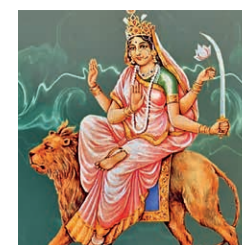




FIRST INDIA

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Rajasthan's Own English Newspaper



Maa Katyayani



Bon Voyage, Mr. PM!

- PM Modi on a 4-day visit to Thailand & SL from today
- Modi will take part in 6th BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok

First India Bureau
Bangkok/Colombo

PM Narendra Modi will embark on a 4-day visit to Thailand and Sri Lanka from today. During his visit, Modi will attend sixth BIMSTEC Summit & hold talks with Thai counterpart Paetongtarn Shinawatra. They will review the pro-

This would be the first physical meeting of the BIMSTEC leaders since the fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in Kathmandu, Nepal in 2018

gress in the entire gamut of bilateral relations and discuss the ways to add greater momentum to the India-Thailand bilateral partnership and exchange views on

regional and multilateral issues today.

On Friday, PM Modi will join the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) leaders from Thailand, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar and Bhutan to oversee signing of Agreement on Maritime Cooperation. Bangkok Vision 2030 will also be adopted at the BIMSTEC Summit.



PM Narendra Modi with Thailand PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra on sidelines of the East Asia Summit, in Vientiane, on Oct 11, 2024.

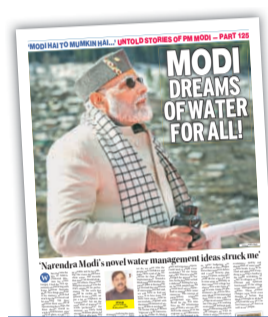
PM NARENDRA MODI TO MEET THAI KING MAHA VAJIRALONGKORN & QUEEN SUTHIDA

PM Modi to meet Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn (also known as Rama X) and Queen Suthida on Friday. PM Modi and his Thai counterpart Shinawatra are also scheduled to visit Wat Pho, one of top 6 temples in Thailand that is famous for its massive reclining Buddha statue.

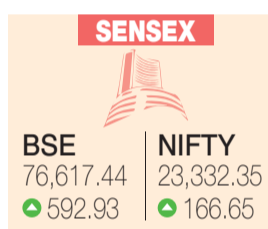


PM MODI-DISSANAYAKE TO INAUGURATE SEVERAL PROJECTS, HOLD TALKS IN SL

Modi will travel to Sri Lanka from April 4-6, at the invitation of SL President Anura Kumara Dissanayake. PM Modi will hold talks with Dissanayake & travel to Anuradhapura for inauguration of many development projects.



PERSPECTIVE P4



IN BRIEF



Chilean President Gabriel Boric Font visited iconic Taj Mahal on Wednesday.

UPI down again! GPay, Paytm, SBI users face payment disruptions

New Delhi: Millions of users across the country reportedly faced issues with UPI transactions on Wednesday. Users claimed Google Pay, Paytm and SBI reported payment failures. Meanwhile, OpenAI also faced major outage amid surge in Studio Ghibli image requests.



Mahatma Gandhi's great granddaughter dies at 92
Navsari: Nilamben Parikh, 92, the great-granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, who is known for her famous book about complicated relationship that Mahatma Gandhi shared with his oldest son and her grand-father, Harilal, passed away in Navsari.

Government appoints economist Poonam Gupta as RBI Deputy

New Delhi: The RBI has appointed Poonam Gupta as its new Deputy Governor. She is the first woman to assume this post in more than a decade. Her appointment comes at a time when the RBI is likely to relax its monetary policies to stimulate economic growth.

WAQF AMENDMENT BILL PASSED IN LOK SABHA AFTER MARATHON 12-HR DISCUSSION

MODI FULFILLS MUSLIM DREAM!

- No interference in Muslim religious matters: Amit Shah
- The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, to be tabled in RS today



UHM Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. Also present here are Kiren Rijiju, Piyush Goyal, Pralhad Joshi, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Dr Jitendra Singh, Mansukh Mandaviya and others.

First India Bureau
New Delhi

The Centre introduced the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, in Lok Sabha on Wednesday, triggering a heated clash between the Modi-led government & Opposition's I.N.D.I.A bloc. The Waqf Bill was passed after 12-hour marathon discussions in the Lok Sabha. Till this report was filed, 226 votes were in favour of the bill and 163 votes against.

UHM Amit Shah speaking in the Lower House in support of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill stated, "Waqf means 'donation for religious charities in the name of Allah'. Waqf is one type of charitable endowment without any intention of taking it back."

TOP QUOTES FROM SHAHS'S SPEECH

- This is the standard procedure for all land transactions. You must prove that the land being declared as Waqf property does not belong to the government
- Non-Muslim members of the Waqf Board will have no role in managing religious affairs, asserting that such allegations were baseless and misleading
- If the amendment to the Waqf Act had not been made in 2013, there would have been no need to introduce this bill
- The income of Waqf is dropping, the income with which we have to do development for minority and push them forward, that money is being stolen. Waqf Board and Council will catch that

WAQF BILL TO BE NAMED UMEED, SAYS RIJIJU

Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju during his arguments in Lok Sabha said, "One very important aspect of Waqf Bill is the new structured system. Waqf Bill has been renamed as the Unified Waqf Management Empowerment, Efficiency and Development (UMEED) Bill. This will give rise to a sense of hope."



Pakistan attempts to cross LoC, five infiltrators killed as India responds

Indian Army asks Pakistan Army to abide by ceasefire deal made in 2021

First India Bureau
Srinagar

Tensions escalated on early Wednesday as the Pakistan Army fired at Indian positions in the Krishna Ghati (KG) sector of Poonch, in J&K, violating the ceasefire agreement. The Indian Army responded with a measured yet decisive retaliation. An official spokesperson confirmed that the Pakistani troops also attempted an infiltration but were repelled. According to sources, 5



infiltrators from Pakistan were reportedly killed during exchange of fire, though official confirmation is awaited.

Meanwhile, the Indian Army asked the Pakistan Army to uphold the tenets of the DGMO understanding of 2021 to maintain peace along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir.



(T-B) Army personnel carrying out search and cordon operations following intelligence inputs of suspicious movement in Kathua.

Fighter plane crashes in Guj, one pilot killed

First India Bureau
Jamnagar

A Jaguar fighter jet of the Indian Air Force (IAF) crashed during a training mission near Jamnagar Air Force Station on Wednesday night, officials confirmed.

The aircraft went down in an open field at Suvarda village, approximately 12 km from Jamnagar city. Senior police officer stated that while one pilot successfully ejected before the crash, another was found dead by villagers.

11 policemen injured in attack while rescuing hostage cops, 12 arrested

Dinesh Saini
Sikar

In a shocking incident in Sikar, more than 30 police officers were attacked by villagers, and sustained severe injuries, while attempting to rescue their colleagues who had been held hostage.

The police team, consisting of officers from 5 police stations, had arrived in Dalawali Dhani area of Ajitgarh on late Tuesday night to free 3 officers who were captured by the relatives of a suspected criminal. Dur-

SUSPECTS PARADED ON STREETS BY POLICE

The police actively paraded the arrested suspects through the streets of Ajitgarh as part of their investigation process on Wednesday evening. After the parade, police personnel had conducted raids at the scene of the incident.

ing the rescue operation, police were ambushed by the villagers, with stones being thrown from rooftops. Several officers, including CI and SI, were injured in the attack, with some sustaining head in-

juries. The police vehicles were also damaged, and few police officers were trapped in the confrontation. The situation escalated to such an extent that additional forces were called in, including the RAC, to restore order.

By Wednesday morning, police had arrested over 12 individuals in connection with the attack. However, the main suspect, Mahipal is on the run. Following the incident, the Ajitgarh Police Station was transformed into fortress with a heavy security presence.

CM SHARMA CHAIRS REVIEW MEETINGS WITH DEPT OF MINING & JAIPUR, JODHPUR AND AJMER DISCOMS

Govt will run a surprise campaign against mining mafias: CM

Nirmal Tiwari & Vikas Sharma
Jaipur

Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma said that the state government is committed to prevent illegal mining, adding, the state government will run a surprise joint campaign for strict and effective action on this so that the mining mafia can be completely reined in.

He said that it is the duty of the personnel to discharge their responsibilities with full dedication and give top priority



Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma with Sudhansh Pant, Shikhar Agrawal, UR Sahoo, Anand Kumar, T Ravikanth and others during review meeting of the mining department, at CMR, on Wednesday.

to the state interest. Sharma was addressing the review meeting of the action taken to control illegal mining activities at

the CMR on Wednesday. He said that there are immense possibilities of mineral resources in Rajasthan and lakhs of peo-

ple are getting direct and indirect employment from mining. The mining sector also plays an important role in the state's

revenue. In such a situation, the priority of the state government is that mineral wealth should be properly exploited and revenue of this sector should be increased. He directed the officials to work by setting targets.

He said that to stop illegal mining, the police, district administration, forest department, transport department and mining dept should work in coordination with each other. The CM directed all District Collectors to take strict action against the mining mafia.

UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY BE ENSURED FOR PUBLIC IN SUMMER: CM INSTRUCTS BABUS

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma has instructed that uninterrupted power supply be ensured for the general public during summer months. The CM said that the DISCOM officials should continuously monitor power supply and complete tasks related to line repairs, transformer installation, and substation (GSS) setup on time. He highlighted the need to prioritize reducing power



losses and set a target for minimizing energy theft and wastage. CM was addressing a review meeting with officials from Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Ajmer DISCOMs at the CMR on Wednesday.

Sikar Clash

Police officers held hostage, attacked with sticks and stones by locals at Dalawali Dhani village

Mob attacks over 30 cops; several injured



Dinesh Saini

Sikar

A violent clash broke out in the Dalawali Dhani village in Sikar, Rajasthan, on Tuesday night, leading to a significant attack on police officers. The confrontation resulted in at least 11 police personnel sustaining serious injuries, with several of them requiring medical treatment. The incident began when three police officers from Ajitgarh police station went to apprehend Mahipal, an accused in a case of assault.

During a wedding procession in a village, Mahipal's associates allegedly held police officers hostage. As police launched a rescue operation with over 30 personnel from five stations, villagers armed with stones attacked them from rooftops, damaging police vehicles. The situation escalated as the mob surrounded and assaulted officers, taking ASI Nekiram hostage and seizing his phone. Despite negotiation attempts, police were at-



Several policemen were injured in the attack on Wednesday and the police vehicles were badly damaged.

tacked with lathis and stones, leaving several injured. Additional forces, including RAC, were deployed to restore order. By Wednesday morning, 12 people were arrested, but Mahipal remained at large. A local woman from the village accused the police of unnecessary brutality, stating that the officers broke into homes, destroyed property, and physically assaulted family members. She claimed that the police beat family members with sticks, broke utensils, and even dragged away elderly people without reason. She further alleged that there

were no female officers present during the raid.

Following the incident, Former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot expressed concern over the increasing attacks on police personnel, stating that ever since the BJP came to power, the authority of the police has been diminishing. He claimed that criminals have become more emboldened, leading to a rise in attacks on law enforcement officers. Rajasthan PCC Chief Govind Singh Dotasra condemned the attack, calling it a reflection of the BJP government's weak stance in dealing with criminals.

RAILY SUPERVISOR FALLS VICTIM TO HONEYTRAP

In a shocking incident in Barmer district, a senior Railway Reservation Supervisor was allegedly trapped in a honey trap by two young women. The Sadar Police have filed a case and taken the two women into custody, where they are currently being interrogated. According to police reports, the victim befriended a woman at the station two months ago. She frequently contacted him for ticket inquiries and later introduced him to her friend. On Monday night, she called him to Chamunda Circle and took him to a room, where two men arrived, assaulted him, and filmed the incident. The accused then demanded Rs 10 lakh in extortion.

WOMAN ESCAPES ABDUCTION IN SIROHI'S MAROL, ACCUSED FLEE; POLICE REGISTERS CASE

Sirohi's Reodar region witnessed a shocking incident as a young woman narrowly escaped an alleged kidnapping attempt. The incident occurred in Marol village, where the victim, a local resident, filed a police complaint against two identified individuals. According to the complaint, a car carrying four men tried to forcibly abduct her. They attempted to drag her into the vehicle with clear intentions of kidnapping. However, the woman's loud cries for help alerted nearby residents, who rushed to her rescue. Seeing the growing crowd, the accused fled the scene in their car. The incident has caused panic in the area, and the Reodar police have registered a case based on the woman's complaint. Authorities have launched an investigation.

₹1.45 CRORE LOOTED FROM BUSINESSMAN IN BIKANER DISTRICT

A shocking case of robbery has emerged from Bikaner, where unidentified miscreants looted Rs 1.45 crore from a businessman. The incident took place in the Beechhwal police station area. According to reports, Sampat and Mukesh were transporting the money belonging to Ramavtar Saraswat when the robbery occurred. Police has begun investigating from multiple angles.

