgotia University, M.G.M. Educational Group, Amity Educational Group, Patanjali Group, Toy Associations, IngTong Company, and various companies from the Medical Devices Park Cluster such as Alenjar, Poly-Medicure, Medisis, Sion Med, Romson, Allied Medical, Narang, and Madhu Instruments.

The Authority's stall showcased a model of the Noida International Airport, alongside detailed information on projects including the Medical Devices Park, the International Film City, the proposed FinTech City, Semiconductor Park, Educational Hub, and Heritage City. An interactive robot named Anushka further captivated visitors, adding a futuristic dimension to the exhibition.

During the Prime Minister's visit, the stall was supported by Special Officers Shaileendra Kumar Bhatia and Shaileendra Kumar Singh, Senior Staff Officer Nandkishore Sundariya, and AGM Indusury Smita Singh, ensuring smooth engagement with dignitaries and guests.

The fair underscored Uttar Pradesh's commitment to industrial development, technological innovation, and investment-friendly initiatives, drawing attention from both national and international participants.

# Swastik Productions evolves into Swastik Stories, launching India's 1st cultural storytelling ecosystem this Diwali

**New Delhi**  
The rebrand marks the strategic launch of India's first integrated cultural storytelling ecosystem, beginning this Diwali with a new FAST (Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV) channel and a slate of Swastik Originals.

Swastik Productions, a name synonymous with India's most iconic mythological and historical shows, today unveiled its evolution into Swastik Stories.

The rebrand marks the strategic launch of India's first integrated cultural storytelling ecosystem, beginning this Diwali with a new FAST (Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV) channel and a slate of Swastik Originals.

The announcement was symbolised by the lighting of an Akhand Diya at the company's Mumbai headquarters by NP Singh, former MD & CEO of Sony Pictures Networks India, representing the eternal flame of storytelling that Swastik Stories will carry forward.

Siddharth Kumar Tewary, Founder & Creative Visionary of Swastik Stories, said, "For 18 years, these stories have been more than shows — they've been part of people's lives, and I carry that love with me every day. With Swastik Stories, I don't see this as just a rebrand, but as lighting a new diya. This Diwali, we begin with a FAST channel and Swastik Originals — but the vision is larger. Swastik Stories will grow into a cultural storytelling ecosystem with films, stage, games, and Bharat — each a new way of carrying Bharat's stories forward."

# Scam accusations were part of a conspiracy by Ex employees to discredit Nari Shakti: Safina Joseph

**New Delhi**  
The Nari Shakti Women Welfare Charitable Trust, established in 2016 in Bengaluru, focused on education, awareness in farming, and health camps for women. Safina Joseph, the president, began an auto rickshaw project in November 2024 to empower women.

However, Joseph discovered that some former employees were misusing the trust's name and extorting money. After learning about these issues, she decided to remove those women from the trust.

On September 22, 2025,



these former employees confronted the staff at the Nari Shakti office, causing a

disturbance and issuing threats. They alleged a scam of 2 crore rupees had occurred.

In response, Joseph while addressing a press conference at PCI, New Delhi stated that the accusations were part of a conspiracy to discredit Nari Shakti. She emphasized that they possess strong evidence of their operations, and that all work done by the trust is documented and legitimate.

Joseph highlighted that the actions of the former employees were aimed at harming the reputation of the organization without any basis or proof.

# Ramalaya and JP SR Prabhushriram Celebrate Indian Heritage at UPITS 2025

**TSN/Greater Noida**  
Ramalaya & JP SR Prabhushriram are participating in the 3rd Edition of the UP International Trade Show, happening from September 25-29, 2025, at the India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida.

The Ramalaya Experience Centre at the exhibition was inaugurated by Dr. D. K. Gupta, Managing Director, Felix Hospital, and Mrs. Gupta, alongside Dr. Shubhra Mittal, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Noida, in the august presence of Shri Prashant Kumar, Founder of Ramalaya. The graceful ceremony marked a significant beginning to this cultural showcase.

With its presence at Stall H14-03/40, Ramalaya, a cultural luxury experience centre, is bringing alive the essence of India's spiritual and cultural heritage. Under its umbrella, JP SR Prabhushriram, a luxury incense brand, is transforming India's devotional stories, including the Ramayana and



Shri Krishna's Leelas, into fragrant, immersive experiences. Each collection embodies cultural heritage, art, and storytelling through fragrances.

A Ramalaya spokesperson says, "For us, fragrance is more than luxury. It is cultural storytelling. Through Ramalaya, we are sharing the sacred narratives of our heritage in a form that resonates with today's world." At the exhibition, Ramalaya is engaging domestic and international visitors,

celebrating India's cultural and spiritual artistry while reinforcing its position as the face of cultural luxury in the incense industry. Visitors are experiencing cultural storytelling, premium fragrances, exclusive gifting solutions, and franchise opportunities at the stall. This participation reinforces Ramalaya's vision of taking Indian cultural luxury to global markets. Visitors are exploring carefully curated incense collections and experiencing the philosophy of "Incense with a Story," a celebration of cultural storytelling through fragrance. The exhibition is showcasing JP SR Prabhushriram's hero collections, including Shripad Ramayana, Shri Krishna Leela, Incredible Temple, Char Dham, and Life and God Collection.

The first two signature collections feature iconic Indian art, Madhubani and Pattachitra paintings, bringing India's invaluable heritage vividly to life in each collection.

# PM and CM Yogi impressed by Greater Noida Authority stall at UPITS

**Ajit Kumar Greater Noida**  
The third edition of the UP International Trade Show (UPITS) 2025 got off to a vibrant start on Thursday at the Expo Mart in Greater Noida, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the presence of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

During the inaugural visit, the Prime Minister and Chief Minister toured Hall No. 3, where the Greater Noida Authority had set up an elaborate stall. Both leaders appeared pleased as they explored the displays, taking note of the city's infrastructure projects and development initiatives.

Greater Noida Authority CEO N.G. Ravi Kumar, along with ACEOs Soumya Srivastava, Sunil Kumar Singh, Shri Lakshmi V.S., Prerna Singh, and Sumit Yadav, welcomed the dignitaries and briefed them on the showcased projects. Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Min-



ister Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' also reviewed the stall, engaging with the officials to understand the development plans and schemes presented. The stall drew attention not only from political leaders but also from Bollywood personalities, including Boney Kapoor and actor Arjun Kapoor. Kapoor interacted with the Authority officials to learn more about the city's growing infrastructure

and investment potential. Visitors were treated to a range of interactive exhibits, including an Amorphous LED wall, web-standes, a Diamond LED cube, quiz and puzzle games, an AI selfie booth, a neuro-sensor car, a "We Are" simulator game, and live mud painting sessions. These attractions particularly captured the interest of young attendees, adding a dynamic, engaging element to the trade fair experience. The Greater Noida Au-

thority's preparations ensured a smooth and organized opening day despite the large influx of VIPs. Parking facilities for 8,000 vehicles were arranged at NASA Parking, supported by shuttle buses to the Expo Mart, facilitating easy access for visitors. Road repairs around the venue allowed seamless vehicle movement, while enhanced horticulture and adequate street lighting improved the overall environment.

Violence erupted in Ladakh due to Centre's 'wrong policies': Mehbooba Mufti

**Srinagar:** PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday alleged the violent protests in the Union Territory of Ladakh erupted due to the "wrong policies" of the central government. The Union home ministry had made many promises with the people of Ladakh but nothing came out of it over the past six years, Mufti told reporters, adding that what happened on Wednesday was a breach in their level of tolerance. The former chief minister said the people of Ladakh have been striving for inclusion under the Sixth Schedule in a bid to protect their identity, culture, land and jobs. "They were disappointed that nothing was happening... If people from outside come there in large numbers, what will remain of them? They are just a few lakh in number," she said. Mufti said the Centre should ponder over the developments in Ladakh, where violence broke out on Wednesday.

Floods in Punjab outcome of government negligence alleges SGPC chief

**Amritsar:** Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) president Harjinder Singh Dhamai Thursday met representatives of flood-affected villages at Gurdwara Sri Ber Sahib in Sultanpur Lodhi and alleged that the floods were the outcome of "government negligence". He listened to their problems and assured them of every possible support from the SGPC. During an interaction, he said the floods were not merely a natural calamity but the outcome of alleged "government negligence". "Had water been released gradually from dams in time, such widespread devastation in Punjab could have been avoided," he said. Dhamai added that the government has left the people to fend for themselves, forcing them to take on responsibilities that should have been carried out by the authorities.

# Haryana CM launches Deendayal Lado Lakshmi Yojana to empower women

**Komal Ramola Chandigarh:** On the birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, the Haryana Government launched the ambitious 'Deendayal Lado Lakshmi Yojana' aimed at boosting the economic and social status of women. Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini unveiled the scheme at a state-level ceremony held at Tau Devi Lal Stadium in Panchkula, along with a dedicated mobile application to facilitate seamless registration and implementation. The Chief Minister highlighted that in the short period since the app's launch, nearly 50,000 women had downloaded it, with around 8,000 applications already submitted. To address application challenges, a toll-free number 18001802231 and helpline 01724880500 were released, and live registration is conducted through the programme. Sh. Saini stated that

**दीनदयाल लाडो लक्ष्मी योजना का भव्य शुभारंभ**  
 और मोबाइल ऐप लॉन्च  
 1 लाख से अधिक महिलाओं की मदद करने को  
 हर महीने मिलेंगे ₹2,100



the scheme will initially benefit around 20 lakh women in Haryana. Open to both married and unmarried women aged 23 to 60 with annual family incomes up to Rs. 1 lakh, beneficiaries will receive Rs. 2,100 per month via direct bank transfer. Multiple eligible women from the same household can also avail the benefit. The government has allocated

Rs. 5,000 crore for the scheme in 2025-26. The Chief Minister emphasized that all processes, including application, verification, and grievance redressal, will be handled through the mobile app, eliminating the need to visit government offices or service centres. Eligible women can begin applying immediately, while others can apply upon reaching the qualifying age. The launch also coincided with the inauguration and foundation laying of projects worth Rs. 326.25 crore, including 31 health-related initiatives, renovation of 10 health institutions, and projects under the Public Works Department and Urban Local Bodies. Sh. Saini underscored that the scheme fulfills the 42nd promise of the

government's 'Sankalp Patra', with 90 commitments expected to be fulfilled by year-end. He reiterated the government's mission to ensure that development benefits reach the last person in the queue, reflecting Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Antyodaya. Highlighting steps taken under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the Chief Minister cited campaigns like 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao', 'Droone Didi Yojana', and the nationwide 'Swasth Nari-Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan'. He noted that in Haryana, over 2.13 lakh women have already become 'Lakshmi Didi's', 100 women have received drones under the 'Droone Didi Yojana', and 18 lakh families have benefited from subsidized gas cylinders. Women now hold 50 percent representation in Panchayats, and initiatives like crèches, girl-specific colleges, and free higher education up to post-graduation are in place.

Punjab Govt pledges ₹74 Cr aid, free wheat seeds to flood-hit farmers



**Chandigarh:** In the wake of devastating floods that destroyed crops across nearly five lakh acres in Punjab, the state government has announced a major relief initiative to support affected farmers. Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda declared that the government will provide two lakh quintals of wheat seeds, worth around ₹74 crore, free of cost to help farmers restart cultivation. Speaking on the occasion, CM Mann said, "In this difficult time, our government stands shoulder to shoulder with the farmers. Punjab's hardworking farmers made the country self-reliant in food grains, and now this initiative is to give new strength to their hard work." He emphasized that the flood-affected farmers are unable to purchase seeds on their own, and this measure will allow them to resume farming for the Rabi season. "The floods have wreaked

havoc across the state, affecting more than 2,300 villages and impacting the lives of nearly 20 lakh people. The disaster claimed 56 lives and rendered approximately seven lakh people homeless. Infrastructure suffered heavily, with around 3,200 schools, 19 colleges, 1,400 clinics and hospitals damaged, 8,500 kilometers of roads destroyed, and 2,500 bridges washed away. Preliminary estimates put the total loss at around ₹15,800 crore, though the figure could be higher. The Mann Government's relief package reflects its commitment to farmers' welfare, positioning the free seed scheme not just as aid but as a promise of support during crises. By providing wheat seeds at no cost, the government aims to bring new hope, fresh harvests, and stability to Punjab's agricultural sector, reaffirming that the state's strength lies in its farmers and their prosperity is a top priority.

