



FIRST INDIA

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Rajasthan's Own English Newspaper

India-NZ 'front up' for global good!

- PM Modi holds bilateral meet with New Zealand PM Luxon
- New Zealand PM Luxon in awe of India's growth under PM Modi
- We welcome NZ to join Indo-Pacific Ocean initiative: PM Modi

First India Bureau
New Delhi

PM Narendra Modi and his New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon counterpart on Monday addressed a joint press conference and witnessed the exchange of agreements between the 2 countries in New Delhi. PM Modi said, "Work will be done by India and NZ to formulate an agreement to deal with issue of illegal migration. We both support a free, open, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific. We welcome NZ to joining the Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative."

Modi also raised concerns over unlawful elements engaging in anti-India activities in NZ. The meeting focused on bilateral ties, with discussions on economic cooperation, trade expansion, and regional security. Negotiations for a FTA have been announced. Luxon praised India's hospitality and highlighted his delegation of business & community leaders, emphasizing trade's potential benefits. **P5**



New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon in a conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at Hyderabad House in Delhi, Monday.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon offers prayers during a visit to the Rakabganj Gurudwara, in New Delhi, on Monday.

“ We have decided to celebrate 100 years of sports relationship between both the countries in 2026. We have decided to work on an agreement to simplify the mobility of skilled workers and address the issue of illegal migration. ”

NARENDRA MODI, INDIAN PRIME MINISTER

“ With Indian-Kiwis being the third-largest ethnic group in the country, there are contributions across various sectors, emphasizing the significant people-to-people connection, skilled migrants between the two nations. ”

CHRISTOPHER LUXON, NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER



PM Narendra Modi & New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon jointly inaugurate the Raisina Dialogue 2025, in New Delhi on Monday.

RAISINA DIALOGUE: NEW ZEALAND PM LUXON SUPPORTS INDIA'S BID FOR UNSC MEMBERSHIP

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon jointly inaugurated the 10th edition of the three-day Raisina Dialogue, in New Delhi, on Monday. During his address, while backing New Delhi's bid to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Luxon said that India has a significant role to play in the Indo-Pacific as its size and geo-strategic heft is crucial in an increasingly multipolar world. Luxon underlined the need to ensure a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and asserted that the "might makes right" approach was unacceptable, remarks that came amid China's increasing muscle-flexing in the region. The Kiwi Premier also praised the development of India as a nation under the leadership of his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi. **P7**

TRUMP SHARES PM MODI'S PODCAST WITH FRIDMAN ON HIS TRUTH SOCIAL PLATFORM

US President Donald Trump has shared PM Narendra Modi's 3-hour podcast with US-based podcaster and AI researcher Lex Fridman on his Truth Social platform, on Monday. During the conversation at Fridman's podcast, PM Modi opened up about his friendship with Trump, lauding his "humility" and "resilience" and noting that he seems "far more prepared" as compared to his first term as the US President. PM Modi said that even after there was an assassination bid on him during the campaigning for the presidential elections last year, Trump showed no fear and "remained unwaveringly dedicated to America". "His life was for his nation. His reflection showed his America First spirit, just as I believe in nation first. I stand for India first and that's why we connect so well. These are the things that truly resonate," he said. **P7**



After US President Donald Trump posts PM Modi's three-hour podcast with Lex Fridman on Truth Social, PM Narendra Modi joins Truth Social platform & posts this picture, on Monday.

PM MODI JOINS TRUTH SOCIAL, ALT-TECH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM OWNED BY TRUMP

PM Narendra Modi on Monday joined Truth Social, a social media platform owned by US President Donald Trump. "Delighted to be on Truth Social! Looking forward to interacting with all the passionate voices here and engaging in meaningful conversations in the times to come," the PM wrote in his first post on the platform. Thanking Trump, Modi said: "Thank you my friend, President Trump. I've covered a wide range of topics, including my life journey, India's civilisational outlook, global issues and more." **P7**

SENSEX

BSE 74,169.95
NIFTY 22,509.65

▲ 341.05 ▲ 112.45

IN BRIEF



Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna administers the oath of office to Justice Joydip Bagchi as a judge of the Supreme Court, in New Delhi on Monday. Bagchi is set to become CJ in 2031.

One terrorist killed in J&K's Kupwara

Srinagar: An encounter broke out between security forces and militants in Zachaldara, Handwara, Kupwara district, North Kashmir. One terrorist was killed, while a police constable was seriously injured.



Putin & Trump to talk about truce deal today

Moscow: The Kremlin confirmed that Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump will speak on settling the Ukraine conflict over the phone on Tuesday.

NEET PG 2025 exam to be held on June 15

New Delhi: NBEMS announced on Monday that June 15 as the date for NEET-PG 2025. Unlike the past editions, this year's NEET-PG will be held in 2 shifts considering the concern for candidates.

Rajnath Singh raises concerns over Khalistani activities with Gabbard

First India Bureau
New Delhi

India has expressed concern over anti-India activities by the Khalistani group Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) operating in the United States, during a meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and US Director of National Intelligence Tuls Gabbard, in New Delhi, on Monday.

Sources said that during the meeting, Rajnath Singh requested the US administration to take strong action against the group. The meeting between Rajnath Singh and Tuls Gabbard focused on strengthening India-US strategic ties, with an emphasis on defence and intelligence sharing. According to an official



(L-R) PM Narendra Modi presents Gangajal from recently concluded Prayagraj Mahakumbh to Tuls Gabbard, in New Delhi on Monday. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh meets Tuls Gabbard on Monday.

statement, both leaders emphasised that strategic security remains a vital pillar of the comprehensive global strategic co-operation between the 2 nations. The two leaders explored avenues for collaboration in cutting-edge defence innovation & niche technologies.

PM MODI & TULSI GABBARD DISCUSS ENHANCING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INDIA-US

In a step toward deepening bilateral ties, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with the United States Director of National Intelligence, Tuls Gabbard, on Monday to discuss enhancing strategic partnerships between India and the US. The meeting, held in the national capital, focused on enhancing strategic partnerships between the two nations. Modi presented her with a vase containing Gangajal from recently concluded Mahakumbh.

PAYING LAST RESPECTS

PM Narendra Modi paid last respects to the mortal remains of former Union Minister Dr Debendra Pradhan, 84, father of Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, in New Delhi on Monday. PM Modi said that Dr Debendra Pradhan's contribution as MP and Minister is noteworthy for the emphasis on poverty alleviation and social empowerment.



ARVIND SINGH MEWAR CREMATED

The last rites of Arvind Singh Mewar, a member of erstwhile royal family of Mewar and chairman of the HRH Group of Hotels, was performed at Mahasatia in Udaipur on Monday. Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar lit the funeral pyre. **P3**

Pakistani woman enters Rajasthan from Pak border

Laxman Raghav and Bhavish Garg
Sri Ganganagar

A major incident has emerged from Sri Ganganagar, where a Pakistani woman crossed the international border and entered Indian territory early Monday morning at around 5 am. BSF personnel took her into custody & security agencies have launched an probe. According to sources, when the soldiers asked her to return to Pakistan, she refused. The incident took place near the Vijeta Post in Anupgarh. **P3**

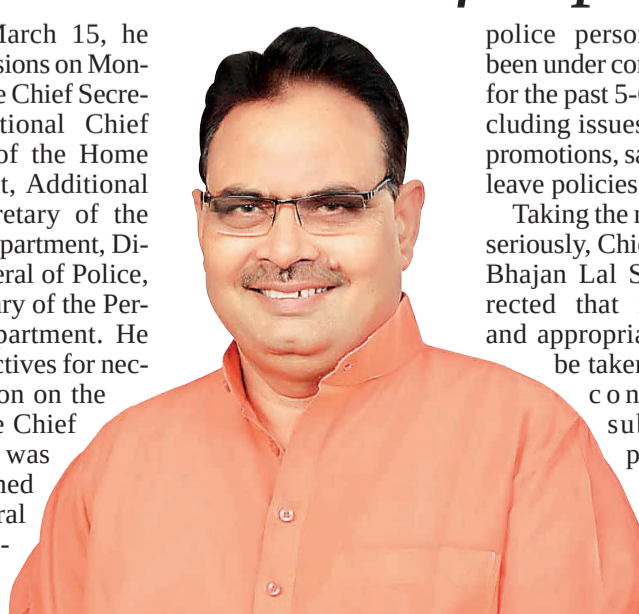
CM SHARMA TAKES POLICE PERSONNEL ISSUES SERIOUSLY

Find permanent solutions for problems: CM

Aishwary Pradhan
Jaipur

Following the police personnel decision to boycott Holi, Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma displayed sensitivity towards their concerns and held an important meeting on Monday. Additional Chief Secretary of the Department of Home Anand Kumar said that after it came to CM Bhajan Lal Sharma's attention that Rajasthan police personnel and officers did not celebrate

