



# FIRST INDIA

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## BHARAT24 PRESENTS 'VIKSIT BHARAT LEADERSHIP SUMMIT - GREEN WARRIORS OF NEW INDIA'

# YADAV AND PAATIL CREDIT PM MODI FOR ERA OF GOOD GOVERNANCE, TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY



Over 12 crore toilets have been constructed across the country, bringing a transformative change in the lives of nearly 60 crore people. Hum toilet toh bana denge, lekin agar hum paani nahin denge, toh Viksit Bharat sambhav hi nahin hai.

**BHUPENDER YADAV**, UNION MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047 is empowering every section of society, even a woman in a village today has the potential to become a "Lakshmi Didi" through the government's empowerment initiatives.

**CR PAATIL**, UNION MINISTER OF JAL SHAKTI

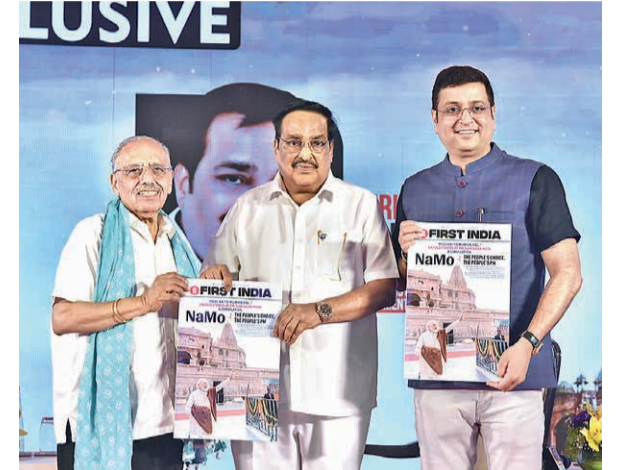
First India Bureau  
New Delhi

Bharat24 successfully organised "Viksit Bharat Leadership Summit - Green Warriors of New India" at Hotel Taj Mansingh, New Delhi, on Wednesday. The summit emerged as an important platform for meaningful dialogue on sustainability, environmental stewardship, water security, green innovation and inclusive development as India advances towards the vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047" envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The event was attended by Union Minister of Jal Shakti, CR Paatil and Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change Bhupender Yadav as Chief Guests, with Dr Jagdeesh Chandra, CEO and Editor-in-Chief of Bharat24, welcoming the dignitaries. Union Minister CR Paatil underlined the importance of water security in achieving the dream of a developed India. He stated that access to water is fundamental to dignity, health and national development. Union Minister Bhupender Yadav highlighted the strong and unwavering trust that people of India have placed in PM Modi's leadership. He observed that earlier, development funds often disappeared before reaching the intended beneficiaries, but today governance has become transparent and accountable. **MORE ON P8**



Union Ministers Bhupender Yadav & CR Paatil, CEO and Editor-in-Chief of Bharat24 Dr Jagdeesh Chandra, Advisor to UP CM Awanish K Awasthi and CBO & Strategic Advisor of Bharat24 Manoj Jagyasi display the Editorial Compilation Part II from the English daily First India (Edits No. 101-171) and Part I from the Hindi daily Sach Bedhadak (Edits No. 1-71), titled "Modi Hai To Mumkin Hai - Untold Stories of PM Narendra Modi: The People's Choice, The People's PM", during the "Viksit Bharat Leadership Summit - Green Warriors of New India" at Hotel Taj Mansingh, New Delhi, on Wednesday. The collection and initiative was greatly appreciated. **SANTOSH SHARMA**



### Dr CHANDRA LAUDS YADAV AS 'FITNESS BRAND AMBASSADOR'

Adding a lighter moment to the event, Dr Jagdeesh Chandra said Bhupender Yadav has contributed not only to the environment and forest sector but also to fitness awareness. He described him as a "brand ambassador" of fitness for losing 22 kg in one year under PM Modi's Fit India initiative, while noting JP Nadda's 18 kg weight loss.

### Dr Chandra hails Paatil's execution, calls Yadav a silent performer



Welcoming Union Ministers CR Paatil and Bhupender Yadav, Dr Jagdeesh Chandra lauded their significant contributions to governance and nation-building. Describing Paatil as "a man of delivery and a silent performer," he highlighted his exceptional leadership, strong connect with grassroots workers, and pivotal role in implementing transformative initiatives such as 'Har Ghar Jal, Har Ghar Na'. Dr Chandra also commended his efforts in fostering inter-state cooperation on water-sharing issues. Speaking about Bhupender Yadav, he said the minister has balanced organisational responsibilities and governance with remarkable effectiveness. He praised Yadav as a "silent performer" for his leadership in securing electoral successes, maintaining harmony between development and environmental conservation, and driving transformative projects that have contributed to the growth of Rajasthan.

## Modi to inaugurate Pachpadra Refinery, launch Jaipur Metro Phase-II on July 4

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma chairs meeting to review preparations for the Prime Minister's visit

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

PM Narendra Modi will visit Pachpadra in Balotra on July 4, where he will inaugurate the Pachpadra Refinery, lay the foundation stone for Jaipur Metro Phase-II, and dedicate and launch various development projects across Rajasthan.

During visit, appointment letters will also be distributed to youths selected for various gov-



ernment jobs. CM Bhajan Lal Sharma on Wednesday chaired a meeting at the CMR to review preparations for the PM's proposed visit and issued directions regarding the arrangements for what he described as a historic event.

The CM said Pachpadra Refinery is an important project for industrial development, investment promotion and employment generation in the state. He said all preparations related to the inauguration programme be completed on time. He instructed

officials to strengthen safety standards within the refinery complex and ensure an effective monitoring mechanism. All arrangements during programme should remain fully streamlined and no



CM Bhajan Lal Sharma showcases a model of Pachpadra Refinery & Petrochemical Project, during a meeting in Jaipur on Wednesday. CS V Srinivas, ACS Aparna Arora and HPCL officials are also seen.

shortcomings should be allowed, he said. The CM said that Modi has always shown respect for labour and workers, and directed that workers employed at the refinery should also be involved in the event.

According to sources, there will be no massive public rally and a maximum of 5,000 people will attend PM's program, and arrangements are being made to accommodate exactly that number. **P8**

### Adani to invest over ₹2 trn in 5 years, target 45 GW capacity

First India Bureau  
Mumbai

Laying down big plans in the power sector, Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani said Adani Power is implementing a capital expenditure programme of over ₹2 trillion with target of reaching 45 gigawatts (GW) of capacity over next 5 years. While addressing shareholders during the annual general meeting, Gautam Adani said Adani Energy Solutions' transmission order book has increased to ₹72,000 crore. **P5**



### Kolkata: 5 die, 20 rescued after warehouse collapses



Search and rescue operation underway at the site where an under-construction godown shed collapsed in Taratala, in Kolkata, West Bengal, on Wednesday. **PTI**

PTI  
Kolkata

Five workers perished and around 20 others were rescued and hospitalised after a three-storey under-construction warehouse collapsed in Kolkata's Taratala area on Wednesday.

CM Suwendu Adhikari halts all construction pro-

jects approved under the erstwhile TMC regime within the city's civic body area till July 31. Officials said the collapsed warehouse is a private leasehold property under the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port. Three people, a construction site supervisor and two labour suppliers, were arrested.

### IN BRIEF

**India-US conclude key trade talks, eye first phase deal by July 24**  
New Delhi: India and the US on Wednesday concluded two-day ministerial-level talks on the proposed first phase of the bilateral trade agreement (BTA), a framework for which was announced in February this year. The talks were held between Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer in Delhi. **P6**

**US Senate votes to halt US and Iran war; Trump calls move 'unpatriotic'**  
Washington: In a significant rebuke, the US Senate on Wednesday passed a resolution seeking to halt further US military action against Iran unless explicitly authorised by Congress. Following that vote, US President Trump criticised lawmakers on Truth Social, describing them as "GRANDSTANDERS" and calling their actions "unpatriotic". **P7**

### Air India flight briefly enters Pakistani airspace during go-around at Amritsar, probe underway

New Delhi: An Air India flight with number Flight AI479, from Delhi to Amritsar briefly entered Pakistani airspace while carrying out a go-around during its landing approach at Amritsar airport on June 22, the airline confirmed on Wednesday. The incident has been reported to the DGCA, and Air India has launched an internal investigation. The plane crossed int'l border near Attari and remained inside Pakistani airspace for less than 2 minutes.

### DELHI IS YET TO CONFIRM PM'S VISIT

## Iran invites PM Modi to Khamenei's funeral

Funeral ceremonies of Ayatollah Khamenei to be held from July 5-9

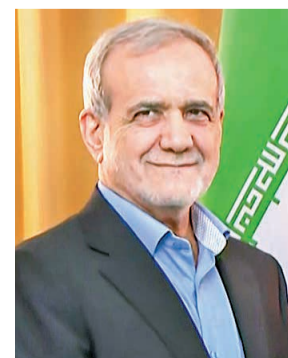
PTI  
New Delhi/Tehran

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian is learnt to have invited PM Narendra Modi to the burial ceremonies for late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, sources said on Wednesday.

The funeral ceremonies will be held from July 5 to 9. There is no confirmation from New



PM Narendra Modi



Iranian Prez Masoud Pezeshkian



Late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Delhi on the invitation to PM Modi. Khamenei, who ruled Iran for three decades, was killed on February 28, the first day of massive US and Israel-

li air strikes on Tehran. The Indian Prime Minister has been invited by President Pezeshkian to the burial ceremonies, the diplomatic sources

said. The funeral is slated to be held in Tehran and Qom on July 5, 6, and 7. The final ceremony will take place in the city of Mashhad on July 9.

### MEA: Passport is not a proof of citizenship

First India Bureau  
New Delhi

Amid growing public confusion over the use of passports as proof of citizenship and eligibility for government benefits, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has clarified that an Indian passport is strictly a travel document and should not be treated as conclusive proof of citizenship. The clarifications came as questions have earlier been raised about other documents as proof of citizenship, including Aadhaar, Voter IDs. **P6**

### MODI HAILS MINISTERS FOR SMOOTH CONDUCT OF NEET RE-TEST 2026

PM Modi praised ministers during Cabinet meeting for collective efforts in ensuring that NEET re-exam 2026 was conducted smoothly without any issues. He said entire process reflected a "whole-of-govt" approach, where different departments worked together towards a common goal. He said this model should be adopted on every occasion, adding, when everyone works together, any challenge can be faced and overcome.

Transport Dept announces new end-of-life vehicle policy, sets 180-day fitness deadline

# Unfit vehicles to face auto deregulation

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

The Rajasthan Transport Department has announced a significant policy change regarding End of Life Vehicles (ELVs), under which certain vehicles will now be automatically classified as ELVs if they fail to meet fitness requirements within a specified period.

According to the new provisions, any vehicle whose fitness certificate expires and is not renewed within 180 days will automatically be declared an End of Life Vehicle on the department's online portal. The move is aimed at improving road safety and phasing



AI GENERATED

out unfit vehicles from active use.

The dept has also clarified that vehicles declared unfit during a fitness inspection will similarly be categorized as ELVs if they do not obtain a valid fitness certificate within 180 days of the inspection. Officials said the

decision is intended to ensure compliance with vehicle fitness norms and reduce the number of unsafe vehicles operating on roads. Once classified as an ELV, a vehicle may face restrictions under applicable regulations governing registration, operation and disposal.

However, the department has provided limited flexibility in exceptional cases. Registration authorities may extend the 180-day deadline if they are satisfied that special circumstances justify additional time for the vehicle owner to obtain fitness clearance.

## Swift police action ends traffic mess in Jpr's Ramnagariya area

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Jaipur Police carried out a swift enforcement drive in the Ramnagariya area on Tuesday night, clearing congestion, removing encroachments and acting against violators after repeated complaints. According to officials hundreds of vehicles were found parked haphazardly on both sides of the road while handcarts and roadside stalls were contributing to daily traffic disruption and inconvenience. After complaints were received at Police Headquarters Special Police Commissioner Om Prakash visited the locality and reviewed the situation. He then deployed a special team and directed personnel to restore order and ensure smooth movement of traffic. Some individuals opposed the action and their vehicles were seized while two youths were arrested.

### SOG ARRESTS MIDDLEMAN IN FAKE DEGREE CASE

The Rajasthan SOG has arrested an alleged middleman in the Physical Education Teacher Recruitment Examination-2022 case. Investigators alleged that Pankaj Jain arranged a forged marksheet from a Uttar Pradesh university for a candidate who later secured a government teaching job. The SOG said the alleged deal was struck for Rs 1.30 lakh and further investigation is underway.