Punjab CM unveils logo for commemorative events to mark Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom anniversary



**Chandigarh:** Punjab Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Thursday unveiled a logo for the state-level commemorative events to be organised for observing the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur. Mann said the state government has already chalked a number of events to commemorate this once-in-a-lifetime event across Punjab in a befitting manner. He said on the historic occasion of the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur, the Punjab government will organise grand events. A massive 'Kirtan Darbar' will be held in Delhi on October 25, he said, adding that on November 25, a major event will be held at Sri Anandpur Sahib.

Four 'nagar kirtans' will start from Jammu, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur, and Tarn Taran in Bathinda on November 20, he added. Mann said the 'nagar kirtans' will reach Sri Anandpur Sahib on the evening of November 22, adding various functions will be organised by the state government at the holy city from November 23 to 25. These historic events will primarily take place on the sacred land of Sri Anandpur Sahib under the auspices of the state government. The CM said that Guru Ji's supreme sacrifice was unique and unparalleled in the history of mankind and symbolized the crusade against injustice, tyranny and oppression.

## INLD chief Abhay Chautala lashes out at JJP BJP takes dig at Hoodas

**Rohtak (Hry):** Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) chief Abhay Singh Chautala lashed out at the JJP on Thursday, saying those who used to chant Chaudhary Devi Lal's name betrayed the public the day they helped the BJP form a government in Haryana. Addressing the INLD's "Samman rally" here on the occasion of the 12th birth anniversary of former deputy prime minister Devi Lal, Abhay Chautala also lashed out at Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda and his MP son, Deepender Hooda. "Taking on the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the INLD chief said people are not happy with the saffron party's government in the state, which has failed on various fronts. He also claimed that law and order has deteriorated in Haryana under the BJP's rule. The rally was also addressed by Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) chief Sukhbir Singh Badal, Congress leader Sampat Singh, Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Chaudhary, former



MP and the founder of Telangana Jagruti K Kavitha, INLD's Haryana unit chief Rampal Majra, INLD leaders Aditya Devi Lal, Karn Chautala and Arjun Chautala. Badal appealed to people to bring regional parties back to power as he said these parties alone are capable of looking after the interests of farmers and the poor. Lashing out at the Jammu and Kashmir Party (JKP), which is led by his elder brother Ajay Singh Chautala, Abhay Chautala said in 2019, the

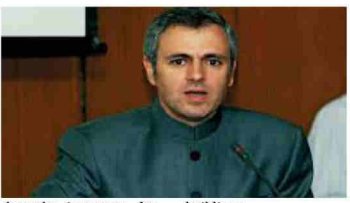
voters of Haryana gave a mandate against the then BJP government and the saffron outfit managed to win only 40 of the 90 Assembly seats in the state. Taking a swipe at the JJP, he said those who used to chant Devi Lal's name and claim that they will teach a lesson to the BJP "betrayed the public and helped the saffron party form the government in 2019". "The BJP formed its government in Haryana with the JJP's support after the 2019 polls. The

two parties parted ways shortly before last year's Lok Sabha election. In October 2024, the BJP came to power in Haryana on its own for a third consecutive term. Holding the rally at Rohtak, considered a stronghold of Bhupinder Singh Hooda's family, Abhay Chautala also lashed out at the Congress leader. He alleged that the Congress is acting as the BJP's "B" team in Haryana. The father-son duo of Bhupinder Singh Hooda

and Deepender Hooda are responsible for the BJP's third consecutive government formation in the state, he said. Just as the public wiped out the JJP in last year's Assembly polls, they will also teach the Congress a lesson in the future, Abhay Chautala said. Badal alleged that national parties do not care about the welfare of farmers or the poor and "create divisions in the name of religions and caste". Asserting that Abhay Chautala represents the true voice of farmers and the poor, the SAD chief said, "He is also the true heir to the legacy of Chaudhary Devi Lal." Sampat Singh, who switched over to the Congress from the INLD a few years ago, said it was Devi Lal who gave him the opportunity to become an MLA for the first time. Without taking any names, the Congress leader said he received numerous phone calls asking him not to attend the Rohtak rally, but he was completely determined to participate.

## JK govt to provide 5-marla land to flood-affected families: CM Abdullah

**Jammu:** Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said five marlas of land will be provided to each flood-affected family rendered homeless to allow them to reconstruct their dwelling units. Abdullah made the announcement while interacting with residents of Duggan village in Billa-war tehsil of Kathua district, whose houses and livelihoods were severely impacted by the recent flooding. The chief minister conducted an aerial survey of the flood-affected areas in Kathua and Reasi districts, accompanied by Bani MLA Rameshwar Singh and MLA Gulabgarh Khurshid Ahmed. He also met the people in Mahore in Reasi. Assuring people of all possible assistance, Abdullah directed the administration to ensure timely relief and rehabilitation measures. "The year 2025 has



brought immense devastation to Jammu and Kashmir — from the dry spell in March-April to incessant rains, flash floods, and landslides in August-September. From Kathua to Kupwara, the damage has been unprecedented," he said. Abdullah highlighted the scale of destruction, noting that torrential rains have damaged over 350 bridges, around 2,000 km of road network, thousands of hectares of agricultural land, besides washing away standing crops and inflicting damages on both government and private

buildings. "Given the enormity of restoration challenges, Jammu and Kashmir is looking forward to a comprehensive relief and rehabilitation package from the Central Government," he added. Emphasising the importance of first-hand assessment, Abdullah said his visit to the remote and isolated areas of Kathua was aimed at understanding the ground realities. He also undertook an aerial survey of damages in Hiranagar and Lakhampur, the entry point of Jammu and Kashmir. Later, the CM convened

a meeting with district administration, including Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma and senior civil and police officers. He directed the Deputy Commissioner to conduct extensive tours of all affected areas and submit detailed ground reports at the earliest. Bani MLA highlighted extensive damages due to landslides triggered by torrential rains in his constituency. In villages such as Moar, Najote, and Kantal-Majra, nearly 100 families have lost their land and property completely, he said and demanded allotment of five marlas of land for such affected families, besides highlighting other pressing concerns, including damages to the Jalana Bridge, delay in tendering of work for High School Lohai, upgradation of High School Sadrota, as well as amnesty from KCC loans and electricity bills for affected families.

## AVISHKAR Academy Inaugurated at Chandigarh Model Jail to Empower Prisoners

**TSN/Chandigarh:** Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria today inaugurated the AVISHKAR (Academy for Vocational Innovation, Skill, Hope, Knowledge and Reform) Academy at the Model Jail in Chandigarh, aiming to transform the lives of inmates through education and skill development. Speaking at the event, Governor Kataria described the academy as a "symbol of hope, skill, innovation, and reform," emphasizing its role in helping prisoners become self-reliant and reintegrate into mainstream society after release. The initiative is designed to provide inmates with educational opportunities, vocational training, and creative outlets to prepare them for a dignified life beyond prison walls. The AVISHKAR Academy, established in Barrack Four-Cell Ward, offers



facilities including a Music Section, Painting and Art & Craft studios, Candle and Gulab making workshops, a library, an IGNOU Study Center, and a Tailoring Section. Previously, vocational activities were conducted in Barrack No. 6, which has now

been reserved solely for prisoner accommodation. The launch coincides with Seva Pakhwada, celebrated from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday until October 2, which also marks the birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal

Upadhyaya, adding special significance to the occasion. The inauguration was attended by Home Secretary Mandeep Singh Brar, IG Prisons Pushpendra Kumar, Additional IG Prisons Dr. Paika Arora, and other senior prison officials.

# “Navratri, Prasad and Parenting: The Importance of Discernment in Faith”

**N**avratri is a highly significant festival in Indian culture and religious beliefs. It is not just a nine-day celebration, but also a symbol of devotion, restraint, health, and social responsibility. During Navratri, devotees worship Goddess Durga in their homes and temples, and pay special attention to food and eating habits. Halwa-puri, chana dal, fruits, and other traditional dishes hold special significance for devotees on this occasion. The deliciousness and sacred nature of these dishes make them a part of a religious ritual.

However, amidst this sacred tradition, an important question arises: Are these dishes prepared during Navratri safe only for human consumption, or can they also be given to our sacred friends, such as cows? This question is important not only from a religious perspective, but also from a health and ecological perspective.

The halwa-puri prasad (offering) during Navratri is primarily prepared from wheat flour, ghee, and sugar. Devotees delight in its flavor and aroma, and consider it a symbol of devotion to the Goddess. Enjoying halwa-puri is not only a part of the celebration, but also strengthens family and social bonds. However, it is equally important to consider its health benefits.

Halwa-puri provides a limited amount of energy and satisfaction for humans. However, eating it in excessive amounts can cause digestive problems, weight gain, and other health risks. During Navratri, people often consume fruits, light sattvic foods, and milk to purify both the body and mind. Therefore, Halwa-puri should be consumed in moderation and with caution.

Now the question arises whether halwa-puri can be given to cows. Cows are considered extremely sacred in Hinduism. They are considered a mother, and religious texts emphasize the importance of serving and protecting them. However, cows' digestive systems differ from humans. They primarily rely on green grass, fodder, straw, and grains. Heavy and sweet foods like ghee, sugar, and refined flour can be harmful to them. Excessive ghee and sugar in halwa-puri can adversely affect their health, causing diarrhea, indigestion, and other gastrointestinal problems.

The need for balance becomes clear here. The purpose of Navratri is not only faith and devotion, but also to maintain coexistence with animals and nature. Devotion and protection can coexist. Offering halwa and puri is not good for the health of cows, and the best option is to provide them with natural fodder, green grass, and fruits. From a religious perspective, the true meaning of devotion is to use discretion while still practicing our faith.

Traditionally, the distribution of prasad during



By Priyanka Saurabh

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Traditional offerings like halwa and puri are important during Navratri, but they are safe only for humans. Cows' digestive systems differ from humans, so products made with ghee, sugar, and refined flour can be harmful. During this time, cows should only be fed green grass, straw, fruits, and fodder. Devotion and protection can coexist. The purpose of Navratri is not just devotion, but also prudent faith and animal protection. By maintaining balance, we can maintain both tradition and animal welfare.

Navratri should be limited to human consumption only. Doing so adheres to religious beliefs and ensures the safety of animals. Many temples and religious sites maintain this balance by offering only fruits, green leaves, and dry grains as prasad. This provides nutrition to cows and protects their health.

This topic is extremely important from a cultural perspective. In Indian tradition, the cow is considered a mother. Religious texts and folk tales specifically mention their protection, respect, and service. If we neglect the health of cows during Navratri out of devotion and tradition, we fail to uphold the principles of their protection and care. This is a matter

where a balance between religion and science is essential.

Education and awareness play a crucial role in this regard. Religious organizers, temples, and families need to understand that every offering they make must be safe not only for humans but also for animals, if any. Awareness campaigns should be conducted through schools, social organizations, and religious organizations to ensure that people understand that halwa-puri is not safe for cows.

Health experts also believe that keeping cows away from human food is essential for their long-term

health. Ghee, sugar, and oil-based foods can cause problems in their gastrointestinal system. Therefore, traditional offerings during Navratri should be enjoyed only for humans. This maintains religious values and ensures the safety of the animals.

The significance of Halwa-Puri during Navratri is not limited to taste or tradition. It is also a medium of devotion, collective enthusiasm, and spending time with family. But we must remember that devotion does not simply mean following tradition; it must also include discretion and prudence. Prasad should be distributed while keeping in mind the health of cows and other domestic animals.

Studies and experiences show that neglecting animals during religious events not only impacts their health but also highlights a lack of awareness in society. Therefore, prioritizing both animal safety and human health during Navratri is essential. This fulfills both our religious beliefs and social responsibility.

Through this tradition, we can also impart an important lesson to children. They can be taught that religious festivals are not just a means of celebration and joy, but also hold messages of wisdom, responsibility, and coexistence. When children learn that halwa-puri is only for humans and that cows are fed natural fodder, they become sensitive and responsible citizens in their own lives.

The message of Navratri is to embrace faith, restraint, and prudence. While enjoying traditional delicacies and offerings, we must remember that the safety and health of our four-legged friends is paramount. If we maintain this balance, the Navratri celebration becomes even more meaningful and enjoyable.

Finally, it must be remembered that the true purpose of Navratri is not merely to indulge in food and drink and festivities. This festival teaches us that faith and wisdom can coexist. It is our religious and social responsibility to take care of the health of both humans and animals. Therefore, during Navratri, halwa-puri should be consumed in moderation for humans, and cows should be given only natural fodder. This is the correct and balanced approach, which integrates faith, culture, and safety.