ACB NABS KOTA CONSTABLE WITH ₹10K BRIBE

The ACB in Kota has trapped another constable, Manish. Earlier, constable Banveer had already been caught in the same case. The ACB nabbed Manish while he was accepting a bribe of Rs 10,000. The bribe was demanded in exchange for not resorting to violence in a legal case. The operation was carried out under the leadership of ASP Vijay Swarnkar, following the instructions of DIG Shivraj Meena.

TEN JUVENILES ESCAPE FROM DETENTION CENTRE

Ten juvenile offenders managed to escape from the Juvenile Detention Home in Dholpur district. The incident occurred when the juveniles broke the iron grill on the roof of the detention home and escaped. The escape was captured on the CCTV cameras installed at the facility. Following the escape, a police team has been actively engaged in blocking the area to detain the fugitives. At the time of the escape, more than a dozen juveniles, detained in connection with various criminal cases, were present in the facility. Between midnight and 1 AM, the juveniles managed to break the iron grill on the roof, and one by one, they made their way out of the facility.

CBN seizes 181 kg of illegal Poppy Husk in Chittorgarh



The cache of drugs seized by the police on Wednesday.

PK Agrawal
Chittorgarh

On Tuesday, officers from the CBN's Chittorgarh unit successfully intercepted a tractor trolley on the Badawli-Palcha highway, near the Pangad Resort, in the Chittorgarh district. The authorities seized a total of 181.460 kilograms of illegal opium husk (doda chura) packed in nine bags, and arrested one individual in connection with the crime.

This operation was carried out as part of the ongoing anti-drug campaign spearheaded by Naresh Bundel, Dy Narcotics Commissioner in Kota. Following a tip-off, a special team from the Chittorgarh CBN unit was deployed to monitor the route. After identifying the vehicle, officials successfully halted the tractor trolley and recovered the illegal substance.

Jail ADG carries out search at Ajmer prison, announces security upgrades

Shubham Jain
Ajmer

A search operation was carried out in Ajmer's high-security jail by the Jail Additional Director General (ADG) and local police. Around five teams were formed to inspect different barracks. However, no suspicious items were recovered from the jail during the operation.

Jail ADG Rupendra Singh said that the search operation was conducted on Wednesday in coordination with the local police. Discussions were also held with the jail administration regarding possible improvements in the high-security prison, and necessary directives were issued for further reforms.

The ADG announced that new jammers would be installed in the high-security jail. The work on this project has already begun, and the tender was



Jail ADG Rupendra Singh interacts with officials during his visit to Ajmer high-security jail on Wednesday.

STATE GOVT WITHDRAWS RAC FROM RAJASTHAN JAILS OVER SECURITY CONCERNS

Rajasthan government has removed the Rajasthan Armed Constabulary (RAC) from central jails across the state. This action comes in the wake of threats issued to the CM and Dy CM. The decision was taken after reports surfaced about RAC personnel allegedly colluding with prisoners. In response, the government acted swiftly to ensure better security management. While RAC personnel will no longer be stationed inside the jails or conduct searches on inmates, they will now be positioned outside the prison gates. This move aims to prevent any unauthorized dealings between jail staff and prisoners.

issued three months ago. High expectations are placed on the Harmonic Call Walking System,

which will prevent SIM cards from operating in any area where a mobile phone is being used.

JDA's Dravyavati STP construction faces another legal hurdle

First India Bureau
Jaipur

The Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) has faced yet another setback regarding the construction of a sewage treatment plant (STP) for the Dravyavati River. JDA had planned to establish the STP near the culvert on Janpath in Shyam Nagar, specifically on Khasra number 309 in the village of Sushilpura. However, the JDA Tribunal has refused to acknowledge JDA's claim over the land.

He stated that the land still belongs to its original owner and that ownership rights had not been revoked. He further explained that merely classifying the land as "Khatadari" does not automatically grant JDA ownership rights.

Taking these argu-

A reference petition was filed in the JDA Tribunal against the establishment of the STP. Representing the petitioner, advocate Hanuman Sharma argued before the tribunal that the land in question is private property

ments into account, the JDA Tribunal issued an order preventing JDA from constructing the STP on plots 4 and 5 of the Khasra land until private ownership rights are legally terminated and JDA obtains legal possession of the land.

This is not the first such hurdle for JDA. Earlier, it had planned to build the STP near the Sushilpura culvert, but that case remains pending in the High Court.



Flamingos nesting at Sambhar

First India Bureau
Jaipur

Sambhar, known for hosting migratory Greater Flamingos during the winter months, has now become a permanent haven for these majestic birds. Recently, the flamingos have been nesting and laying eggs in the region after their courtship displays. The most sought-

after activity for tourists visiting Sambhar is bird watching during sunrise and sunset, a time when the flamingos' beauty and grace are on full display. With the expansion of tourist facilities, Sambhar has reached new heights as a popular tourist destination. Every year, during the winter season, millions of migratory birds visit

Sambhar, with the Greater Flamingos being the most prominent. This year, around 400,000 flamingos arrived at Sambhar, of which approximately 300,000 have returned, while around 100,000 have decided to stay back. These flamingos are now nesting in the area, offering a captivating sight for visitors.

ROAD TRIPS ON THE RISE IN RAJASTHAN!

Rajasthan is a State where every journey weaves a new story: Ravi Jain

Nirmal Tiwari
Jaipur

Road trip tourism is experiencing a rapid rise in Rajasthan, thanks to better road infrastructure and well-developed highways. Tourists are now prioritizing long drives across popular routes like Jaipur-Jaisalmer, Udaipur-Mount Abu, and Ranthambore-Kumbhalgarh. This surge in road trip tourism has

been facilitated by improved facilities and increased accessibility to key destinations across the state.

Tourism Secretary Ravi Jain attributes Rajasthan's growing appeal to its diverse tourism offerings, modern infrastructure, and the government's visionary policies. He mentioned that the state's tourism industry continues to reach new heights, driven by the increasing popularity of road trip tourism, concert tourism, weekend getaways, religious tour-



ism, and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) events. Rajasthan has once again set a new record in domestic tourism, with approximately

37.8 million domestic tourists visiting the state in just the first two months of 2025 (January and February). This is a testament to the state's year-round tourism ap-



peal. The state's rich cultural heritage, historical forts, natural beauty, and modern amenities have made it a top destination for domestic travelers.

Recently, Jaipur's Amber Fort won an award for Best Heritage Destination, Kumbhalgarh was recognized as the Best Mountain Destination, and Bikaner was

awarded for Best Culinary Destination. Jain emphasized that Rajasthan is not only a place for sightseeing but a state where every journey weaves a new story, and every traveler returns with an unforgettable experience.

Ravi Jain further highlighted that the government is focusing on the overall development of tourism sites to ensure that tourists receive the best facilities. Recognizing the changing trends in domestic tourism, religious tourism, weekend

getaways, adventure tourism, and village tourism are being promoted across the state.

The government is also identifying and developing new tourist spots in each district, which has not only created more employment opportunities in rural areas but has also strengthened the local economy.

With these combined efforts, Rajasthan is well on its way to becoming an even more prominent and preferred destination for both domestic and international travelers.

Ensure robust preps to prevent seasonal diseases: Min Khimsar

Health Min Khimsar puts Rajasthan on alert for heatwave, instructs officials

Vikas Sharma
Jaipur

Health Minister Gajendra Singh Khimsar said that, according to the Meteorological Department, extreme heat and heatwave warnings have been issued for several states, including Rajasthan. In view of this, officials in all districts should remain on alert mode and ensure the necessary preparations as soon as possible. There should be no shortcomings in arrangements related to testing, medicines, and treatment at any healthcare facility. Any negligence at any level will lead to disciplinary action against the responsible officer.

The Health Minister was reviewing preparations for the prevention of seasonal diseases and other related matters via video conference during a high-level meeting held at the Health Bhawan on Wednesday. He said that preparations for preventing seasonal diseases should be continuously monitored at state level. Additionally, state-level officials should conduct regular field inspections.



Health Min Gajendra Singh Khimsar during the review meeting of Department of Health in Jaipur on Wednesday. Gayatri Rathore, Ambrish Kumar, Neha Giri, Priyanka Goswami, Dr T Shubhamangala, Dr Ravi Prakash Sharma, and other senior officials were also present.

Similarly, divisional and district-level officials must also inspect their respective areas to ensure healthcare services remain efficient.

Principal Secretary of Health Dept, Gayatri Rathore, said that department is proactively ensuring timely preparations for prevention and treatment of seasonal diseases during upcoming summer. She instructed that wherever there is a shortage of doctors or other staff in healthcare institutions, alternative arrangements should be made immediately, and vacant positions should be filled to avoid disruption in health services. The timely and adequate supply of medicines should be ensured, and officials should regularly monitor the arrangements.

TIMELY PROCUREMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF ESSENTIAL RESOURCES

The Health Minister emphasised that no healthcare institution should report a shortage of fans, coolers, air conditioners, etc. The procurement of essential resources should be ensured in time. If necessary, funds available under RMRS should be used as per regulations. Additionally, support can be sought from donors, voluntary organisations, and philanthropists. Khimsar also instructed that control rooms should be established in districts and operated smoothly. Emergency medical services in all hospitals should be well-equipped, and functionality of ambulances, along with the availability of all life-saving equipment, should be ensured. Public awareness initiatives should also be undertaken to educate people on preventing seasonal diseases.

ENSURE ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WHERE THERE IS A STAFF SHORTAGE

Khimsar reviewed the availability of doctors and nursing staff in all districts and instructed that wherever there is an insufficient number of doctors or nursing staff, alternative arrangements should be made. As per regulations, contractual recruitment of doctors or other medical personnel should be done at local level. He directed that a detailed report on human resource availability in healthcare institutions from all districts should be submitted by Thursday afternoon.

VACANT POSITIONS IN TRAUMA CENTRES AND FRUs TO BE FILLED SOON: KHIMSAR

Khimsar reviewed the smooth operation of trauma centers and First Referral Units (FRUs) in all districts. He stressed that trauma centers play a crucial role in saving lives. The state government is ensuring the functionality of these centers by providing the necessary human resources and equipment. Wherever the operation of trauma centers and FRUs is affected due to a lack of personnel or equipment, vacant positions will be filled as soon as possible.

'State leads in PM Kisan enrollments, now more focus on revenue reforms'

First India Bureau
Jaipur

Revenue Min Hemant Meena announced that Rajasthan has achieved the highest PM Kisan registration in India, with 81% of eligible farmers (7.3 million) registered. He urged officials to aim for 100% registration and ensure efficient handling of land-related cases.



During a review meeting, Hemant Meena directed officials to expedite boundary determination, land division, and land conversion cases while enhancing the e-Dharti portal. He also emphasized resolving revenue cases pending for over ten years and ensuring smooth implementation of Rising Rajasthan MoUs through RajNivesh portal. Principal Secretary Dinesh Kumar stressed door-to-door farmer registration and digital crop surveys. Revenue Board Chairman Hemant Gera highlighted innovations like mandatory daily hearings for old cases and two judicial shifts to improve resolutions.

Dilawar pushes for cleaner Raj, warns misuse of funds

Bhanwar S Charan
Kota



Min Madan Dilawar addressing the review-meet in Kota.

Education and Panchayati Raj Minister Madan Dilawar reaffirmed Rajasthan's goal of becoming the cleanest rural state. During a review meeting in Kota, he emphasized daily village cleaning, proper garbage disposal, and drainage maintenance. Gram Panchayats receive monthly funds between Rs. 80,000 and Rs. 2.5 lakh, which must be utilized effectively. He announced the formation of 1,000 teams to inspect Panchayat cleanliness, warning of strict action against underperforming officials while encouraging well-performing Panchayats.

Officials were directed to ensure funds allocated for cleanliness are not misused. Dilawar also reviewed the Annapurna Rasoi Yojana and warned against overcharging or serving

substandard food. He assessed the land distribution progress for nomadic and semi-nomadic families, ensuring timely registration and inclusion in the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

A significant MoU was signed with two self-help groups in Kota for establishing utensil banks to reduce plastic waste. The initiative will expand to 1,000 Gram Panchayats. Additionally, the newly launched SBMG Rajasthan App will enable citizens to report cleanliness issues via photos.



Min Madan Dilawar during launch of Panchayat level 'Bartan Bank' in Kota on Wednesday. Ladpura MLA Kalpana Devi, Kishanganji MLA Lalit Meena, Sangod Panchayat Samiti Pradhan Jaiveer Singh Amrit Kuan, SBM Director Saloni Khemkam, and others were also present.

Youth Cong hosts mega job fair; Gehlot slams BJP on unemployment

Naresh Sharma
Jaipur

The Rajasthan Youth Congress successfully concluded the Vishal Rojgar Mela at Rajasthan International Center, Jaipur, witnessing over 4,000 registrations and 1,200 on-the-spot job offers. Over 150 leading companies, including HDFC Bank, Tata Motors, Infosys, and Flipkart, participated, offering jobs across IT, healthcare, engineering, and management sectors.