### MULTI-CR PLOT FRAUD CASE UNDER SCANNER

A plot fraud case has surfaced in Sri Ganganagar, with police registering an FIR and investigating an alleged illegal transaction network. Authorities are probing claims that agricultural land was sold without required approvals and buyers were issued slips for amounts lower than payments made.

### MINOR RESCUED IN HOTEL RAID, 3 HELD

Police rescued a minor girl during an operation at a hotel in Sri Ganganagar after officers posed as customers. Three persons, including the alleged accused and the hotel owner, were arrested. Another suspect was also detained. The victim was taken into police protection.

### POLICE RAID HOOKAH BAR OPERATING AS CLUB

Jaipur Police raided an alleged hookah bar operating under the guise of a club in the Airport area and arrested the manager along with three employees. The Special Team recovered hookahs and flavoured smoking products from Oslo Club, while visitors were challenged. Special Police Commissioner Om Prakash warned that licences of clubs and restaurants found operating hookahs could face cancellation following recommendations to civic authorities.

## SHRC takes suo motu cognisance of burn incident in Jagatpura

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

The Rajasthan State Human Rights Commission has taken suo motu cognisance of an incident in Jaipur's Jagatpura area in which a young woman sustained serious burn injuries after a handcart overturned and hot water fell on her.

The case pertains to Reeshu Gupta, a street vendor, who was severely injured after being scalded by hot water during the incident. Acting on media reports, the Commission initiated proceedings on its own and sought a factual report from the Police Commissioner, the District Collector and other concerned officials. Commission Chairman Justice G.R. Moolchandani directed authorities to conduct a thorough investigation into the incident and submit a de-

### Female vendor scalded before VIP movement

A woman street vendor suffered serious burn injuries during a police drive to clear roadside stalls ahead of a VIP movement in Jaipur's Ramnagariya area, officials said, triggering criticism from the opposition.

The incident occurred on June 19 near Mahal Road in Jagatpura, where police were removing stalls through minutes



damaged cart of the vendor.

pushed the cart, causing boiling water to spill on Brijesh Gupta, who suffered burns on her shoulder, chest, thighs and other body parts.

Police said the matter is under investigation.

You read it in First India on JUNE 24, 2026

## Census 2027 field staff told to remove HLO app after survey

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

With fieldwork for the first phase of Census 2027 completed in Rajasthan, authorities have directed enumerators and supervisors to uninstall the HLO application from their mobile devices after following prescribed data-security procedures. The survey concluded across the state on June 14. Personnel have been instructed to first log out of the application and clear its memory and cache before removing it from their devices.

A formal communication has been issued to Sub-District Census Officers to ensure compliance with the directions. The move is aimed at safeguarding census-related information and ensuring proper handling of data collected during the field exercise.



## KHAIRTHAL, NAGOUR DISTRICTS WORKING WITHOUT SPs

Two districts in Rajasthan are currently functioning without full-time Superintendents of Police. The post of SP in Khairthal-Tijara has remained vacant for a considerable period, with Bhiwadi SP Brijesh Jyoti Upadhyay holding additional charge of the district. Similarly, the SP's post in Nagaur is also lying vacant, with Additional Superintendent of Police Asharam currently overseeing responsibilities in the district.

## TRANSFER PLEAS REACH 'RAM DARBAR' IN JODHPUR

Jodhpur City MLA Atul Bhansali has set up a unique "Transfer Temple" at his constituency office amid the transfer season. Government employees seeking transfers are depositing applications in a box placed before an image of Lord Ram. Bhansali says he is only a messenger who can convey requests to the government and ministers, not guarantee transfers.



## TRANSFER SEASON REVIVES OLD MEMORIES IN THE BJP

As transfer requests surge, BJP workers are recalling late Madan Lal Saini and former minister Ramkishore Meena for their accessibility. Both leaders were known for readily recommending transfer cases and helping workers without repeated follow-ups. Their willingness to assist party workers has become a point of nostalgia during the current transfer season.



## LAND, FOREST HURDLES STALLING DEVP PROJECTS

Land and acquisition disputes and delays in obtaining Forest Department approvals are slowing several development projects across Rajasthan. The government has directed departments to improve coordination, expedite land acquisition cases and regularly review pending forest NOCs. Officials have been instructed to remove bottlenecks and ensure delayed projects commence at the earliest.

## MORE POLICE THAN PARTY WORKERS IN CONG PROTESTS?

Raj Congress frontal organisation is reportedly facing organisational difficulties, with protests and meetings attracting poor attendance. Despite frequent announcements of demonstrations and marches, turnout often remains minimal. Political observers note that some events draw more police personnel and media representatives than party workers, raising questions about the outfit's effectiveness.



## Township policy clarified, affordable housing quota made compulsory by govt

Abhishek Shrivastava  
Jaipur

Rajasthan has clarified its township policy, making it mandatory for developers to reserve land for EWS and LIG housing,

including in industrial schemes where residential development is not originally proposed. Developers must earmark plots equivalent to 5 per cent of the saleable area, subject to prescribed lim-

its. The government also clarified that developers will be responsible for roads, footpaths, streetlights and plantation work falling within project areas. However, major city infrastructure

such as trunk sewer lines and stormwater drainage systems will continue to be developed by urban local bodies. The clarification has been issued to ensure uniform implementation of the policy

and promote planned urban development with affordable housing provisions. The revised norms are expected to strengthen inclusive development across upcoming township projects.



## FERTILISER BOOKING THROUGH FARMER IDs

# Fertiliser distribution goes digital in state

Vinod Singh Chouhan  
Jaipur

Rajasthan will begin distributing subsidised fertilisers through Farmer IDs from June 25 under a pilot project aimed at ensuring transparency and curbing black marketing and hoarding. The initiative will initially be rolled out in Sirohi and Rajsamand districts, covering nearly 2.5 lakh farmers.



REPRESENTATIONAL

According to the Agriculture department, the Farmer ID has also been linked with Jan Aadhaar, enabling verification of land records and ensuring that fertiliser is distributed according to the area of agricultural land owned or cultivated by a farmer

launch the pilot project in Rajsamand. Under the new system, farmers will be able to book fertilisers through a mobile application using their Farmer ID. The booked fertiliser

must be purchased from an authorised dealer within 48 hours, failing which a fresh booking will be required.

Officials said the system will allow real-time monitoring of dealer stocks and help prevent diversion of subsidised fertilisers for non-agricultural use. A state-level nodal cell has been constituted to monitor implementation, address operational issues and review fertiliser availability during the Kharif 2026 season. The Agriculture Department plans to gradually expand the system across Rajasthan after assessing the pilot project's performance.

## Industry leaders push for greater women's workforce

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Industry leaders and workforce experts reaffirmed their commitment to increasing women's participation in formal employment during a roundtable organised by IPE Global under the SheWorks initiative in Jaipur. The discussion focused on the role of women's economic participation in driving growth, productivity and inclusive development as Rajasthan pursues its vision of becoming a USD 350 billion economy by 2030. Joint Director of Employment Rajkumar Meena highlighted government measures



IPE Global organised a roundtable conference under the SheWorks initiative in Jaipur on Wednesday.

supporting greater workforce participation by women. Rekha Menon of IPE Global said increasing women's employment requires collective efforts to address barriers related to mobility, workplace safety and social norms. Participants emphasised creating an enabling ecosystem to help more women access and thrive in quality formal jobs across industries.

## Conservation milestone for Rajasthan

## From orphaned cub to wild tiger: RVT-7 freed

First India Bureau  
Bundi

In a significant milestone for wildlife conservation, tiger RVT-7 was released into the open forests of Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve on the eve of Bundi Foundation Day after spending more than 18 months in a rewilding enclosure.

According to forest officials, the enclosure gate was opened at around 6:15 pm on June 23 following the prescribed protocol and approval process. During the night, the tiger ventured outside briefly to explore its surroundings but returned to the enclosure after assessing the unfamiliar environ-



Tiger RVT-7 steps out of the rewilding enclosure to explore its surroundings.

ment. The gate remains open, allowing the animal to move freely into its natural habitat whenever it chooses.

Chief Conservator of Forests Sugna Ram Jat said the tiger attempted to leave the enclosure twice during the night and spent some time out-

side before returning.

Preparations for the release had been completed earlier this month. On June 7, forest officials fitted RVT-7 with a radio collar to enable continuous monitoring of its movements and behaviour in the wild.

The tiger, an orphaned

cub of Ranthambore tigress T-114, was rescued at just two to three months of age and brought to Abhedha Biological Park in Kota. Raised under special care, RVT-7's release marks a significant achievement in Rajasthan's tiger conservation efforts.

Raj: IIT admission process for 2026-27 to begin from June 29

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

The admission process for the 2026-27 academic session in government and private Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) across Rajasthan will commence on June 29. The Skill, Employment and Entrepreneurship Department will issue the detailed admission notification on the same day.

Eligible candidates can submit online applications from June 29 to July 16 through their SSO IDs or at nearby e-Mitra centres.

The department has set a target of achieving 95 per cent average admissions across ITIs. Institutions have been directed to ensure at least 75 per cent admissions, with higher-performing institutes asked to improve enrolment further.

## Govt to launch RPL training for 5K construction workers

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

The Rajasthan Government has announced a series of measures to strengthen skill development and employment generation across the state following a departmental review meeting chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary, Skill, Planning and Entrepreneurship Department, Sandeep Verma.

A key decision includes the formation of District Skill and Entrepreneurship Committees in all districts to improve coordination, monitoring and implementation of skill development programmes. The committees will assess local skill gaps, prepare District Skill Development Plans and review the performance of major schemes, including PM-KVY and DDUGKY.

## FOCUS ON GLOBAL-STANDARD TRAINING THROUGH CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

The Government is planning to establish Centres of Excellence (CoEs) for construction workers in 12 districts, including Sikar, Jhunjhunu, Nagaur, Jaipur, Udaipur, and Bharatpur. Each centre is expected to cost around Rs 4.60 crore. The proposed facilities will provide training in modern construction techniques, workplace safety standards and skills aligned with the requirements of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Workers will also receive assessment and certification support to enhance their employability in domestic and international markets.



ACS Sandeep Verma

The meeting also approved plans to conduct Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) training for 5,000 construction workers registered with the Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) Board. The programme, proposed at a cost of Rs 3.26 crore, aims to formally certify workers' existing skills and improve their employability and wage

prospects.

Officials were directed to ensure the first meetings of district committees by July 15. The review also covered women's skill development initiatives, tribal youth training programmes and new opportunities in caregiving and water management sectors under central government-supported training schemes.

## Govt caps APO period at 30 days, issues new posting guidelines



Departments must now state in writing the reasons for placing an employee under APO. FILE

Dr Rituraj Sharma & Shivendra Singh Parmar  
Jaipur

The Rajasthan government has capped the period for keeping any government employee "Awaiting Posting Orders" (APO) at a maximum of 30 days, issuing fresh guidelines under Rule 25-A of the Rajasthan Service Rules, 1951.

The Finance Department said APO status can be used only in cases of administrative necessity and public interest, and not as a substitute for disciplinary action. Departments have been directed to clearly record reasons in writing while placing any employee under APO.

As per the new norms, APO may apply

**If an employee is not posted within 30 days, the concerned administrative department will have to submit details of the case every month to the Chief Secretary's Office**

in cases such as return from leave, deputation, training, or transfer-related formalities. Any extension beyond 30 days will require prior approval of the Finance Department with proper justification.

The Chief Secretary will review APO cases quarterly, and reports will be uploaded on the CMIS portal to ensure transparency and accountability.

## Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani offers prayers at first Sindhu Kumbh in Ladakh

First India Bureau  
Leh

Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani on Wednesday visited Sindhu Ghat during the first Sindhu Kumbh in Leh-Ladakh and offered prayers for peace, prosperity, and progress of the nation and society.

Addressing devotees, Devnani described the Sindhu River as an eternal symbol of Indian civilisation, culture and national identity. He



Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani prays during the first Sindhu Kumbh in Leh-Ladakh, on Wednesday.

said the confluence of faith, culture, and national unity on its banks

reflects India's rich spiritual heritage.

He noted that the

## Courtesy meet



Former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje meets Rajya Sabha MP and BJP national president Nitin Nabin at BJP headquarters in New Delhi, on Wednesday.