Through this balance and wisdom, the Navratri festival not only becomes religiously fulfilling but also serves as an inspiring example for our society and animal welfare. In this way, we can adhere to religious faith and cultural tradition while fulfilling our responsibility to our four-legged friends.

# Caring for ageing parents: Adapting timeless values to contemporary realities

**I**n a not-so-distant past, families across many cultures followed an unspoken rhythm: parents reared children, who then looked after their parents as they aged. The idea of “parental care” was an extension of everyday life rather than a set arrangement. Every celebration, meal, and bedtime tale included the grandparents, who were an integral part of the family.

This rhythm is stuttering today. Elderly parents are more likely than ever to live alone in cities and towns across the world, particularly in urban areas. The way society interacts with its elders has changed as a result of the rise in nuclear families, the lure of careers in far-off cities or nations, and the mounting demands of contemporary life. For many, interaction with parents has been reduced to brief phone calls or yearly visits, creating a void that technology cannot fully address.

The number of elderly people is rapidly increasing in India, as in many other countries. More than one-fifth of older adults in India now live alone or exclusively with their spouse, as per the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India. Even though life expectancy has increased due to medical advancements, elderly people's emotional and social well-being is frequently disregarded. Experts caution that loneliness can be just as damaging to health as chronic diseases. It raises the risk of depression, damages sleep and erodes immunity.

As embodied in the proverb Mata, Pita, Guru, Deivam, reverence for elders has long been a fundamental aspect of Indian culture. Parents are positioned at the centre of the hierarchy of many cultures' proverbs. However, instead of regular care, this respect is now shown in many homes through ceremonial gestures. While touching feet on festivals or sending flowers on birthdays may be considerate, they cannot replace ongoing participation and presence. Parents who once waited up for their children late into the night now wait for their calls. Ironically, in the time of instant communication, developing a deep connection has become harder. Video calls and messages exist, but often feel rushed or perfunctory.

Meaningful care today requires conscious effort. In the past, care happened organically because families lived together. Now, it has to be on purpose. Ten minutes of focused conversation, without the distraction of screens, can be better than hours spent together without talking. One of the defining challenges in parental care is the reversal of roles. Children become caregivers, guiding decisions about health, finances, and sometimes living arrangements. This transition, while necessary, if handled with sensitivity, can preserve the dignity and independence of parents. Col-



By Vijay Garg

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laborative decision-making, though perhaps difficult at times, helps. Instead of dictating choices, framing them as shared discussions ensures that parents remain active participants in their own lives. The language of care matters: “Shall we go to this doctor?” communicates respect more than “You must see this doctor.”

Not all children can live close to their parents, but distance need not mean detachment. Caring from afar requires a blend of emotional and practical support. Regular, meaningful communication matters — asking about their day, discussing their hobbies,

and their memories. Health coordination is important, with digital records of medical reports and arrangements for reliable local support in emergencies. Small adjustments like good lighting, grab rails, and non-slip flooring can make homes safer. Shared activities — reading the same book, watching a programme together over a call, or exchanging recipes — create moments that keep bonds alive.

Isolation deepens the challenges of ageing, and social interaction is vital for mental and emotional health. Encouraging parents to attend community events, join interest-based groups, or stay connect-

ed with friends can help. For those comfortable with technology, online forums and hobby classes open new avenues for engagement. The benefits are twofold: active minds remain sharper, and a stronger social network reduces dependency on family for every need, easing emotional strain on both sides. In smaller towns and rural areas, elders are more likely to live close to the family, but face other difficulties — limited healthcare access, physical labour demands, and fewer recreational opportunities. In cities worldwide, they may have better facilities but suffer from emotional isolation. Bridging this gap requires both policy attention and family commitment. In some countries, legal frameworks exist to protect the rights and well-being of senior citizens, but laws alone cannot replace the warmth of human connection.

The care given to ageing parents is not just a personal responsibility; it is a social investment. When elders feel valued, they remain active contributors to their families and communities. Their stories, skills, and wisdom enrich the younger generation, grounding them in values that outlast material inheritance. Moreover, children learn by example. The way adults treat their parents sets the template for how they themselves may be treated in later years.

India's rapid modernisation need not come at the cost of its traditions of familial closeness. Caring for parents does not mean clinging to outdated structures; it means adapting timeless values to contemporary realities. Flexible work arrangements, inter-generational living spaces, and community support systems can all play a role. The goal is not to recreate the past, but to ensure that in the race forward, society does not abandon the very people who made that journey possible.

Elders are not simply dependents; they are living histories. Their presence is a reminder of resilience, sacrifice, and unconditional love. Parental care is not repayment of a debt, for no repayment can equal a lifetime of nurturing. It is an honouring of roots in the final chapters of their lives. The call is simple: visit more often, listen more deeply, involve them in decisions, and make them feel heard and seen.

A culture is measured not by its tallest buildings or fastest technologies, but by how it treats those who have walked the path before. In the words of an old proverb, “When an old person dies, a library burns to the ground.” Societies must ensure their libraries remain intact — not gathering dust and solitude, but being read, valued, and celebrated until the very last page.

# PM Modi launches Rs 1.22 Lakh crore projects in Raj and flags off three trains

■ PM Modi virtually flagged off two new Vande Bharat Express trains – Bikaner–Delhi Cantt. and Jodhpur–Delhi Cantt. and one Amrit Bharat express train between Udaipur City to Chandigarh Express from Banswara, Rajasthan.

Abhishek Byahut Banswara/Jodhpur  
In order to strengthen rail connectivity and boost tourism in Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday virtually flagged off two new Vande Bharat Express trains – one from Bikaner to Delhi Cantt. and another from Jodhpur to Delhi Cantt., along with an Amrit Bharat Express train between Udaipur City and Chandigarh from a rally in Banswara, Rajasthan.



Rajasthan had a historic day also as PM Modi also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of significant development work, including nuclear power project, worth Rs 1.22 lakh crore, aimed at enhancing infrastructure push in Rajasthan.

Ashwini Vaishnav, Union Minister of Railways and BJP MP from Jodhpur Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat joined the event from Jodhpur railway station. Speaking to a public rally, the Prime Minister said the nation is progressing at the rate of electricity. The Prime Minister remem-

bered how in the past, electricity was expensive and limited, but now it is reaching every household and village. Biting at the opposition, he said attempts have always been made to hinder the speed of growth, but the central government has been working persistently to give strength to the poor and rural communities. He also requested people to embrace indigenous products, saying they were the real power of Atmanirbhar Bharat. The introduction of the

two new Vande Bharat Express trains has brought a wave of joy among people in Rajasthan and other neighbouring states. The Jodhpur–Delhi Cantt. train will leave at 5:25 in the morning and arrive at Delhi Cantt. at 1:30 in the afternoon, while the return journey begins at 3:10 in the afternoon and ends in Jodhpur at 11:20 at night. Its primary halts are Merta Road, Degana, Makrana, Phulera, Jaipur, Alwar, Rewari and Gurgaon, with an overall trav-

el time of eight hours and ten minutes. They can accommodate over 500 passengers and provide a new, comfortable and faster journey experience. Meanwhile, the train from Bikaner–Delhi Cantt. will leave from Bikaner at 5:40 in the morning and arrive at Delhi Cantt. by 11:55 before returning in the evening to reach Bikaner at 11:05 at night. It will stop at Ratnagarh, Churu, Sadulpur, Loharu, Mahendragarh, Rewari and Gurgaon, taking the entire

trip of six hours and twenty minutes. The Vande Bharat train has modern features like Wi-Fi, charging points, comfy seats, bio-toilets, and a pantry car. It uses a suspended traction motor for a smooth ride, armor technology to prevent collisions, and intelligent braking that saves 30% electricity. Tourists visiting Bikaner's attractions like Bhujia, Junagarh Fort, and Camel Safari will benefit from new train services. Likewise,

travelers in Jodhpur visiting Mehrangarh Fort, Ummed Palace and the Blue City will enjoy quick connections to Delhi. These trains will also assist people linked to Sambhar's salt industry and Makrana's marble industry. The introduction of these trains aims to improve travel facilities and stimulate trade, tourism, and employment, fostering regional development.

In addition to these rail facilities, the Prime Minister also laid foundation stones for various important projects, such as the Rs 42,000 crore Mahi Banswara Nuclear Power Project comprising four reactors, large-scale renewable energy projects in Bikaner, 15.5 gigawatt transmission lines, and major projects in water supply, healthcare and road infrastructure.

These projects, along with the introduction of new train facilities, are likely to make trade, educational and tourism connectivity between Delhi and Rajasthan much better and also boost the state to unprecedented levels of power generation and infrastructural development.

## Vivek Gupta takes charge as INS President for 2025-26

Staff Reporter  
New Delhi

The 86th Annual General Meeting of the Indian Newspaper Society (INS), the apex body representing publishers of newspapers, magazines and periodicals in the country, was held today through video conferencing and other audio-visual means.



At the meeting, Mr. Vivek Gupta of Samarg was elected as the President of the Society for the year 2025-26. He succeeds Mr. M. V. Shreyams Kumar of Mathrubhumi, who served as President during the previous term.

The new leadership team also includes Mr. Karan Rajendra Darda of Lokmat as Deputy President, Mr. Tanmay Maheshwari of Amar Ujala as Vice President, and Mr. Anant Nath of Grihsobhika as Honorary Treasurer. Ms. Mary Paul continues as the Secretary General of the Society.

The AGM also announced the Executive Committee members of the INS for the year 2025-26, comprising some of the most prominent figures from India's newspaper and magazine industry. The committee features publishers and senior executives representing leading dailies, magazines and journals from across the country, reflecting the diversity and strength of the

Indian media landscape. The Indian Newspaper Society, established in 1939, plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the interests of print media publishers in India. It works to foster growth, uphold press freedom, and engage with policymakers on issues critical to the industry. With the election of the new office-bearers and executive committee, the Society is set to continue its efforts in addressing challenges faced by the media sector, particularly in an era of rapid digital transformation.

### Vijayvargiya accuses Rahul Gandhi of being influenced by 'foreign culture'

Shajapur (MP)  
Madhya Pradesh minister Kailash Vijayvargiya on Thursday accused Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi of being influenced by "foreign culture", a charge rejected by the Congress.

He was addressing an event in Shajapur on the birth anniversary of BJP ideologue Deendayal Upadhyaya. He said Rahul Gandhi is influenced by "foreign culture" and behaves accordingly. "India has its own culture, and the nation will progress through it," he added.

"Today's opposition leader kisses his sister in public. This is the impact of foreign culture, while in our tradition, people do not even drink water at their sister's home," he said. The BJP leader said two ideologies are at work in the country. One is to keep the nation secure, and another against its culture, he said. Vijayvargiya described Deendayal Upadhyaya's life as a symbol of simplicity, sacrifice and national commitment.

"The message of service, dedication and placing the nation above everything else that he gave represents the soul of India and will continue to guide us," he said.

Born in 1916 in Mathura, Upadhyaya was a senior RSS functionary and one of the founders of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the forerunner of the BJP. Earlier, Vijayvargiya performed 'bhoomi puja' and laid the foundation stone for road and drainage works worth about Rs 2.74 crore in Shajapur and inaugurated other development projects.

He said the BJP government has been tirelessly working to improve basic amenities for the common people. "Under our double-engine government (same party at the Centre and in the state), the chariot of development is moving ahead at a steady pace.

### For greater transparency: EC streamlines counting process of postal ballots

New Delhi

In a bid to prevent the possibility of any manipulation, the Election Commission has streamlined the process of counting of postal ballots in Lok Sabha and assembly polls. The new practice will be first implemented in Bihar where assembly polls are due in November.

Till now, on the day of counting, postal ballot counting starts at 8 am and EVM counting at 8:30 am. According to the earlier instructions, EVM counting could theoretically go on irrespective of the stage of postal ballot counting and chances of it getting completed before the completion of postal ballot counting cannot be ruled out.

Although, counting of postal ballots generally gets completed before the counting of EVMs, to ensure uniformity and uti-



most clarity in the counting process, the Election Commission has now decided that the penultimate (second last) round of EVM counting will be taken up only after the counting of postal ballots is completed at the counting centre where postal ballot counting is being done.

The Commission also directed that in cases where there are a large number of postal ballots, the returning officers are to ensure that sufficient number of tables and

counting staff are in place so that there is no delay and the counting process is further streamlined. Counting of postal ballots have come under question on multiple occasions when the winning margins are slender.

In view of the recent initiatives taken by the Commission for home voting for persons with disabilities and senior citizens above 85 years, the number of postal ballots has increased substantially.