Former CM Ashok Gehlot, Youth Congress National President Udaybhanu Chib, and others attended the event. Gehlot criticized the BJP govt for failing to provide jobs, asserting that Cong delivers



Unemployed youth at the Vishal Rojgar Mela by Raj Youth Cong at RIC in Jaipur on Wednesday.

results. Gehlot praised the initiative, interacting with job seekers and reaffirming Rahul Gandhi's dedication to youth employment. State Youth Congress President Abhimanu Poonia assured more such fairs in the future. The event highlighted Congress' proactive approach to job creation amid rising unemployment concerns.

Hand-carry parcel facility expanded to Jaipur Airport

Vimal Kothari
Jaipur

The hand-carry parcel facility has been expanded to include nine airports, including Jaipur. This initiative will allow the transport of hand-carried jewelry parcels from Jaipur, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Kochi, and Coimbatore.

Previously available at only four airports, this initiative allows exporters to transport gemstones, jewelry, samples, and prototypes. Set to launch on May 1, following a Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs notification, this expansion is expected to streamline jewelry trade, benefiting Jaipur's import-export business.

Rajasthan HC summons DGP over Police inaction in minor's disappearance case

Raj HC displeased with probe, orders DGP to explain delay

Kamalkant Vyas
Jaipur

The Rajasthan High Court has summoned the state's Director General of Police (DGP) over police's inaction in a minor girl's disappearance case. The petitioner had filed a Habeas Corpus petition, citing police negligence despite an FIR being lodged on Feb 5, 2025, at Pratnagar Police Station.

On Wednesday, Jaipur East DCP Tejaswini Gautam appeared before the court, but the bench—comprising Justice Indrajeet Singh and Justice Mukesh Rajpurohit—found her report unsatis-



factory. Expressing strong displeasure, the court noted that despite a month passing, the police had taken no action against the named suspects.

Following this, the court summoned DGP to appear on April 7, 2025, to explain the delays. The petitioner's advocates, Narendra Gurjar and Chandrashekhar Sharma, emphasized that police's failure to act has worsened the complainant's distress, as the minor remains missing and the accused remain unchecked.

HEARING ON INTERIM BAIL TO ASARAM REMAINS INCOMPLETE, NEXT HEARING ON APRIL 7

Jodhpur: The Rajasthan High Court has not granted immediate relief to convicted rapist Asaram in his ongoing case. During a half-hour hearing on Wednesday, the government opposed interim bail, citing his violation of Supreme Court conditions by continuing discourses despite a ban. The court has scheduled the next hearing for April 7, 2025, and asked Asaram to file an affidavit addressing the allegations. After surrendering at Jodhpur Central Jail on Tuesday, Asaram was shifted to a private hospital. Though granted interim bail in a Gujarat case, he remains in jail pending rulings in both cases.

Shivprakash Purohit

COURT ORDERS SEALING OF DEO OFFICE IN AJMER FOR UNPAID SALARIES OF ₹1.5 CR TO 6 TEACHERS

In Ajmer, the office of the District Education Officer (Primary) was sealed on Wednesday due to non-payment of dues to six teachers. The teachers are owed a total of approximately Rs 1.5 crore in pending payments. Earlier, a court team had visited the officer's chamber and ordered the sealing, but the officer had requested an extension of one month. However, despite passage of six months, the payment has not been made, leading to today's action. The court team took the decision to seal office after the officer failed to fulfill the payment obligations within extended period. The matter has now been brought to forefront as education department faces scrutiny over delay in settling these dues.

SC raps RSRTC over pending allowances

First India Bureau
Jaipur

The Supreme Court has criticized the Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC) for its prolonged delay in paying day and night allowances to drivers and conductors, an issue pending since April 2021. Rajasthan's Additional Advocate General (AAG) assured the court that payments would be made soon, leading to a six-month extension for completion.

The case, presented by RSRTC's ASG Aishwarya Bhati, originated from a contempt petition filed by the Roadways Employees Union. The court granted interim relief, relying on the govt's assurance of payment.

NEW INITIATIVE IN STATE

Excise Department takes bold step, new device to detect fake liquor

Rajasthan Excise Department introduces a smart device to be installed in liquor shops to curb fake liquor sales, ensuring consumer safety and transparency

Vinod Singh Chouhan
Jaipur

In a groundbreaking move to curb the sale of counterfeit liquor, the Rajasthan Excise Department is set to introduce a device that will allow customers to verify whether the alcohol they are consuming is genuine or fake.

Soon, every liquor shop, hotel bar, and restaurant bar in state will be required to install this device, making it easier for customers to check the authenticity of their liq-



REPRESENTATIONAL

uor. With the increasing circulation of counterfeit & out-of-state liquor, dept has taken a proactive step to safeguard consumers.

The new device, expected to be deployed across the state this month, will provide instant results by scanning the hologram

HOW DEVICE WORKS TO AUTHENTICATE LIQUOR

- Customers will place the device on the hologram affixed to the bottle.
- Within seconds, the device will analyze authenticity of bottle.
- A green light indicates genuine, Rajasthan-manufactured liquor.
- A red light signifies counterfeit or illicitly sourced liquor.
- If fake liquor is detected, the excise department will take strict action, including sealing the shop or bar.
- The excise department will also conduct random inspections to ensure compliance.

on liquor bottles. If the device emits a green light, the liquor is verified as authentic and manufactured in Rajasthan. How-

ever, if a red light appears, it signals that bottle contains either counterfeit alcohol or liquor smuggled from another state.

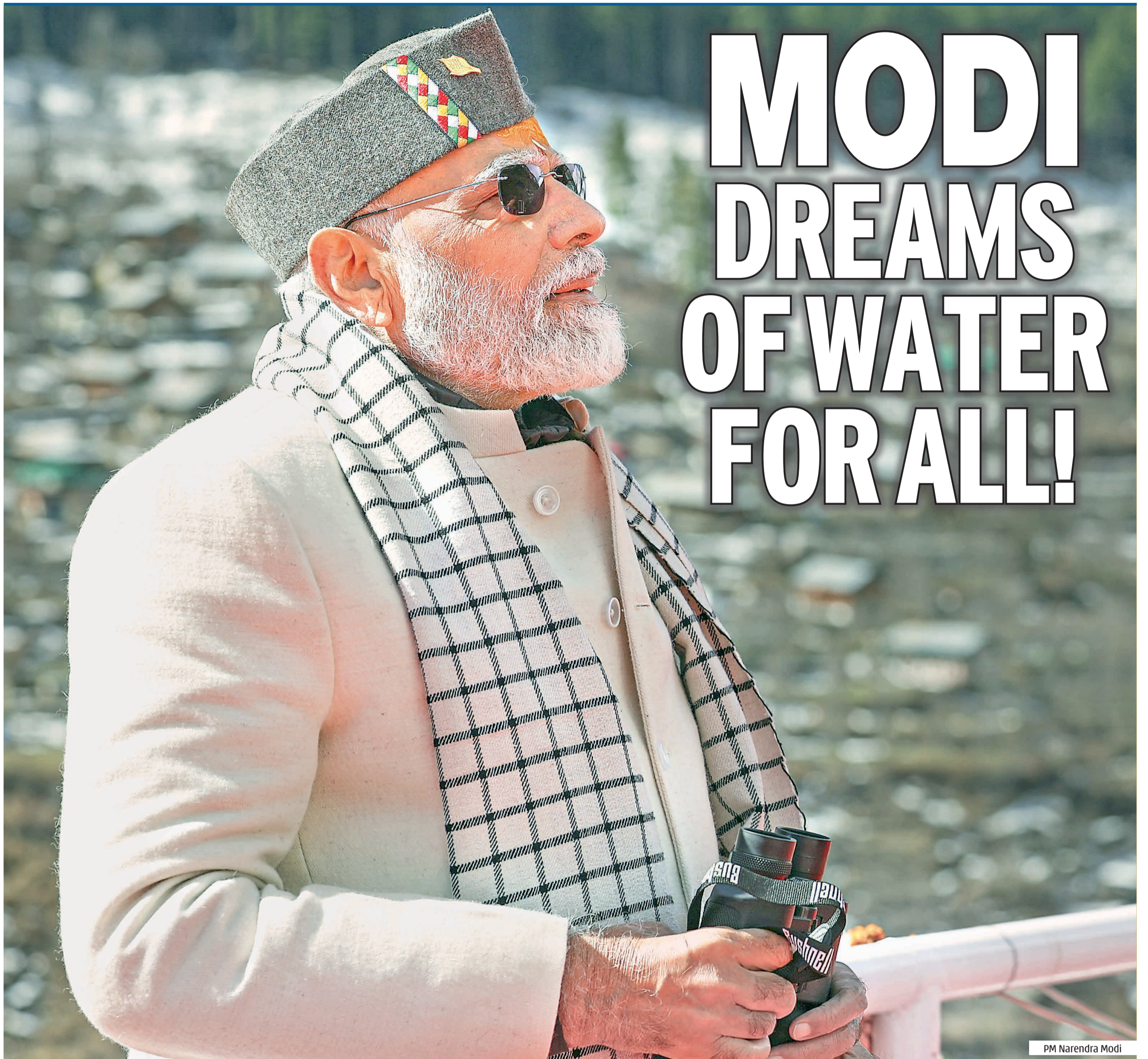
A MOVE TO COUNTER ILLEGAL LIQUOR TRADE

According to Excise Commissioner Shivprasad Nakate, this initiative is aimed at tackling the growing problem of illegal liquor trade, especially with reports of smuggled liquor from states like Haryana and Punjab. The department has received numerous complaints from customers alleging that liquor shops were selling counterfeit or smuggled alcohol. With the implementation of this device, customers will have the power to check the authenticity of their liquor on the spot, ensuring they consume only genuine products.

ENSURING CONSUMER SAFETY & TRANSPARENCY

This move by the excise department is expected to bring greater transparency to the liquor industry while protecting customers from health hazards associated with fake liquor. The mandatory installation of this device will create a more accountable system where customers and authorities alike can monitor the authenticity of alcoholic beverages.

'MODI HAI TO MUMKIN HAI...' UNTOLD STORIES OF PM MODI – PART 125



PM Narendra Modi

MODI DREAMS OF WATER FOR ALL!

'Narendra Modi's novel water management ideas struck me'

When I became the DG of NMCG (National Mission for Clean Ganga), I had the first opportunity of interacting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Two things stand out in my memory, which had struck me then as novel and far-reaching. Till then, whenever there was talk of rejuvenating the Ganga, the thrust always veered towards beautification, especially of ghats, or construction of new ghats along the river. This is where all the effort stopped. Here PM Modi intervened and clearly told us that our job was not just to ensure the beautification and cleanliness of ghats or building of new ghats. Our main purpose was to ensure the quality and purity of the water of the Ganga and other rivers. Our focus and emphasis should be on deciding and fixing the standard of the water quality and consistently maintaining that quality to make wa-

ter potable and fit for bathing. Our rivers should have clean water, and towards that motto we should all devote our efforts. The second thing that struck me was the PM's emphasis on performance, i.e. the work that should be visible on the ground. In our system, we put a lot of emphasis on 'construction' but not the same kind of attention towards 'performance'. For instance, we easily build sewage treatment plants, but how well or efficiently they are functioning, and what the lacunae are, if any, that can further enhance their efficiency or performance, doesn't remain our concern. The PM wanted us to shun this habit. He wanted us to work towards achieving our goals in a time bound manner through consistent focus on the performance aspect of any project. There was another thing that I find important to mention, and that is Modi ji's emphasis on public participation. He

UP Singh
Former Secretary
Ministry of Jal Shakti

stressed involving the members of the public in cleaning the Ganga as well as other rivers. He said, even if we build a sewage plant, or any other such thing with government funding, we can't make it a success if people don't cooperate and be a part of the nation building process. We will keep cleaning on the one hand, and people will keep littering and polluting on the other, and the end result will come to a null. That's why in anything and everything

we do, we must take the people into confidence and make them a part of the initiatives for their effective implementation. Narendra Modi suggested another important point at the meeting. He stressed the importance of micro irrigation and said, we will have to find out ways as to how more and more farm areas could be successfully irrigated with the minimum amount of water available at our disposal. On former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary on December 25, Modi ji launched the Atal Bhujal Yojana, which was to bring about a paradigm shift in water management in the country. I remember, he had told an important thing at the inaugural event at Vigyan Bhawan in Delhi related to micro-irrigation. He had said, our plants needed water, not our farms. In our country, the water use efficiency is very low. Earlier it was thought that only engineering marvels like big

dams and irrigation projects could lead to ample water availability for our farms and crops. This new scheme changed the approach. For one, for the first time we had a dedicated funding for water. Second, people from the ground level were empowered to manage their water resources. The concept of participatory irrigation management was introduced for the first time. Now on, the information and authority was not limited to the contractor or the engineer or the administrative officials engaged in fitting pipes or constructing tanks. The villagers knew of their resources, the quality and quantity of water they were to receive, and what actually was happening so that they could act accordingly at their own level, without being dependent on the government or the private agency to do things for them. This led to greater accountability and better management of water in villag-

es. Water budgeting was introduced, so that villagers knew their surplus or deficit and a water security plan was put in place, so that they could devise ways not just to raise water availability in their respective village but also to save water from going to waste. Under the government's Jal Jeevan Mission, Modi ji even interacted from time to time with the village-level committees to see if the plan was working as envisaged and kept guiding and instructing officials and villagers on ways to make it work even more effectively, always intent at removing the roadblocks whatsoever thwarting the process in any way. Today, the portal is in the public domain for all to see what is happening in this field. Every important phone number of the person(s) concerned, right from the state to the block and village level across the country can be accessed and information gathered on the

availability, quality and distribution of water under various heads. It can be located and addressed if anything is posing a hurdle in the ample availability of water to villagers or in the efficient and optimum functioning of the village water management committees. These seminal changes were never even thought of before. But Modi ji brought in all these and paved the way for a secure future of our rivers as well as our people.