Holi on March 15, he held discussions on Monday with the Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary of the Home Department, Additional Chief Secretary of the Finance Department, Director General of Police, and Secretary of the Personnel Department. He issued directives for necessary action on the matter. The Chief Minister was also informed that several service-related demands of



police personnel have been under consideration for the past 5-6 years, including issues related to promotions, salaries, and leave policies. Taking the matter very seriously, Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma directed that immediate and appropriate actions be taken on issues concerning subordinate police personnel and their welfare. The Chief Minister

also emphasized the need for permanent solutions to long-standing problems. In the near future, all issues related to police personnel will be thoroughly examined at the departmental level, and forward-looking reforms will be implemented in a new framework. The department will soon conduct a thorough examination of all matters related to police personnel, following which their pending demands will be fulfilled without further delay.

Violent clashes erupt in Nagpur, Sec 144 imposed

First India Bureau
Nagpur

Tension arose in central Nagpur on Monday when stones were thrown at police following some rumours, leading to injuries to four people. Section 144 has been imposed, and citizens have been urged not to believe rumours. Meanwhile, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has appealed for peace after violence broke out in Nagpur amid the row over the call for removal of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's tomb. **P6**

Drug Bust CNB team seized more than Rs 30 lakh worth of illegal opium

3.2 Kg opium, 2,450 narcotic pills seized in separate actions

Pk Agrawal
& Sunil Sihag

Chittorgarh/Hanumangarh

In a major operation, the Central Narcotics Bureau team seized more than Rs 30 lakh worth of illegal opium in the Mayra village, located within the Vijaypur police station area of Chittorgarh district. The operation, carried out by the Kota and Chittorgarh narcotics cell teams, resulted in the recovery of 3 kilograms and 223 grams of opium from a house.

During the search, the opium was found hidden in a water tank. The Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) team seized the opium under the NDPS Act, and efforts to locate the suspects involved are currently underway.

Meanwhile, under the directives of District Superintendent of Police Arshad Ali, the Rawatsar police carried out a significant crackdown on drug trafficking. Leading the operation, Station House Officer (SHO) Ramchandra Kaswan and SI Imichand arrested two individuals with 2,450 narcotic pills.



Opium was found hidden in a water tank on Monday.

BAJAJ NAGAR POLICE RAIDS CAFE; ARRESTS 1, SEIZES HOOKAHS

Bajaj Nagar Police Station In-Charge Mamta Meena took action late at night when she raided the Diona Cafe. Mamta Meena, in plain clothes, arrived at the cafe and found young men and women using drugs in form of hookah. Upon seeing the situation, she immediately called for police backup to the scene. The police arrested the cafe manager, Suleman, and seized a large quantity of hookahs and flavors from the cafe. The individuals found using hookahs were fined on the spot, and their family members were also called.

TODDLER KIDNAPPED FROM RLY STATION; POLICE SOLVE CASE

A four-year-old boy was reportedly kidnapped from Jaipur railway station. CCTV camera footage from the railway station shows a couple kidnapping the child while he was playing with his sisters. The boy's family registered a complaint at the GRP police station. Police nabbed the accused on the basis of CCTV footage from railway station.



11,600 LITERS OF FAKE OIL SEIZED IN PALI

Under "Shudh Aahar, Milawat Par Waar" campaign, the Food Safety Directorate team conducted a major operation in Pali. Under the leadership of Commissioner H. Guite and Additional Commissioner Pankaj Ojha, the operation resulted in the seizure of 11,600 liters of fake oil. The raid was carried out at a facility located at Mandia Road, Sheikho ki Dhani, in the RIICO Industrial Area of Pali.

POLICE SEIZE SMACK WORTH ₹52 LAKH

Chandwaji police of Jaipur rural in a major action under Operation Knockout seized 260 grams of smack worth Rs 52 lakh and arrested one person. Deputy Inspector General of Police Anand Sharma said that the campaign is being run under the direction of Additional Superintendent of Police Rajneesh Poonia to prevent the sale of illegal drugs in view of the increasing drug addiction among youth.

MOTHER KILLS 17-DAY-OLD CHILD IN JHUNJHUNU

A woman killed her 17-day-old daughter in Jhunjhunu because she was upset at having a daughter for the second time. The accused woman, Nisha, brutally killed her daughter by drowning her in a water tank when her family members had gone to work in the fields. She then tried to fabricate a story. The family panicked, started searching for the infant and finally found her in the water tank. Initially, they thought it was an accident but later they strictly questioned her and she confessed to her crime.

COPS BUST FAKE SIM RACKET, 2 ARRESTED

The Jodhpur Commissionerate Police has uncovered a major gang involved in providing fake SIM cards to cyber criminals for fraudulent activities, arresting two suspects in the process. The police team recovered several SIM cards, mobile phones, checkbooks, Aadhaar cards, and PAN cards from their possession and is interrogating the accused.

ANCIENT SHIVLING GOES MISSING FROM TEMPLE

Angry villagers protested and blocked the road at the main bus stand intersection after an ancient Shivling at the Dhabeshwari Mata temple of Lasdavan village in Chittorgarh went missing. The Shivling was allegedly vandalised and then stolen. Police have started investigating the case and are searching for the culprits who did this.

Two minor brothers found dead: Family alleges murder

Mukesh Sharma
Beawar

In a shocking incident in Atitamand village, located within the Saket Nagar police station area, two children of Laxmanram Meghwal, 13-year-old Jaydev and 11-year-old Bhavesh, were found dead in their own home on Sunday night.

The news of the incident quickly spread through the village, causing a stir. The administrator of the village panchayat, Dushyant Singh, along with several villagers, gathered at the scene. On Monday morning, family members, along with members of the community and other villagers, gathered at the mortuary. They expressed suspicions that the children had been murdered and demanded compensation for the family and an autopsy conducted by a medical board. During this time, Saket Nagar Police Station Officer Jitendra Singh tried to pacify the relatives.

After considerable persuasion, the children's father, Laxmanram, filed a report with the police, stating that on Sunday, he and his wife had gone to work in the fields. Their two sons, Jay and Bhavesh, and their daughter were at home.

Shakti Vandan Mahotsav

500 girls receive free cervical vaccine in camp



Dr Somya addressing the public during the event.

First India Bureau
Jaipur

The Shakti Vandan Mahotsav, organized by the Greater Jaipur Municipal Corporation from March 15 to 17, 2025, concluded on Monday at Jawahar Kala Kendra.

As part of an initiative led by Mayor Dr. Somya, free cervical vaccines were administered to the daughters of sanitation workers and schoolgirls.

Around 500 girls received the cervical vaccine at the special camp set up during the event. The initiative was widely appreciated by sanitation workers and students, who raised slogans like "Bharat Jeetega Cancer Harega". The Shakti Vandan Mahotsav was inaugu-

Free cervical vaccines were administered to the daughters of sanitation workers and schoolgirls

rated by Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma on March 15.

The event focused on promoting local products and empowering women through the 'Vocal for Local' campaign. Around 300 stalls were set up under different categories such as Srijan, Shree Ann, Vastra, Saundaryam, Haritam, Ratnam, and Waste to Wealth, all managed by women entrepreneurs. The festival proved to be a unique platform for women's economic, social, and mental empowerment.