## Supreme Court stays execution of death row convict in 2013 blasts case

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the execution of an alleged Indian Mujahideen operative who was sentenced to death in connection with the 2013 Dilsukhnagar blasts that left 18 dead and 131 injured.

The plea filed by convict Asadullah Akhtar was heard by a bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and N.V. Anjaria. "There shall be stay of execution of the death sentence of the appellant," the bench said.

Two powerful explosions in Hyderabad's Dilsukhnagar, a crowded shopping area, took place on the eve of February 21, 2013.

The first blast took place at a bus stop and another blast was near an eatery in Dilsukhnagar.

Akhtar, lodged in a Delhi jail, challenged the April verdict of the Telangana



High Court upholding the death penalty to five operatives of banned terror outfit Indian Mujahideen, including its co-founder Yasin Bhatkal, in the case.

The apex court directed the Delhi government to place before it the report of all probation officers relating to Akhtar within eight weeks.

"The superintendent of prison of the prison concerned, shall submit a report with regard to the nature of work which has been performed by the appellant

to award the punishment to the convicts.

"Life imprisonment would be completely futile since the sentencing aim of reformation is completely unachievable. Having given due consideration to all the aggravating and mitigating circumstances, we are of the firm view that this is a fit case wherein the death penalty awarded by the sessions court needs to be confirmed," it said.

On December 13, 2016, the NIA court convicted the five accused – Mohd Ahmed Siddiqui, Yasin Bhatkal, Pakistani national Zia-ur-Rahman alias Waqas, Asadullah Akhtar alias Hadid, Tabaseen Akhtar alias Monu and Ajaz Shaikh.

Two separate FIRs were registered at different police stations at that time. On March 14, 2013, the NIA took over the investigation into both cases.

### Minister Naik inaugurates "First Data Center Summit on Carbon-Free Energy" organized jointly by NSEFI and Amazon

New Delhi

The National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI), in partnership with Amazon successfully hosted the 1st Data Center Summit on Carbon-Free Energy at The Lalit, New Delhi. The landmark event brought together senior policymakers, renewable energy leaders, and data center industry captains to chart the course for India's sustainable and carbon-neutral digital infrastructure. Deepak Gupta (IAS Retd.), Hon Director General, NSEFI mentioned "Data centres can procure solar power directly from farmers' fields or get green attributes through decentralized agricultural projects.

This model creates a virtuous cycle of growth—data centres reduce their carbon footprint, farmers become energy entrepreneurs, and rural India becomes a stakeholder in the digital economy. The digital industry can lead by example, showing how sustainability and growth can move hand in hand. Michael Punke, Vice



President, Global Public Policy, Amazon Web Services, highlighting Amazon's carbon-free data center initiatives and investment journey in India mentioned "As we look to the future, we recognize new challenges, including the increasing energy demands of technologies like generative AI. That's why we're diversifying our investments across solar, wind, nuclear, battery storage, and emerging technologies. Our commitment to achieving net-zero carbon by 2040 remains unwavering. I want to em-

phasize that this is a journey we must undertake together. The path to sustainable digital infrastructure requires collaboration between government, industry, and society. AWS is committed to being a partner in India's sustainable digital transformation, and we look forward to making this vision a reality together." Delivering the Chief Guest Address, Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Shripad Yesso Naik, emphasized that "Under the visionary leadership of our Prime Minister

Narendra Modi, India has achieved 50% of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources—five years ahead of schedule. Our renewable energy capacity has grown more than four-fold in the last decade, and we are on track to reach 100 GW by 2030. The digital revolution and the clean energy revolution must now converge. India strongly believes that energy transition is not only about megawatts and gigawatts. It is about jobs, skills, and innovation. Every new carbon-free data center built in India will create green jobs, boost indigenous manufacturing of renewable and storage systems, and generate new business models for digital-energy convergence. It is about farmers supplying biomass for clean energy, engineers developing next-generation cooling systems, and startups innovating in energy management India's vision is clear: a digital economy powered by carbon-free energy.

## Opposition slams BJP over Ladakh statehood promise

New Delhi

The opposition parties on Thursday blamed the BJP for the recent violence in Ladakh, alleging that the ruling party's "breach of promise" on statehood and restoration of power to the region triggered people's anger, as they asked the Centre to engage in "meaningful dialogues" with the protesters.

A day after clashes between security personnel and protesters demanding statehood and constitutional protection left four people dead and more than 80 injured in Ladakh, an uneasy calm prevailed in the region on Thursday as police and paramilitary troops strictly enforced a curfew in Leh.

The Congress trained its guns on the ruling BJP, alleging that the crisis in Ladakh was the government's own creation, and calling the demand for inclusion of Ladakh under the



Sixth Schedule of the Constitution for its dignity and for the protection of its identity "legitimate" and "just". Termining the loss of precious lives in Ladakh tragic, Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera said in a post on X: "It's a grim reminder of the government's failed promises. In 2019, from the floor of Parliament, the nation was assured that the humiliation being inflicted on the people of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir then would usher in peace. Six years later, the trouble has only deepened."

"This crisis is the BJP government's own creation – one it now seeks to unfairly ignore," he said. Ladakh's demand for inclusion under the Sixth Schedule for dignity and for the protection of its identity is both legitimate and just, Khera said. It deserves not neglect, but compassion and statesmanship, the Congress leader said. Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav too blamed the BJP for the violent protests in Ladakh, alleging that the ruling party's "breach of promise" to Ladakhis triggered angry protests.

Farmer protesting against illegal mining crushed to death by tractor in Pilibhit

Greater Noida Lucknow  
The third edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS 2025) opened on a high note, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasizing the state's vision of transforming Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's concept of Antyodaya into Rashtrodaya.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, held on Upadhyaya's birth anniversary, CM Yogi highlighted the exhibition as a platform to advance Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat through the swadeshi model of "Make in India, Make for the World."

When the villagers blocked the path, the driver allegedly hurled abuses and threatened to kill them before ramming the tractor into the protesters.

Singh was crushed under the wheels, while three others — Kamal Singh, Durgesh Singh, and Ganesh — sustained injuries. He was rushed to the hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The assailants fled the spot, leaving the tractor-trolley behind, police stated.

The tractor has been seized, and efforts are underway to identify its driver, Station House Officer (SHO) Hazara police, Sharad Kumar said.

The deceased's son, Pritam Singh, lodged a complaint naming six persons, including Alan Ali, his three brothers, Hemant Maheshwari, and Arvind Yadav, besides six unidentified men, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Vikram Dahiya said.

A case of murder and other serious charges has been registered, he added.

PNB branch manager associate held for Rs 12 crore fraud in Balrampur

Balrampur (UP)  
A branch manager of Punjab National Bank (PNB) and another individual have been arrested on Thursday for allegedly embezzling over Rs 12 crore by opening fake loan accounts, officials said.

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During the investigation, the allegations were found to be true, and an FIR was registered on August 15, he added.

It was established that by creating around 46 fake loan accounts, a total of Rs 8.09 crore was embezzled, while Rs 3.93 crore was misappropriated through 40 Mudra loan accounts, Kumar said.

During the probe, the role of PSP Construction Company, owned by one of the accused, Samarjeet Singh, also came under scrutiny, the officer stated.

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## UPITS 2025 poised to transform Antyodaya into Rashtrodaya: CM Yogi

Greater Noida Lucknow  
The third edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS 2025) opened on a high note, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasizing the state's vision of transforming Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's concept of Antyodaya into Rashtrodaya.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, held on Upadhyaya's birth anniversary, CM Yogi highlighted the exhibition as a platform to advance Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat through the swadeshi model of "Make in India, Make for the World."

When the villagers blocked the path, the driver allegedly hurled abuses and threatened to kill them before ramming the tractor into the protesters.

Singh was crushed under the wheels, while three others — Kamal Singh, Durgesh Singh, and Ganesh — sustained injuries. He was rushed to the hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The assailants fled the spot, leaving the tractor-trolley behind, police stated.

The tractor has been seized, and efforts are underway to identify its driver, Station House Officer (SHO) Hazara police, Sharad Kumar said.

The deceased's son, Pritam Singh, lodged a complaint naming six persons, including Alan Ali, his three brothers, Hemant Maheshwari, and Arvind Yadav, besides six unidentified men, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Vikram Dahiya said.

A case of murder and other serious charges has been registered, he added.

PNB branch manager associate held for Rs 12 crore fraud in Balrampur

Balrampur (UP)  
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buyers from 80 countries and 2,250 exhibitors from 75 districts participating. Russia was welcomed as the partner country, alongside more than 532 foreign buyers, as CM Yogi stressed that UPITS will play a key role in positioning Uttar Pradesh as a global investment destination.

In a symbolic gesture, the CM presented a statue of Goddess Durza crafted by Firozabad

artisans to the Prime Minister, celebrating the state's rich heritage of craftsmanship. He also praised the government's initiatives for artisans, such as the Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana, which has trained over four lakh artisans and aligns with the One District, One Product (ODOP) scheme, strengthening the "Vocal for Local" movement. Uttar Pradesh, with 77

GI-tagged products and 75 more in the application process, is fast emerging as the country's leading GI capital, reflecting the state's commitment to preserving its cultural legacy.

CM Yogi highlighted the state's industrial and entrepreneurial growth, noting that the CM Yuva Udyami Scheme, launched in January 2025, has already benefited more than 90,000 youths. He also refer-

enced the success of the UP Global Investors Summit in 2023, where proposals worth Rs 40 lakh crore were received, and projects worth over Rs 12 lakh crore have already commenced production. Preparations are underway for a ground-breaking ceremony worth Rs 5 lakh crore this November.

The Chief Minister underscored Uttar Pradesh's push in the MSME sector, which now employs over two crore youths, making it the state's second-largest employment hub after agriculture. Private industrial park schemes, including 11 pledge parks, have further expanded employment and investment opportunities. On the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, CM Yogi announced a plan to develop 100-acre industrial zones in every district, offering comprehensive support for skill development, entrepreneurship, and self-employment.

Uttar Pradesh's emergence as a global hub for IT, semiconductors, and electronics manufacturing was another highlight. The state contributes 5% of India's mobile phone output and over 50% of mobile component production. CM Yogi emphasized the importance of reducing foreign dependence, harnessing indigenous resources, and fostering collaboration between industry, academia, R&D centers, and society to achieve self-reliance.

### Youths demand CBI probe as CM claims recruitment plans targeted

Dehradun  
The Uttarakhand Beroggar Sangh, protesting against the alleged leak of three pages of a graduate-level examination's question paper, on Thursday demanded that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) investigate the "irregularities in the examination."

Amid the uproar caused by the leaking of three pages of the question paper during the competitive examination for various departments on September 21, a delegation led by union president Ram Kandwal met Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, but it yielded no results.

Responding to the demand for a CBI probe into the paper leak case, Dhami said it is a ploy to complicate and divert the recruitment process in the state. He said the recruitment process in the state will continue uninterrupted and all the vacant posts will be filled.

A large number of stu-

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dents, under the banner of the Uttarakhand Beroggar Sangh, have put up tents on the road outside the Parade Ground here and are sitting on an indefinite strike.

The union has also demanded the immediate resignation of the Uttarakhand Subordinate Services Selection Commission (UKSSSC) chairman, cancellation of the examination and amendments to the constant recruitment rules from the state government.

The union's state vice president, Suresh Singh, said, "We will not end our protest until the state government accepts all our demands."

Cambodian officials explore India's governance model in Bulandshahr

Avnish Tyagi Bulandshahr  
A delegation of administrative officers from Cambodia arrived in Bulandshahr on Thursday to participate in an in-depth training program focused on India's administrative system and development policies. The special workshop, held at the auditorium of DPS School, offered the visiting officials a comprehensive view of India's governance mechanism and developmental initiatives.

The delegation was briefed by District Mag-

Avnish Tyagi Bulandshahr

The birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay was commemorated with grandeur on Thursday at Nikunj Hall in Bulandshahr. The event drew a distinguished gathering of political leaders, senior party workers, and local dignitaries, all paying tribute to the visionary thinker and leader, Dharma Pal Singh, the General Secretary of BJP Uttar Pradesh Organization, graced the occasion as the chief guest.

The program was presided over by District President Vikas Chauhan, while the proceedings were conducted by Deepak Rishi. In a ceremony highlighting the party's respect for its long-standing members, senior BJP veteran workers from the district—some of whom have been associated with the party since the Jan Sangh days—were felicitated with shawls by Regional President Satyendra Sisodia.