You read PART 124
on MARCH 27, 2025COMPILED AND EDITED BY
SHASHIKANT SHARMA

WAQF AMENDMENT BILL ROW

Rijju criticises UPA, says Parl was treated as Waqf property

The Waqf Amendment Bill was first tabled in the LS in August last year amid furious protests

First India Bureau
New Delhi

The more than 11-hour debate on the Waqf Amendment Bill - which proposes changes to laws that decide how Muslim charitable properties are administered - began Wednesday afternoon with Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju and the opposition trading jabs after the bill was tabled in the Lok Sabha.

Rijju began with jabs at the Congress, claiming the party had made "questionable" changes to Waqf laws when in power, including the de-notification of "123 major buildings... given to the Waqf".

His introductory speech was rebutted by the Congress' Gaurav Gogoi, who first accused Rijju of making "misleading statements" and labelled the Waqf amendments "an assault on the Constitution".

'India's media doesn't need validation from foreign bodies'



PTI

New Delhi

India has a vibrant press and media ecosystem which does not need validation from foreign organisations, the government told the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. Minister of State for I&B L Murugan said this in a written response to a question from Congress MP K Sudhakaran, who asked about "India's decline in the Global Press Freedom Index ranking in 2024".

"India has a vibrant press and media ecosystem, which does not need validation from foreign organisations," he said.



If we had not introduced this amendment today, even the building we are sitting in could have been claimed as Waqf property. If Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government did not come to power... several other properties would also have been de-notified.

KIREN RIJJU, MINORITY AFFAIRS MINISTER

Gogoi also asked why the Minority Affairs Ministry did not mention this bill in any of the four meetings of its parliamentary committee in 2023, a year before the amendments were presented. "A case going on since 1970 in Delhi involved several properties, including the Parliament building. The Delhi Waqf Board had claimed these... the case was in

court but then the UPA denotified 123 properties and gave them to the Waqf Board," the Union Minister said on the 'Parliament to Waqf' charge. Rijju then criticised the opposition for standing against changes, insisting there will be no alterations to the management of mosques and that the amendments were "a property management issue".

tee, we are not deliberating upon the original Bill. My submission pertains to whether the Joint Parliamentary Committee possesses the authority to incorporate new provisions into the Bill."

He further asserted that even the Lok Sabha lacks the right to intro-

WAQF BILL FOCUSES ON PROPERTY MGMT, NOT RELIGION: RIJJU

Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju on Wednesday tabled the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha, which seeks to improve the functioning of Waqf properties, address complexities, ensure transparency and introduce technology-driven management. Rijju said the legislation has nothing to do with religion, but deals only with properties. "The government is not going to interfere in any religious institution. The changes made in the Waqf law by the UPA government gave it overriding effect over other statutes, hence the new amendments were required," Rijju said.

OPPOSITION'S 4D ATTACK ON CENTRE OVER AMENDMENT BILL

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi launched a fierce counterattack Wednesday - after Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju tabled the Waqf Amendment Bill - accusing the BJP-led government of trying to "defame (and) disenfranchise minorities" and staging an "4D assault on the Constitution". Gogoi also questioned the government over a contentious provision - that donations can only be made by a Muslim who has been practicing his/her faith for at least five years. It is a sad situation, the Congress leader said, when the government takes it on itself to issue 'religious certificates'.

IMMIGRATION BILL TREATS FOREIGNERS AS 'POTENTIAL CRIMINALS': MANU SINGHVI

The Immigration and Foreigners Bill 2025 sends a message that all foreigners are "potential criminals" who are to be viewed with serious suspicion by India, Congress MP Abhishek Manu Singhvi said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. Opposing the Bill, which was passed by the Lok Sabha on March 27, he demanded that it be sent to a standing committee as it delegates excessive power to lowly officials and lacks provisions for appeal, oversight and accountability, among other things. "I rise to oppose this Bill and seek substantial changes in its pernicious character."



Waqf bill attack on Constitution's basic structure, says Gogoi

PTI
New Delhi

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Wednesday said the INDIA bloc will oppose the proposed changes to the Waqf law and called the bill an attack on the basic structure of the Constitution with an aim to dilute its provisions, defame minorities, disenfranchise them and divide the Indian society.



Hitting back, former Union minister and BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said when large number of Waqf properties are lying vacant and being looted, the government has all powers to bring a law to regulate it.

He told Gogoi that while he cited Constitution, he did not present a complete picture on its various provisions authorising government to bring laws on various issues, including Waqf properties.



Amit Shah and Akhilesh Yadav in the Lok Sabha during the Budget session of Parliament, in New Delhi, Wednesday.

Shah & Akhilesh's lighter exchange in LS over party president

PTI
New Delhi

Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav took a dig at the ruling BJP on Wednesday, questioning why the country's largest political party is not able to elect its president, prompting Home Minister Amit Shah to say it takes time to arrive at such decisions as the BJP is not a dynastic party. Participating in a debate on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha, Yadav asked why has the BJP not decided who will be its next president.

"The BJP claims to be the largest party in India but it still has not decided on its leader?" he asked.

Shah swiftly countered Yadav, saying the BJP is not a dynastic party and thus, it takes time to decide on its leadership, unlike parties where succession is predetermined.

WAQF BILL A 'CONSPIRACY,' SAYS AKHILESH

New Delhi: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav strongly criticised the BJP in the Lok Sabha over the Waqf Amendment Bill, accusing the ruling party of having neither the right policies nor the right intentions. Speaking in Lok Sabha over the Bill, Yadav said, "BJP's policies and intentions are flawed. This is a conspiracy to snatch homes and shops from crores of people in the country." Yadav slammed the government and said that the contentious Waqf Amendment Bill has been made to hide the failures of the current regime. "Whenever the BJP introduces a new bill, they are hiding their failure," he said.

Waqf Amendment Bill: JPC has extensive power, rules LS Speaker Birla

Agencies
New Delhi

During parliamentary proceedings on Wednesday, Revolutionary Socialist Party's N.K. Premchandran raised a point of order, stating, "As reported by the Joint Parliamentary Commit-

tee, we are not deliberating upon the original Bill. My submission pertains to whether the Joint Parliamentary Committee possesses the authority to incorporate new provisions into the Bill."

He further asserted that even the Lok Sabha lacks the right to intro-



duce new provisions unless Rule 81 is suspended by the Chair.

Premchandran emphasised that while the Joint Parliamentary Committee may recommend amendments, it cannot directly incorporate new provisions. Responding to this, Union Home

Minister Amit Shah clarified that the Bill had been tabled in the House upon the Opposition's demand for its referral to the Joint Parliamentary Committee. The committee presented its opinions, which were subsequently reviewed and accepted by the Cabinet.

Kashmir parties slam Waqf (Amendment) Bill as attack on Muslim rights



Agencies
Srinagar

On the day Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju introduced the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, major political parties in Kashmir condemned it as an attack on Muslim rights and an attempt to erode the autonomy of the Waqf Board.

Former chief minister and Peoples Democratic Party chief Mehbooba Mufti alleged the proposed Bill is part of a conspiracy to render Muslims helpless.

She accused the BJP-led government of pursuing policies against the Muslim community, citing instances of lynching, mosque demolitions, and encroachments on Muslim graveyards.

Mufti said that she has no hope from the BJP government and urged the Hindu majority should come forward and take a stand against such injustices.

National Conference law maker Hasnain Masoodi called the bill a step toward disempowering Muslims.

"This bill is a clear violation of the rights of Muslims. It dilutes the control of the Waqf Board, which is unacceptable," Masoodi asserted.

TN CM Stalin urges PM to withdraw Waqf Bill 2024

PTI
Chennai

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Wednesday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking withdrawal of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, saying it will harm the interest of Muslims. Stalin said the Constitution grants every citizen the right to follow their respective religion and it is the duty of the elected governments to



uphold and protect this right. However, the proposed amendments to the Waqf Act, 1995 have not taken into consideration the constitutional protection given to minorities and are "bound to severely harm the interest of Muslim community."



SECURITY TIGHTENED IN MUZAFFARNAGAR AFTER INTRODUCTION OF WAQF BILL IN LS

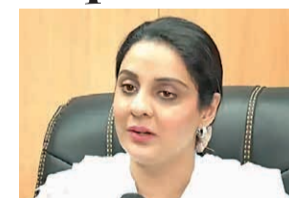
Muzaffarnagar: Security was tightened at sensitive locations of Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar as a precautionary measure, following the tabling of the Waqf Bill in Parliament on Wednesday, officials said. A flag march led by District Magistrate Umesh Mishra and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Abhishek Singh was conducted by the district administration in sensitive areas.

Delhi Haj Committee Chief backs Waqf Bill

Agencies
New Delhi

As the Waqf (Amendment) Bill was tabled in the Parliament for discussion, Delhi Haj Committee chairperson Kausar Jahan on Wednesday said that she welcomes the Bill and it is being opposed by those who don't want the betterment of the nation.

"I welcome the Bill. This is an important step towards transparency, ac-



countability, and impartiality. It is the need of the hour," she said.

"Those who are opposing it don't want the betterment of the nation. The present situation of Waqf Board or Waqf properties demand change," she added.

FROM COLONIAL LEGACY TO INTELLECTUAL RENAISSANCE

NEP paves way for making a self-reliant nation: PM Modi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Agencies
New Delhi

Highlighting the historic transformation of India's education sector in the past decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday hailed the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as India's intellectual renaissance, paving the way for a self-reliant, globally competitive nation through education and innovation.

Responding to a post by Union Education

Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on X, the PM stated, "Union Education Minister Shri @dpradhanbjp highlights how India's education sector has undergone a historic transformation in the last decade. NEP 2020 is more than a reform; it is India's intellectual renaissance, paving the way for a self-reliant, globally competitive nation through education and innovation."

Pradhan, in his post, said the NEP 2020 represents a decisive break

'NEP 2020 POLICY OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE FUTURE OF PEOPLE'

Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday hit out at Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, saying that corruption and governance deficit were the defining features of the country's educational past, and the NEP 2020 represents a decisive break from this inglorious past. In a newspaper article published in The Hindu and shared by the Minister on his X handle, he stated that NEP 2020 is not merely an education reform but "an intellectual decolonisation that India had awaited for a long time." He described it as a policy of the people, by the people, and for the future of the people.

from the "inglorious past" when corruption and governance deficit

were the defining features of the country's educational system. The

policy is not merely an education reform, it is the intellectual decolonisation that India had awaited for a long time, Pradhan said.

"Nothing could be further from the truth than the argument that the education system has veered off its course in the last decade," the education minister said and drew attention to an article he has written in a newspaper to showcase the "true picture" of India's educational transformation.

IN BRIEF

Hyderabad youth rapes German tourist inside car, arrested



Hyderabad: A senior official said that police filed a case and arrested the accused after the German woman alleged that he raped her in the car. A 22-year-old German woman has alleged that she was sexually assaulted by a car driver in Telangana's Hyderabad after he offered her and her friend a ride to explore the city, reported on Tuesday.



2 women Naxalites carrying Rs 14L bounty each killed

Bhopal: Two women Naxalites, carrying a reward of Rs 14 lakh each on their heads, were killed in an encounter with police in Madhya Pradesh's Mandla district on Wednesday morning, a senior official said. The gun-battle took place under Bichhiya police station limits, Director General Police (DGP) Kailash Makwana said.

Lalu Prasad Yadav hospitalised due to high sugar levels



Patna: Ex Bihar CM Lalu Prasad Yadav, 76, was hospitalised on Wednesday after his health deteriorated while he was on his way to the Patna airport to fly to Delhi. The RJD chief, who was to board an Air India flight at 4.05 pm, has been admitted to Paras Hospital. Sources said the health of Lalu Prasad, who is battling heart-related ailments, worsened due to a spike in blood sugar levels.

Karnataka shocker: Man kills 3, then dies by suicide

Chikkamagaluru: A 40-year-old man killed three of his family members and later shot himself dead in Magalu village in this district, police said on Wednesday. Ratnakar Gowda, who worked as a driver in a school, allegedly shot dead his mother-in-law, sister-in-law and daughter.

US tariffs may hit agri, pharma, machinery & chemical sectors

Agencies
New Delhi

As the US government's reciprocal tax seems imminent, Indian exporters are in a wait-and-watch mode. While they are concerned, they cannot yet fully assess the sectoral impact. The full extent will only be clear once the tariff is implemented. However, initial estimates suggest that India's farm sector, gems and jewellery, electronics, auto components, and textiles & apparels are likely to be most affected.