IN BRIEF

Delhi police ASI and his wife killed in an accident in Jaipur

Jaipur: In a tragic incident on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, a husband and wife lost their lives. The victims have been identified as Kaluram Meena and Dhappo Devi, residents of Ramnagar in the Kothawada area of Jaipur. Kaluram Meena, an Assistant Sub-Inspector with the Delhi Police, died on the spot, while his wife, Dhappo Devi, succumbed to her injuries while being transported to hospital.

Dr Jagdish Modi set to lead JMA; Official announcement soon

Jaipur: Renowned physician Dr. Jagdish Modi has been elected unopposed as the president of the Jaipur Medical Association (JMA) after his contenders withdrew in a show of unity. Currently serving as Deputy Superintendent at SMS Hospital, Dr. Modi's leadership is widely endorsed. The official executive committee announcement is set for March 30.

Indira Gandhi Canal to shut for 60 days for relining work

Sri Ganganagar: The Indira Gandhi Canal will be closed for 60 days in Rajasthan for relining work to be done for 3.25 km. According to WRD, there will be 30 days of partial and 30 days of complete canal closure. The canal will be partially closed from March 26 to April 26. During this, 2,000 cusecs of water will be available from the canal for drinking purposes. There will be complete closure from April 27 to May 27.

Indian army conducts Gaurav Yatra, reaches out to veterans

Ashvini Yadav
Alwar

The Indian Army hosted a Veterans Rally (Gaurav Samaroh) at Itarana Cantt, Alwar, reaffirming its commitment to the welfare of veterans and Veer Naris. More than 500 veterans attended the meet which provided them a platform for on the spot grievance redressal on a wide range of issues.

As a run up to the event, a motorcycle rally 'Gaurav Yatra' was conducted from 22 to 28 February 2025 in which door to door visits in remote villages was organised to address the concerns of over 500 veterans and Veer Naris. The attendees at the event were made aware



More than 500 veterans attended the meet at Itarana Cantt, Alwar on Monday.

of latest initiatives of the Central Government being conducted through Army Welfare Placement Organisation, Directorate of Indian Army Veterans and Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.

The grievances related to Pensions & SPARSH were also redressed through representatives from Record

Offices and Zila Sainik Board. A Medical and Dental camp was also set up for the veterans.

While being part of the rally, Major General Ashish Khurana, General Officer Commanding, Battle Axe Division, praised the service and sacrifices of the esteemed veterans and reaffirmed Army's unwavering support for them.

Silent warriors: 70% of kidney donors women

First India Bureau
Jaipur

In a world where love and sacrifice know no bounds, women have emerged as silent warriors, giving the ultimate gift of life—one-third of kidney patients are receiving a new lease on life from female donors. When it comes to kidney donation, 70% of all organ donors are women. In an overwhelming 80% of cases, it is the patient's wife who steps forward, willing to part with a piece of herself to save her husband.

However, the contrast is heartbreaking. When the tables turn, and a woman herself suffers from kidney disease, the support she receives is far from equal.

19 climb water tank in protest over cheating



Account holders climbed the tank in protest on Monday.

First India Bureau
Sri Ganganagar

Nineteen account holders, including three women, staged a protest by climbing an overhead water tank, demanding justice in Jaitsar over the alleged embezzlement case involving the 2 GB Gram Seva Cooperative Society and 3 GB Mini Bank.

Bank management's nodal officer Pawan Sharma, manager Kundan Swami, SHO Imran Khan and police team also reached the spot. Medical

department and fire brigade team were also called in to avoid any untoward incident. Protesters were adamant on talking to the district collector only. Rampyari, a protester became seriously ill.

Public representatives, villagers and former Congress block president Inderjit Singh Randhawa also protested. Later, a meeting was organized between account holders, public representatives and administration in the sub-tehsil office.

Fake land registry scam unearthed in Tonk district

Ziauddin Khan
Tonk

A significant action has been taken in the fake land registry case in Tonk, following revelations made by First India. The investigation committee has submitted another report to the District Collector, recommending action against seven land mafias involved in fraudulent land registrations. The committee found concrete evidence during the investigation of fake land registries, which will now lead to a police case being registered. The report has also been forwarded to the revenue dept for further action. Based on this report, the dept will take steps to de-register the land involved.

A NEW GUEST!

First successful Ostrich breeding

Nirmal Tiwari
Jaipur

For the first time in Rajasthan, ostriches have successfully bred in captivity. At the zoo located in Ramniwas Bagh in Jaipur, female ostrich Avantika and male ostrich Mallikarjun mated, leading to a remarkable event on the festival of Makar Sankranti when Avantika began laying eggs.

She laid a total of 11 eggs, and on the auspicious occasion of Holi, one of them hatched,



SUNIL SHARMA

giving birth to a healthy chick. This marks a significant milestone in wildlife conservation and captive breeding efforts in the state.

Soni reviews health schemes in Jpr, calls for better implementation

First India Bureau
Jaipur

Jaipur District Collector Jitendra Kumar Soni has directed medical officials to ensure that quality healthcare services reach every citizen of the district. While presiding over the District Health Committee meeting held at the District Collectorate auditorium on Monday, he reviewed the progress of various health programs and schemes.

Discussing the ongoing TB-Free Gram Panchayat campaign, the District Collector instructed offi-



District Collector Jitendra Kumar Soni speaking with the officials during the meeting on Monday.

cials to screen individuals consuming tobacco and accelerate the campaign by officially appointing Nikshay Mitras.

During discussions on the non-communicable diseases program, he emphasized the importance of screening the general

public for diabetes, hypertension, and cancer. He also directed the authorities to expedite pending payments under the Rajshree and Lado schemes. Additionally, antenatal care, postnatal care, delivery reports, and line lists were reviewed.

Udaipur mourns royal legacy as Arvind Singh Mewar cremated at Mahasatia

Final rites of Arvind Mewar held

Final procession passed via Jagdish Chowk, Hathipol, and Delhi Gate

Punjab Guv Kataria, royal family, and local leaders paid heartfelt tributes

Ravi Sharma
Udaipur

The final rites of Arvind Singh Mewar, a member of former Mewar royal family, were conducted in Udaipur on Monday. His mortal remains were brought to Shambhu Niwas at the City Palace for the public to pay their last respects. The body was kept for viewing from 7 AM to 11 AM, and at 11 AM, the final procession began from Shambhu Niwas. The procession passed through Jagdish Chowk, Ghantaghar, Hathipol, and Delhi Gate before reaching Mahasatia, where the cremation took place.

A large number of people gathered at Shambhu Niwas to pay their tribute to the late Arvind Singh Mewar. Among those who attended was Punjab Governor, Gulabchand Kataria, who also offered his respects. Prominent leaders and members of the Mewar royal family were



Arvind Singh Mewar's last rites were performed at Mahasatia in Udaipur on Monday. Arvind Singh's son Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar lit the funeral pyre.



Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar & MLA Vishwaraj Singh folded their hands at the funeral site Mahasatia on Monday.



Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar became emotional after hugging both the sisters during the last rites.



When Arvind Singh Mewar's last journey proceeded from Tripolia Gate of Udaipur's City Palace towards Manak Chowk, a huge crowd gathered to join the procession on Monday.



MLA Ravindra Singh Bhati.



Shailesh Lodha at City Palace.



Taj Group CEO Puneet Chatwal offering flowers and garlands on the mortal remains of Arvind S Mewar.

present for the ceremony. Vishwaraj Singh Mewar, the Member of Legislative Assembly from Nathdwara, who is also a member of the former royal family, participated in the ceremony and proceeded directly to Mahasatia for the cremation.

Arvind Singh Mewar's final procession made its way to Mahasatia from 11 AM where his cremation took place. Mahasatia holds historical significance as the cremation ground for the Maharanas of the Mewar dynasty since 1615, when Maha-

rana Amar Singh I was the first to be cremated there. Vishwaraj Singh Mewar, a member of the royal family, arrived directly at the Mahasatia cremation site to pay his respects as the final rites of Arvind Singh Mewar were conducted.