As part of the ongo-

ing "Seva Pakhwada" campaign, winners of the district-wide "Vishit Bharat" (Developed India) art competition were also honored with mementos, celebrating the talent and creativity of young participants and wishing them a bright future.

Addressing the audience, Chief Guest Dharma Pal Singh described Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay's life as a source of inspiration. He highlighted Upadhyay's pioneering concept of In-

tegral Humanism, noting that it transformed politics from a mere pursuit of power into a tool for reaching the most marginalized sections of society. Singh emphasized that the BJP, guided by Upadhyay's principles, continues to focus on service, good governance, and the welfare of the poor.

Regional President Satyendra Sisodia underscored Upadhyay's unwavering commitment to organizational strength and ideologi-



cal clarity, urging party members to follow his example to bring about positive social change. District President Vikas Chauhan added that the day's gathering reinforced a collective resolve to internalize Upadhyay's vision and ensure that the party's policies and initiatives benefit every section of society.

The celebration was attended by an array of prominent leaders, including Rajya Sabha MP and BJP National Minister Surendra Nagar, Noida MP and former Union Minister Dr. Mahesh Sharma, District In-charge and State Minister Bhasant Tyagi, District Panchayat President Atul Tevatia, and MLAs Pradeep Chaudhary, Devendra Lodhi, Anil Sharma, Chandrapal Singh, Laxmi Raj Singh, and Meenakshi Singh, among others. The event reflected both reverence for Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay's legacy and a renewed commitment to his ideals within the district.

livery and management of schemes including pensions, health services, MNRGA, self-help groups, promoting the One District-One Product initiative.

The program was attended by a number of senior officials including ADM (E) Pramod Kumar Pandey, CMO Dr. Sunil Dohre, SP City Shankar Prasad, and trainee IAS officer Sudhanshu, among others, marking a significant step in fostering international cooperation and exchange of administrative expertise.

### GST 2.0 brings historic relief, Agra residents welcome tax cuts



Akash Jain Agra

In a landmark move under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the central government has rolled out GST 2.0, introducing wide-ranging reductions in tax rates. The initiative is expected to provide direct financial relief to millions of citizens across the country, particularly benefiting middle-class families and everyday consumers.

Under the new GST framework, essential services and commodities, including health services, vehicles, ration items, and daily consumer goods, have become more affordable. Analysts say this step will enhance the purchasing power of the public and bolster the nation's economic growth.

In Agra, MP Rajkumar Chahar led a public outreach drive at Aji Nagar Market, interacting directly with shopkeepers and customers alongside BJP workers. He provided detailed explanations about the GST rate reductions and emphasized the govern-

ment's commitment to welfare-driven policies.

Speaking at the event, MP Chahar highlighted that GST 2.0 represents more than just tax relief. "This initiative reinforces the spirit of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas.' Our goal is to ensure that every citizen is integrated into the mainstream of development without facing financial hardship," he said.

The initiative received widespread support from local leaders, including former MLA Mahesh Goyal and members of the Aji Nagar Market Committee. They described the GST reforms as historic and visionary, pledging to raise awareness about the scheme so that the benefits reach every section of the public.

With GST 2.0 now in effect, residents and businesses across Agra are expected to experience tangible relief, marking a significant step towards the government's efforts to create a more inclusive and economically empowered society.

### 5 booked for incurring losses worth Rs 11.84 crore to state electricity board

Shimla  
Three retired engineers of the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited (HPSEBL) and two directors of a company have been booked for providing undue benefits to a private company, causing the board losses worth around Rs 11.84 crore, police said on Thursday.

The accused have been identified as Senior Engineer Rajesh Thakur; former chief engineer (operations) Anup Dhillon; former superintendent engineer (operations), Y R Sharma; former chief engineer (commercial), and Directors of Gilvert Ispat Pvt Ltd, Abhin Moudgil and Umesh Modgil.

Based on a complaint filed by the Chairman of HPSEBL, Sanjay Gupta, in March 2025, an FIR was registered against the accused at Shimla's State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau's Police Station.

In the complaint, Gupta alleged that the connections of electricity to Gilvert Ispat Pvt Ltd, a company based in Solan's Barotiwala, were approved by the CMD without payment of outstanding dues, and the entire process was done in haste twice in one day (October 6, 2012).

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Slovenia bans Israeli PM Netanyahu from entering EU country

Ljubljana (Slovenia): Slovenia on Thursday said it was banning Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from entering the European Union country to underscore its defence of international law.

The decision was linked to an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court against the Israeli prime minister, Foreign Ministry official Neva Grasic said, according to the official STA news agency. The EU nation of some 2 million people, which recognised a Palestinian state last year, has been a vocal critic of Israeli actions in Gaza and Thursday's move against Netanyahu was apparently designed to underscore the country's politics.

Slovenia already had barred Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich from entering the country and imposed an arms embargo on Israel. "All countries that are bound by the international court, including Slovenia, must not recognize the situation resulting from Israel's illegal presence in the occupied Palestinian territory, and must not offer any support in maintaining this situation," she added.

The Slovenian government said on X that the decision sends "a clear message to the state of Israel that Slovenia expects consistent respect for the decisions of international courts and international humanitarian law."

BUSINESS

KK Kapila receives prestigious Prangey Award



New Delhi: Mr. K. K. Kapila, Chairman of Intercontinental Consultants and Technocrats (ICT) and President Emeritus of the International Road Federation (IRF), has been conferred the prestigious Louis Prangey Award by the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (IFDIC).

The award, regarded as the highest recognition by IFDIC—the Geneva-based global apex body of the consulting engineering industry—was presented during the IFDIC Global Infrastructure Conferences 2025, held from September 21 to 23 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre in South Africa. Instituted in honor of Louis Prangey, IFDIC's founding president, the award celebrates individuals who have rendered outstanding service to the global consulting engineering profession. In its 113-year history, only 20 individuals have received this distinction. Mr. Kapila is the first Asian to be honored with this ultimate recognition.

World requires global workforce can't escape this reality: EAM Jaishankar

New York: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said that today's changing world requires a global workforce, stressing that nations cannot escape the reality that demands for a global workforce cannot be met in many countries due to national demographics.

His remarks come amid trade and tariff challenges, as well as President Donald Trump's headline stance on immigration, including a new USD 100,000 fee on H-1B visas that largely affects Indian professionals who make up the majority of beneficiaries of these temporary work visas.

Addressing the event at the Heart of Development, Aid, Trade, and Technology hosted by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) on the margins of the UN General Assembly session on Wednesday, Jaishankar called for the creation of a more acceptable, contemporary, efficient model of a global workforce, which can then be located in a distributed, global workplace.

"Where that global workforce is to be housed and located may be a matter of a political debate. But there's no getting away. If you look at demand and you look at demographics, demands cannot be met in many countries purely out of national demographics," he said. "This is a reality. You cannot run away from this reality. So how do we create a more acceptable, contemporary, efficient model of a global workforce, which is then located in a distributed, global workplace? I think this is a very big question today which the international economy has to address," he said.

"We will see, as part of this re-engineered world, new, more different trade arrangements between countries, countries which will make decisions which they may not have made in other circumstances, countries which today will feel the desire, sometimes even the compulsion that there are better roads, shipping and much another trade interfaces than ever in human existence."

"So for all the obstacles and complications that may arise, I also think they will be countered in some ways by what will happen in the great domain," he said.



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Palestinian president Hamas will have no role in governing postwar Gaza

United Nations:

The Palestinian president, speaking over video after the United States revoked his visa, told world leaders Thursday that his people "reject" the 2023 Hamas attack on Israel and pledged that the militant group would have no role in governing Gaza after war ends and must hand over its weapons.

Mahmoud Abbas told the UN General Assembly that Palestinians in Gaza "have been facing a war of genocide, destruction, starvation and displacement" by Israel. His speech came as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu heads to New York to give his own address in person on Friday.

Despite laying out in gruesome detail the death and destruction in Gaza, Abbas said Palestinian authorities "reject" the action Hamas carried out on October 7 and that it does not represent their people. He also laid out a vision for what govern-

ment would look like in territories once the war is over, saying that the Palestinian Authority is "ready to bear full responsibility for governance and security. He added that "Hamas will have no role to play in governance," and "we will have to hand over their weapons to the Palestinian authorities."

"There can be no justice if Palestine is not freed," Abbas said.

In a short but resolute speech, Abbas thanked the world leaders who have stood up for Palestinians throughout the Gaza war, saying that the recent recognition of Palestinian statehood has presented his people with hope for peace and an end to the conflict. He welcomed the recent announcements from France, the UK and Canada to recognize them as an independent state and called for the remains free dozen countries to do the same.

But, he added, that symbolic recognition is not enough to address the present moment.

Chinese military says third aircraft carrier 'Fujian' will be launched soon

Beijing:

China's third aircraft carrier 'Fujian', which has been successfully conducting tests and training in accordance with the plan, will be commissioned soon, the Chinese military said on Thursday.

"It is not far off," Zhang Xiaogang, the spokesman of the Chinese Defence Ministry, told a media briefing here.



He said that carrier-based aircraft J-16T, J-35 and Kongfing-600 have completed catapult-assisted take-off and arrested landing training aboard the Fujian.

The success of the training demonstrates that Fujian has obtained electromagnetic catapult launch and recovery capabilities, paving the way for multiple types of carrier-based aircraft to be integrated into the carrier formation, and marking a milestone in the development of China's aircraft carriers, Zhang said.

Fujian, China's third aircraft carrier with hull number 18, was launched in June 2022 and named after Fujian Province. Unlike the ski-jump decks of China's first two carriers — the Liaoning and the Shandong — the Fujian features a flat flight deck, with a full-load displacement exceeding 80,000 tonnes.

Fujian is stated to be the most advanced aircraft carrier possessing an electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS) used by the American aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford.

China plans to operationalise Fujian this year as it has completed nearly three years of sea trials, setting the stage for the Chinese navy for the first time to operate three carrier groups.

The recent trial de-

ployments of Fujian in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea raised concerns about China flexing its naval muscle to enforce its territorial claims.

China claims Taiwan as part of its mainland. It also claims most of the South China Sea, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have counterclaims.

FICCI hosts Bharat R&D Summit 2025, urges stronger industry-academia collaboration

TSN/New Delhi:

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) hosted the inaugural Bharat R&D Summit 2025, at Federation House, New Delhi, under the theme "Innovating Together: Industry-Academia Collaboration." The summit brought together policymakers, scientists, and industry leaders to deliberate on India's research priorities and strengthen partnerships between academia and industry.

Prof. Ajay K Sood, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, highlighted that India's Gross Expenditure on R&D (GERD) stands at 0.7% of GDP, with less than 40% contributed by industry. "India must move beyond incremental work. Industry has to invest boldly in deep-tech and product-driven research in semiconductors, clean energy, biotechnology, and AI," he said, citing initiatives like the National Research Foundation and the ₹1 lakh crore deep-tech corpus as key enablers for impactful partnerships.

Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India stressed the importance of breaking silos across academia, industry, and government to meet Vision 2047 goals of sustainable growth and global leadership. "India's oceans hold immense potential from sustainable fisheries and deep-sea resources to ocean-based renewable energy. Industry must actively engage alongside initiatives like the Deep Ocean Mission to unlock these opportunities sustainably."



FICCI BHARAT R&D SUMMIT 2025 "Innovating Together: Industry-Academia Collaboration" September 25 - 26, 2025 | FICCI, New Delhi

Dr. Raj Choudhary, Co-founder of HCL and Chairman of the National Quantum Mission Governing Board, emphasized that India must transition from a services-led economy to a product nation to secure technology sovereignty. He said, "Overdependence on services is no longer sustainable. Large-scale investments in deep-tech and product development are key

to global competitiveness." He highlighted progress under the National Quantum Mission, including support for 104 quantum startups, semiconductor incentives, and the forthcoming R&D Innovation Fund, which will match government and private sector investments.

Ms. Anandi Iyer, Co-Chair of the FICCI Innovation Committee and Director, Fraunhofer India Office, underscored the triple helix model and the need for higher industry investment to strengthen India's innovation ecosystem. She said, "While India's academia excels in fundamental research and our industry is entrepreneurial, R&D expenditure is just 0.5% of GDP. Industry must step up to raise it beyond 2% in the next decade."

Prof. Sudhir Kumar Barai, Co-Chair, FICCI Innovation Committee and Director, BITS Pilani, offered closing remarks for the day. He said, "Industry participation is essential for impactful research. By fostering startups and engaging with platforms like the innovation exhibition, we can translate academic innovation into real-world solutions and address national challenges."