## Dotasra flags '₹2.43 cr' seizure, raises corruption allegations against Meena

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Rajasthan Congress president Govind Singh Dotasra on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on the State Government, demanding a probe into alleged corruption linked to raids involving persons associated with Agriculture Minister Kirodi Lal Meena.

Dotasra alleged that the recovery of Rs 2.43 crore raised serious questions and called for a time-bound investigation by agencies like the ACB or SOG. He also questioned the role of central agen-



RPCC Chief GS Dotasra

cies and sought transparency in the matter.

He raised concerns over maternal deaths, alleged fake medicines in hospitals and administrative actions in border areas, claiming lack of accountability and

compensation for affected families.

The Congress leader also criticised remarks on women's healthcare and alleged negligence in treatment facilities. He warned of a larger agitation and said Congress leaders would visit Bikaner to meet victims' families.

Dotasra further flagged issues related to the Rajasthan-Haryana water agreement and demanded clarity on border security measures and demolition of religious structures, urging an all-party discussion on sensitive matters.

## MEENA COUNTERS GRAFT ALLEGATIONS

Agriculture Minister Kirodi Lal Meena on Wednesday hit back at his critics, accusing them of misleading youth and undermining transparency in recruitment processes. He said those who allegedly indulged in corruption and conspiracies during their tenure are now attempting to distract public attention with false narratives. Meena alleged that past actions had compromised the fairness of government recruitments and harmed deserving candidates. He further questioned allegations against his family, asserting they were politically motivated.

## SELF-RELIANCE IN DEFENCE MANUFACTURING

## Workshop focusses on investment, skill devp

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Opportunities in defence manufacturing, incentives under the Rajasthan Aerospace and Defence Policy-2026, industrial infrastructure, skill development and MSME support were discussed at a workshop on "Self-Reliance in Defence Manufacturing" held in Jaipur on Wednesday.

The event was jointly organised by the Rajasthan government, RII-



RIICO GM Mukul Rastogi, Dy Director General Virendra Kumar Adhana (Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence), RIICO ED Aakash Tomar, and DRDO Scientist Himanshu Deepak during the workshop on 'Self-Reliance in Defence Manufacturing' in Jaipur, on Wednesday.

CO and Invest India, and saw participation from the Ministry of Defence, Department of Defence

Production, DRDO, industry bodies, startups, academic institutions and officials from vari-

ous departments.

Discussions focussed on strengthening India's indigenous defence eco-

system, promoting innovation through DRDO, enhancing industry-academia collaboration and developing a skilled workforce for the sector. Investment opportunities in drones, defence electronics, precision engineering and maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services were also highlighted.

RIICO Executive Director Akash Tomar said the workshop was part of a national initiative to boost self-reliance through stakeholder consultations.

## Govt expands Commercial Taxes cadre, 100 new posts sanctioned

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

The Bhajan Lal government in Rajasthan has approved an increase of 100 posts in the Commercial Taxes Department as part of a cadre restructuring exercise to strengthen tax administration and revenue collection.

The revised structure includes 36 officer-level and 64 subordinate posts, raising the total sanctioned strength from 777 to 813. One additional post of Deputy Commissioner has been created,



The revised structure increases the total sanctioned strength from 777 to 813 posts.

increasing the cadre from 51 to 52 posts. The government has also sanctioned two additional posts each of Assistant Commissioner and Commercial Taxes Officer,

along with 31 posts of Assistant Commercial Taxes Officer.

At the subordinate level, 21 posts of Junior Commercial Taxes Officer and 43 posts of Tax Assistant have been approved. The move aims to improve administrative efficiency and enforcement capabilities within the department.

Officials said appointments will be made against the newly created posts in a phased manner to strengthen field-level tax administration and streamline revenue operations across the state.

## 'MODI HAI TO MUMKIN HAI...' UNTOLD STORIES OF PM MODI – PART 185

MODI: INSPIRING MILLIONS,  
ONE CONNECTION AT A TIME

The narrators recall Prime Minister Narendra Modi's warmth, humour and ability to recognise the potential in others. Their anecdotes offer a glimpse into the personal touch that defines his leadership and inspires those around him



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Modi ji is a leader  
who recognises the  
potential of others

Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji's extraordinary leadership lies in his ability to recognise the potential of others and highlight it in a way that inspires everyone around him. What makes his leadership truly unique is that he not only guides people but also encourages them to innovate, take initiative, and contribute in meaningful ways. I had the privilege of experiencing this firsthand in 2017 while serving as a Member of Parliament.

I had gone to meet him regarding an issue from my constituency. After patiently listening to the matter and discussing possible solutions, he asked me to stay back for a few moments. With genuine curiosity, he wanted to know what kind of work I had been doing beyond raising constituency issues in Parliament. During our brief conversation, I shared details of an internship programme I had initiated. The idea was to bring students from IITs, IIMs, and other premier institutions to work closely on developmental challenges and contribute fresh perspectives and innovative ideas. For me, it was simply a short conversation of about five minutes.

However, what happened afterwards left a deep impact

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat,  
Union minister

on me. At the very next meeting with Members of Parliament, Prime Minister Modi ji mentioned the initiative himself. He spoke about it at the beginning of his address and once again during his concluding remarks. He appreciated the value of such efforts and encouraged other MPs to think creatively and adopt innovative approaches in their own constituencies.

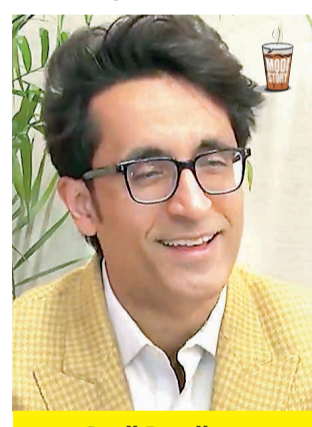
That moment revealed an important aspect of his leadership. He pays attention to even the smallest constructive efforts, acknowledges them generously, and uses them to inspire others. His leadership creates an environment where every contribution matters, every good idea receives encouragement, and every sincere effort finds purpose and meaning.

'The birthday memory  
I will always cherish'

I still remember my birthday on September 29, 2013. It was a day I had planned quietly, just as I usually do. Over the years, I had developed a simple tradition of calling a few people whom I deeply respected and seeking their blessings on my birthday. Narendra Modi ji was always among the first people on that list.

By then, he had already emerged as a national leader and was one of the most prominent figures in public life. Yet, despite his busy schedule and growing responsibilities, I felt a personal connection that encouraged me to call him. In fact, I often thought that once he became Prime Minister, I would probably stop calling him on such occasions because of the demands on his time. But in 2013, I picked up the phone as I always had.

When he answered, I said, "I know you do not like celebrating your birthdays, but I do, and I am calling to seek your blessings." What followed was something I never expected. With his characteristic smile and sense of humour, he responded,

Sunil Deodhar,  
Former BJP national secretary

"What was the hurry for you to be born on 29th September? Couldn't you wait for two more days so the whole world could celebrate it?" I burst into laughter. He

You read PART 184 on  
JUNE 18, 2026

then explained that if I had been born on October 2, my birthday would have coincided with those of Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri ji, and the entire nation would have been celebrating along with me. It was such a simple remark, yet it instantly transformed an ordinary birthday greeting into a memorable conversation.

What touched me most was not just the humour, but the warmth behind it. Narendra Modi ji has never been someone who publicly celebrates his own birthday, yet he took a moment to make mine special. That brief exchange reflected his remarkable ability to connect with people personally, make them feel valued, and create lasting memories through the simplest of words.

Moments like these explain why Narendra Modi ji leaves such a deep impression on people. Not through grand gestures alone, but through his warmth, thoughtfulness, and unique ability to bring joy to everyday moments. Even today, that birthday conversation remains one of my most cherished memories.

Whoever Modi ji  
meets, he makes  
him feel valued

During a visit to Indore, my home city, Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji took time out of his demanding schedule to meet my family. Naturally, we were nervous. After all, we were about to meet the Prime Minister of India, a leader admired not only across the country but around the world. We wondered what the interaction would be like and how we should conduct ourselves.

Yet, the moment we stepped into the room, all our nervousness disappeared. What struck us immediately was the warmth with which he greeted us. It did not feel like meeting a distant national leader. Instead, it felt as though we were meeting someone we had known for years. That is one of the most remarkable qualities of Modi ji. Whoever he meets, he has a unique ability to make them feel comfortable, valued, and genuinely important.

In his characteristic style, he lightened the atmosphere with humour. Looking at me, he joked, "Your legs never stay at home," referring to my constant travels and busy schedule. Everyone laughed, and in that instant, the formal distance between the Prime Minister

Pradeep Bhandari,  
BJP national spokesperson

and us simply vanished. During our conversation, he spoke about the importance of public service, responsibility, and the need to inspire others through action and commitment. What impressed me most was his extraordinary energy. Despite the immense responsibilities he carries, his enthusiasm and positivity were infectious.

When we left, that energy stayed with us. It is difficult to describe in words, yet impossible to forget. My family and I consider ourselves truly fortunate to have met him and received not only his blessings but also a source of inspiration that continues to motivate me even today.

COMPILED AND EDITED BY  
SHASHIKANT SHARMA

## PM Modi expresses concern over misuse of digital platforms



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the 52nd meeting of PRAGATI, the ICT-enabled, multi-modal platform aimed at fostering Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, by seamlessly integrating efforts of the Central and State Governments, at Seva Teerth in New Delhi on Wednesday.

The reviews were done by the prime minister at 52nd meeting of PRAGATI held at Seva Teerth, Wednesday

PTI  
New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday expressed concern over the rising misuse of digital platforms to defraud people and stressed that such matters require coordinated, sensitive and time-bound handling by all concerned agencies.

Modi made the remarks while reviewing grievances related to cyber crime and digital arrest frauds. He also re-

viewed four critical infrastructure projects across the road, power, industrial corridor and metro rail sectors, covering four states and costing around Rs 30,000 crore, an official statement said.

The reviews were done by the prime minister at the 52nd meeting of PRAGATI, the ICT-enabled, multi-modal platform aimed at fostering Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation by seamlessly integrating efforts of the

central and state governments.

Reviewing the cases related to cyber crime and digital arrest, Modi noted that citizens should not be made to run from one department or agency to another and emphasised the need for clear ownership, faster response, better coordination among law enforcement agencies, banks and digital platforms, and stronger public awareness campaigns. He observed that in cases in-

volving cyber fraud, timely action is crucial to prevent financial loss and restore public confidence. The prime minister asked all stakeholders to work in close coordination to strengthen prevention, reporting, investigation and grievance redressal mechanisms.

Modi emphasised that states should work towards enabling e-Zero FIR mechanisms for faster registration and response in cyber fraud cases. As per statement,

the infrastructure projects, important for economic growth, regional connectivity, industrial development and public welfare, were reviewed with focus on timelines, inter-agency coordination, issue resolution and timely completion. Modi underlined that delays in infrastructure projects not only lead to cost escalation, but also deprive people and industries of timely benefits.

He asked the concerned ministries and

state governments to resolve pending issues in a mission-mode manner and ensure close monitoring at the highest level. The PM emphasised the use of PM GatiShakti National Master Plan for efficient planning and timely implementation of infrastructure projects. He also underlined the need for regular and timely updation of project details, utilities, infrastructure layers, clearances and other field-level information on the portal.

### We corrected lapses: Minister Pradhan over NEET Re-exam



Agencies  
New Delhi

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday admitted lapses in the NEET exam 2026, which was cancelled following allegations of paper leak. However, he said that the central government acted promptly, corrected the lapses and conducted the NEET re-exam successfully. Following the exam cancellation, Pradhan said PM Modi made it clear that the future of the students should not be compromised.

"We accept there were lapses on our side and we corrected them," Pradhan said. "My message to NEET aspirants and their families is 'be positive and believe in the country's system'. PM Modi is doing a lot. We have brought the system on track. I accept we made mistakes in the past," he added.

The minister said all states contributed a lot to conducting the NEET exam successfully and government will take strict action against "paper mafia", adding that a fast-track court will be set up to expedite the trial process for cases.

"This government is very sensitive towards the youth. We will do everything to secure their future," he said.

## 'For our youth, PM Modi is an ideal & guardian figure'

The ruling party rejects Jairam Ramesh's remarks on reservation, Nehru; hails PM Modi's leadership and defends larger mandate

PTI  
New Delhi

Rejecting Congress leader Jairam Ramesh's allegation that the BJP wants to end reservation by securing a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha, the ruling party said there is nothing wrong in seeking a bigger mandate to carry out reforms.