I express my deepest condolences on demise of Arvind Singh Ji Mewar, a member of former royal family of Udaipur. He has done good works for which he will be remembered.

SACHIN PILOT,
MLA, TONK

On demise of Arvind Singh Mewar, a senior member of the Mewar dynasty, I pay my last respects to departed soul & console family members and express my condolences.

RAVINDRA SINGH BHATI,
MLA, SHEO

30-year-old Pakistani woman found on Int'l border, refuses to return

Laxman Raghav &
Bhavish Garg
Sri Ganganagar

Tension erupted in Sri Ganganagar after a Pakistani woman crossed international border and entered Indian territory early on Monday morning around 5 AM. The incident took place near the Vijeta Post in the Anupgarh region, where the woman, identified as Humaira, a 30-year-old resident of Balochistan in Pak, managed to breach barbed wire fencing. BSF took her into custody, & launched investigation.

She has claimed that she does not wish to return to Pak, citing threats to her life. She was also found wearing some gold ornaments, which raises further questions about



Pak Woman in BSF's custody in Sri Ganganagar on Monday.

her background.

A Joint Interrogation Committee (JIC) has been formed to question her. Security officials have arrived at the location, and BSF personnel, including women officers, are conducting the interrogation. The matter is now being investigated at multiple levels, but the final decision regarding Humaira's fate will rest with the government.

Raj Mahila Cong welcomes new chief Sarika Singh

Sarika Singh takes charge in presence of Alka Lamba, Dotasra and Jolly

Dinesh Dangi
Jaipur

Sarika Singh has officially assumed charge as the new President of Rajasthan Mahila Congress. She took over the post in the presence of National President Alka Lamba, PCC Chief Govind Dotasra, and LoP Tika Ram Jolly. On this occasion, Alka Lamba accused the BJP of disrespecting Indira Gandhi, stating that insulting Indira Gandhi is equivalent to disrespecting half the population of the country.

The Congress party has begun strengthening and



Ashok Gehlot with Alka Lamba and newly appointed President of Rajasthan Mahila Congress (R) Sarika Singh in Jaipur on Monday.

activating its frontal organizations, following similar efforts at PCC and AICC levels. As part of this initiative, high command has appointed new state presidents for Mahila Cong in various states, including Rajasthan.

During the event, PCC Chief Govind Dotasra emphasized the need for greater representation of

women in politics. He stated that women should be given more opportunities. Meanwhile, National President Alka Lamba launched a scathing attack on BJP. Responding to a remark in the Assembly referring to Indira Gandhi as a "grandmother", Lamba retorted that Indira Gandhi was, in fact, BJP's "grandmother" as well.

SC accepts govt affidavit to relocate Seven Wonders Park; 6 months time given

Kumar Gaurav
New Delhi

The Rajasthan government has got relief from the Supreme Court in the matter related to the Seven Wonders along the Ana Sagar Lake in Ajmer.

The Court has ruled in favor of the state, temporarily shielding it from contempt charges. The Supreme Court accepted the affidavit submitted by the state government.

However, the Court issued strong directions regarding the protection of the Ana Sagar Lake's wetland area, which the government has agreed to follow.

The government has been given a period of six months to either remove the Seven Wonders from the wetland area or relo-



SC grants relief to Raj Govt in Seven Wonders Park case, orders wetland protection and relocation in six months

cate them to another site.

The state government was represented by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Additional Advocate General Shivmangal Sharma.

Chief Secretary Sudhanshu Pant attended the court proceedings via video conference. The next hearing for this case will be held on April 7.

Raj HC criticises State's inaction in illegal mining case

First India Bureau
Jaipur

In the illegal sand mining case, the CBI informed the High Court that the Rajasthan government was not cooperating with the investigation. The court made strong remarks, criticizing the state's inaction despite police officers losing their lives due to mining mafia activities. It observed that the system seemed to be running "at the mercy of fate."

The court directed the state to present a detailed action report and allowed the CBI to seek CRPF or other agency support if needed. Additionally, the court rejected a former leaseholder's application to become a party in the case. Justice Sameer Jain issued the orders.

GUV MEETS TRAINEE OFFICERS

Uphold transparency and ethics: Guv Bagade

Vinod Singh Chouhan
Jaipur

Governor Haribhau Bagade said on Monday that officers should develop a work culture of complete transparency in the administrative and accounting service, considering national interest paramount.

Bagade was addressing the 2024 batch of trainee officers of the Rajasthan Administrative and Accounts Services at Raj Bhavan on Monday. The meeting



Governor Haribhau Bagade with trainee officers of 2024 year batch of Rajasthan Administrative & Accounting Service at Raj Bhavan in Jaipur on Monday. Sreya Guha & Dr Prithvi Raj also seen.

was arranged through an initiative by Additional Chief Secretary and Director General of the Harish Chandra Mathur Rajasthan Institute of

Public Administration, Sreya Guha.

During the session, the governor inquired about the work and training of the trainee officers and

encouraged them to play a meaningful role in the progress of the state and the nation. Citing the example of Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar, the

first Speaker of the Lok Sabha, he highlighted how Mavalankar laid the foundation for parliamentary traditions and public administration in the country. He also referred to Acharya Chanakya and other great leaders, emphasizing that honesty and state interests should be prioritized in public service. He further said that just as structured planning and management are essential in daily life, they are equally crucial for excelling in administrative roles.

Need to regulate loudspeakers giving calls for 'azan': Balmukund

Cong censures BJP MLA's statement

PTI
Jaipur

BJP legislator from Hawa Mahal assembly constituency Balmukund Acharya on Monday said there is a need to regulate the volume of loudspeakers giving calls for 'azan'.

He said the volume of loudspeakers is being deliberately increased during ongoing Ramzan and some people have put up loudspeakers in their homes, which the police administration should



Balmukund Acharya

monitor and regulate. The high volume creates problems for those who have headaches and migraines and for students who are preparing for competitive exams, he added.

In Jodhpur, Law and Legal Affairs Minister Jogaram Patel said if required, the government

will not hesitate in bringing legislation.

Reacting to the MLA's statement, Congress leader Pratap Singh Khachariyawas alleged that some BJP MLAs have lost their "mental balance" so they talk "rubbish". PCC chief Dotasra also lashed out at the MLA, saying instead of focusing on real issues, he was only doing "Hindu-Muslim".

MLA Balmukund Acharya told reporters in Jaipur, "If someone has a problem or is suffering from migraine or headache then there is a need to rectify it."

ARVIND SINGH MEWAR TRUE GUARDIAN OF INDIA'S RICH CULTURAL LEGACY



Gajendra Singh

The writer is Social Thinker and Social Investment Experts

✉ g_shekhawat



Arvind Singh Mewar, the 76th custodian of the House of Mewar passed away on March 16, 2025, at the age of 81, following a prolonged illness. Mewar was not just a royal person; He was the enthusiastic patron of India's cultural and historical heritage. Throughout his life, he made tireless efforts to restore the heritage of Mewar, rebuild its historical monuments and protect the rights and traditions of the tribals. His contribution ensured that the glorious heritage of the Mewar dynasty, which is from Bappa Rawal and Maharana Pratap, remained alive in modern India.

Arvind Singh was his attempt to restore and rebuild historical monuments in Udaipur and the whole of Mewar, one of the most important contributions of Mewar. He recognized the importance of conserving miracles of architecture which stood as a symbol of Rajput valor and culture. Under his leadership, the City Palace Complex in Udaipur saw extensive conservation efforts, ensuring that its 400-year-old architecture and frescoes remain intact. Today, the palace is the center of inheritance museum and cultural research. Another important restoration attempt was directed at the Jagmandir Island Palace, a 17th-century miracle that was revived and converted into a famous heritage destination. He also played an important role in the restoration of



Arvind Singh Mewar, the 76th custodian of the House of Mewar passed away on March 16, 2025, at the age of 81, following a prolonged illness. Mewar was not just a royal person; He was the enthusiastic patron of India's cultural and historical heritage. Throughout his life, he made tireless efforts to restore the heritage of Mewar, rebuild its historical monuments and protect the rights and traditions of the tribals

Shiv Niwas Palace and Fateh Prakash Palace, converting these royal residences into world-class heritage hotels that connect luxury with history uninterrupted. Additionally, he ensured conservation of religious places associated with the Mewar dynasty, including the prestigious Eklingji Temple, which remains an important spiritual site in Rajasthan. Through these efforts, he protected Mewar's monuments, made them accessible to the public and ensured that they keep describing the famous past of the region.