At the summit, FICCI unveiled a compendium of technologies for commercialization along with the release of a discussion paper titled "Addressing India's Challenge of Low Private Sector R&D Expenditure", which examines the barriers to higher industry participation in research and outlines actionable measures to strengthen India's innovation ecosystem.

Similarly, 412 MW Rampur Hydro Power Station achieved its highest-ever monthly generation of 3,451.60 MU and clocked record quarterly generation of 955.616 MU, along with highest single-day generation of 11,023 MU.

The 60 MW Naitwar Mori Hydro Power Station surpassed its design energy and generated 315.02 MU in its first operational year.

SJVN looks to spend Rs 1 200 cr as capex in FY26

New Delhi:

State-owned SJVN is looking to invest Rs 1,200 crore as capital expenditure on various projects in FY26 and generate 13,090 million units of electricity.

In a statement, the company said it achieved its highest-ever generation of 10,647 MU from all operational projects. "For FY2025-26, SJVN has an MOU target of 13,090 MU generation and Rs 12,000 crore capex," the company said. During the first quarter of the current fiscal year, the company has reported energy generation of 3,451.60 MU, recorded revenue of Rs 822.4 crore and profit after tax (PAT) of Rs 258.51 crore.

The 1,500 MW Naitwar Mori Hydro Power Station delivered record outputs, including the highest-ever quarterly generation of 3,451.60 MU, highest single-day generation of 3,572 MU and record monthly generation of 1,222.17 MU.

Similarly, 412 MW Rampur Hydro Power Station achieved its highest-ever monthly generation of 3,451.60 MU and clocked record quarterly generation of 955.616 MU, along with highest single-day generation of 11,023 MU.

The 60 MW Naitwar Mori Hydro Power Station surpassed its design energy and generated 315.02 MU in its first operational year. By combining producer priorities with consumer needs, the three organisations hope to stabilise supply, reduce market volatility, and ensure energy security for South Asia is affordable, traceable and responsibly produced.

APOA, CPOPC and Solidaridad Join Forces for Sustainable Palm Oil Supply

TSN/New Delhi:

The Asian Palm Oil Alliance (APOA), the Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries (CPOPC) and Solidaridad Network Asia Limited (SNAL) have signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Mumbai to create a more stable, sustainable and inclusive palm oil supply chain for South Asia.

The agreement establishes a formal plat-

form for cooperation between producers and consumers, with an emphasis on harmonising sustainability standards, strengthening traceability, and ensuring the inclusion of smallholders. The partnership will focus on India and neighbouring South Asian markets, which together account for more than 1.5 billion consumers.

"At a time when food security and price sta-

bility are front of mind for families and businesses across South Asia, this partnership gives producers and consumers a formal table to strengthen collaboration and foster mutual understanding in addressing shared challenges," said Atul Chaturvedi, Chairman of APOA.

The MOU aims to align national sustainability frameworks such as Indonesia Sustainable Palm Oil (ISPO), Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) and the Indian Palm Oil Sustainability (IPOS) framework. It also prioritises regenerative practices and NDPE-compliant (No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation) sourcing, using digital tools such as Solidaridad's SoliTrace to enable mill-to-market transparency.

Dr. R. V. Mehta, Executive Director of the Solvent Extractors' Association of India, said the initiative would help Indian and South Asian consumers make informed decisions about palm oil's role in nutrition and affordability while ensuring sustainability. CPOPC Secretary General Izzana Salleh emphasised the importance of aligning with national sustainability standards and ensuring smallholders remain central to the supply chain. Solidar-

idad Asia's Managing Director, Dr. Shatadru Chattopadhyay, underlined the need to make sustainability both practical for producers and meaningful for buyers.

A joint working group, co-chaired by APOA and CPOPC with Solidaridad as the technical secretariat, will steer the partnership, monitor progress, and coordinate communications. The collaboration also

foresees joint advocacy in global platforms to promote fair trade, prevent discriminatory practices, and strengthen policy coherence.

By combining producer priorities with consumer needs, the three organisations hope to stabilise supply, reduce market volatility, and ensure energy security for South Asia is affordable, traceable and responsibly produced.

Ravichandran Ashwin signs with Sydney Thunder for BBL 15

**Sydney:** Indian spin legend Ravichandran Ashwin has signed with Sydney Thunder for the Big Bash League (BBL) season 15. He will be the first cricketer who has played for the India men's cricket team to represent a BBL club.

"Indian legend Ravichandran Ashwin has created history, joining Sydney Thunder for BBL 15. The Thunder Nation will welcome the biggest overseas signing since the League's inception, with Ashwin set to become the first male player to have represented India to join a BBL club," Sydney Thunder said in a release.

Ashwin will enter Thunder's line-up in early January and ignite the club's push to play in back-to-back BBL finals, having lost to Hobart Hurricanes in the previous season.

The release said that 39-year-old Ashwin brings an unrivalled cricket resume, a hunger to win and commitment to growing the game globally. His presence in Thunder Green will bring leadership and class on the field, while uniting the club's multi-cultural Western Sydney heartland, it added.

In 287 matches for India, Ashwin's off-spin claimed 765 international wickets, including 537 wickets at Test level. He is a Cricket World Cup (2011) and Champions Trophy (2013) winner with India, the ICC's Cricketer and Test Cricketer of the Year of 2016 and a member of the 2011-20 Men's Test Team of the Decade.

**Trying to find qualities of a leader in a lot of people: Agarkar**

**New Delhi:** India's Chief selector Ajit Agarkar has clarified that while Shreyas Iyer remains an important figure in India's white-ball setup, his absence from red-ball cricket continues due to fitness reasons. Iyer will lead India A against Australia before heading into the ODI series in Australia. "I don't think we've discussed the 50-over format yet. At the moment, we have to pick the team for these two Test matches against West Indies," Agarkar said.

"Shreyas is a senior player. He obviously leads his franchise in IPL (Indian Premier League) cricket. He's one of the senior guys. He was captain for India A as well. It's not like because of that we are looking at him as a Test captain. We're trying to find qualities of a leader in a lot of people and India A gives us an opportunity to see if somebody has that ability."

"Unfortunately, I think the statement was put out already, with regards to his fitness in terms of red-ball cricket, he won't be available... and he's been a key player in one-day cricket over the last few years," he added.

Shreyas has conveyed to the BCCI that he has taken a decision to take a six-month break from red-ball cricket. He wishes to utilise this period to build endurance, body resilience and work on his overall fitness, as per the BCCI media advisory.

## Suryakumar attends T20I hearing with Match Referee and PCB Officials

**Dubai:** Indian skipper Suryakumar Yadav's hearing for his alleged political comments and provocative gestures by the Pakistan team has been done in the presence of match referee Richie Richardson and the representatives from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), as per ICC sources.

BCCI has officially lodged a complaint against Pakistan cricketers Sahibzada Farhan and Harris Rauf for their inappropriate actions during the high-voltage Asia Cup's Super Four encounter on September 21.

According to BCCI sources, a complaint has been filed with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and match referee Andy Pycroft. The Indian team has demanded strict action against both players for conduct that they believe crossed the line of acceptable on-field behaviour.

Notably, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had also filed a complaint against the Indian skipper for allegedly making political remarks during the post-match presentation and press conference following the group stage clash between the two rivals.



Suryakumar attends T20I hearing with Match Referee & PCB officials

As per sources, Suryakumar could be let off with a warning or a fine. It is likely that 15 per cent of his match fee will be cut, as per sources.

During Pakistan's innings during the Super Four clash, opener Sahibzada Farhan celebrated his half-century in controversial fashion by holding his bat like a gun, a move that has

been widely criticised as being insensitive and provocative. Later in the match, pacer Harris Rauf came under fire for multiple incidents. After dismissing Sanju Samson, Rauf showed aggression, and later, when he was stationed near the boundary rope, responded to the jeers from Indian spectators by lifting his fingers to indicate

"0-6", a reference to Pakistan's groundless claims that they downed six Indian fighter jets during the four-day clash at the border after India's Operation Sindoor in May this year.

During the incident, Rauf was teased by the fans with the chants of "Virat Kohli", as the legendary batter had hit him for two success-

sive sixes during a tense run-chase of 160 runs at Melbourne during the T20 World Cup 2022, one of which has been described by the International Cricket Council (ICC) as the 'Shot of the Century'.

Interestingly, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had earlier lodged two complaints with the ICC against the Indian captain. PCB was against Suryakumar Yadav's comment after the game on September 14 on the Pahalgan incident, as, according to them, he made it political.

"Perfect occasion, taking the time out, we stand by the families of the victims of the Pahalgan terror attack. We express our solidarity. Want to dedicate the win to all our armed forces who showed a lot of bravery. Hope they continue to inspire us all, and we give them more reasons on the ground whenever we get an opportunity to make them smile," Suryakumar Yadav said after the win.

India has already reached the final of the Asia Cup with wins over Pakistan and Bangladesh in the Super Four, while Pakistan battles Bangladesh today, in a virtual semifinal, with the winner getting to play India in the finals.

KL's 74 steadies India A during 412-run chase against Australia A at Lucknow



Lucknow:

A steady half-century by KL Rahul and an unbeaten knock of 44\* by Sai Sudarshan put India A ahead in their 412-run chase at the end of day three of their second four-day unofficial Test against Australia A at Lucknow on Thursday.

At the end of day three, India A was 169/2, with Sudarshan (44\*) and Manav Suthar (1\*) unbeaten. They need 243 more runs to win.

India started the day three with Australia A at 16/3, with Nathan McSweeney unbeaten at 11. After India elected to field first, half-centuries from McSweeney (74 in 162 balls, with 10 fours) and Jack Edwards (88 in 78 balls, with 11 fours and a six) took Australia to 420, despite Suthar's figures of 5/107.

Sudarshan, with his 75, was the India A's sole

resistance as they managed to put up 194 runs, trailing by 226 runs. Henry Thornton (4/36) was the pick of the bowlers for the Aussies.

During their second innings, however, the Aussies slipped to 16/3. Pacer Mohammed Siraj (2/20) struck early on day three, removing Cooper Connolly (0) to reduce Australia A to 7/4. However, McSweeney put on a 90-run fifth-wicket stand with Josh Philippe (50 in 48 balls, with eight fours), helping his side go beyond the 100-run mark at least.

Gumoor Brar (3/42) and Suthar (3/50) struck at regular intervals, bundling out Australia for 185 runs, leaving McSweeney unbeaten at 85\* in 149 balls, with 10 fours and a six. Australia led by 411 runs, giving India 412 to win the unofficial Test.

India face big blow ahead of CWC25 as pacer suffers injury in warm-up clash

**Bengaluru:** India have been hit with a massive injury blow as pacer Arundhati Reddy was wheelchair off the field in the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup warm-up game against England on Thursday.

Doubts loom over Reddy's participation in the World Cup following a freak accident in her follow-through while bowling against England in Bengaluru, as per ICC.

The pacer, who had earlier snapped the wicket of England opener Amy Jones, looked poised to take a return catch struck back at her by Heather Knight, but landed on her left leg awkwardly before falling to the ground.

Doctors raced onto the ground and attempted to help Reddy off the ground, before a wheelchair was called for the bowler.

In 11 ODIs since her debut last year, the right-arm pacer has taken 15 wickets at an average of 32.66, with best figures of 4/66. In her most recent bilateral outing against Australia, she took four wickets in two matches, including three wickets in Delhi. This year, she has tak-



Big blow for India ahead of CWC25 as pacer injured in warm-up

en seven wickets in six matches at an average of 41.85.

Team India will start their ICC Women's World Cup campaign against Sri Lanka on September 30 in Guwahati. The two-time finalists in 2005 and 2017, India will be aiming to lift their maiden title in home conditions. They are heading into the tournament after a 1-2 series loss to Australia recently.

Coming to the warm-up game, India elected

to field first, and England is 214/3 in 36 overs at the time of writing.

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh, Uma Chetry, Renuka Singh Thakur, Deepthi Sharma, Sneha Rani, Sree Charani, Radha Yadav, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud. Reserves: Tejal Hasabnis, Prema Rawat, Priya Mishra, Minnu Mani, Sayali Satghare.

Irfan feels WI series a "missed opportunity" to try a new fast bowler, rest Bumrah

**New Delhi:** Following India's squad selection for the home series against West Indies, former Indian cricketer Irfan Pathan expressed that pacer spearhead Jasprit Bumrah could have been rested for the series, while giving a chance to a new fast bowler to play, since the country needs a pool of eight to nine good fast bowlers in long-term.