According to an analysis by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), Indian farm exports to the US currently face a 5.3% tariff, while US farm exports to India face a much higher 37.7%, creating a tariff differential of 32.4%. Pharmaceuticals face an additional tariff of 10.9%, diamonds and jewellery 13.3%, and electronics 7.2%.

"If the US enforces a reciprocal tariff policy on India on April 2, India's exports of gems and jewellery—especially studied gold jewellery and cut and polished diamonds—will be significantly impacted," says Kirit Bhansali, chairman



of the Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC). He mentions that GJEPC is already in discussions with the government to find a mutually agreeable solution to protect India's gem and jewellery exports.

Israel, India's biggest competitor in the gems and jewellery export sector, can send products to the US without any tariff, says a government official working on a report to assess the impact of the US reciprocal tax on India.

The official adds that about 44% of India's ex-

INDIA LESS VULNERABLE TO US TARIFF SHOCKS THAN OTHERS: REPORT

A day before the US revealed its reciprocal tariff measures, Moody's stated on Tuesday that India is relatively less vulnerable to external financial shocks and will be the fastest-growing among advanced and emerging economies.

ports to the US (in value terms) would face an additional tariff of up to 2%, while only 7-8% of exports would face over a 20% additional tariff. In electronics, smartphone

exports could be severely impacted. "If reciprocal tariffs are imposed by the US, exports of smartphones from India will incur a 15% tariff. This could disrupt the growing trend of smartphone exports from India, as the current tariffs are at 0%," according to a PwC report. In the farm and processed food sector, fish, meat, and processed seafood will face the most damage, with \$2.58 billion in exports facing a 27.83% tariff differential, according to GTRI. Shrimp, a major export, will also become significantly less competitive.

India's manufacturing sec growth hits eight month high in March

PTI
New Delhi

India's manufacturing sector growth rose to an eight-month high in March, driven by quicker increases in factory orders and production amid buoyant demand conditions, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) was at 58.1 in March, up from 56.3 in February, indicating a substantial improvement in the health of the sector that was above its long-run average.

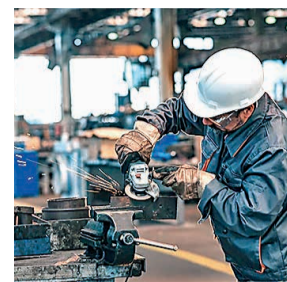
In February, India's manufacturing PMI fell to a 14-month low amid softer increase in new orders and production.

In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

Manufacturing sector growth in India recovered the ground lost in February, largely driven by a stronger contribution from its largest sub-component: the New Orders Index.

March saw total sales expand to the greatest extent since July 2024, with companies remarking on positive customer interest, favourable demand conditions and successful marketing initiatives.

Accordingly, firms scaled up production vol-



Manufacturing sector growth in India recovered the ground lost in February, largely driven by a stronger contribution from its largest sub-component: the New Orders Index

umes at the end of the 2024/25 fiscal year. The rate of expansion was sharp, above its historical average and the strongest in eight months.

Although new export orders continued to increase strongly in March, the pace of growth retreated to a three-month low. Panellists cited gains from Asia, Europe and the Middle East in terms of international sales.

"Although international orders slightly slowed, overall demand momentum remained robust, and the new orders index recorded an eight-month high of 61.5. Strong demand prompted firms to tap into their inventories, causing the fastest drop in finished goods stocks in over three years," said Pranjul Bhandari.

SENSEX RISES 593 POINTS, NIFTY CLOSES ABOVE 23,300 BEFORE US TARIFF ANNOUNCEMENTS



Indian benchmark indices ended higher on Wednesday, recovering from their largest drop in a month, as buying in blue-chip stocks like HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank lifted the market, though gains were limited by uncertainty over the scale and impact of U.S. President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariffs. The benchmark Bombay Stock Exchange Sensex gained 592.93 points or 0.78% to close at 76,617.44, while the broader Nifty 50 index finished at 23,332.35, up by 166.65 points or 0.72%.

First visit by an Indian Prez to Slovakia

Agencies
New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu will embark on a four-day state visit to Portugal and Slovakia from April 7. In Portugal, she will meet President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, Prime Minister Luis Montenegro, and National Assembly President Jose Pedro Aguiar-Branco. This visit, marking 50 years of diplomatic relations, is the first in 27 years and aims to strengthen India-Portugal ties. From April 9-10, President Murmu will visit Slovakia, meeting President Peter Pellegrini, Prime Minister Robert Fico, and National Council Speaker Richard Rasi.

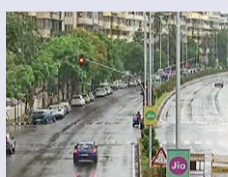


IMD'S 'ORANGE' ALERT Alert for thunderstorm & hailstorm in J'khand

PTI
Ranchi

The IMD has issued an 'Orange' (be prepared) alert for hailstorm, thunderstorm and gusty winds for three days in parts of Jharkhand, a weather official said on Wednesday. The state's weather is likely to change from Wednesday with the possibility of thunderstorms, accompanied by rains and gusty winds in western, central and southern parts of Jharkhand. "On Thursday, the southern and central parts of the state are likely to witness hailstorms coupled with thunderstorms and gusty winds at an expected speed of up to 60 kmph.

LIGHT SHOWERS IN MUMBAI, RESPITE FROM HEAT



Mumbai: Mumbai saw a cloudy sky and humid morning on Wednesday as light showers in the previous night brought some relief from the sweltering heat. The Colaba observatory of the India Meteorological Department recorded a minimum temperature of 26.2 degrees Celsius which was 1.8 degrees above normal.

Indian Army replies to Pak's peace violation

Agencies
Jammu

The Indian Army continued to dominate the Line of Control (LoC), effectively responding to unprovoked firing by Pakistan, according to an official spokesman on Tuesday. On April 1, 2025, a mine blast occurred in Krishna Ghati Sector during a Pakistan Army patrol, followed by unprovoked firing and ceasefire violations. The Indian Army responded in a controlled manner, and the situation remains under control. The Army emphasized the importance of upholding the 2021 DGSMO understanding for peace. Earlier, India & Pak held a Brigadier-Level Flag Meet to reaffirm the ceasefire agreement.

Aluminium caused explosion in Guj godown: forensic probe

PTI
Deesa



People gather at the site after a blast at a firecracker warehouse led to a blaze and collapse of the building, in Banaskantha.

A forensic investigation has confirmed that the presence of aluminium powder, one of the ingredients to make firecrackers, caused the huge explosion and blaze which ripped through the warehouse near Deesa town in Gujarat killing 21 persons a day ago, police said on Wednesday. Apart from aluminium powder, a team from the forensic science laboratory (FSL) also found yellow dextrin powder from the warehouse where firecrackers were stored, Banaskantha district Superintendent of Police Akshayraj Makwana told reporters.

Though the SP admitted that both substances

are used for manufacturing firecrackers, he told reporters that a detailed investigation was underway to find out whether firecrackers were manufactured in the godown or not.

The godown, where the explosion took place around 9.45 am on Tuesday, is located in an industrial area near Deesa

town, around 30 km from the Banaskantha district headquarters. The blast was so powerful that it sent body parts of workers flying 200-300 metres away. Family members of some of the workers who stayed on the premises were crushed to death after heavy chunks of the RCC roof slab fell on them, officials said.

FI TOON



SHEKHAR

OPERATION AT WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN

Indian Navy Seizes 2,500 kg Narcotics

PTI
New Delhi

Indian Navy's frontline frigate INS Tarkash has seized over 2,500 kgs of narcotics in the Western Indian Ocean, officials said on Wednesday.

The operation to seize the narcotics was launched after the Navy received inputs on March 31 on suspicious movements of some vessels, they said.

After systematically interrogating all suspicious vessels in the vicinity, INS Tarkash intercepted and



INS Tarkash has seized over 2,500 kgs of narcotics in the Western Indian Ocean.

boarded a suspect dhow, owing to the coordinated efforts with the P8I marine surveillance aircraft and the Maritime Operations Centre in Mumbai, a Navy spokesperson said.

Additionally, the ship launched its integral helicopter to monitor the activities of the suspicious vessel and identify other vessels likely operating in the area, he said.

A specialist boarding team, along with Marine Commandos, boarded the suspect vessel and conducted a thorough search, leading to the discovery of various sealed

packets, the official said. Further search and interrogation revealed over 2,500 kgs of narcotic substances (including 2,386 kgs of hashish and 121 kgs of heroin) stored in different cargo holds and compartments onboard the vessel, he said.

The suspicious dhow was subsequently brought under the control of INS Tarkash, and the crew underwent comprehensive questioning regarding their modus operandi and the presence of other similar vessels in the area, the spokesperson added.



MATCH TODAY

KKR vs SRH

7:30 pm IST, Eden Gardens, Kolkata

Buttler & Siraj hand Titans second win

A sensational bowling performance from Mohammed Siraj (3 wickets for 19 runs) & a brilliant fifty from Jos Buttler powered Gujarat Titans (GT) to comfortable 8-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru, on Wednesday



Gujarat Titans' Mohammed Siraj celebrates after taking the wicket of Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Devdutt Padikkal.

First India Bureau
Bengaluru

Gujarat Titans produced an excellent all-round show to beat Royal Challengers Bengaluru by eight wickets in their Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday. Set a target of 170, GT completed the chase with as many as 13 balls to spare.

Gujarat Titans secured their second-biggest chase in terms of wickets remaining, following their nine-wicket victory over Rajasthan in Jaipur in 2023. Interestingly, all six encounters between GT and RCB have been won by the chasing team, with both teams winning three games each.

Chasing a modest 170-run target, GT openers Shubman Gill and Sai Sudharsan approached the tricky new-ball phase cautiously, avoiding unnecessary risks.

The first breakthrough



Gujarat Titans' Sai Kishore celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Krunal Pandya during an IPL match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Gujarat Titans, at M Chinnaswamy stadium in Bengaluru, Wednesday.

for RCB came in the fifth over, but by then, the Titans had already laid a solid foundation.

Following the early dismissal, Sudharsan and Jos Buttler kept the chase on track, regularly find-

ing boundaries after the powerplay to keep the required run rate in check.

RCB turned to Josh Hazlewood for a breakthrough, and he succeeded in breaking a 75-run

partnership. However, that was the only real moment of resistance, as Buttler and Sherfane Rutherford calmly steered GT to victory.

Gujarat Titans won the toss and elected to field

first, restricting Royal Challengers Bangalore to 169/8 in their 20 overs.

Liam Livingstone was the standout performer for Royal Challengers Bangalore, scoring 54 off 40 balls. Mohammed

BCCI ANNOUNCES INDIA'S 2025 HOME SEASON FIXTURES

New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has officially unveiled the fixtures for Team India's international home season for 2025, featuring high-stakes clashes against West Indies and South Africa. The action-packed season will see India compete in Test matches, One-Day Internationals (ODIs), and Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is), providing fans with thrilling cricketing spectacles. The home season kicks off with the Test series against West Indies, beginning on October 2, in Ahmedabad. The second and final Test will be played in Kolkata from October 10 to October 14.

China ready to buy more Indian goods, says Chinese envoy as US tariffs loom

First India Bureau
Beijing

As US President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs threaten to upend the global trade system, China has offered to import more Indian products and strengthen trade cooperation. Beijing's ambassador to New Delhi on Wednesday asked Indian enterprises to share "dividends of China's development" by seeking trade opportunities in the neighbouring country.

"We are willing to work with the Indian side to strengthen practical cooperation in trade and other areas, and to import more Indian products that are well-suited to the Chi-



President Donald Trump listens to a question from a reporter in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.

nese market," Chinese Ambassador Xu Feihong told Chinese state-backed newspaper the Global Times in an interview published on Monday.

"We also welcome more Indian enterprises to cross

the Himalayas and seek opportunities for cooperation in China, sharing the dividends of China's development," he said.

Xu added that China hopes India will create a fair and transparent busi-

US THREATENS MORE TARIFFS ON RUSSIAN OIL

New Delhi: US President Donald Trump has indicated potential complications for Russian oil trade unless Moscow reaches an agreement on the Ukraine conflict soon. The American leader threatened to levy secondary tariffs ranging from 25-50 per cent on Russian oil buyers because he feels Moscow is blocking his efforts to end the war in Ukraine.

NEW TARIFF TO DISRUPT GLOBAL SHIPPING

Berlin/Athens: US President Donald Trump's new tariff plan has the ocean shipping industry on edge as he stokes a trade war destined to stanch transport demand and send companies scrambling to manage the fallout. Major global container shipping firms towering piles of colorful boxes stuffed with goods for US customers like Walmart, Target and Home Depot.

Agencies
Jerusalem

Israel's military operation in the Gaza Strip is expanding to seize "large areas," the defense minister said, while officials at hospitals inside the Palestinian territory said Israeli strikes overnight and into Wednesday had killed over 40 people, nearly a dozen of them children.