Arvind Singh Mewar was not only the patron of heritage at the national level, but was also an influential person in the international heritage protection community. He was a member of the Global Heritage Fund, who works for the protection of cultural heritage around the world. His leadership attracted global attention to the historical sites of India, and he often collaborated with international heritage or-

ganizations such as UNESCO and Intac (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage). He represented India at various global heritage and tourism summit conferences, advocating sustainable conservation efforts. His work in promoting responsible tourism through heritage hotels received many international honors, including the National Tourism Award from the Government of India and the prestigious Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) hall of fame recognition. His efforts in global cultural diplomacy strengthened India's position in the international heritage conservation movement.

Arvind Singh Mewar was not just a representative of the culture and customs of Mewar—he used to realize him in his everyday life. The essence of Rajput traditions was visible in his routine, from his dress to the adherence to traditional customs. He was deeply committed to promoting and preserving Rajasthani

language, considering it an integral part of Mewar's identity. He advocated to include it in cultural programs, literature and educational discourse, ensuring that the language survived for future generations. His devotion to Rajasthani heritage was clear in his speeches, conversations and the way he followed the traditions that had been going on for centuries.

As the head of the Mewar royal family, Arvind Singh Mewar played an important role in maintaining and promoting the Rajput customs and traditions, which had been going on for generations. He maintained the practice of Ashwa Pujan, a centuries-old Rajput ceremony that honors horses as a symbol of warrior's power and loyalty. He also continued Rajasthani festivals such as Gangaur and Teej, who celebrate the power of women in Goddess Parvati and Rajput culture. Kartik Purnima ceremony, which strengthens the deep spiritual relations of Mewar, remained an important program under his leadership. Additionally, he established the annual Maharana Mewar Foundation Award to identify people who contributed to cultural protection, education and social service. His unwavering commitment to these traditions ensured that the customs of Mewar are not lost over time, but to get recognition globally.

His contribution was also spread even to strengthen the role of heritage in contemporary society. He worked closely with policy makers to ensure that historical sites get government support and funding. His efforts helped Udaipur recognize UNESCO Creative City, which further strengthened the city as the global cultural center. The death of Arvind Singh Mewar has led to an end to an era for the Mewar royal family, yet his legacy as a patron of history, culture and traditions will continue to inspire generations to come. Mewar family, is expected to carry forward his approach and will continue the family's dedication to heritage protection. Through his untiring efforts to preserve the identity of Mewar, Arvind Singh Mewar remained the lighthouse of the rich past of India, ensuring that the grand traditions, monuments and cultural heritage of Rajasthan have flourished for the coming years.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE AUTHOR ARE PERSONAL

IN-DEPTH

REVVING UP 5TH GEN FIGHTER PRODUCTION

With persistent security threats from China and Pakistan, India is accelerating its indigenous fighter jet development to enhance self-reliance and bolster defence preparedness. The Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) programme is progressing steadily, with orders placed for advanced variants. Simultaneously, the ambitious Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) project aims to equip the Indian Air Force (IAF) with cutting-edge stealth capabilities.

Recent geopolitical tensions, coupled with delays in foreign jet procurements, have reinforced the need for a robust indigenous aviation ecosystem. The push aligns with the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiative, reducing dependence on foreign suppliers while strengthening domestic defence production.

However, challenges remain—ranging from technological bottlenecks like indigenously producing an aero engine with the required thrust, to infrastructure constraints. If successfully implemented, India's home-grown fighter jet programme will not only enhance national security but also position the country as a significant player in global defence exports.

TELANGANA FACES CASH CRUNCH



Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's government is facing a harsh financial reality. The Congress came to power on the back of grand election promises, including financial aid to women, free power, and loan waivers. However, just months into governance, the state is struggling to pay salaries and allowances to its employees. This predicament underscores the perils of populist politics, where promises of freebies often outweigh fiscal prudence.

Telangana's financial distress is not unique. Many states, like Himachal Pradesh, have relied on welfare schemes to win votes, only to find themselves grappling with empty coffers later. While social welfare is essential, indiscriminate doles strain state finances, leading to borrowing and delayed payments. The Telangana government's struggle should serve as a wake-up call to political parties nationwide. Offering unrealistic freebies without a sound revenue model can lead to economic instability.

Revanth Reddy now faces a tough choice—fulfill populist commitments or maintain financial stability. The immediate challenge is finding resources to keep the government functioning while delivering on promises. Seeking loan from the Reserve Bank of India is not the answer as that also will have to be repaid. The solution lies in balancing welfare with fiscal discipline, prioritising productive expenditure, and boosting revenue generation. Political parties must rethink their approach to election promises, focusing on sustainable development rather than short-term electoral gains.



Telangana CM Reddy's govt is facing a harsh financial reality. The Congress came to power on the back of grand election promises, including financial aid to women, free power, and loan waivers

RICH PAST OF INDIA

His contribution was also spread even to strengthen the role of heritage in contemporary society. He worked closely with policy makers to ensure that historical sites get government support and funding. His efforts helped Udaipur recognize UNESCO Creative City, which further strengthened the city as the global cultural centre. He was also important in starting cultural exchange programs, which led to the study and contribution to the conservation of India's legacy, historians and protectionists from all over the world

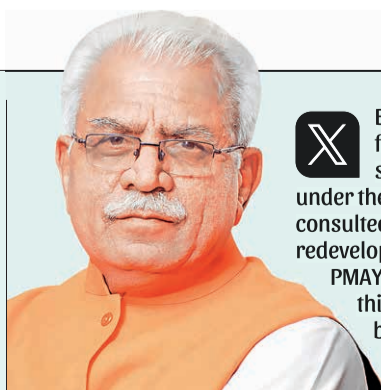
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TOP TWEETS



Saddened by the demise of Shri Debendra Pradhan, former Union Minister and senior political leader. Having known him for many years, I got the opportunity to witness his dedication for public service, and his contribution to the development of Odisha and the nation, during his long period in the service of the people. My heartfelt condolences to his son and Union Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, other family members and admirers.

President of India @rashtrapatibhvn



Better cooperation was expected from some states in the in-situ slum redevelopment scheme under the erstwhile PMAY-U. We have consulted all the states in the slum redevelopment scheme subsumed in PMAY-U 2.0 and I am confident that this scheme will definitely yield better results.

Manohar Lal @mlkhattar

SPIRITUAL SPEAK

To keep the body in good health is a duty... otherwise we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear.

BUDDHA

MEA: NZ PM's first visit to India highlights strengthening ties

ANI

New Delhi

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon is on an official visit to India from March 16-20, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This marks his first visit to India as Prime Minister, and he's accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers, senior officials, businesses, media, and members of the Indian diaspora community in New Zealand.

Speaking at the special briefing on the official visit of the Prime Minister of New Zealand to India on Monday, the MEA Secretary (East) Jaideep Mazumdar said that Luxon is also the chief guest of the 10th Raisina Dialogue this year and will deliver the keynote address.

The visit highlights the strengthening ties between India and New Zealand, with several high-level contacts between the two nations in the past year.

"At the invitation of PM Modi, the PM of New Zealand, Christopher Luxon, is on an official visit from 16th to 20th March. This is his first visit to India in his current capacity as Prime Minister... He is the chief guest of the 10th



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and New Zealand's Minister Mark Mitchell exchange MoUs, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Monday.

Raisina Dialogue this year and will deliver the keynote address later this evening," he said.

Notably, Luxon congratulated Modi on his third term as Prime Minister, and the two leaders met on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in Laos in October.