Bumrah's selection was one of the major talking points of the squad selection for the home WI Tests. Bumrah played just three out of five Tests on the tour of England and took 14 wickets with two five-wicket hauls. But during the fourth Test at Manchester, he struggled with his fitness and delivered his worst-ever Test figures of 2/112. During the ongoing Asia Cup, he has not been at his best elite, with five scalps in four matches at an average of 22.00, an economy rate of 7.33 and best figures of 2/18. Bumrah's workload will be a major concern, as the series is scheduled to start on October 2, just over a week after India plays the Asia Cup final on September 28.



Irfan calls WI series a "missed opportunity" to test new pacer, give Bumrah rest

On his YouTube channel, Pathan said that while Bumrah's commitment to Test cricket is fantastic, he would have picked up a young fast bowler an opportunity if he was a selector.

"It seems like a missed opportunity not to play a young fast bowler in these two Tests, but that's the team's current direction. If I were a selector or manager, I would have surely tried to give a young fast bowler an opportunity, focusing on their development, not just quick results.

Bumrah remains committed to Test cricket, which is fantastic," he said.

Pathan said that Bumrah's workload management was great during the Indian tour, and India has a great chance to continue doing so in Indian conditions, as spinners primarily dominate.

"Still, it's good that Bumrah maintains Test cricket as his priority. Selectors could have utilised this series to give proper rest to Bumrah and groom a young fast bowler, something India must

prioritise for long-term vision. India needs a group of eight good fast bowlers, not just three or four," he added.

Irfan also welcomed all-rounder Axar Patel's return to the team, who last played a Test in February last year against England, saying that his return will give India batting depth, as India will also field other spin bowling all-rounders, Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar, alongside him.

But Irfan wondered if Kuldeep, who last featured during the New Zealand series last year, could miss out again, having last played a Test in October last year and sitting out during India's matches against England away from home.

"Axar's return strengthens the team. When Axar plays alongside Washington and Jadeja, the team gains batting depth. Does this mean Kuldeep Yadav may miss out again? I would definitely want to see him play, but with home conditions generally allowing only two fast bowlers, his spot is not guaranteed," said the former all-rounder.

Smriti Mandhana recalls receiving Indian jersey at age of 17

**Mumbai:** Ahead of her side's ICC Women's World Cup campaign, Indian batter Smriti Mandhana spoke on receiving her Indian jersey for the first time ever as a teenager, saying that her brother and parents felt "emotional" on seeing her wearing India's iconic blue colours.

Smriti, currently in red-hot form heading into the tournament, was speaking to JioStar ahead of her side's ICC Women's Cricket World Cup campaign start against Sri Lanka from September 30 at Guwahati.

Speaking to JioStar, Smriti recalled that she was 17 when she received her Indian jersey, having made her debut



Smriti Mandhana recalls the pride of receiving India jersey at 17

in 2014.

"I remember I was 17 when I got the India jersey in my room. I do not think I can forget it. I wore it and sent the photos to my parents and my brother. They were

very emotional," recalled Mandhana proudly.

Smriti recalled that being in Sangli, a city in Maharashtra, and not many girls playing cricket back then was a significant challenge for her,

as she had to travel to Pune and spend four to five months away from home.

"As a 14-year-old to do that, and miss out on school, it was very challenging," she added.

Smriti recalled that during the semifinal of the Commonwealth Games against Australia in 2022 at Birmingham, a tournament in which India secured a historic silver medal, was one of those instances of feeling "extremely proud of wearing the jersey". She also said that since then, with so much hard work put in, the belief within the team has "changed a lot".

"Everyone believes they are match-winners. The last T20 World Cup (in 2024 when India finished at third in Group stage and missed out in the next round) was something which hit me quite a bit. I thought to myself, 'I do not want to feel like this as an athlete in my life. Post that, a lot of

fitness and nutritional changes have come into place. We all have been waiting for this World Cup," she added.

Mandhana said that since 2019, a lot has changed for women's cricket and she is excited to see fans turning in big numbers to cheer the team.

"The Women's Premier League (WPL) has made us immune to the loud crowd as well. Nothing can beat people cheering, India at the stadiums," she concluded.

This year, Mandhana has been in red-hot form, scoring 928 runs in 14 innings at an average of 66.28 with a strike rate of 115.85, with four centuries and three fifties and a best score of 135.

She finished as the leading wicket-taker in the recent home series against Australia, which India lost 1-2, with 300 runs in three matches at an average of 100.00, with two centuries and a fifty. In the final ODI yesterday, with a 50-ball Virat Kohli to be overtaken the fastest century by an Indian in ODI cricket across both men's and women's cricket.

India will start their Cricket World Cup campaign at home against Sri Lanka in Guwahati, with Mandhana needing 43 runs to break Australia's Belinda Clark's record of 970 runs in women's ODIs during the 1997 calendar year, the most by a women's cricketer.

**Badminton**  
Asia U17, U15  
C'ships: Tanvi,  
Bornil to lead  
Indian challenge  
in China

**New Delhi:**  
Asian U-15 champion Tanvi Patri and former champion Bornil Changmai will lead a strong 36-member Indian squad for the Badminton Asia U17 and U15 Championships to be held in Chengdu, China, from October 21-26, 2025.

Tanvi and Changmai will this time compete in the U-17 categories as the Indian contingent hopes to build on the last two successful campaigns. India had won a gold and a bronze in 2024, and one gold, one silver, and one bronze in 2023, with both editions taking place in Chengdu, as per a press release from the Badminton Association of India (BAI).

The Indian team was selected based on the players' performance in the just-concluded Ashwini Gupta Memorial All India Sub Junior (U-15 & U-17) Ranking Badminton Tournament 2025, held at Panchkula, Haryana, from September 13 to 23, 2025, and has a mix of some already established stars, along with a few fresh faces.

"India's consistent success in the continental championships over the years reflects the strength of our junior development program. This squad has several promising players with the potential to bring home medals, which highlights the depth and talent within the team," said Badminton Association of India Secretary General, Ranjay Mishra. Among the squad, Sharayu Ranjane will feature in all three categories of U-15, teaming up with Sojaya Shelar in girls' doubles and Hemant Sri Sammelis in mixed doubles. Punith S and Deepak Raj Aditi, who will partner each other in the U-17 mixed doubles, will also be in action in boys and girls' doubles, respectively.

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# Sajan Prakash targets 200m butterfly glory at Asian Aquatic Championship

**Ahmedabad:**  
Duble Olympian Sajan Prakash returns to a major continental stage at the Asian Aquatic Championship 2025, beginning September 28 at the Viceroy Savarkar Sports Complex in Ahmedabad, with his sights set on the 200m butterfly medal.

After missing qualification for the Paris Olympics and taking a break from the sport, the 31-year-old has eased back into competition this year and now aims to dip under the two-minute mark in his signature event against Asia's best, as per a press release from the Swimming Federation of India (SFI).

Prakash admitted the Paris qualification setback left him mentally and physically drained. He said, "I swam for more than 20 years without a proper break, and I was mentally burnt out after I missed the cut for Paris."

**Kalinga Lancers strengthen squad ahead of Hockey India League 2026**



**New Delhi:**  
Kalinga Lancers had a successful outing at the Hero Hockey India League auction, making key additions to their squad for the new season, scheduled to take place in January 2026.

With three Indian and four overseas slots to fill, Kalinga Lancers began proceedings by acquiring Australian goalkeeper Jed Showden for Rs 10 lakh. The 24-year-old made his senior team debut earlier this year and was part of Australia's recent Oceania Cup title-winning team, as per a press release from Kalinga Lancers.

The franchise then picked up local talent Amit Kumar Toppo at his base price of Rs 2 lakh. He was a member of Odisha's maiden title-winning team at the Men's Senior Hockey National Championship



Sajan Prakash eyes 200m butterfly glory at Asian Aquatic Championship

is. "I just wanted to rest, treat my shoulder and enjoy life a little. I also explored coaching during that time. Since restarting in January, I have been taking it slowly, but I am happy to be back in competition."

Earlier this year, Prakash showed his class at the 2025 World Police and Fire Games in the United States, winning 10 medals, including seven golds. He also bagged four medals at the Senior National Aquatic Championships in Bhubaneswar.

At the Asian Aquatic Championship, Prakash will compete in the 200m butterfly, the event in which he qualified for two Olympic Games, along with the 4x200m freestyle relay and the 4x100m medley relay. He explained, "I swam

the Bengal Tigers on Thursday officially announced their team line-up for the upcoming Hockey India League (HIL) 2026, after an action-packed player auction in New Delhi.

The auction showcased some thrilling moments, with intense bidding for top talent and plenty of excitement around new and returning players. The squads feature a mix of seasoned internationals, emerging Indian talents and promising U-21 players, reflecting the Tigers' focus on both performance and nurturing young talent, as per a press release.



Bengal Tigers unveil squads for Hockey India League 2026 after auction

Group, the team owner, alongside Deepak Thakur, Head Coach (Women's), Dipika, Assistant Coach (Women's) and Jagraj Singh, Men's Team Manager, who ensured that each team selection aligned with the Tigers' vision of competitive and dynamic hockey.

Bengal Tigers Men's Hockey Team Line Up For HIL - Jagraj Singh, Jaskaran Singh, Anil Deep, Pradhan Pooanna Chandura, Afan Yousef, Abhishek, Guresh Singh, Sukhjeet Singh, Pardeep Singh Sandhu, James Carr, Gunthor Boccart, Hayden Eble, Sean Findlay, Enrique

1:58.98 at Nationals in June, and my goal here is to get below two minutes. That's the strategy, and I will be happy if I can achieve that."

Looking ahead, Prakash said this meet is also a step towards the Asian Games in 2026. "The Asian Games are a year away. This is a good chance to see where we are and what we need to improve."

On the significance of the competition, Prakash highlighted the importance of the championship being staged in India. He said, "The fastest swimmers in Asia are going to be here, and it's going to be a very quick meet. I was part of the 2026 edition, and nine years later, to still be racing makes me proud. Hoping it at some give Indian swimmers exposure to a big stage and can raise the standard for the sport. Hopefully, it will inspire the next generation."

## Bengal Tigers announce squads for Hockey India League 2026 following auction

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Several key players from last season have been retained, ensuring continuity and experience within the squads. A highlight of the auction was the intense bidding for Agustina Gonsalves and Valentina R. R. de los Llanos, with two other teams competing fiercely. In the end, the Tigers secured both players, adding strength and experience to their line-up.

The auction was overseen by Rahul Todi, Managing Director, Strachi

Gonzales, Christopher Ruhr, Tom Grambsch, Pramod, Vivek Lalani, Aishik Jadhav and Ketan Kushwaha.

Bengal Tigers Women's Hockey Team Line Up For HIL - Lalrenziam, Mahima Choudhary, Vandana Kataria, Lalrinpuia Pachuaw, Shubis Chuan Pukhamban, Jennifer Rizo, Agustina Gonsalves, Valentina R. R. de los Llanos, Victoria Manuela, Emma Findlay, Noor Orpa de Bast, Sohaanna Bannings, Manisha Chaudhan, Sonika, Monika, Pooja Sahoo, Gurjit Kaur, Aditi Maheshwari, Sakshita Kaur and Anjali Gattam.

## Breaking Time

**What to do**  
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digit 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only correct solution.

1	5	6						8
			6			5	3	
4			7		1			
2			8	1				
			3		6			
			4	5		8		
		7		4			2	
3	2			5				
5						9	1	6

## Solution, Sudoku

8	5	2	7	3	4	6	9	1
7	4	9	8	6	1	2	5	3
3	6	1	9	5	2	7	8	4
4	2	5	1	7	9	3	6	8
9	3	6	5	4	8	1	7	2
1	7	8	6	2	3	5	4	9
6	9	3	2	8	5	4	1	7
2	8	7	4	1	6	9	3	5
5	1	4	3	9	7	8	2	6

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# Alcaraz survives ankle injury scare, advances to second round

**Tokyo:**  
Carlos Alcaraz overcame an injury scare to progress to the second round of the ongoing Japan Open competition on Thursday, beating Sebastian Baez in a convincing manner.

Alcaraz produced dead silence from the audience when he went down to the court 20 minutes into the match, needing some help with his left ankle, but nonetheless continued to script an easy 6-4, 6-2 win, as per Olympics.com.

Following the match, he said, as quoted by Olympics.com, "I think I played a great level of tennis besides what happened at the beginning of the match. I am just happy to get the win and happy that I was able to play until the end of the match."