The ruling party also took exception to his description of Jawaharlal Nehru as India's best prime minister. In an interview, Congress general secretary Ramesh claimed that the ruling party first wants to push delimitation in the garb of women's reservation, with the ultimate objective of ending reservation.

Responding in one-word answers, Ramesh said Jawaharlal Nehru is the best prime minister India has had, while Sard-



Congress MP Jairam Ramesh

ar Vallabhbhai Patel is the best prime minister the country could not have.

Reacting to the remarks, BJP national spokesperson Syed Shahnawaz Hussain alleged that while the country is progressing and developing under PM Modi's leadership, the Congress has little to offer beyond criticism. "Congress has nothing to

offer except criticism. While the country is progressing and developing under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, its leaders continue to make baseless allegations," he said.

"For the youth of this country, Narendra Modi is an ideal and a guardian figure. He works for their welfare and future," BJP spokesperson said.

### BJP WANTS 2/3RD MAJORITY IN LOK SABHA: CONGRESS

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday alleged that the BJP's push for a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha is aimed at amending the Constitution, with its "real and ultimate target" being the removal of reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs. He also said former Congress leaders who joined the BJP after benefiting from the party should not be welcomed back, while asserting that established political parties—not protest movements alone—must carry forward issues affecting the country's youth. The Congress general secretary claimed that the BJP's immediate objective is to pass delimitation-related legislation, while its larger goal is to secure enough numbers in Parliament to alter constitutional provisions.

### Kerala Cabinet names Sinha as next chief secretary



PTI  
Thiruvananthapuram

The Kerala government on Wednesday approved a series of administrative appointments and relief measures, appointing a new chief secretary and sanctioning financial assistance for families affected by recent tragedies.

The state Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister V D Satheesan, decided to appoint Bishwanath Sinha, a 1992-batch IAS officer, as Kerala's next Chief Secretary, according to a CMO release issued here.

Sinha will take over after incumbent Chief Secretary A Jayathilak retires on June 30.

He has been serving as additional chief secretary in the Home Department since June 28, 2023.



#### MINISTERS IN ACTION OVER MONSOON EFFECT

#### A TEST FROM NATURE PROMPTS EARLY DAMAGE-CONTROL MEASURES

Concerns over the impact of El Niño and forecasts of below-normal rainfall have put both policymakers and farmers on alert.

Govt officials have advised states to promote crops that require less water and to strengthen drought-preparedness measures. Political observers note that authorities are attempting to stay ahead of potential challenges.

#### LAND ALLOCATION SPARKS POLITICAL DEBATE

#### QUESTIONS RAISED OVER AEROSPACE LAND GRANT IN KARNATAKA

A fresh political controversy has emerged after BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari questioned the allocation of five acres of aerospace-related land in Karnataka to a trust linked to the family of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge. The BJP has sought clarification on the basis of the allotment, arguing that the trust lacks experience in the defense or aerospace sectors. The Congress has yet to provide a detailed response to the allegations.

#### NEW TREND IN UNCONTESTED RAJYA SABHA POLLS

#### SEVERAL CANDIDATES SECURE UPPER HOUSE SEATS WITHOUT A VOTE

The process of filling vacant Rajya Sabha seats is underway, but much of the attention has focused on the large number of candidates being elected unopposed. Political parties, including the BJP and Congress, have carefully calculated their numbers to ensure the successful entry of key leaders into the Upper House. Analysts believe the latest round of elections could influence the balance and dynamics of parliamentary debates.

#### AUTHORITIES LAUNCH FIRE SAFETY CHECKS

#### SAFETY INSPECTIONS INTENSIFY FOLLOWING RECENT INCIDENT

Following a recent incident in Aliganj, authorities across several states have stepped up fire safety inspections at coaching centres and educational institutions. Officials have been reviewing compliance with safety regulations, emergency preparedness measures, and required certifications. The developments have sparked a broader debate over whether such checks should be conducted more regularly rather than only after major incidents.

#### POLITICS GOES DIGITAL IN THE AGE OF REELS

#### MORE REELS, LESS SPEECHES? SOCIAL MEDIA IS NEW POLITICAL BATTLEGROUND

Modern politics is increasingly being shaped not only in legislative chambers but also on smartphone screens. Political parties and leaders are investing heavily in short-form video content to connect with voters, especially younger audiences. Observers note that social media engagement has become an important part of political communication. However, critics argue that complex policy issues cannot always be fully explained via brief videos.

COMPILED BY SANDEEP MISHRA

### Union Home Minister to unveil new plan on drug control strategy

## Shah to chair Narco-Coordination Centre meet on Friday

PTI  
New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will chair the 10th apex-level meeting of Narco-Coordination Centre on Friday, with a focus on tackling the challenges posed by synthetic drugs, darknet-enabled trafficking, expanding the reach of rehabilitation centres for drug users over the next 3 years.



The plan signals a sharper national push against synthetic drugs, darknet trafficking & gaps in rehabilitation

The meeting will bring together key stakeholders from 44 central ministries and departments, along with 108 representatives from state governments & drug law enforcement

agencies in hybrid mode, where further strengthening the government's efforts to achieve a drug-free India will be discussed. Shah will also release a vision document on narcotics control (2026-2029) prepared through wide-ranging consultations with Central government departments, drug law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders.

The document will provide a shared roadmap for addressing the "demand-reduction, supply-reduction and harm-reduction" aspects of the drug menace. "This vision document will serve as a guiding framework for policy formulation, implementation and institutional strengthening across the country to curb the menace of drugs," a statement said.

### TO MAKE INDIA A LEADING GLOBAL POWER

## Infrastructure, intelligence key pillars: Gautam Adani

Agencies  
New Delhi

The Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani on Wednesday said that infrastructure and intelligence can no longer be viewed as separate priorities, as they have become complementary forces that will strengthen India's economic capabilities, enhance strategic self-reliance and support its ambition of becoming a leading global power.



Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani

FILE

trialist described infrastructure as the physical backbone of growth, encompassing assets such as roads, ports, airports, power plants, transmiss-

ion networks, renewable energy parks, gas pipelines, logistics hubs, water systems and industrial ecosystems. The second pillar, intelli-

gence, refers to the growing role of technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation, digital platforms, real-time analytics, and pre-

dictive systems.

Gautam Adani said these tools are increasingly being used to improve efficiency, responsiveness and decision-

making across infrastructure assets and networks.

Gautam Adani began his address with a recap of the year gone by. "It was a year in which the world grew more fractured. Complex energy security models returned to the centre of national strategy, and technology became inseparable from sovereignty. However, even in the face of these challenges, your Adani Group remained anchored to an unwavering belief — India's future cannot wait," said the Adani Group Chairman.

## WEATHER

Late monsoon covers parts of Gujarat, arrives in MP nine days behind schedule

## Monsoon reaches Guj, enters MP

Agencies  
New Delhi

The southwest monsoon advanced into Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) saying conditions remain favourable for its further progress over the next few days. In Gujarat, the monsoon reached Surat after arriving later than its usual June 15 schedule. Parts of south Gujarat received rainfall, while rest of Gujarat continued to experience high temperatures. Gandhinagar and Rajkot recorded the highest maximum temperature of 40.5°C.

The IMD has forecast heavy rain at isolated places in south Gujarat over the next 24 hours, accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and winds of 40-50 kmph. Light to moderate rainfall is likely across parts of the state during the next week. In MP, monsoon entered nine days behind schedule through Balaghat, Chhindwara, Betul, Khandwa and Burhanpur.

Rain in 14 districts, including Bhopal, Indore and Ujjain, brought relief from heat, while IMD issued a thunderstorm, lightning and rain alert for 42 districts over the next 24 hours.



A horse-cart driver makes his way through a rain-soaked street during a spell of rain, in Amritsar on Wednesday.

## FLASH FLOODS IN ARUNACHAL LEAVE THREE MISSING, DAMAGE 18 HOUSES AFTER HEAVY RAIN

Itanagar: Incessant rain triggered flash floods in Arunachal Pradesh's Keyi Panyor district on Wednesday, inundating low-lying areas, damaging 18 houses and leaving 3 people missing at the Neepeco project colony near Poosa, officials said. State disaster management secretary Dani Sulu said an under-construction retaining wall collapsed following heavy downpours, causing flooding in nearby residential areas. Meanwhile, landslides on a national highway disrupted traffic and stranded several commuters, hampering rescue efforts.



People inspect debris after landslide and flash floods near NEEPCO colony in Arunachal Pradesh.

## India and UAE hold talks to strengthen defence cooperation, innovation



India and the UAE reviewed progress under the Strategic Defence Partnership Framework during talks in New Delhi.

Agencies  
New Delhi

India and the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday held a meeting in New Delhi to advance defence cooperation under the Strategic Defence Partnership Framework. The Ministry of Defence, in a post on social media, said the meeting was co-chaired by Amitabh Prasad, Joint Secretary for Interna-

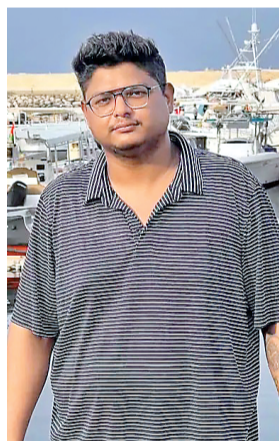
tional Cooperation, and UAE Brigadier Staff Jamal Ebrahim Mohamed Ebrahim Almar-Zooqi. According to the ministry, the discussions focused on expanding collaboration between the two countries in the defence sector and exploring opportunities for further engagement. The two sides deliberated on ways to strengthen defence industry cooperation, promote innovation,

## Man stabbed to death on Mumbai local train after argument over shutting door

Agencies  
Mumbai

A 21-year-old man was allegedly stabbed to death inside a moving Mumbai local train on Tuesday night after an argument over closing the coach door during heavy rain, police said. The victim, Mayank Lohar, was travelling in the first-class compartment of a Churchgate-Nallasopara fast local when he got into a dispute with another passenger between Goregaon and Kandivali stations.

Police identified the accused as Roshan Suvarna, who was later arrested from Mumbai's Kurla area. According to investigators, the altercation began over whether



Mayank Lohar was fatally stabbed aboard Mumbai local.

the train door should be kept open or closed amid the downpour. The argument escalated, and some passengers allegedly assaulted the accused during the confrontation.

Police said Suvarna then took out a knife from his bag and stabbed

Lohar, causing fatal injuries, before fleeing the scene. A video recorded inside the train showed the accused holding a knife and walking through the compartment after the attack. Bloodstains were visible on the metal seats as passengers moved away from the area.

The footage also showed the accused turning back to look at the victim, who was lying on the train floor. Senior Police Inspector Data Khuprekar of Borivali Railway Police said the incident occurred between Goregaon and Kandivali. He was arrested shortly afterwards, while railway police registered a murder case and began examining eyewitness, video accounts.

## Amarnath Yatra to begin under multi-layered security arrangements



Pilgrims have started to arrive for the Amarnath Yatra ahead of the commencement of the annual pilgrimage next week.

Agencies  
Jammu

A multi-layered security apparatus, no-fly zones along the twin yatra routes, watch towers to keep vigil and real-time monitoring of vehicular movement — as the annual Amarnath Yatra is set to start next week, an unprecedented security grid has been put in place. And for the first time, J&K Police issued

"tamper-proof" QR-code-based identity cards to service providers, including pony riders, to ensure safety of pilgrims. While security agencies say there are no specific intelligence inputs about threats to pilgrims, a multi-layered security setup has been put in place as precaution. Government has also issued RFID tags for vehicles, pilgrims and service providers.

Passport is a travel document, not citizenship proof says MEA

Agencies  
New Delhi

A passport is a travel document and not proof of citizenship, the Ministry of External Affairs clarified on Wednesday. While passports are issued only to Indian citizens, they do not by themselves establish citizenship. The MEA also highlighted security features in the new chip-based e-passports, including biometric data, aimed at reducing fraud, enhancing global acceptance. India has rolled out e-passports that meet international standards for authentication. Officials said 1.5 crore passports and related services delivered in 2025.

## India-US BTA review meeting

## India-US trade talks focus on market access



Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal meets US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer during bilateral trade talks in New Delhi.

Agencies  
New Delhi

India and the US have reviewed the core issues of the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA), including enhanced market access, digital trade, and reduction of non-tariff barriers, during the two-day ministerial-level meeting here, an official statement said on Wednesday. The meeting was held between Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer here.