"There have been several high-level contacts between India and New Zealand in the past year. PM Luxon telephonically congratulated PM Modi after he won his third term as Prime Minister and PM Modi also met PM Luxon on the margins of the East Asia

There have been several high-level contacts between India and New Zealand in the past year. PM Luxon congratulated PM Modi after he won his third term as Prime Minister and PM Modi also met PM Luxon on the margins of the East Asia Summit in Laos in October 2024

JAIDEEP MAZUMDAR, MEA SECRETARY (EAST)

Summit in Laos in October 2024," he added.

The President of India also made a successful visit to New Zealand in August last year, further solidifying the relationship between the two countries. Luxon's visit is expected to deepen the bilateral relationship across all sectors and strengthen people-to-people ties.

Earlier in the day, PM Modi and the New Zealand PM held a bilateral meeting at the Hyderabad House in the national capital on Monday.

"PM Narendra Modi warmly welcomed PM Christopher Luxon of New Zealand at Hyderabad House today. Extensive discussions on bilateral relationships lie

ahead," MEA official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a post on X. Luxon had arrived in the city on Sunday on a five-day official visit to India. Earlier this morning, the New Zealand PM paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi in Rajghat.

The meeting comes amid a growing push to enhance bilateral ties, with both leaders set to discuss economic cooperation, trade expansion, and regional security. The visit has already seen the announcement of negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two nations.

'Calculated move to appease vote bank'

BJP slams K'taka govt over 'unconstitutional' 4% minority quota

ANI

Bengaluru

The Bharatiya Janata Party came out heavily against the Congress-led Karnataka government over its decision to grant four per cent reservation for minority contractors in tenders, and termed the move "unconstitutional" aimed to send a message to the party's "vote bank".

Surya, the BJP MP from Bengaluru South constituency, alleged that the Siddaramaiah government has done this in a "very calculated move" at the behest of Congress party's top leadership.

"Reservations solely based on religion are unconstitutional and is not permitted. Despite being fully aware of this legal position the Siddaramaiah government in a very calculated move to appease and send a message to its vote bank has indulged in this constitutional adventure. This is being done at the behest and patronage of the top-most leadership of Congress party, particularly Rahul Gandhi", Tejasvi Surya said in a press conference on Monday.

Attacking Congress further, he took a jibe comparing Rahul Gandhi's remarks during the



BJP MP Tejasvi Surya.

QUOTA NOT JUST FOR MUSLIMS: DK

The Karnataka state cabinet approved an amendment to the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement (KTPP) Act, which aims to provide 4 per cent reservation in tenders to Minority contractors. The amendment will be made after the KTPP act is tabled in the ongoing assembly session. However, Karnataka Deputy CM DK Shivakumar has clarified that reservation is not exclusive to Muslims but extends to "all minority communities and BCs."

ment of the Lok Sabha election campaign, Rahul Gandhi went about the whole country and spoke the same strain of thought that earlier PM Manmohan Singh had spoken about the minorities of the country having an exclusive and first right on the counter resources," Tejasvi Surya added.

The BJP leader further questioned whether this is the brand of secularism and Constitution for Congress where benefits of minorities are taken away for minorities.

He asserted that the BJP will raise this issue in the assembly and Parliament and also challenge it in the courts.

"You claim to be a champion, a self-proclaimed champion of Ambedkar and the welfare of backward classes," Surya said.

Bharat Jodo Yatra with former PM Manmohan Singh's earlier remarks regarding minorities.

"Before the commence-

No-confidence motion by AIADMK against TN Speaker Appavu fails

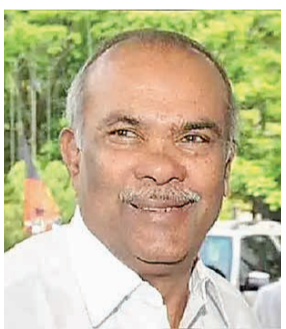
PTI

Chennai

The main opposition AIADMK on Monday moved a resolution seeking removal of Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker M Appavu from his office and it was defeated with the ruling DMK and its allies opposing the motion.

While 63 members supported it, 154 MLAs voted against the motion. In the absence of Appavu, Deputy Speaker K Pitchandi held the proceedings. Leader of Opposition Edappadi K Palaniswami, listing several incidents in the Assembly, alleged Appavu acted partially.

Chief Minister Stalin opposed the resolution and allies of the ruling DMK, including the Congress



and Left parties, rallied behind the Speaker and opposed the motion. "People will laugh at such a motion being moved by those who have lost their confidence," Stalin said, lashing out at the main opposition.

After the voting, Pitchandi announced that 63 members were in favour of the motion, and 154 MLAs were against it and hence the no confidence motion was defeated.

₹1,000-CRORE TASMAC 'CORRUPTION' PROTEST Annamalai, Tamil Nadu BJP leaders arrested before stir

PTI

Chennai

Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai was arrested by Chennai police on Monday morning, hours before he was set to lead a demonstration against alleged financial irregularities in the state-run liquor retailer, Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (TASMAC).

Annamalai, who had planned to hold a protest outside the TASMAC headquarters Chennai's Egmore, was detained near his residence in Akkarai as he attempted to leave for the venue.

Several other senior BJP leaders, including former Telangana Governor Tamlisai Soundara-



K Annamalai was arrested by Tamil Nadu police on Monday.

rajan, Mahila Morcha chief and Coimbatore South MLA Vanathi Srinivasan, and BJP MLA Saraswathi, were also taken into custody at different locations across the city.

The protest was organised in the wake of a sweeping probe by the Directorate of Enforce-

ment (ED), which has uncovered what it describes as a sprawling corruption network within TASMAC, implicating state officials, liquor distilleries, and bottling companies in an alleged Rs 1,000-crore financial fraud.

On Monday morning, as BJP workers gathered

in different parts of Chennai, police deployed in large numbers to thwart the protest. Soundararajan, also a former BJP state chief, was intercepted at her home in Saligramam, where authorities had cordoned off the premises in the morning. Party members attempting to march from Rajarathinam Stadium toward the TASMAC headquarters were detained en masse.

On March 6, the ED conducted raids at multiple locations across Tamil Nadu, recovering incriminating documents and electronic evidence. Following his arrest, Annamalai condemned the police action and accused the ruling government.

Will 4L Maha Kumbh workers wait 144 yrs for jobs?: Yadav

Agencies

Mahoba

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav took a sharp dig at the Uttar Pradesh government questioning whether the four lakh youth who received employment during the Maha Kumbh, primarily as motorcycle riders assisting devotees, will get jobs again "in 144 years".

"The UP CM says that 4 lakh youth got employed, who were riding motorcycles (to help devotees commute during the Maha Kumbh). Does this mean they will get employment again in 144 years?" Yadav quipped, alluding to the next full-cycle Maha Kumbh, which occurs



every 144 years. His remarks were aimed at the government's temporary employment initiatives and the lack of long-term job opportunities in the state.

Addressing the media in Mahoba, the former CM further claimed that hundreds of people are still missing after the Maha Kumbh, adding that posters had been put up in public places.

NAVAL MATERIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICE AND ARMAMENT SERVICE

President Murmu meets officer trainees

PTI

New Delhi

The officer trainees of the Indian Naval Material Management Service and Indian Naval Armament Service called on the President of India, Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday, a release from the President's secretariat said.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that at a time when global geopolitical tensions

are rising, the countries are enhancing maritime cooperation and undertaking joint exercises.

She stated that with India acquiring a bigger role on the global stage, officers of the Naval Material Management Service and Naval Armament Service would play an important role in supporting the Indian Navy through efficient logistics management by leveraging advanced technologies.

The President advised officers to continuously



President Murmu in a group picture with the officer trainees of the Indian Naval Material Management Service and Indian Naval Armament Service during a meeting, at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

update their knowledge about the latest technological developments happening around the

globe. She told them to adopt an innovative approach to make inventory man-

agement and service delivery systems seamless and effective. She urged officers to dedicate themselves to the service of the nation and the Indian Navy. She expressed confidence that they would contribute towards nation-building by providing the best services to the Indian Navy.