Israel's offensive in the Palestinian territory was "expanding to crush and clean the area" of militants and "seizing large areas that will be added to the security zones of the State of Israel."

The Israeli government has long maintained a buffer zone just inside Gaza along its security fence and has greatly ex-



Palestinians inspect the site of an Israeli strike on a house, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on Wednesday.

UN REJECTS ISRAEL'S CLAIM GAZA HAS ENOUGH FOOD

United Nations: The United Nations on Tuesday dismissed Israel's claim that Gaza has a sufficient amount of food, stocked during the now-ended ceasefire. COGAT, the Israeli military agency in charge of aid deliveries to Gaza, said earlier in the day that "there is enough food for a long period of time, if Hamas lets the civilians have it." "Ridiculous. We are at the tail end of our supplies," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told reporters.

panded since the war began. Israel says the buffer zone is needed for its security, while Palestinians view it as a land grab that further shrinks the narrow coastal territory, home to around 2 million people.

FORBES BILLIONAIRES LIST 2025

Mukesh Ambani drops out of top 10

Agencies
New Delhi

Reliance Group Chairman Mukesh Ambani has fallen out of the top 10 in Forbes' World's Billionaires List for 2025. His net worth has dropped to \$92.5 billion from last year's \$116 billion.

The list shows that the world has 3,028 billionaires. US leads with 902 billionaires, India has 205 in Forbes list.

Elon Musk reclaims top spot with \$342 billion in net worth.

MUKESH AMBANI RANKED 18TH

Ambani, who was in the top 10 last year, is now ranked 18th on the list with a net worth of \$92.5 billion. The next Indian on the list is Gautam Adani, chairman of the Adani Group, who ranks 28th globally with a net worth of \$56.3 billion.

He is the richest Indian and richest Asian on the list. The other big and popular name on the list, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates (69), made it to the 13th spot with \$108 billion in 2025.

ELON MUSK REGAINS TOP SPOT

Elon Musk has reclaimed the title of the world's richest person, with an estimated net worth of \$342 billion. He has overtaken LVMH's Bernard Arnault, who has dropped to fifth place—his lowest ranking since 2017. Meta's

Mark Zuckerberg has climbed to second place for the first time, with a net worth of \$216 billion. He has surpassed Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, who is now ranked third.

SAVITRI IS INDIA'S RICHEST WOMAN

Savitri Jindal (75), chairperson emerita of OP Jindal Group, has been named India's richest woman by Forbes. With a staggering net worth of \$35.5 billion, she ranks among the top echelons of the world's richest.

The recognition comes as part of Forbes's latest update on the World's Billionaires list for 2025, which now sees female representation at 13.4%. Savitri took over the O.P. Jindal Group in 2005.



Lack of action on renewal of pre-paid taxi service affecting both drivers & passengers

The pre-paid taxi service at the airport has been temporarily suspended as the airport administration failed to renew the taxi service license. Due to the non-renewal of the license, taxi drivers are seen wandering outside the airport, while passengers are unable to avail of the cost-effective taxi service. Pre-paid taxis typically follow the rates set by the RTO, which are more affordable compared to other services. The Pre-Paid Taxi Union has issued a statement, expressing dissatisfaction with the approval process, which they claim was granted to keep the service outside the airport. They also mentioned that the pre-paid taxi counter has been located inside the airport for decades.

With help of Jaipur Discom, Dholpur achieves remarkable milestone in revenue collection

Dholpur has achieved a remarkable milestone in revenue collection for the first time in 15 years, thanks to the efforts of Jaipur Discom. The revenue collection for the year 2024-25 surpassed the 100% mark, a feat never before accomplished in the region. The Dholpur circle, which was established by Discom in 2011 with five subdivisions and two divisions, had consistently struggled to achieve more than 99% revenue collection. Despite numerous administrative efforts, issues like theft and leakage had caused substantial losses.

SOP formula in seat allocation for SR

The Medical Education Department of Rajasthan has made significant revisions to its Senior Residency (SR) seat allocation process. Initially, the allocation was to be based solely on the NEET PG merit, but following strong opposition, the department issued a fresh Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

RAF: Athletes, coaches at risk if found guilty

Rajasthan Athletics Federation (RAF) is intensifying its efforts to combat doping among athletes. In line with the rules of the Athletics Federation of India, the RAF will now hold both athletes and their coaches accountable for doping violations. Rajasthan Athletics Secretary Devanarayan said doping has ruined many athletes' lives.

FIRST INDIA 2ND FRONT

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Respect for diversity enriches our experiences and broadens our perspectives.

Dr JAGDEESH CHANDRA, CMD & Editor-in-Chief



Review Meeting on Illegal Mining Prevention

Tough stand & collective efforts key to curb illegal mining: CM

Nirmal Tiwari
Jaipur

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma, while chairing a review meeting on actions taken to control illegal mining at CMR, said that strict enforcement of laws is essential to deter illegal mining. He directed the Mining Department to monitor district-level SIT meetings daily and utilize drones for surveillance, ensuring photogra-

Principal Secretary, Mines & Petroleum, T Ravikanth detailed actions, legal provisions, and department roles in curbing illegal mining

phy and videography of affected areas. He also called for a headquarters-level joint task force for surprise inspections and swift resolution of pending cases.

Sharma stressed promoting M-Sand as an alternative to gravel under the M-Sand policy to

● Drones and other advanced technologies should be used to monitor illegal mining, says CM Sharma ● A joint task force should be formed for surprise inspections, and pending cases must be resolved swiftly to curb illegal mining, he adds



CM Bhajan Lal Sharma chairs a review meeting of the Dept of Mining, focusing on measures to control illegal mining at CMR in Jaipur on Wednesday. Sudhansh Pant, UR Sahoo, Aparna Arora, Shikhar Agrawal, T Ravikanth, Anand Kumar, Arijit Banerjee, & others were present.

curb overexploitation. He assured recruitment for vacant Mines Dept posts and reviewed anti-mining actions in Tonk, Nagaur, Bhilwara, Sawai Madhopur, Deeg, Kotputli, Rajsamand, and Chittorgarh.

CS Sudhansh Pant stresses legal mining for revenue, jobs; Principal Secy T Ravikanth details illegal mining trends, enforcement measures, co-ordination efforts.

Police, administration, and related departments must coordinate to curb illegal mining, the CM directed district collectors to act strictly against mafias. He emphasised strict law enforcement to deter offenders and instructed the mining department to monitor SIT meetings and submit daily reports.

BHAJAN LAL SHARMA, CHIEF MINISTER

Our priority is to promote legal mining, curb illegal activities, increase revenue, and create employment opportunities.

SUDHANSH PANT, CHIEF SECRETARY

CM QUESTIONS, WARNS OFFICIALS ON MINING MAFIA LINKS IN MEETING

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma chaired a high-level meeting on illegal mining, questioning and reprimanding officials over lax enforcement. He sharply countered Deeg officials' jurisdiction claims regarding an illegal road built by mining mafias, asserting firsthand knowledge of the area. Bhilwara Collector also faced scrutiny over incomplete FIR and arrest data. Chief Minister Sharma alongside CS Sudhansh Pant and DGP UR Sahoo, signalled a stricter crackdown, warning that officials colluding with mafias would soon be exposed.

Ensure 100% compliance with budget plans: Min Kumawat

First India Bureau
Jaipur

Animal Husbandry Minister Joraram Kumawat directed officials to ensure 100% execution of budget-approved schemes. Chairing a review meeting, he stressed timely implementation and strict monitoring.

Officials reported exceeding targets for the CM Mangla Animal Insurance Scheme, with 42,000 health certificates issued and 2,000 animals insured. Kumawat urged expediting registrations and improving Mobile Veterinary Units, citing medicine shortages and doctor unavailability.

Reviewing livestock fairs, he noted complaints of mismanagement and called for better organization. A phased plan for fairs in 11 districts is underway. The Camel Conservation Mission is progressing, with draft regulations being finalised.

For 2025-26, Kumawat stressed quality execution. The 'Pashudhan Nishulk Aarogya Yojana' now covers 200 free medicines. Officials proposed a Centre of Excellence in Pali.

Warm Conversation



Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar met Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma at the Chief Minister's Residence, Jaipur, in a courtesy meeting on Wednesday.

On this occasion, CM Sharma warmly welcomed Narwekar by presenting him with a stole. During the meeting, both the leaders discussed various topics, including legislative processes, good governance, and inter-state cooperation.

Earlier in the day, Rahul Narwekar also met Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani at the State Assembly in Jaipur. Devnani welcomed him with books Hindu Vijay Pravartak and A Year of Innovations in Rajasthan Assembly. He also gave Narwekar a tour of the digitised Assembly under the NEVA project and the Museum of Political Narrative. Narwekar praised the digital initiatives and the museum for showcasing the Assembly's legacy.

Strengthen rural power infra in irregular zones: CM to officials



CM Bhajan Lal Sharma addresses a review meeting of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Ajmer Discoms at CMR. Heeralal Nagar, Shikhar Agrawal, Alok Gupta, Arti Dogra, Om Kaseera, Nathmal Didel, Dr Bhanwarlal and KP Verma were present.

CM Sharma urges Energy Corp to finish maintenance before peak demand

Vikas Sharma
Jaipur

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma, in a review meeting with Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Ajmer Discoms at CMR, directed officials to strengthen power infrastructure in rural areas with irregular supply. He

emphasized feeder-level monitoring to curb T&D and AT&C losses and ordered prompt repair and replacement of faulty meters.

He urged swift implementation of PM Kusum Scheme components A and C, calling them key to state energy self-reliance. Sharma also stressed effective execution of the RDSS scheme to ensure seamless power supply and directed strict action against de-

laying contractors. The CM highlighted the Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Free Electricity Scheme, ensuring 150 free units via solar plants for eligible households. For those lacking space, community solar plants will be set up.

He urged Discoms to fast-track electricity connections, prioritize agriculture, report daily, ensure timely transformer replacements and PHED connections.

Bhadana thanks Bairwa for scholarship deadline

First India Bureau
Jaipur

Devanarayan Board Chairperson Om-Prakash Bhadana ensured eligible students don't miss out on the scooty and scholarship scheme due to application errors. He met Deputy CM Dr Prem Chand Bairwa, requesting an extension to rectify mistakes. Following his appeal, the deadline for corrections is extended until April 9, 2025.

The Directorate of Higher Education issued guidelines for various 2024-25 schemes, including Kali Bai Bhil Meritorious Student Scooty Scheme, Devanarayan Student Incentive Scheme, CM Higher



Dr PC Bairwa being thanked by OP Bhadana during a meeting in Jaipur.

Education Scholarship, and tribal student aid programs.

Many students faced portal issues, preventing corrections before the March 31 deadline. This extension ensures they can modify applications and secure benefits. Bhadana thanked the Deputy CM, calling it a crucial step in supporting students' education.

State Govt dedicated to providing quality healthcare for all: Patel

He reviews state's free medicine, diagnostic services with the patients

First India Bureau
Jodhpur

The Parliamentary Affairs, Law, and Legal Minister Jogaram Patel conducted a surprise inspection of the Primary Health Centre at Pooniyon Ki Pyau in Jodhpur district on Wednesday. He reviewed the arrangements in the general OPD, injection and dressing room, laboratory, labor ward, vaccination room, registration register, and medicine stock.

He announced that under the leadership of CM Bhajan Lal Sharma, a Rs 3,500 crore 'Ma Kosh' fund will be established to provide free medical



Jogaram Patel conducts a surprise inspection of the Primary Health Centre at Pooniyon Ki Pyau in Jodhpur district on Wednesday to review the arrangements.

Providing quality healthcare is our top priority. The budget brings many healthcare benefits, including a Trauma Centre in Keru, a boon for locals. All staff must ensure cleanliness and timely presence to serve patients better.

JOGARAM PATEL, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS MINISTER

tests and medicines under the CM Ayushman Arogya Yojana. A trauma centre will also be set up in Keru to enhance healthcare services.

Patel directed staff to maintain cleanliness, ensure timely attendance, and provide quality healthcare.

He instructed officials to guarantee essential materials, proper registration facilities, and clean drinking water. While inspecting the wards,

INFRA PUSH

Dy CM Diya Kumari announces roads, water projects in Gangapur City

First India Bureau
Sawai Madhopur

Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari visited Gangapur City, inaugurating multiple development projects and distributing free scooters to meritorious female students under government schemes. She launched road projects worth Rs 245 lakh under the Non-Patchable/Missing Link Project and urban road-works worth Rs 161.50 lakh. Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, piped water



Diya Kumari during the foundation stone laying ceremony of new roads in Gangapur City in Sawai Madhopur. Man Singh Gurjar, Hansraj Meena, Rajendra Meena and others were also present.

supply projects in Aliganj and Maliyon Ki Chowki, replacing hand pumps,

were inaugurated. Additionally, Rs 544.89 lakh was allocated for 91



Diya Kumari distributes scooters to talented female students under the Kalibai Bhil Evam Devnarayan Chhatra Scooty Yojana during the programme.

projects under the Sixth State Finance Commission and Rs 507.15 lakh

for 83 projects under the Central Finance Commission.