The discussions focused on pathways to conclude an interim agreement as an important milestone towards a comprehensive BTA, the commerce ministry said. It added that both sides reaffirmed their commitment to an agreement that is balanced, commercially meaningful, and delivers tangible benefits for

The discussions focused on pathways to conclude an interim agreement as an important milestone towards a comprehensive BTA

businesses, farmers, workers, and consumers in both countries.

"The two leaders conducted a comprehensive review of core BTA elements, including enhanced market access, digital trade, supply chain resilience, reduction of non-tariff barriers, and expanded cooperation in strategic sectors," it added. The two ministers also noted the substantial progress by negotiating teams in recent months. "The two sides expressed confidence that ongoing negotiations will further deepen economic ties and strengthen the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership," it said.

## RBI IN WAIT AND WATCH MODE

## Premature to discuss rate hike: Guv Malhotra

PTI  
New Delhi

Reserve Bank Governor Sanjay Malhotra has said the central bank is closely monitoring developments in West Asia and that it would be premature to talk about a rate hike at this stage. "If we actually wanted to prepare them (market) for this (rate hike), then we would have changed our (stance)..., if it was so certain that we are going to hike in the coming months, then we would

have changed the stance from 'neutral' to 'restrictive', right? We did not do that," he told ET Now. "So, I think it will be premature to talk about a rate hike. What we have said is that we are cautious, we are aware that there could be risks, both on inflation, as well as on growth, especially inflation, because it is hitting the upper band...we are cautious, and we will continue to remain data dependent," he said.

Earlier this month, the RBI kept its benchmark repo rate unchanged at



Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra

5.25 per cent amid growing risks to growth and inflation from the prolonged West Asia conflict, elevated energy

prices and global supply-chain disruptions. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) unanimously voted to leave the policy repo rate unchanged at 5.25 per cent, and continue with its "neutral" stance.

The RBI lowered its growth expectations for the current fiscal year, projecting real GDP growth at 6.6 per cent in 2026-27, below the 6.9 per cent April forecast. The projection is also lower than the 7.6 per cent estimated for 2025-26. It forecast inflation to

rise to 5.1 per cent in 2026-27, with price pressures expected to peak at 5.9 per cent in the third quarter before easing. This compares to the previous projection of 4.6% average retail inflation for the year. Core inflation is expected at 4.7%, up from the earlier projection of 4.4%.

Observing de-escalation in West Asia conflict, Malhotra said it is good news both for growth, inflation, and crude prices also have moderated to comfort Indian economy.

## FI TOON



SHEKHAR

# Jammu and Kashmir strictly internal matter, India tells UN

Agencies  
New York

India strongly rejected Pakistan's attempt to raise Jammu and Kashmir at a UN Security Council Arria-formula meeting, asserting that the Union Territory "has always been, is and will remain" an integral part of India. India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Parvathaneni Harish, criticised Islamabad for politicising the forum and making unwarranted references to Indian territory.

Harish said Pak's repeated attempts to internationalise the Kashmir issue would not change the reality that J&K is India's internal matter. He accused Islamabad of misusing international platforms to divert attention from its own domestic challenges, including governance failures and human rights concerns.



India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Parvathaneni Harish, addresses a UN meeting while reiterating that Jammu and Kashmir remains India's internal matter.

The Ministry of External Affairs also dismissed recent remarks by Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, calling them an effort to deflect attention from issues within Pakistan. India further highlighted reports of economic exploitation, restrictions on civil liberties and denial of rights in Pakistan-oc-

cupied Kashmir. Reiterating its long-standing position, New Delhi said matters relating to Jammu and Kashmir are not subject to external mediation and remain strictly within India's sovereign domain. India also reiterated its commitment to safeguarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

## UNITED STATES-INDIA TIES ENTER GROWTH PHASE

The United States has described India as one of its most important strategic partners, highlighting growing cooperation in trade, technology, energy and defence. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Bethany Poulos Morrison said the Trump administration is working to deepen ties and called the relationship "the future". She expressed optimism about a bilateral trade deal and highlighted collaboration in artificial intelligence, semiconductors, critical minerals and energy security.

## UNITED STATES SAYS INDIA PARTNERSHIP CRITICAL FOR FUTURE GROWTH

The United States has described India as one of its most important strategic partners, highlighting expanding cooperation across trade, technology, energy and defence. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Bethany Poulos Morrison said the Trump administration is moving rapidly to deepen ties and called the relationship "the future". Speaking at a Capitol Hill event organised by the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies, Morrison highlighted collaboration in artificial intelligence, semiconductors, critical minerals, energy security and emerging technologies. She expressed optimism about a proposed bilateral trade agreement and backed efforts to raise two-way trade to \$500 billion by 2030. Morrison also praised the Indian-American community for its contributions to business, technology and public life, describing people-to-people ties as a key pillar of the growing India-US partnership.

# Tehran calls deal an American defeat, backs further dialogue

Agencies  
Tehran



Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf arrives as diplomatic efforts continue following the US-Iran agreement.

Iran has described the agreement ending the West Asia conflict as a "declaration of America's defeat", claiming it reflected the resilience and resistance of the Iranian nation rather than external pressure. Speaking at a conference in Azerbaijan, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said the understanding was achieved through national strength and determination.

Meanwhile, Pakistan confirmed that technical-level talks between Tehran and Washington are expected to resume next week as efforts continue to implement the deal. The interim agreement provides sanctions relief in exchange for limits on Iran's nuclear programme, while both sides pursue broader negotiations aimed at resolving long-standing disputes and easing regional tensions.

## IRAN WAR POWERS CURBED BY SENATE

The US Senate has approved a war powers resolution requiring President Donald Trump to seek congressional approval before continuing military action against Iran. The measure passed 50-48, with four Republicans joining Democrats in support. Though largely symbolic, the resolution reflects growing concern over the political and economic costs of the conflict. The vote comes amid ongoing diplomatic efforts between Washington and Tehran and follows opinion polls showing widespread public scepticism about the war.

## IRAN NUCLEAR SITES SET FOR INSPECTION

International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi has indicated that inspectors are expected to regain access to Iran's key nuclear facilities under the recent US-Iran interim deal. Grossi said IAEA oversight remains a core provision of the agreement and stressed that inspections are essential for monitoring Tehran's nuclear activities and implementing the accord.



# Rising road accident deaths worrisome, Birla stresses on safety



LS Speaker Om Birla chairs a meeting with SaveLIFE Foundation representatives to strengthen road safety and implement the Zero Fatality Programme in Kota-Bundi, at Parliament House in New Delhi. Birla's OSD Rajesh Goyal was also present.

First India Bureau  
New Delhi

Lok Sabha Speaker and Kota-Bundi MP Om Birla on Wednesday held a meeting at Parliament House to review measures aimed at strengthening road safety in his constituency. The meeting with SaveLIFE Foundation focused on implementing the "Zero Fatality District Programme" to minimise road accident deaths and move towards achieving zero fatalities.

Expressing concern over the rising number of road fatalities, particularly among youth, Birla termed the trend a major social and national loss.

He said road safety must become a mass movement rather than remain confined to administrative efforts. Stressing the need for coordinated action by government agencies, experts, social organisations and citizens, he said fatalities could be reduced by up to 70 per cent through sustained efforts.

A study presented during the meeting highlighted over 400 annual deaths in the region and identified critical corridors and accident-prone locations. Engineering interventions, AI-based monitoring, stronger enforcement and improved trauma care systems were also discussed.

# Gehlot reiterates demand for Vidhan Parishad

First India Bureau  
Jodhpur

With the Rajasthan Assembly's Monsoon Session approaching, the long-pending demand for the creation of a Legislative Council has regained political momentum. Fresh discussion has been triggered by ex-CM

Ashok Gehlot's renewed support, while the Rajasthan Former Legislators' Association has reiterated its demand. The Assembly has passed resolutions seeking an Upper House on three occasions — 2008, 2012 and 2021 — but the proposal remains pending with the Centre. Support-

ers argue that a Legislative Council would improve regional and social representation and provide a platform for experienced individuals to contribute to lawmaking. Critics, however, cite the significant financial burden involved. The issue is likely to figure prominently during the session.



Ex-CM Ashok Gehlot meets Jodhpur Cong office-bearers, discussing organisational programmes and grassroots strengthening.

# Young shooters from Nagaur impress at Rajasthan state championship in Jaipur

First India Bureau  
Jaipur/Nagaur

Shooters from Nagaur delivered an impressive performance at the 24th Open Rifle and Pistol Shooting Tournament being organised by the Rajasthan Rifle Association at the Jagatpura Shooting Range in Jaipur. Five shooters from the Super 50 Shooting Sports Academy secured selection for upcoming Pre-National, North Zone and KSS School Open National competitions.

Ayush Sirohi, Kalp Bhakar and Lokendra Kadwasara competed in the 10-metre rifle category, while Neha Prajapat and Tanishq Jakhar participated in the 10-metre



Kalp Bhakar (L) and Lokendra Kadwasara (R) during the 24th Open Rifle and Pistol Shooting Tournament at the Jagatpura Shooting Range in Jaipur.

pistol event. Their strong performances earned them places in the next stages of national-level competition. Virender Choudhary, founder of the Dr Sahdev Choudhary Foundation, and Vijendra



Choudhary, Managing Director of Nagaur Automobile, congratulated the shooters and wished them success in future events.

# Rajasthan slashes licence fees for small hotels

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

In a major relief for small hotels and a significant boost to Rajasthan's tourism industry, the Autonomous Governance Department has substantially reduced annual licence fees for smaller hospitality establishments and issued revised orders. The move comes in response to demands from hotel associations seeking lower fees for small properties.

Under the revised structure, hotels with up to 10 rooms will now pay annual licence fees of Rs 7,500 in Municipal Corporation areas, Rs 5,000 in Municipal Council areas and Rs 4,000 in Mu-

nicipal Board areas. Hotels with up to 25 rooms will be charged Rs 10,000, Rs 8,000 and Rs 6,000 respectively. The department has replaced the earlier single-category system for hotels with up to 50 rooms by introducing three separate slabs based on room capacity. Hotels with 26 to 50 rooms will now pay lower fees than those prescribed under the notification issued on May 24. The revised rates have also been extended to heritage hotels with up to 50 rooms, benefiting a large section of Rajasthan's hospitality sector. Officials said the revised structure aims to encourage tourism investment.

# Nirav Modi liable for ₹100 crore loan recovery

Agencies  
London

A UK court has ruled that fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi must pay Bank of India more than ₹100 crore under a personal guarantee linked to a loan extended to a Dubai-based company associated with him. The London Circuit Commercial Court rejected Modi's challenge to the guarantee and upheld the bank's demand. The ruling covers both the principal amount and interest charges. Modi, who remains in a British prison while contesting extradition to India, had disputed the claim during court proceedings. The judgment is being seen as a major victory for Bank of India in its efforts to recover outstanding dues and pursue claims against the businessman.



## YOGA DIPLOMACY

# Meditation session marks Yoga Day in New York



Dr H.R. Nagendra, Binaya Pradhan and Prem Bhandari pose with organisers in New York.

First India Bureau  
New York

The Consulate General of India in New York, in collaboration

with the Rajasthan Association of North America (RANA), organised a special meditation session led by renowned yoga expert Guru Dr H.R. Nagendra on the

occasion of the 12th International Day of Yoga. The event brought together members of the diplomatic corps, academia, business community, yoga institutions,

spiritual organisations and the wider Indian-American community.

Welcoming participants, Consul General Binaya Pradhan expressed happiness over the growing popularity of yoga in the United States, pointing to the increasing number of yoga enthusiasts participating in yoga centres and wellness events. Guru Dr Nagendra guided attendees through meditation practices and shared insights on the importance of meditation in fostering inner peace, mental clarity, harmony and holistic well-being. He emphasised that yoga helps cre-



Dr H.R. Nagendra, Amna Almheiri and Jonathan Granoff attend a meditation session during Intern'l Day of Yoga celebrations in New York.

ate balance between the body, mind and breath, improving both physical and mental health. Participants appreciated the session and reflected on the continuing relevance of India's ancient wellness traditions.

RANA President Prem Bhandari described yoga as India's gift to humanity and noted that International Day of Yoga, initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the United Nations, is now celebrated in more than 190 countries.