Earlier on March 4, The officer trainees of the Indian Revenue Service (78th batch) called on President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Luxon calls on Prez Murmu



Prime Minister of New Zealand, Christopher Luxon calls on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on Monday. PTI




VAISHNO DEVI ESSENTIAL DO'S & DON'TS

After influencer Orry and 7 others were booked for drinking in Katra, the focus has shifted to the rules one must follow during Vaishno Devi yatra

WHAT NOT TO DO	THINGS TO REMEMBER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alcohol - Not only banned in Katra but also in nearby villages Arli, Hansali & Matyal ● Meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs - Banned in Katra ● Tobacco products - Cigarettes, bidis, matchboxes, and other addictive substances are banned beyond Banganga. (Banganga is a sacred stop where many devotees bathe before continuing their journey) ● Lighters, scissors (metal with pointed tips) not allowed beyond Banganga ● Flammable substances - Cooking fuels, gasoline, and gas torches not permitted beyond Banganga ● Video filming - Video cameras/camcorders are prohibited en route ● Coconuts not allowed beyond the frisking point at Bhawan ● Begging prohibited ● Chanting slogans inside cave not permitted ● Kanya Poojan (ritual worship of young girls) - Strictly prohibited ● No tips - Dakshina or any other gratification to employee or person not allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain an official yatra slip - Get it only from the Yatra Registration Counter at the Katra bus stand. Without a valid slip, crossing the Banganga check post is not permitted ● Ensure proper receipts - Obtain official receipts for all payments made to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board ● Donate only in designated places - Use only the donation boxes provided by SMVSB. Donations at authorized counters in Katra, Adhkuwari, Sanji Chhat, and Bhawan are tax-exempt under the Income Tax Act ● Respect fellow pilgrims - Avoid loud or inappropriate attire ● Stick to designated paths - Walk on paved tracks instead of stairs. Do not rest in areas with warning signs ● Secure valuables - Avoid carrying excessive cash, jewelry, or valuables ● Wait for your group number to be announced before proceeding for Darshan at Gate No.1 ● Visit Bhairon Temple only after darshans at the Holy Cave

1

Eight people, including influencer Orry, booked for 'drinking' at Katra hotel

2

FIR registered for violating laws near Mata Vaishno Devi shrine

3

Strict rules in place due to shrine's proximity

10 MILLION DEVOTEES ANNUALLY

12 KILOMETRE TREK FROM KATRA

Security beefed up at Aurangzeb's grave, IDs mandatory for visitors

PTI Sambhajinagar

As calls for the removal of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's grave intensify, the police administration has stepped up security, making it mandatory for visitors to furnish their identity cards before entering the site in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar district, an official said on Monday.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) staged protests at various government offices during the day and submitted memorandums for the removal of Aurangzeb's grave in Khuldabad.



Aurangzeb is remembered in Maharashtra for his battles with the Marathas, who resisted his expansionist ambitions. Maratha warrior king Shivaji Maharaj's son, Sambhaji, was captured, tortured, and executed on his orders.

The Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar rural police department has implemented multiple security posts from the entry point to Khuldabad town to the grave site.

An official said a State Reserve Police Force (SRPF) company of 50 policemen, 30 personnel from local police and 20 Home Guards have been deployed at various points and the grave site.

Ayodhya: Ram Navami schedule announced

First India Bureau Ayodhya

The programme for the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami has been announced by the Shri Ram Temple Trust. According to the Hindu calendar (Samvat 2082), Ram Navami falls on April 6.

According to Champat Rai, the General Secretary of Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, on Navami, the consecration (Abhishek) of Shri Ram Lalla will take place from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM. The temple doors will remain closed from 10:30 AM to 11:40 AM. After that, from 11:40 AM to 11:45 AM,

Shri Ram Lalla will be adorned (Shringar), and during this time, the doors will remain open. Following this, offerings (Bhog) will be made, and the doors will remain closed.

At exactly 12:00 noon, during the divine birth of Shri Ram, an Aarti and Surya Tilak ceremony will take place. This means that the rays of the sun will illuminate the forehead of Shri Ram Lalla, symbolizing the Sun God (Surya Narayan) offering a tilak to Ram Lalla, who is born in his own lineage. The Trust's General Secretary stated that devotees can watch entire programme at home on television also.

Months after caste survey Telangana passes Bills for 42% quota for Backwards

PTI Hyderabad

Telangana Assembly has passed two key Bills clearing the way for 42 percent reservation for Backward Classes in government jobs, educational institutions and urban and rural local body polls Monday.

The Bills titled the 'Telangana Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of seats in educational institutions and of appointments for posts in ser-



Telangana CM Revanth Reddy

vices under the state) Bill, 2025' were tabled after the Zero Hour. Another Bill, which is meant to clear sub-caste reservation for BCs, is also tabled in the House.

This comes months after the state government's caste survey found that the BCs — including Muslim caste groups — form 56.33 percent of the state's population.

In the debate, Bills secured support not only from the ruling Congress but also the Opposition parties such as the BJP and the BRS.

DHANKHAR EXPRESSES GRATITUDE

'Sonia, Mamata among those who inquired about my health'

PTI New Delhi

Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee were among the leaders who got in touch with the family of Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar to inquire about his health after he was hospitalised for cardiac-related ailments.

Dhankhar revealed this in the Rajya Sabha on Monday as he resumed chairing the proceedings of the House.

He said he was "greatly touched" by the concerns



expressed across party lines which contributed to his speedy recovery.

"The Leader of the House (and Union Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mallikarjun Kharge) were the first ones to get in touch with my family.

"Sonia Gandhi got in touch with my wife as did the chief ministers of several states including West Bengal," he added.

Gandhi was present in the House when Dhankhar

mentioned this.

Dhankhar, who is also the chairman of the Rajya Sabha, was admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in the national capital on March 9 following cardiac-related ailments. He was discharged on March 12 and advised to take adequate rest.

In the Rajya Sabha on Monday, he said the concern shown was an "enlightenment" to him that "when it comes to a situation (like this), our hearts are connected".

"This will be a source of inspiration and enlight-

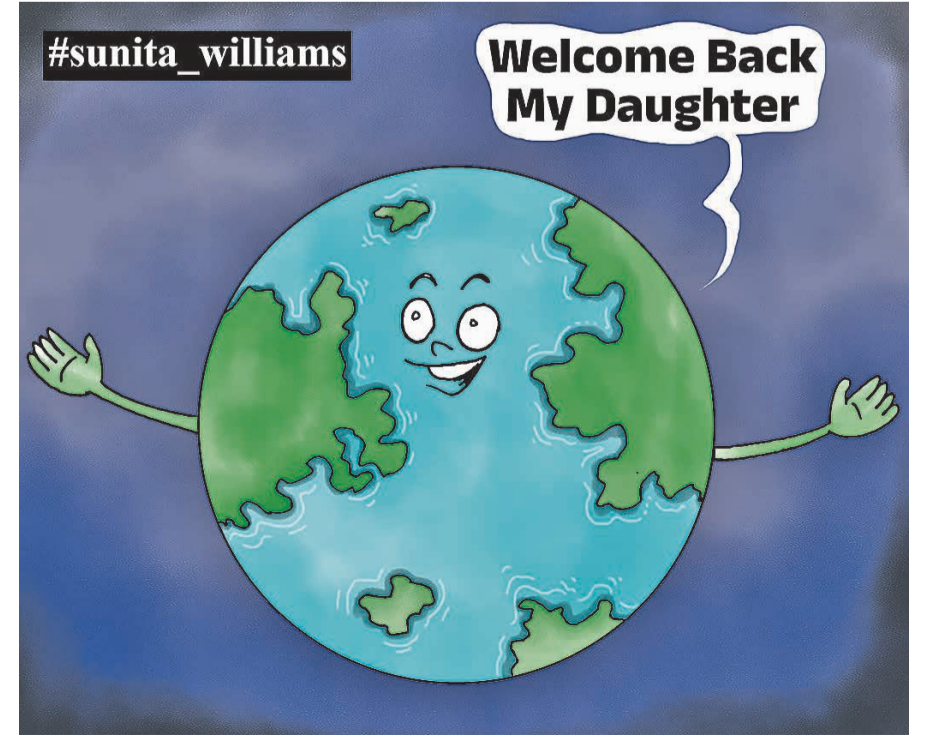
enment to me," he said.