She explored departmental exhibitions, distributed solar induction cookers, and highlighted the government's focus on water, electricity, roads, health, and education. Addressing public demands, she announced Rs 5 crore for road construction and a 12 km stretch under the MDR-248 project.

Diya Kumari also attended the 275th Hela Khyal Dangan in Lalsot, emphasising Rajasthan's cultural heritage and long-standing family association.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS WORTH ₹5,000 CR TO BE BUILT IN THE STATE, SAYS DY CM DIYA

Jaipur: Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari announced the approval of Rs 5,000 crore for 21 national highway projects. Key works include four-lane expansions of Nagaur-Netra, Raipur-Jassakheda, Gangapur City Bypass, and Karauli Bypass, along with improvements to 13 accident-prone spots. She expressed gratitude to PM Narendra Modi and Minister Nitin Gadkari for prioritizing Rajasthan's road development and ensuring better connectivity. Last year, a record Rs 12,620 crore was spent on roads, bridges, and overpasses, with this year's budget rising to Rs 17,384 crore. Under CRIF, Rs 1,300 crore was utilized, the highest ever. PWD ACS Praveen Gupta credited Diya Kumari's continuous efforts and effective monitoring for securing maximum funds and accelerating road infrastructure projects.



MYSTERY AWAITS!

After the blockbuster success of film *Street 2*, Shraddha Kapoor is set to star in a high-concept thriller by Tumbbad director Rahi Anil Barve, produced by Ekta Kapoor.

P11



Draped in Sunshine

As summer unfolds, let your saree be as light as the breeze. Airy cottons, crisp linens, and sheer Chanderis in soft pastels and florals bring effortless elegance. City First showcases sarees that keep you cool while radiating timeless charm!



Bhavika Khunteta

cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

As the mercury rises and the days stretch longer, fashion takes a turn towards breezy silhouettes and breathable fabrics. Yet, the timeless allure of a saree remains untouched, seamlessly blending tradition with summer-friendly comfort. Choosing the right fabric becomes the key to embracing elegance without feeling weighed down. Light and airy weaves such as cotton, linen, mulmul, Chanderi, and Kota Doria dominate the summer wardrobe, offering a cooling effect and an effortlessly graceful drape. The softness of mulmul feels like a whisper against the skin, while the crisp texture of linen exudes sophistication. Chanderi and Kota Doria, with their sheer finish and delicate weaving, bring an ethereal charm, perfect for both casual outings and festive occasions.

Colour and print play an equally crucial role in summer sarees. Soft pastels like powder blue, mint green, and blush pink add a refreshing touch, while bright hues bring a lively vibrancy to warm days. Floral motifs, block prints, and hand-painted designs lend a playful charm, ensuring that the saree becomes a canvas of artistry. A light, breezy drape enhances comfort, allowing air to flow freely. Styl-



ing a summer saree is all about keeping it effortless—pairing it with a sleeveless blouse, a chic crop top, or even a cotton bralette adds a contemporary twist while keeping the look relaxed and airy. Accessories complete the ensemble, with jute or fabric-based jewellery, straw hats, and minimalistic makeup elevating the aesthetic without adding to the summer heat.

More than just attire, summer sarees are a statement of grace, blending tradition with modern sensibilities. Whether worn to work, a brunch, or a celebration, they symbolize elegance in its purest form. The right saree, paired with the right styling, can make even the hottest summer day feel like a gentle breeze. So, embrace the warmth, drape yourself in effortless sophistication, and let your saree flow as freely as the season itself.

WHAT'S NEXT?



Convocation: Raffles University will host its 6th convocation, with Union Minister Bhupender Yadav as Chief Guest. Degrees will be awarded to 344 students and 21 gold medalists will be honoured.

When: April 5, 10:30 AM onwards
Where: Raffles University, Neemrana



Khuli Kitaab: Standup comedy by Devesh Dixit, "Khuli Kitaab Stand Up" by Devesh Dixit is a hilarious comedy experience. With sharp wit and keen observations, he takes audiences on a rollercoaster through India's everyday absurdities, ensuring nonstop laughter.

When: April 6, 6:00 PM
Where: Jaipur Comedy Club, Jaipur.



Rahgir-Kya Jaipur Kya Dilli Tour: After winning hearts on his last tour and Jashn-e-Rekhta, Rahgir returns with a new special featuring released and unreleased songs. Experience soul-stirring lyrics and his raw desi voice live!

When: April 20, 6:00 PM
Where: Knighthouse, Jaipur

BIRTHDAY FORECAST!



Vikrant Massey
ARIES
April 3

Lucky Number: 9 Lucky Colour: Blue

Stay aware of your surroundings, Aquarius, but don't internalize others' opinions too much. Avoid getting hurt by careless remarks. Find comfort in stability and tangible pleasures. Enjoy life's material joys while maintaining emotional balance. Protect your energy and focus on what truly matters.



Jaipur Flight Plan

KOLKATA- Air India, Indigo, Spicejet, Air India Express, Alliance Air

CHANDIGARH- Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Alliance Air

GOA- Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Alliance Air

HYDERABAD- Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Akasa Air

AHMEDABAD- Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Alliance Air, Akasa Air

CHENNAI- Air India, Air India Express, Indigo

NEW DELHI- Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Alliance Air

INDORE- Air India, Air India Express, Indigo

DEHRADUN- Air India, Indigo

ABU DHABI- Air India, Indigo, Air India Express

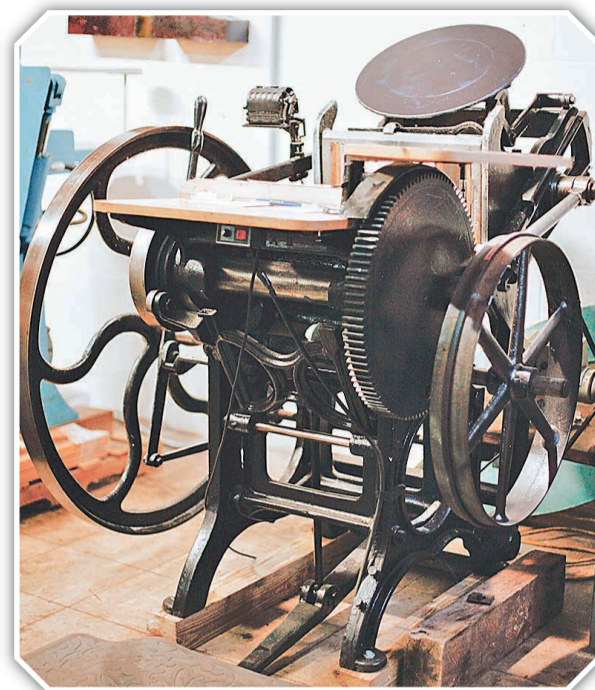


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REKINDLING THE LOVE FOR PRINT

BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS IN THE DIGITAL ERA



While digital content will undoubtedly remain dominant in many aspects of life, the revival of books and print media demonstrates that traditional formats still hold immense value.

break from digital distractions, allowing readers to immerse themselves in a story or article without notifications and pop-ups. This desire for a more focused and less hurried reading experience is fueling the resurgence of physical books and periodicals. Research from the University of California suggests that excessive screen time can lead to digital fatigue, making print a preferred medium for relaxation and deeper engagement.

While digital content will undoubtedly remain dominant in many aspects of life, the revival of books and print media demonstrates that traditional formats still hold immense value. Whether it's for the joy of collecting, the nostalgia of flipping pages, or the need for a distraction-free reading experience, print is proving its resilience in the digital age.

As technology continues to evolve, it seems that instead of being replaced, print media is carving out a new role—one that embraces the best of both worlds and ensures that books and newspapers remain a cherished part of our cultural landscape. Perhaps the most exciting takeaway from this resurgence is that print is not just surviving—it is thriving, reinventing itself as an essential counterbalance to the digital age. In a world where everything moves at the speed of light, print reminds us to slow down, engage deeply, and appreciate the timeless beauty of the written word. The turn of a page is more than just a motion; it's a journey back to the roots of storytelling, knowledge, and human connection.



Dr Harshita Mittal Dani

Doctorate of Philosophy, Political Science & Content writer

In an age dominated by screens, where digital content floods our daily lives, a surprising trend is emerging—print media is making a remarkable comeback. Despite the convenience of e-books and online news,

readers are increasingly turning back to physical books and traditional newspapers, reviving a format once thought to be fading into obscurity.

There is something undeniably appealing about the tactile nature of printed media. Many readers report a more profound connection when holding a book or flipping through a newspaper than when reading on a screen. Studies have shown that people retain information better when reading from paper rather than digital devices, suggesting that the sensory experience of print plays a role in comprehension and memory.

Interestingly, a study by the Pew Research Center found that 65%

of Americans had read a printed book in the past year, compared to only 28% who read an e-book. Similarly, a report by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) revealed that the In-

dian print industry grew by 39% in 2022, driven largely by regional newspapers and an increasing demand for books. This data contradicts the long-held assumption that digital formats would completely overtake traditional reading habits.

One of the most visi-



dian print industry grew by 39% in 2022, driven largely by regional

signs of the print resurgence is the growth of independent bookstores.



Police 100	Fire 101	Ambulance 102/108	Child Helpline 1098	Help in Suffering 2760012
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WHAT'S JAIPUR WATCHING TODAY?

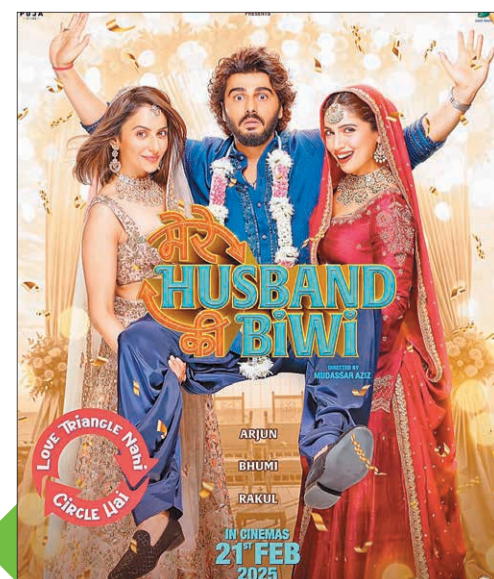
<https://in.bookmyshow.com/>



Movie: Sikandar
Director: AR Murugadoss
Cast & Crew: Salman Khan, Rashmika Mandanna, Kajal Aggarwal, Sathyaraj, Anjini Dhawan, Sharman Joshi



Scan or click here to book your movie tickets



Movie: Mere Husband Ki Biwi
Director: Mudassar Aziz
Cast & Crew: Arjun Kapoor, Bhumi Pednekar & Rakul Preet Singh



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Festive Glow

Katrina Kaif captivated fans with her stunning Eid look, leaving netizens in awe. On Tuesday, the actress shared a glimpse of her festive celebration on Instagram, dressed in a pastel ethnic suit adorned with intricate embroidery. She paired it with a matching dupatta, dewy makeup, open hair with a centre partition, and long earrings.

With plants in the background, Katrina posed elegantly, looking away from the camera. Keeping her caption simple yet heartfelt, she wrote, "Eid Mubarak," accompanied by a moon, white heart, and sparkle emoji. Fans flooded the comment section, calling her "Barbie forever" and showering her with love.

Eid celebrations on March 31 saw Bollywood stars embracing the festive spirit, and Katrina's graceful appearance stood out. Her minimal yet elegant look resonated with fans, making her Eid post a viral sensation.



Katrina Kaif

Katrina's Eid look

A Cinematic MYSTERY

After the massive success of *Stree 2*, Shraddha Kapoor is gearing up for her next big project. The actress, who has been reading multiple scripts, has now locked a high-concept thriller with Tumbbad director Rahi Anil Barve, produced by Ekta Kapoor. According to sources, Shraddha was impressed by the film's unique storyline and believes it to be a perfect follow-up to *Stree 2*.

The film is set to go into pre-production soon, with shooting expected to begin in the second half of 2025. Apart from this, Shraddha is also in talks for a romantic film with Aashiqui 2 director Mohit Suri, which may reunite her with Aditya Roy Kapur. While *Stree 3* is still some time away, she might make cameos in Dinesh Vujan's horror-comedy universe before the franchise continues.

With an exciting lineup ahead, Shraddha Kapoor is set to explore new genres while keeping her signature charm intact. Fans can expect thrilling surprises in the coming years.



Shraddha Kapoor

Unstoppable SPIRIT

Veteran actor Dharmendra recently underwent eye surgery and was seen leaving the hospital with confidence and charm. The legendary actor, known for his powerful screen presence, reassured fans about his health, declaring, "Bahut jaan hai mujhe abhi." His energy and positivity left everyone inspired.

In a video, Dharmendra, 89, walked out of the hospital with a bandage over his eye but radiated strength. Raising both arms, he expressed gratitude towards his fans, saying, "I love you all, I am strong." This moment once again proved why he is Bollywood's eternal He-Man.