During the fifth games of the first set, with scores level 2-2, Alcaraz's leg gave him a moment of concern as he charged forward from baseline and he fell over his back, clutching his head and



Alcaraz survives ankle injury scare to advance to 2nd round

grabbing his left ankle in agonising pain. The audience held its breath, waiting for the world number one to get up and continue. Alcaraz got proper treatment and continued to maintain the crowd, converting his second break point to take a 5-4

lead. Alcaraz got some more time to recover as rain suspended play for 20 minutes and he got his ankle taped up. Following the resumption of play, Alcaraz was in full flow, finishing the match in 90 minutes.

The Spanish sensation, a six-time Grand Slam champion already, was worried about his ankle initially. The Spaniard said at first he was seriously worried but felt better as the ankle started to settle. "I feel like it was un-

lucky. I was feeling good, and it was about running to a key drop shot he made in the fifth game, and that happened," he said.

"I would say it saved me that I was going forward, and thanks to that, it didn't blend all around. I was worried because, in the first minutes of playing, my ankle did not feel good at all. But then after a while, I just started to feel a little bit better. I could walk to the bench, which was a relief for me."

"Right now I am feeling the same way which for me I would say is great because when it cooled down, I am feeling the same way when I was playing on the court. I think it is a great sign," he continued.

Alcaraz is optimistic of playing the second round match against Belgium's Zizou Bergs on Saturday, but is not committing to his availability at a 100 per cent, saying that he will do whatever it takes to be good enough to play.

## India takes early lead, sweeps women's 50 m prone event podium



India sweeps podium in women's 50m prone, takes early lead

**New Delhi:**  
Indian shooters started off their ISSF Junior World Cup campaign in New Delhi with a high, securing all the podium spots in the women's 50 m prone event at Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range on Thursday.

The men missed out on the gold in the same event, had to settle for a silver and bronze, but it was all enough to help India take an early lead in the medal tally, as per Olympics.com.

Anushka Thakur walked out with the gold in the women's prone 50 m rifle shooting contest, with 621.6 points, edg-

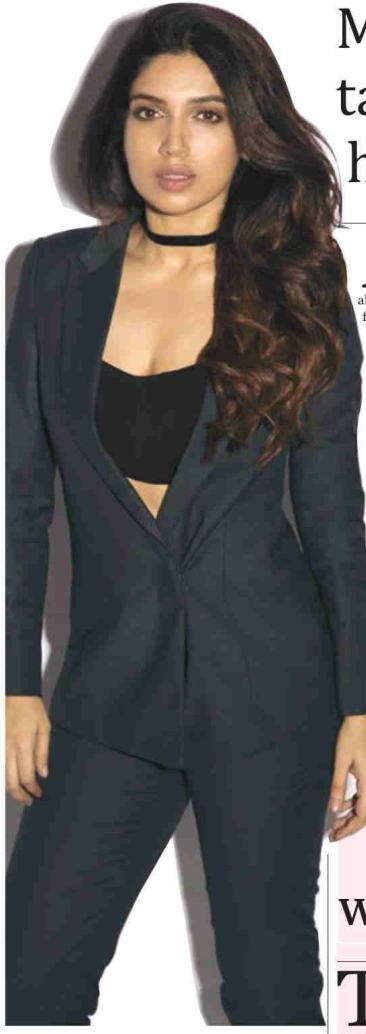
ing out Anshikha, who shot 619.2 and Adhya Agrawal, who secured a bronze with 615.9 points.

India's Sanjya Sudesh Sapale (610.9) and Nimrat Kaur Brar (604.3) also finished within the top 10 with eighth and ninth spot finishes.

Coming to the men's event, India's Deependra Singh Shekhawat, who shot 617.9 points, missed out on gold narrowly, which went to Kamal Nurikhatmetov, who outthrew the Indian by a point.

In the same event, the fifth spot went to Vedant Nitin Waghmare, while Kushagra Singh Rajawat and Kunal Sharma occupied the eighth and last place, respectively, in a field of 11 players.

A 69-member Indian shooting contingent, led by Paris 2024 Olympian Raiza Dhillon and Asian trap champion Sabera Harris, is a part of the competition, which will conclude on October 2 and will feature 208 shooters from 19 federations. This is the first time a Junior World Cup has been held in India.



# My lows in life have taught me more than my highs: Bhumi Pednekar

Mumbai actor Bhumi Pednekar recently opened up about her journey in films and how her work has shaped her life and career.

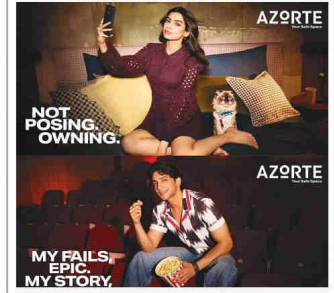
Bhumi said that her very first film continues to hold a special place in her heart. Talking about the "presence and impact" of her debut film Dum Laga Ke Haisha, she explained how it changed the course of her life.

She explained how it changed the course of her life. "I can never shake off the presence and impact that Dum Laga Ke Haisha had on me. It was a film that truly made a difference. I started my journey

reflected on her decade-long journey in cinema. Bhumi said that her very first film continues to hold a special place in her heart. Talking about the "presence and impact" of her debut film Dum Laga Ke Haisha, she explained how it changed the course of her life. "I can never shake off the presence and impact that Dum Laga Ke Haisha had on me. It was a film that truly made a difference. I started my journey

as a teenager at Yash Raj, with big dreams and aspirations of becoming a heroine in the film industry. Back then, I was someone seeking opportunities and acceptance. Today, I find myself seeking purpose and impact; that's how I've evolved as a person," she said during the session. The actor also spoke about how her films over the years have connected with audiences, adding that movies like Toilet: Ek Prem Katha, 'Sonchiriya,' 'Badhaai Do,' and 'Bhakhshak' dealt with themes such as "ethical journalism and gender-based violence," while 'The Royals' celebrated "women in positions of power." "For me, these last 10 years have been filled with nothing but gratitude. Every morning, I wake up feeling like I'm headed to a film set, and that feeling is everything. This is just the beginning. I want to keep working until my last breath," she added. Bhumi also spoke about the challenges of facing trolling and online negativity and shared how they have become accustomed to "trolling and bullying." However, she said it becomes harder when women are the targets. "Trolling, bullying, whatever you call it, we're used to it. But when women are targeted, I don't always know how to deal with it. I don't wake up with courage; I find it within myself because I don't have another option. I know I'm going to survive this. I have too much drive and ambition in me. We live in a world dominated by social media, and with it come constant noise and opinions. My lows in life have taught me more than my highs, and they've shown me that I am far more resilient than I thought."

## Khushi Kapoor, Vedang Raina join AZORTE's Autumn-Winter 2025 campaign



Mumbai actor Khushi Kapoor and Vedang Raina have joined the AZORTE Autumn-Winter 2025 campaign. The campaign aims to reach out to Gen Z's biggest cultural anxiety: the fear of being "mid".

AZORTE, one of the country's fastest-growing fashion and lifestyle destinations, has roped in Bollywood actors Khushi Kapoor and Vedang Raina for its Autumn-Winter 2025 campaign. Reflecting its commitment to understanding its audience and their evolving identities, AZORTE has created a space that celebrates the real, the raw, and the unedited. More than fashion, the campaign is about giving Gen Z the confidence to wear their journey, embrace their 'mid' moments, and feel comfortable in their own skin. With a narrative that states, "You're not Mid, You're Just in the Middle of your story", the campaign aims to reach out to Gen Z's biggest cultural anxiety: the fear of being "mid". Further with the inclusion of the young stars, the campaign flips the narrative around mediocrity, reframing it as a space of self-discovery, growth, and authentic expression. It further states that "mid isn't mediocre" but rather momentum and the stumble before the stride. The campaign also draws attention towards the world obsessed with extremes, instant success, overnight virality, and curated perfection, where Gen Z feels constant pressure to stand out. "The fear of being 'average' often overshadows the messy, in-between moments of becoming a star," says AZORTE. The campaign offers a refreshing perspective: being "in the middle" isn't failure, it's progress," the company added, as per the press release. Created by Famous Innovations and directed by Anish Dehbia, the visually striking brand film shows how the campaign aims to explore these moments of self-doubt and turn them into moments of style, confidence, and unapologetic self-expression. "From fashion experiments that don't always land, like a dance reel that feels authentically terrible, to nights spent dreaming of what's next, the narrative celebrates the raw and real journey of figuring life out, reminding Gen Z that they don't need to have it all figured out just yet. The campaign reinforces the idea that authentic beats perfect every time," they added.

# JioHotstar Unveils Gripping Trailer of Search with Konkona Sensharma

New Delhi The secrets of youth, political cover-ups, a brutal murder and a seasoned investigator's race against time - JioHotstar today revealed the trailer of its upcoming Hotstar Specials' crime thriller 'Search: The Naina Murder Case'.



Produced by Applause Entertainment & Highgate Entertainment, in Association with Applause Production, and directed by Rohan Sippy, this series follows ACP Sanyukta Das and rookie ACP Jai Kanwal (played by Surya Sharma) as they solve a case that shows the dark underbelly of a society where truth is the rarest currency and everyone is a suspect. Search: The Naina Murder Case also stars Shub Pandit, Varun Thakur, Dhruv Sehgal, Shradha Das and others. Speaking about the series, director Rohan Sippy shared, "Search: The Naina Murder Case is so much more than a murder mystery or a whodunit - it is an emotional, political and psychological maze. The series is filled with constant twists and turns where the truth always remains elusive."

## Santosh Mitra Square honours Armed Forces with 'Operation Sindoor' theme



Kolkata's Durga Puja 2025 is just around the corner, the air in Kolkata is already charged with excitement. Every year, the city's pandals push the limits of creativity, and this year is no different. One pandal that's already making headlines is the Santosh Mitra Square Durga Puja, which has chosen a deeply patriotic theme: Operation Sindoor. The pandal has been designed to honour the bravery of the Indian Armed Forces. From the terrorist attack at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir to the success of Operation Sindoor, the visuals recreate scenes of sacrifice, courage, and victory. Step inside, and it feels like you've entered a battlefield. Models of military weapons, such as the BrahMos missile and S-400 systems, add to the powerful effect, making the pandal not just a place of worship, but also a reminder of national pride. Sajal Ghosh, General Secretary of the Santosh Mitra Square Durga Puja Committee and BJP Councillor, explained the vision behind the theme, stating that the idea was to awaken a sense of "patriotism in people's hearts." While speaking to ANI, Ghosh said, "The idea behind creating this pandal is simple - to awaken a sense of patriotism in people's hearts. Operation Sindoor is the voice of every Indian's heart. It showcased the dignity and strength of our armed forces, and how they destroyed the enemy and protected our nation. Through this pandal, we wanted to bring that bravery alive for everyone to see." The festive fervour in Kolkata is once again marked by the creativity and thematic depth of its iconic Durga Puja pandals.

# Kareena Kapoor, Prithviraj Sukumaran begin shooting for Meghna Gulzar's 'Daayra'



Mumbai actors Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran have officially commenced the shooting of their upcoming film, 'Daayra'. Taking to their respective social media handles, the actors shared glimpses from the first day of shoot, adding several BTS moments. "Day 1. 68th film Daayra with the most amazing @meghnagulzar and @therealprithvi. Send love and blessings." Kareena wrote in the caption. From holding a puja ceremony on the first day of production to discussing with director Meghna Gulzar, trying look tests, shooting scenes, and reading scripts, the actor offered an intimate insight into their preparations. In a special highlight, veteran lyricist Gulzar also arrived on the sets and engaged in a conversation with the team. Likewise, Prithviraj expressed a feeling of thrill in his post as he added, "#Daayra is officially rolling. A new story, a new journey that challenges and excites in equal parts. Thrilled to be stepping into this world." Director Meghna Gulzar dedicated a special post to mark the beginning of a journey of "blurred and crossed lines." "Daayra" was announced earlier this year when Kareena Kapoor confirmed her part in the film. "I've always said that I'm a director's actor... and this time I cannot wait to work with one of the finest director's we have, @meghnagulzar & alongside the magnificent @therealprithvi, whose work I deeply admire. To my dream team, #Daayra let's do this," she wrote on Instagram. Prithviraj, too, expressed his excitement about working with Meghna Gulzar and Kareena. "Some stories stay with you from the moment you hear them. DAAYRA is that for me. Excited to work with Meghna Gulzar, the incredible Kareena Kapoor Khan and Team Jungle Pictures! Wish you all a very happy Vishu! #Daayra," he posted on Instagram.