## Courtesy Call



Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Kesari Singh, Acting Chairman of the Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC), met Governor Haribhau Bagade at Lok Bhavan, in Jaipur on Wednesday. The meeting was a courtesy call.



## BHARAT24 PRESENTS 'VIKSIT BHARAT LEADERSHIP SUMMIT - GREEN WARRIORS OF NEW INDIA'

# ECONOMIC GROWTH & GREEN DEVELOPMENT MUST GO TOGETHER: Dr JAGDEESH CHANDRA

First India Bureau  
New Delhi

Bharat24 successfully organised "Viksit Bharat Leadership Summit - Green Warriors of New India" at Hotel Taj Mansingh, New Delhi, on Wednesday. During the summit, Bharat24 felicitated several distinguished personalities and organisations as the "Green Warriors of New India" in recognition of their outstanding contributions towards environmental conservation, sustainability, water management, social impact and nation-building.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jagdeesh Chandra said that the summit was envisioned as a national platform to encourage constructive dialogue on sustainability and green development, and to inspire collective action towards creating an environmentally responsible and developed India by 2047. He emphasised that economic progress and environmental stewardship must go hand in hand if India is to emerge as a global leader.

Manoj Jagyasi, Chief



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra presenting memento to Union Minister Bhupender Yadav along with Bharat24 Team (L to R: Kamal Rautela, Gunjan Dixit, Akanksha, Amit Ojha, Anjana, Poomima Mishra, Aditi Nagar, Manoj Jagyasi, Ashish Malhotra, Bhim Negi, Rittik Banerjee and Dharendra Awasthi & Adviser to UP CM Awanish Awasthi, during the Bharat24's 'Viksit Bharat Leadership Summit - Green Warriors of New India' organised at Hotel Taj Mansingh, New Delhi, on Wednesday. **SANTOSH SHARMA**



Union Minister CR Paatil being felicitated by Dr Jagdeesh Chandra & Manoj Jagyasi during the Leadership Summit.

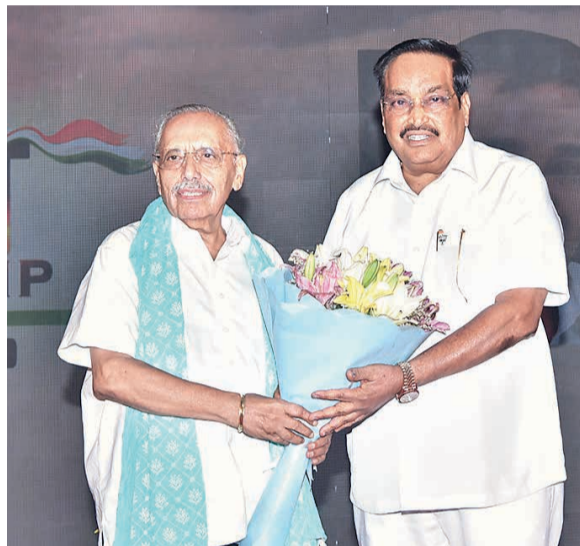
Business Officer and Strategic Advisor, Bharat24, said that the summit reflected Bharat24's commitment to creating meaningful platforms that bring together govt, industry, academia and civil society to discuss India's future



priorities. He noted that sustainability is no longer an option but a national imperative, and collaborative action will be essential to realise the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. He further said that the enthusiastic

participation of leaders from diverse sectors made the summit a powerful platform for ideas, partnerships & solutions that can shape a greener & more inclusive India.

Vibrant discussions at the summit covered environmental conservation, climate resilience, water security, green innovation, sustainable infrastructure, and social responsibility, reaffirming collective commitment to a prosperous and eco-conscious India. Stakeholders resolved to collaborate for Viksit Bharat 2047 and a sustainable future.



Union Minister CR Paatil being warmly greeted by Dr Jagdeesh Chandra at 'Viksit Bharat Leadership Summit - Green Warriors of New India' held in New Delhi on Wednesday.



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra, Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, Manoj Jagyasi, Satyam Roychowdhary, Bidyut Majumdar, Awanish Awasthi, and Dr Arpit Chopra Jain during the lamp-lighting ceremony at Bharat24's 'Viksit Bharat Leadership Summit - Green Warriors of New India' organised at Hotel Taj Mansingh, New Delhi, on Wednesday.

## CM okays ₹50 cr for 115 religious sites



Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma visited the ancient Tripolia Balaji Temple in Sangaran on Wednesday, offering prayers for the state's well-being and prosperity. He also laid the foundation stone for ₹50 cr works to beautify & renovate 115 religious sites, includ-



ing Sanghiji Jain Temple & Sanga Baba Temple. UDH Minister Jhabar Singh Kharrar & others were present.

## Pachpadra Refinery to become India's energy fortress, says CM

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting at the Chief Minister's residence to review the Pachpadra Refinery-cum-Petrochemical Complex. He sought detailed updates from officials and HRRL management on progress, operational status and preparedness. CM Sharma said Prime Minister Narendra Modi would soon inaugurate the refinery and directed officials to ensure all arrangements are completed in time to make the event historic.



Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma chairs a high-level meeting regarding the Pachpadra Refinery and Petrochemical Complex at CMR in Jaipur on Wednesday. CS V Srinivas, ACS to CM Akhil Arora, ACS Aparna Arora, Principal Secy Vaibhav Galriya, along with HRRL management were present.

He said the project would strengthen India's energy security and emerge as a major growth engine for Rajasthan. HRRL management praised the Chief Minister's close monitoring

and teamwork with state officials, stating that with his guidance the refinery has once again become ready for operations within a short span. Over

half a dozen units are operational and production has begun. The management presented product samples, a refinery model and a booklet on its journey to CM Sharma.

## CM: Jaipur's transport, sanitation going hi-tech

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma announced 1,538 development projects worth Rs 631 crore for Sangaran, focusing on infrastructure, electricity, water, and sanitation. He said Jaipur's transport

and sanitation systems are being made high-tech. PM Modi to lay Jaipur Metro Phase-2 foundation on July 4. Projects: Muhana flyover, Bambala STP, satellite hospital, trauma centre, Unity Mall, Dravyavati. Swamitva cards were also distributed.



CM Bhajan Lal Sharma inaugurates 1,538 development works worth ₹631 crore at Sangaran Stadium in Jaipur on Wednesday. Also seen are (L-R) JDA Commissioner Siddharth Mahajan, MP Manju Sharma, Cabinet Minister Jogaram Patel, MOS Jhabar Singh Kharrar, ACS Alok Gupta & Secretary Ravi Jain.

## ONE OFFICER, TWO DEPARTMENTS, THREE CRISES

# FROM MATERNITY WARD TRAGEDIES TO ADMINISTRATIVE FIREFIGHTING: THE BURDEN ON ONE BUREAUCRAT - GAYATRI RATHORE

Rajendra Chhabra  
Jaipur

Acting on Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma's directions, Gayatri Rathore, Principal Secretary of the Medical Education Department, left Jaipur late on Monday night and travelled first to Jodhpur and then to Bikaner to assess the ground situation and gather facts regarding serious medical incidents that have recently come to light at both locations.

Two women died, and the condition of several others deteriorated following caesarean deliveries at AIIMS Jodhpur, Paota Women's Hospital

in Jodhpur, and PBM Women's Hospital in Bikaner. Earlier, last month, five women died in a similar incident at the Janana Hospital in Kota. On that occasion as well, Gayatri Rathore was dispatched from Jaipur to Kota.

The incidents at the major women's hospitals located in the state's three principal divisional headquarters—Kota, Jodhpur and Bikaner—have drawn attention across Rajasthan. The situation is being regarded as serious, and the matter has reached the level of both the minister and the principal secretary. Meanwhile, a controversial statement made by Medi-

cal Minister Gajendra Singh Khimsar in Bikaner has also become a subject of discussion.

On the other hand, following these incidents, Gayatri Rathore has been seen constantly moving from one hospital to another. However, the reality is that she is already burdened with extensive responsibilities. She is not only the Principal Secretary of the Medical Education Department but also heads the Medical and Health Department, which oversees healthcare services across the state.

If one considers only the major hospitals, Rajasthan has 48 large hos-

pitals attached to medical colleges. Of these, 33 are affiliated with government medical colleges. All major government women's hospitals located at divisional headquarters are also part of this system. Managing these hospitals is, in itself, a massive responsibility.

It was for this reason that an independent Medical Education Department was carved out of the Medical and Health Department in 2009. At the time, IAS officer Govind Sharma became the first full-time and independent Principal Secretary of the newly created department. A separate directorate was also es-



Principal Secretary Gayatri Rathore inspects Ummed Hospital in Jodhpur on Tuesday. Principal of Dr SN Medical College Dr BS Jodha & others were present. **FILE**

established. The objective was to separate the management of large teaching hospitals from routine healthcare services

and enable more effective administration.

Over the past nearly two decades, the department has been headed by 15 secretaries. On 12 occasions, separate and independent secretaries were appointed exclusively for the department. Only in three cases—Veenu Gupta, Mukesh Sharma and Akhil Arora—was the additional charge of the Medical Education Department assigned for a limited period while they were serving as Principal Secretary of the Medical and Health Department.

Even during the tenure of the present government, T Ravikant and

Ambrish Kumar served as full-time heads of the department. This arrangement continued until 2024.

However, in November 2024, after Ambrish Kumar became embroiled in controversies, the complete responsibility of the Medical Education Department was also handed over to Gayatri Rathore. As a result, for the first time, the full-time responsibility of both the Medical and Health Department and the Medical Education Department came under a single officer.

Critics argue that this has effectively concentrated responsibility for

all medical services across the state—both large and small—in the hands of one official. According to them, placing the burden of two extremely large, important and resource-intensive departments on a single individual is neither practical, nor logical, nor administratively justified.

Observers believe that every official has a human limit in terms of capacity and time. In the wake of incidents such as those in Kota, Jodhpur and Bikaner, they say it is natural to ask how long a single officer, Gayatri Rathore, can continue rushing from one crisis to another across the state.



**ARTISTIC VOYAGE!**

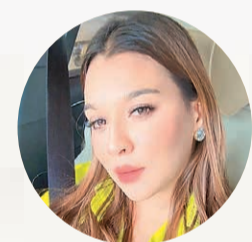
**O**n concluding day of "Chitrahaar - Unfolding Towards the Self," a solo art exhibition by young artist Sara Harsh, witnessed an enthusiastic response from art lovers at JKK on Wednesday. **P12**



# DREAM ALCHEMY

From fashion runways to film sets, freelance models Uriella of Mumbai and Actress Monika Mishra of Bihar are scripting their own success stories. City First traces the remarkable journeys of two dreamers who refused to let circumstances define their destiny.

**F**or Uriella, the spotlight was never just about glamour—it was about discovering who she truly is. Raised by a strong and determined single mother, she grew up believing that no dream is too big when backed by courage and hard work. Today, the Mumbai-based actor, freelance model, author and entrepreneur, who is also pursuing a degree in International Business, is creating her own path in the world of fashion and entertainment. But her journey was far from predictable. Growing up in a boarding school, Uriella wasn't always sure of her future. It was only after the lockdown that she found her calling. Inspired by global icon Kim Kardashian, she embraced the idea of chasing multiple passions and turning them into reality. Her love for fashion began with magazines, runway shows and luxury brands, long before she ever stepped in front of a camera. At just 16, she became runner-up in an international beauty pageant, and a year later made headlines as a published author with her novella *Totem to Mayhem*, which sold out in the UK within its debut week. From moving from Calcutta to



**Tripti Mahawar**

cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

Mumbai to building a career across acting, production and entrepreneurship, Uriella has embraced every challenge with confidence. Grounded by discipline, Pilates and authenticity, she continues to prove that true success lies in staying yourself unapologetically while fearlessly pursuing every dream. Uriella believes in one mantra—"Do It All." And with every step forward, she is doing exactly that.

Meanwhile, born on August 28, 2002, in Bihar, Actress and freelance model Monika Mishra grew up in a close-knit family alongside her two elder sisters and elder brother. A bright student who excelled in academics and sports, Monika always harboured a dream far beyond the classroom—to become an actress and make her mark in the entertainment industry.

Her striking height and confident personality often drew attention, with neighbours and well-

wishers encouraging her mother to consider modelling and pageantry for her daughter. Those words stayed with Monika and eventually inspired her to pursue a career in fashion and cinema despite coming from a traditional background.