Dharmendra's career spans over six decades, with timeless films like *Sholay*, *Chupke Chupke* and *Anpadh*. Despite his age, his passion for cinema remains undiminished. Recently, he was seen in *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya* and *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani*. Up next, he will star in *Ik-kis*, portraying ML Khetarpal, alongside Agastya Nanda.

Even after decades in the industry, Dharmendra's spirit remains unbreakable, continuing to inspire generations.



Dharmendra



Behind the Piracy Empire

Munawar Faruqi is set to make his OTT acting debut with *First Copy*, a gripping thriller premiering on Amazon MX Player in June 2025. The teaser introduces viewers to the 1990s Mumbai film industry, where Munawar's character, Arif, rises from humble beginnings to mastermind a massive piracy empire. As industry giants try to take him down, Arif finds himself in a high-stakes battle for survival.

The series, also starring Krystle D'Souza, features actors Gulshan Grover, Raza Murad, and Meiyang Chang. Sharing the teaser on Instagram, Munawar wrote, "Maal nakli hai, par Arif ka swag bilkul asli hai!" expressing the essence of his intense character.

Speaking about his role, Munawar shared that Arif's journey is a tale of survival, marked by charm and emotional turmoil. Known for his *Bigg Boss 17* victory and past reality show appearances, Munawar is now stepping into fiction storytelling. With *First Copy*, he promises audiences an unpredictable and thrilling ride into the dark world of piracy.



Munawar Faruqi



Stills from the "First Copy" teaser

Adorable Moment!

Cricketer KL Rahul is embracing fatherhood with sheer joy and his recent words about his newborn daughter have melted hearts. Athiya Shetty and KL Rahul welcomed their baby girl on March 24, 2025, and ever since, the couple has been showered with love and blessings.

A day before his match against SunRisers Hyderabad in IPL 2025, Rahul was seen sharing a sweet exchange with cricketer Nitish Kumar Reddy. When asked about his baby, Rahul smiled and said, "Good." When Nitish added, "Cute?" he grinned and replied, "Cute. Obviously, I will say cute." The moment was as heartwarming as it gets!

Meanwhile, Athiya Shetty recently gave fans a glimpse of a traditional ceremony on her Instagram stories, featuring beautifully decorated



Athiya Shetty & KL Rahul



KL Rahul & Athiya Shetty shared heartwarming moments after their baby girl's arrival

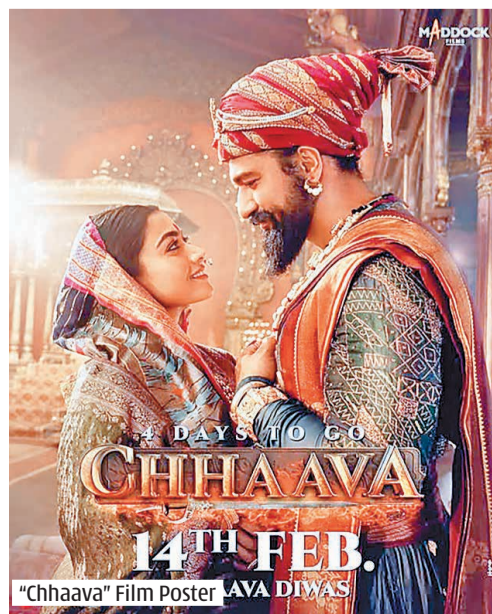
plates with floral arrangements and sacred elements. Her mother, Mana Shetty, also re-shared the post, hinting at a special family celebration.

Athiya and KL Rahul first shared their baby news through a touching Instagram post featuring two swans and the message, "Blessed with a baby girl."

Salman Praises Chhaava

Superstar Salman Khan, fresh from the promotions of *Sikandar*, recently shared his thoughts on Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna's period drama *Chhaava*. The film, which hit the big screens on February 14, 2025, has been a massive success at the box office. During an interview, Salman lauded the performances, stating, "Chhaava bahut hi acchi picture thi. I think Vicky's done a great job, and so has she (Rashmika)... done a fantastic job in *Chhaava*."

Directed by Laxman Utekar and produced by Dinesh Vujan under Maddock Films, *Chhaava* brings to life the story of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.



"Chhaava" Film Poster



Salman Khan

QUEENS' GRAND SOIRÉE

SUNIL SHARMA



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra with (L-R) Anshika Choudhary, Ruopfuzhano Whiso, Roosh Sindhu, Palak Kohli and Irene Dkhar

Dr Jagdeesh Chandra, on behalf of Bharat24: Vision of New India and First India Newspaper, hosted a beautiful dinner ceremony for Miss Universe 2024 finalists at Hotel Rambagh Palace in Jaipur on Wednesday. Ruopfuzhano Whiso (Miss Universe India 4th Runner-Up) and Irene Dkhar (Miss Tourism World India 2024) from the North East, along with Roosh Sindhu (Miss Universe Gujarat 2024) and Palak Kohli (Miss Grand India 1st Runner-Up 2024), added grace and elegance to the prestigious gathering. The event was a celebration of their remarkable achievements, with Dr Chandra extending his heartfelt congratulations to the supermodels for their continued success in the fashion, entertainment and glamour industry. The accomplished title holders expressed their gratitude to Nikhil Anand, National Director of Miss Universe India and owner of Glamanand Group, for his unwavering support in their journey. Anshika

Choudhary (Miss P&I 2024) was also present on the occasion and further welcomed the beauties to Jaipur, adding to the spirit of joy.

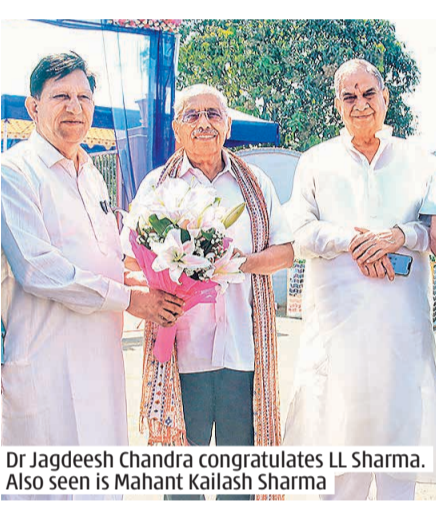
During the evening, Dr Chandra engaged in insightful discussions with the passionate ladies on various topics, including career growth, personal development and India's representation on global platforms. The guests enjoyed Rajasthan's warm hospitality and an exquisite variety of cuisine and further expressed their appreciation to Dr Chandra for the delightful evening, making it a memorable occasion. **—City First**



Top to Bottom: Palak Kohli, Ruopfuzhano Whiso, Roosh Sindhu & Irene Dkhar

GRAND FAREWELL CEREMONY 'AASHIRWAD 2025' AT IIS UNIVERSITY

Tears and Cheers



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra congratulates LL Sharma. Also seen is Mahant Kailash Sharma



Pawan Arora and LL Sharma celebrated the special occasion with heartfelt smiles

A CELEBRATION OF LOVE!

City First

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The grand Lagan Tika and Ashirwad ceremony of Mohit, son of Sita Devi and Kanhaiya Lal Sharma, and nephew of LL Sharma (Chief Correspondent at Dainik Navjyoti Jaipur), with Hina, daughter of Manju Devi and Ram Gopal Sharma, was held on Wednesday at Balesara Farm House, Jaipur. The joyous occasion brought together family, friends and guests who extended their heartfelt blessings to the couple.

Dr Jagdeesh Chandra graced the event and warmly blessed Mohit and Hina, wishing them a lifetime of togetherness. He also extended special greetings to the Sharma family, expressing his best wishes for their continued prosperity and joy.

Pawan Arora, CEO & Managing Editor of First India News, conveyed his warm congratulations to the



Soon to be married, Mohit & Hina

Sharma family and LL Sharma. He offered his heartfelt blessings to the newlyweds, wishing them a life filled with love. The ceremony was attended by Mahant Kailash Sharma of Moti Dungri Ganesh Temple, Bhagirath Basnet, Dinesh Dangi, Santosh Sharma, Amit Kala, SP Sharma among others.



Amit Gupta, Somya Gupta, Aura Virmani & Raakhi Gupta



Students dazzled the stage showcasing flexibility and strength with grace during the cultural evening

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IS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur, hosted its heartfelt farewell ceremony, 'Aashirwad 2025 - Cultural Eve cum Send Off Ceremony' bidding an emotional adieu to its graduating students on Wednesday. The evening was filled with nostalgia, gratitude and celebrations as students reflected on their cherished memories.

The university lawns witnessed a vibrant cultural showcase, graced by



A still from the traditional folk dance performance

Chancellor Amit Gupta, Vice-Chancellor Prof TN Mathur, Registrar Dr Raakhi Gupta, faculty members and special guests Somya Gupta and Aura Virmani. Chancellor Gupta expressed pride in the students, stating, "This is an emotional yet proud moment as our students embark on new journeys. Our blessings will always be with them. IIS is the only university that provides exclusive programs for girls, such as AI and Robotics."

Over 1,300 girls bid farewell as part of this grand event. The event featured an emotional skit

by the IISU Theatrical Society, mesmerizing folk and fusion dance performances and the distribution of achievement certificates. Students shared heartfelt experiences, thanking mentors and friends for their support.

The evening concluded with a soulful farewell song, leaving the audience with lasting memories. Through 'Aashirwad 2025,' IIS University reaffirmed its commitment to holistic education, proving once again that it is not just an institution but a family that supports its students at every stage of life.

MEET & GREET!



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra was warmly greeted by Mukesh Meena, President of Pink City Press Club, during a courtesy visit at the former's residence on Wednesday. During the meeting, Dr Chandra congratulated Meena on being re-elected as President for the third time, further wishing him all the best for further endeavours.

IN THE CITY!



World Autism Awareness Day 2025, organised by the Late Nanuram Nachi Devi Health and Education Committee, Apna Sapna Foundation, Cradle Children Hospital Jaipur, and Jaipur Child Development Centre, concluded with a grand ceremony at Jawahar Kala Kendra on Wednesday. The event, attended by dignitaries like MLA Kali Charan Saraf, IAS Avichal Chaturvedi, and experts, included workshops, sports, and cultural programs for children with autism. Performances by children, including dance and street plays, were celebrated. Organisers emphasized their commitment to autism awareness and providing a supportive platform for these children. **SUNIL SHARMA**



An ICSSR-sponsored 10-day Faculty Development Programme on Research Methodology was inaugurated on Wednesday. Prof Sudhi Rajeev, Vice Chancellor of Haridev Joshi Journalism and Mass Communication University, was the Chief Guest, while Prof GS Karkara was the Guest of Honour. The event was chaired by Dr K Ram (Retd IPS), Chief Patron of VGU. VGU Vice Chancellor Prof ND Mathur welcomed the guests, CEO Dr Onkar Bagaria highlighted VGU's progress, Dean Law Dr PP Mitra briefed about FDP and Dr Shilpa Rao Rastogi proposed a vote of thanks.

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

A grand cultural and awareness program, Autism Ek Ehsaas-4, was held at the Police Auditorium, Shastri Nagar, under the joint aegis of the Support Foundation for Autism and Developmental Disabilities and the Rajasthan Police Academy on Wednesday. The event highlighted the growing prevalence of autism, which affects approximately 1.8 crore individuals in India. Performances by handicapped children and students from Treasure Land Special School captivated the audience. The achievements of 14 autism achievers, including Ayotashi, Viraj & Aditya Bhatnagar among others were celebrated. The emotional song "Tujhe Sab Hai Pata Meri Maa" was sung by Autism Buddy Club members and their mothers. Dignitaries like IAS Kuldeep Ranka, IPS S Sengathir, Dr Akashdeep Arora, Addl SP Sunita Meena and Dr Neeraj Madhukar shared insights, while the program concluded with the national anthem.



IAS Kuldeep Ranka, IPS S Sengathir and Addl SP Sunita Meena along with Anirudh, Hitesh Methani, Shiven, Akshay Bhatnagar, Abir Jhanwar, Preyash Verma, Manav, Mohammed Shagii, Vaishnavi, Fatima, Nityam, Vidhi, Gavya, Anvi, Divyansh & Hridan



Ramesh Jalan, Ravi Kamra, Swami Aditya Dev, Swami Sanatan Dev and Vijay Vargia

An Eye Donation Awareness Activity was held at Nursery Park Yog Class, aimed at benefiting members and attendees. Swami Aditya Dev Ji from Patanjali Haridwar inspired participants to continue supporting social causes through good deeds. Ravi Kamra shared that the yog practitioners generously donated ₹20,000 to the Eye Bank Society of Rajasthan to further promote eye donation awareness and support those in need of eye care.



JITO Jaipur Ladies Wing recently hosted the FemPower Networking Meet at the JITO Office, uniting 30+ women entrepreneurs for impactful business networking. Prerna Ranka, Chief Secretary, JLTW, delivered the welcome speech, followed by Shruti Sethi, Secretary & JBN Convener-JLTW, who outlined FemPower's vision. Participants gave 45-second business introductions and exchanged referrals. The session was moderated by Niharika Shrimal, Ekta Jain, Anamika Kataria, and Revica Bagda. Saloni Jain and Sarika Kumat invited registrations for upcoming events.