Her professional journey began in Delhi, where she worked as an event hostess before stepping into modelling. Runway appearances, pageant victories and the prestigious title of Miss Aura India 2023 significantly boosted her confidence and strengthened her belief in her dreams. Determined to aim higher, she moved to Mumbai in 2024, embracing both the opportunities and challenges that came with the city.

Despite struggling with accommodation, finances and the competitive nature of the industry, Monika remained focused on her goals. She further refined her craft under the mentorship of renowned acting coach Saurabh Sachdeva at *The Actor's Truth*.

Her perseverance paid off with acting projects and films such as *O Mata Anukundama* and *The Red Bag*. Today, Monika continues her pursuit of Bollywood with unwavering determination, proving that courage, hard work and self-belief can transform dreams into reality. For her, the camera is not just a profession—it is her passion, purpose and the beginning of an extraordinary journey still unfolding.



**WHAT'S NEXT?**



**Lath Dhara Bhattar by Amit Maharana:** It brings relatable small-town stories, desi traditions, family humour, and witty observations to the stage, delivering an engaging one-hour comedy special packed with laughter and memorable moments.

🕒 When: June 28, 07:00 PM  
 📍 Where: Jaipur Comedy Club, Jaipur



**Suhana Safar Aur Ye Mausam Haseen:** Is a nostalgic musical evening featuring renowned singers Sangita Melekar and Chirag Panchal, celebrating Bollywood's golden era (1931-1970) through timeless classics, unforgettable melodies, and a heartfelt tribute to legendary composers, lyricists, and singers.

🕒 When: June 29, 06:30 PM  
 📍 Where: Rajasthan International Centre, Jaipur



**AntarNaad:** Beyond Noise, Into Surrender is a soul-stirring live bhajan concert by Nikhar Juneja, blending devotion, music and spiritual energy. Travelling from Jaipur to Delhi, this transformative evening promises peace, connection, and an unforgettable journey into the heart of bhakti.

🕒 When: July 4, 06:00 PM  
 📍 Where: Janki Paradise Marriage Garden, Jaipur

**BIRTHDAY FORECAST!**



**Karishma Kapoor**  
**Cancer**  
 June 25

Someone close to you may seem distant, distracted, or difficult today, but don't take it personally. Their concerns are likely unrelated to you and they may not be ready to share them. If you feel tense or restless, a brisk walk or workout can help restore balance and ease stress.

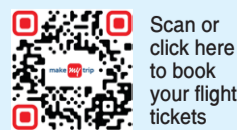
Lucky Number: 7

Lucky Colour: Red



**Jaipur Flight Plan**

- NEW DELHI** - Air India, IndiGo, Alliance Air
- MUMBAI** - Air India Express, IndiGo, Air India
- SURAT** - Air India, Air India Express, IndiGo, Alliance Air
- BENGALURU** - Air India, IndiGo, Air India Express
- KOCHI** - Air India Express, IndiGo, Air India, Akasa Air
- UDAIPUR** - Air India, IndiGo
- KOLKATA** - IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, Akasa Air, Alliance Air
- HYDERABAD** - Air India Express, IndiGo, Air India, Alliance Air
- DUBAI** - IndiGo, Air India Express, Air India, Air Arabia



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**A**sk anyone what they ultimately want from life, and most answers will circle back to the same thing—to feel happy, settled, and at peace with where they are headed. Yet, in daily life, happiness often feels postponed. We tell ourselves, “Once this project is over... once I earn more... once things settle at home...” Only then will we relax and feel content.

In an Indian setting, this feeling is even more layered. Between family expectations, career pressure, financial responsibilities, and social comparisons, happiness quietly takes a back-seat. We keep adjusting, compromising, pushing through. And somewhere along the way, we forget that happiness is not something that arrives after everything is perfect. It is something we build, even when life is messy.

**LETTING GO MAKES SPACE FOR PEACE**

One of the biggest barriers to happiness is not what is happening right now, but what we are holding on to from the past. Old arguments, hurtful words, disappointments—these stay with us far longer than they should. It is natural to feel hurt when someone treats you unfairly, whether it is a colleague, a friend, or even family. But holding on to that hurt slowly weighs you down. Forgiveness is often misunderstood. It does not mean forgetting what happened or accepting wrong behaviour. It simply means deciding that you will not carry that burden anymore. In many families, grudges quietly continue for years—over property, misunderstandings, ego clashes. Everyone moves on outwardly, but the heaviness remains.

Letting go is not about the other person. It is about your own peace. When you reduce judgment, when you stop replaying what went wrong, you create mental space. You feel lighter. And surprisingly, you also become kinder to yourself.

**YOUR BODY CARRIES YOUR MOOD**

It is difficult to feel happy when your body is constantly tired.



**Happiness Isn't Far Away**

Happiness is often seen as something distant, dependent on success or circumstances. But in reality, it is shaped by everyday choices—how we let go, how we care for ourselves, and who we spend time with. This article explores simple, practical ways to feel lighter, healthier, and more fulfilled starting today.

Many of us ignore this connection. We skip meals, survive on chai and snacks, sleep late, wake up early, and call it routine. Over time, this catches up. You feel irritated, low on energy, and emotionally drained without a clear reason.

Taking care of your health is not just about looking fit—it directly affects how you feel. Drinking enough water, eating simple home-cooked food, getting proper sleep, and moving your body regularly can shift your mood more than you expect. Even something as basic as a short walk in the morning or evening can clear your mind. In our culture, we often prioritise everyone else—family, work, responsibilities—and put ourselves last. But neglecting your health doesn't help anyone in the long run. When you feel physically better, everything else becomes easier to handle. Your patience improves, your energy increases, and your overall outlook becomes more positive.

**THE COMPANY YOU KEEP MATTERS**

Have you noticed how your mood changes depending on who you spend time with? Sit

with people who constantly complain, criticise, or compare, and you begin to feel heavy. Spend time with those who laugh easily, stay hopeful, and support you, and something shifts within you.

Happiness is surprisingly contagious. In Indian households, this is easy to observe—one person's mood often sets the tone for the entire home. The same applies to friendships and workplaces. You don't need a large social circle, but you do need meaningful connections.

A simple conversation over chai, a genuine laugh, or even sharing everyday worries with someone who listens can lift your mood. At the same time, it is worth reflecting—are the people around you adding to your peace or taking away from it? Sometimes, protecting your happiness also means creating a little distance from negativity.

**HAPPINESS IS BUILT IN SMALL WAYS**

We often imagine happiness as a big achievement—a perfect life, a major success, or a dramatic change. But in reality, it grows quietly, through small, everyday choices. Choosing to let go instead of holding on.



Taking care of your body instead of ignoring it. Spending time with people who bring out your better side.

It doesn't require a complete life overhaul. It begins with awareness. With small shifts. With deciding that your well-being matters today, not someday.

Life will always have its share of problems. There will be stress, uncertainty, and moments of frustration. But alongside all that, there can also be calm, connection, and contentment—if you allow it.

Because happiness is not something waiting for you in the future. It is already present, in small moments, in simple habits, in the way you choose to live each day.

City First Team with AI-Assisted Inputs



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: Cocktail 2**  
**Director:** Homi Adajania  
**Cast & Crew:** Shahid Kapoor, Rashmika Mandanna, Kriti Sanon,



Scan or click here to book your movie tickets



**Movie: Welcome To The Jungle**  
**Director:** Ahmed Khan  
**Cast & Crew:** Akshay Kumar, Suniel Shetty, Disha Patani, Jacqueline Fernandez, Arshad Warsi, Tusshar Kapoor, Rajpal Yadav, Paresh Rawal



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# Voices Shaping Modern Weddings

**TAJ MAHAL, NEW DELHI, LEADS THE CONVERSATION ON MODERN INDIAN WEDDINGS WITH WEDDINGSUTRA ENGAGE**

**EXCLUSIVE DIALOGUE WITH INDUSTRY LEADERS ON THE EVOLVING LANGUAGE OF LUXURY WEDDINGS IN INDIA**



(L-R) Parthip Thyagarajan, Shilpa Sharma, Vandana Mohan, Anju Modi and Dr Anmol Ahluwalia



(R-L) Dr Anmol Ahluwalia (Area Director-Operations and General Manager, Taj Mahal, New Delhi), Anju Modi (couturier), Vandana Mohan (Founder of The Wedding Design Company), Shilpa Sharma (Founder of Breakaway) and Parthip Thyagarajan (Co-Founder and CEO of Weddingsutra) during the session "Philosophy of Timeless Weddings"



Anshu Khanna, Vandana Mohan, Anju Modi and Shilpa Sharma with a guest

**City First**

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**R**einforcing its position as the Capital's iconic destination for landmark celebrations, Taj Mahal, New Delhi, brought together leading voices from India's wedding ecosystem in an exclusive dialogue in association with WeddingSutra Engage. Drawing on perspectives from hospitality, fashion, wedding design and travel, the evening centred on the evolution of modern weddings, the confluence of cultures and the personalisation of experiences.

Held at Longchamp and anchored in the philosophy of Timeless Weddings, the panel featured Dr Anmol Ahluwalia, Area Director-Operations and General Manager, Taj Mahal, New Delhi; Vandana Mohan, Founder of The

Wedding Design Company; couturier Anju Modi; Shilpa Sharma, Founder of Breakaway; and was moderated by Parthip Thyagarajan, Co-Founder and CEO of WeddingSutra.

The conversation centred on three key shifts shaping luxury weddings in India – personalisation over scale, culinary experience as part of the celebration itself and legacy as a marker of timelessness. The discussion highlighted Delhi's growing prominence in the wedding landscape, shaped by its cultural richness, architectural heritage and ability to offer distinctive experiences for both hosts and guests.

Dr Anmol Ahluwalia, Area Director - Operations & General Manager, Taj Mahal, New Delhi said, "The most memorable weddings are remembered not only for their grandeur, but for the emotions



Parthip Thyagarajan, Vandana Mohan, Anju Modi, Ritika Gupta, Dr Anmol Ahluwalia with a guest

they evoke and the moments they create – with Trust, Awareness and Joy. At Taj Mahal, New Delhi, we believe timeless luxury lies in this balance of elegance, warmth and personal meaning. Our advantage has always been the range we can offer within one address, from grand ballrooms to intimate lawns and storied restaurants, elevated by bespoke services. Through Timeless Weddings by Taj, our endeavour is to

craft celebrations that reflect the individuality of each couple while embodying the warmth, intuition and legacy of Taj hospitality."

Adding a unique and immersive touch to the evening, guests were invited to a 'Kitchen Party'—an afternoon tea curation offering a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the hotel's culinary world, pairing Indian bites with classic English tea traditions. Set amidst stunning views, the experience featured

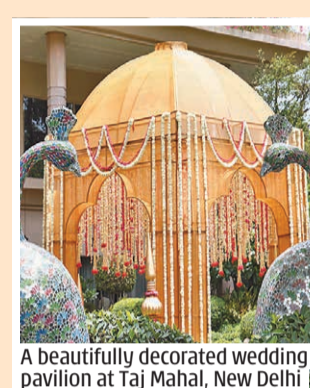


Chef Ankit Gaurav with fellow chefs at Hotel Taj Mahal, New Delhi

a live showcase of the hotel's signature restaurants. House of Ming presented classics including Golden Fried Prawns, Tofu Pancake, Edamame and Cheese Dim Sum, and Mapo Tofu with Jasmine Rice. Varq showcased regional and seasonal favourites such as Panchdhaan Khichdi, Varqui Khumb, Guntoor Chikki Paneer with Set Dosa, and Saifeeda Gosht Biryani. Rick's complemented the experience with its signature bar, serving

a selection of craft cocktails and mocktails. The experience concluded with an indulgent dessert trolley and chocolate cart, featuring creations such as Quinoa and Orange Kheer, Rasgulla with Coffee Tiramisu, and artisanal chocolate selections.

For close to five decades, the hotel has played host to Timeless Weddings as a custodian of celebrations, creating experiences that feel both grand in scale and personal in



A beautifully decorated wedding pavilion at Taj Mahal, New Delhi

spirit. Set in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi, the re-imagined Taj Mahal, New Delhi uniquely combines its historical grandeur with modern luxury through elegant banquets, landscaped lawns, terrace garden and versatile event spaces, complemented by award-winning culinary experiences, luxury suites, bespoke services, wellness offerings through J Wellness Circle and the hallmark warmth of Taj hospitality.

**ACT TO ACTION SUMMER CAMP 2026 CONCLUDES SUCCESSFULLY ACROSS CITIES**

## IGNITING YOUNG MINDS

**City First**

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**A**ct To Action Summer Camp 2026, in collaboration with First India News as Media Partner, an innovation-driven experiential learning initiative aimed at nurturing future-ready leaders, concluded successfully across Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur. The Udaipur edition, held from June 8 to 22 at Neerja Modi School, Chitrakoot Nagar, saw enthusiastic participation by students and received encouraging responses from parents and educators.

The camp was organised under the guidance of Principal Dr Brijraj Singh Baghela and Director & Coordinator Sakshi Sojatia. Participants engaged in entrepreneurship, leadership, communication and problem-solving activities, while also presenting startup ideas, sustainability projects and innovative solutions to real-world challenges. Theatre-based learning sessions further enhanced confidence and self-expression among children.

A major highlight of the



Kritesh Agarwal along with teachers, centre in-charge and children at Sun India Pre School, Gopalbari

camp was hands-on exposure to AI and STEM learning through hydro rocket launches, innovation challenges, scientific experiments and technology-based activities. These sessions were conducted with the support of Lab of Future, iBig Wonder, Chitrakala and Act To Action. The Udaipur chapter was led by District Head Coordinator Rodri Garg, Co-Head Prakhar Kapoor, PR Head Garima Mehta and Core Team Member Jatin Panwar, along with a dedicated team of facilitators and volunteers.

Act To Action Founder and

Director Kritesh Agarwal said the initiative aims to equip children with creativity, critical thinking, entrepreneurship and technological awareness. He also highlighted that the second phase of the camp was conducted at Sun India Pre School, Gopalbari, and Phonixions Jaipur under the leadership of Ishan Sharma, Nanki Kandhari and Charu Verma.

The camp was organised in collaboration with DoIT&C Rajasthan, iStart Rajasthan, First India News Group, CRE-DAI Rajasthan and Ananta Hotels & Resorts.

**NETWORKING MEET IN JAIPUR**



Pink Womaniya Club launched its new session 2026-27 with a grand Meet & Greet followed by an elegant lunch at Hyatt Regency Jaipur on Wednesday. The event witnessed the participation of over 50 women from diverse professional and social backgrounds, fostering networking and meaningful interactions. Founder and Director Kanu Mehta highlighted the club's journey and its mission of empowering women through collaboration, leadership and community engagement. The gathering marked renewed commitments, inspiring conversations and a shared vision for the year ahead. The session will focus on growth, social initiatives and strengthening a supportive women's network across Jaipur.

**JAIPUR WOMAN SCALES EVEREST**

Neelima Arora, a Jaipur-born mountaineer, has created history by becoming the world's first woman with Thalassemia Minor to summit Mount Everest (8,849 m), bringing pride to India. A Silicon Valley Validation Engineer in California and mother of two, she had no prior mountaineering experience until two and a half years ago, after knee surgery inspired her to take up the challenge. During the 50-day expedition, she battled High-Altitude Pulmonary Oedema three times but continued despite medical advice to turn back. Having previously climbed peaks like Mont Blanc, Matterhorn and Aconcagua, she reached Everest on May 25, calling it an emotional triumph.



**KALA MANTHAN ART SHOWCASE**

The national-level art exhibition and camp "Kala Manthan (4th Edition)" concluded on Wednesday at Chitra International Art Gallery, Dehradun, marking a vibrant celebration of art, culture and creativity. Artists from across India participated enthusiastically in the event, which ran from June 20. The closing ceremony was graced by Dehradun Mayor Saurabh Thapliyal as the chief guest, along with Colonel Bharat Bhandari and Prof Bharat Bhushan as guests of honour. During the event, the prestigious Santosh Smriti Kala-Charcha Srijan Samman was conferred upon Dr Chandrashekhar Kale (2024) and Surendra Singh (2025), each receiving ₹21,000, a citation and a shawl. Organiser Tara Chand Sharma was praised for successfully hosting the national art initiative.



**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INDUSTRY DIALOGUE**

Industry leaders and policymakers reaffirmed their commitment to advancing women's participation in formal employment and promoting gender-inclusive workplaces across Rajasthan during an Industry Roundtable held at Hotel Hilton on Wednesday. Organised by IPE Global under the SheWorks initiative, the consultation brought together key stakeholders, including Rajkumar Meena, Joint Director, Directorate of Employment, Government of Rajasthan, Rekha Menon, Lead, Women's Economic Liberty, IPE Global, and Rishav Mandal, Managing Director, Rajasthan Skill and Livelihood Development Corporation (RSLDC). Speakers highlighted that enhancing women's workforce participation is vital for Rajasthan's USD 350 billion economy vision by 2030, stressing reforms in safety, hiring, retention and skilling pathways.



**ICAI DECLARES CA RESULTS**

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has declared the results of the CA Intermediate Examination held in May 2026. According to ICAI Jaipur Branch Chairman CA Raja Mordhwaj Sharma, six Jaipur students secured places in the All India Merit List. Divyansh Jain secured AIR 8 with 487 marks, followed by Jatin (AIR 31, 455), Aastha Goyal (AIR 37, 448), Swasti Somani (AIR 44, 441), Parth Amarnani (AIR 47, 438) and Hardik Mamodia (AIR 49, 436). Jaipur also recorded encouraging pass percentages across various examination groups.



# COUTURE CHRONICLES



Kashish Aswani



Designer Kanishka Mosun with Miss Rajasthan 2026 finalists Mansi Rathore, Bhawana Vaishnav, Kanchan Khatana, Kashish Aswani and Sejal Arora during the launch of the exclusive bridal collection for the pageant's grand finale



Mansi Rathore and Bhawana Vaishnav captured in a candid moment



Sejal Arora, Mansi Rathore & Bhawana Vaishnav

The first look of the 28th edition of Rajasthan's longest-running beauty pageant, Miss Rajasthan 2026, organised by Fusion Group, was unveiled on Tuesday at JJK Fashion, Malviya Nagar. During the event, renowned designer Kanishka Mosun launched the exclusive bridal collection that will be showcased at the grand finale of the pageant. Organisers Yogesh Mishra and Nimisha Mishra said the first-look launch marked the beginning of the final phase of the competition. They informed that a total of three designer looks will be unveiled ahead of the finale. The Top 28 finalists will wear these specially curated collections while showcasing their talent, confidence and personality on the grand stage. Mentor Nawal Shekhawat said that the final 10-day journey of Miss Rajasthan 2026 will begin with the Talent Round, which will be held at R Chandra Palace on Sikar Road. The finalists will participate in a series of grooming sessions, competitive rounds and activities leading up to the finale. Miss Rajasthan, now in its 28th edition, continues to provide a prestigious platform for young women from across the state to showcase their talent and pursue their dreams in the fashion and glamour industry.

## MEET & GREET!



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra was greeted by Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Chief Advisor to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Dr Anmol Ahluwalia, Area Director and GM, Taj Mahal, New Delhi, during his visit to Hotel Taj Mansingh, Delhi, on Wednesday.

## COURTESY MEETING!



On the occasion of World Olympic Day, Mahipal Singh Nimbada, President of the Pali Olympic Association and an esteemed member of the First India family, paid a courtesy visit to Monika Sain, Superintendent of Police, Pali, and presented her with a commemorative memento in recognition of her services and support towards community development initiatives. During the meeting, discussions were held on promoting sports culture among youth, encouraging greater participation in sporting activities and spreading the core Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. Both dignitaries emphasised the importance of sports in shaping disciplined, healthy and responsible citizens.

## CISF EARNS RECERTIFICATION



Navdeep Singh Heera felicitated IPS Babu Ram

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has successfully renewed the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System Certification for security operations at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, Delhi. The certification was awarded by global certification body DNV following a comprehensive audit and is valid from April 14, 2026, to April 13, 2029. To mark the achievement, Navdeep Singh Heera, Chief Security Officer (CSO), Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), felicitated Babu Ram, IPS, DIG/CASO (Chief Aerodrome Security Officer), CISF, and presented the certification. The recertification reaffirms CISF's commitment to maintaining world-class aviation security standards while ensuring a seamless passenger experience at India's busiest airport. It covers security operations at Terminal 1, Terminal 2, Terminal 3, as well as cargo and other operational areas. The achievement further strengthens CISF's reputation as one of the world's leading aviation security organisations. Through advanced technology, professionalism and globally benchmarked practices, CISF continues to safeguard critical national infrastructure and enhance security standards at the country's premier aviation hub.

# CREATIVE CANVAS



Vibrant paintings reflecting imagination, emotions and creative expression on display at Sara Harsh's solo exhibition, 'Chitrahaar - Unfolding Towards the Self'



Virender Choudhary admires the artworks on display as young artist Sara Harsh shares insights into her creative journey and the inspiration behind her paintings

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The second and concluding day of "Chitrahaar - Unfolding Towards the Self," a solo art exhibition by young artist Sara Harsh, witnessed an enthusiastic response from art lovers at Surekha Art Gallery, Jawahar Kala Kendra, on Wednesday. Visitors continued to appreciate the exhibition, particularly Sara's abstract artworks that reflect her creative journey and artistic evolution.

Among the prominent visitors was Virender Choudhary, Director of First India News, who lauded Sara's artistic vision, innovative use of colours and unique creative expression. Appreciating her dedication to art at a young age, he



Sara Harsh and Dr Meeta Singh

extended his best wishes and remarked that her commitment to continuous learning and artistic practice is truly inspiring.

Among the distinguished guests who visited the exhibition were art collector and patron Abhishek Poddar, Roma



(L-R) Anshu Harsh, Roma Poddar, Sara Harsh, Abhishek Poddar and Somendra Harsh

Poddar, Shyam Sundar Bissa, Dr Meeta Singh and Reeta Khandelwal, who appreciated Sara's artistic vision, creative expression and dedication towards art.

The exhibition showcases Sara's progression as an artist, featuring works ranging from her childhood sketches to paintings created at the age of 18. More than a display of artworks, "Chitrahaar" offers a glimpse into her imagination, personal growth and creative development.

Art enthusiasts, students and emerging artists praised the emotional depth, originality and freedom of expression reflected in her creations. The two-day exhibition served as a platform to encourage young talent and celebrate creativity, individuality and artistic exploration.

## DOCTORS SAVE UNBORN BABY



Dr Prema Bhat

Specialists at Mahatma Gandhi Hospital (MGH), Jaipur, successfully saved the life of an unborn baby by treating a rare and life-threatening fetal heart rhythm disorder, Supraventricular Tachycardia (SVT). The condition was



diagnosed in the 25th week of pregnancy by Dr Prema Bhat, Fetal and Pediatric Cardiologist, after the fetus was found to have an abnormally high heart rate, posing a risk of heart failure and intrauterine death. The mother was treated with transplacental anti-arrhythmic therapy, restoring the fetal heart rhythm within 72 hours. Although the condition recurred at 35 weeks, timely delivery and post-birth treatment successfully stabilised the newborn, who was discharged in good health. Dr Bhat credited the achievement to the coordinated efforts of the Departments of Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Neonatology, highlighting the importance of advanced fetal cardiology and multidisciplinary care in managing such complex cases.

## PROF ARORA INSPIRES STUDENTS TOWARDS EXCELLENCE



Gurvinder Singh, Sardar Rajan Singh, Vandana Mehrotra, Raj Krishna Sharma, Sunayana Nagpal, Rajendra Gupta, Prof Dr Ramesh K Arora, Ajay Gupta, Yashpal Bhatia, Tulsi Sangtani and Harnam Singh

Ajay Gupta welcomed the guests, Principal Sunayana Nagpal said the session would guide students and parents and Principal Rajendra Gupta proposed the vote of thanks. The program was attended by management committee members Vandana Mehrotra, Ajay Gupta, Rajiv Gupta, Rajan Singh, Tulsi Sangtani and Pt Raj Sharma, along with teachers, students and parents. Copies of Vijayi Vyaktitva were presented to attendees.

## SAFETY FIRST



A six-day self-defence camp for girls and women organised by the Tejaji Nagar Branch of Bharat Vikas Parishad concluded at Mangalam Ananda Residential Complex. Around 65 participants aged above 10 years received training from Jaipur Police's Nirbhaya Squad, constables Sheela and Mamta. The closing ceremony was attended by retired DIG Sunil Bishnoi as the chief guest. Sunil Kumar Gupta highlighted the organisation's activities, while Savita Bhargava and Vijay Laxmi Srivastava thanked the trainers and participants. Devendra Srivastava proposed the vote of thanks. The program concluded with the National Anthem.