He went on to say that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and others visited him in the hospital and several others too wanted to but couldn't due to restrictions.

"I express my deep sense of gratitude," he said, adding there was hardly anyone who had not shown concern over his health.

Narrating his conversation with TMC leader Derek O'Brien last week, Dhankhar said he had called the opposition leader to wish him on his birthday, but he advised him to take rest.

FI TOON



PM NARENDRA MODI AND NZ PM CHRISTOPHER LUXON INAUGURATE RAISINA DIALOGUE 2025

FOCUSING PEOPLE, PEACE AND PLANET!



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a group picture with New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, Tulsi Gabbard, S Jaishankar, Ajit Doval, and other global leaders during the Raisina Dialogue 2025, in New Delhi on Monday.

PTI

First India Bureau
New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his New Zealand counterpart Christopher Luxon jointly inaugurated Raisina Dialogue 2025 in New Delhi on Monday evening. In his keynote address, Luxon said, India and New Zealand are fortunate to be part of the world's most economically dynamic



PM Narendra Modi with NZ PM Christopher Luxon, S Jaishankar, Ajit Doval, Tulsi Gabbard and others during the Raisina Dialogue 2025, in New Delhi on Monday.

region. He said, the Indo-Pacific will account for two-thirds of global economic growth in the coming years and by 2030, it will be home to

two-thirds of the world's middle-class consumers. Luxon said, India itself is at the heart of this exciting economic future. He said, the 2nd major opportunity is technological change. Luxon said, New Zealand and India are on the cusp of a transformation in their economies and societies. He said, Raisina Dialogue is a forum that provides an annual opportunity for

thought leaders from across the world to focus their collective minds on the contemporary strategic challenges being navigated right in the Indian Ocean. The theme this year's 3-day Raisina Dialogue is "Kalachakra – People, Peace and Planet", world leaders will engage in numerous conversations in various formats, over six thematic pillars.

NO PLACE FOR OLD ASSUMPTIONS IN CHANGING WORLD ORDER: EAM

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Raisina Dialogue, with a simple namaste on stage, alongside this year's chief guest, NZ PM Christopher Luxon. The vote of thanks was given by EAM S Jaishankar, who spoke of the timeliness of a gathering like Raisina—especially in this current geopolitical moment. "Ladies and



EAM S Jaishankar addresses during the inauguration of the Raisina Dialogue 2025.

gentlemen, the world order is clearly undergoing a great churn. This requires leadership of the kind that we have in the room today. It requires new systems to think differently, not simply falling back on old assumptions to deal with new situations. And it requires honest conversations, fresh ideas, and creative solutions," said Jaishankar.

Donald Trump calls Biden's pardons invalid

Trump has alleged that the pardons, signed during Biden's final hours in office, were authorised using an autopen

Agencies
Washington DC

US President Donald Trump on Monday declared all pardons issued by former President Joe Biden to be null and void, claiming they were executed without Biden's knowledge or approval. Trump alleged that the pardons, signed in Biden's final hours in office, were authorised using an autopen – a machine that reproduces a person's signature – suggesting Biden neither signed the documents himself nor was aware of them. He claimed that individuals behind these actions might have committed a crime.

"The 'Pardons' that Sleepy Joe Biden gave to the Unselect Committee of Political Thugs, and many others, are hereby declared VOID, VACANT, AND OF NO FURTHER FORCE OR



Joe Biden & President Donald Trump.

TRUMP SAYS HE HAS "NO INTENTION" OF EASING STEEL, ALUMINUM TARIFFS

Washington: US President Donald Trump said Sunday he had "no intention" to ease steel and aluminum tariffs as Washington edges towards an all-out trade war with major partners. Since January, Trump has imposed levies on multiple trading partners and imports -- including steel and aluminum -- roiling financial markets and fanning fears that his plans could tip the world's biggest economy into a recession. The president told reporters aboard Air Force One he did not plan to make exceptions to the tariffs, saying, "No, I have no intention of that." He instead doubled down on a pledge to impose reciprocal levies as soon as April 2 to remedy trade practices Washington deems unfair.

EFFECT, because of the fact that they were done by Autopen. In other words, Joe Biden did not sign them but, more importantly, he did not know anything about them!" Trump wrote on his social media platform, Truth Social.

Dragon-Elephant Dance only correct choice: China

ANI
Beijing

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning appreciated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's positive remarks on China-India relations during a podcast interview and also noted that being partners in mutual success and achieving "Dragon-Elephant Dance" cooperation is the only correct choice for the two coun-

tries, Chinese state media reported on Monday. Global Times reported that while addressing a media query on PM Modi's recent remarks on the Lex Fridman podcast, Mao Ning stated that China is willing to work with India to fully implement the consensus reached by their leaders, take the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties as an opportunity to advance exchanges and cooperation across vari-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi & Chinese President Xi Jinping.

ous fields and levels and promote the healthy and stable development of

China-India relations. According to the report in the Global Times,

Mao said that in the 2,000-year history of China-India interactions, friendly exchanges and mutual learning have been the mainstream, contributing significantly to world civilization and human progress.

In October last year, Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Modi on the margins of the BRICS Summit held in Kazan, Russia.

RR training session



Rajasthan Royals players during a practice session ahead of the IPL 2025 tournament at Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur, Monday.

SANTOSH SHARMA



Madan Rathore introduces triple S formula

Madan Rathore has unveiled a new approach for the appointment of officers within the organization, based on the Triple S Formula, which stands for Survey, Samikaran (Equation), and Sehmata (Consensus). According to this formula, the new office-bearer should be a dedicated party worker and the selection should receive a positive response through surveys or consultations.

Amit Chaudhary gets lung transplant

Amit Chaudhary, a prominent figure in student politics, had been struggling with a lung infection. The doctors informed him that his only chance of survival was a lung transplant. However, the cost of the transplant was astronomical. At this point, Amit's friends stepped forward without seeking any crowd funding and raised a substantial amount—2 crore rupees—to cover the costs.

IAS Jaydev C.S. joins Raj Cadre

IAS officer Jaydev C.S. from the Uttar Pradesh (UP) cadre has been transferred to the Raj cadre under an Inter-Cadre Deputation. The approval for the deputation from UP to Rajasthan was granted earlier. On February 7, the Dept of Personnel and Training (DoPT) issued the official orders. It took over a month—1 month and 10 days—for the posting to be formalized after the deputation order was released.

BJP's Poonam Pachauri replaced by Congress

In a controversial move, a BJP councillor was removed from the post of Acting Chairperson of Karauli Municipal Corporation, and a Congress councillor was appointed in their place. Rashida Khatoon, the former chairperson from Congress, had been suspended after multiple complaints. Following her suspension in July 2024, BJP councillor Poonam Pachauri was appointed as the Acting Chairperson.

Houthis attack U.S. carrier after airstrikes

Agencies
Washington DC

Yemeni Houthis have twice attempted to attack the USS Harry S. Truman after at least 53 people have been killed and 98 injured after the U.S. launched a series of airstrikes on Yemen on Saturday, according to the Houthi health ministry.

The Houthis claimed to have attacked the U.S. aircraft carrier — the vessel is stationed in the Red Sea — in December and January, and the Yemeni Houthi Armed Forces said in a statement posted on Telegram



Smoke rises from a location reportedly struck by U.S. airstrikes in Sanaa, Yemen.

on Monday that "we are confronting this criminal aggression and responding to escalation with escalation."

CELEBRATION OF INCLUSIVITY AND EXCELLENCE

India celebrates triumph of athletes returning from Special Olympics World Winter Games

PTI

New Delhi

Special Olympics Bharat, on Monday, organised a welcome ceremony for the Indian athletes who returned from Turin, Italy after a historic 2025 Special Olympics World Winter Games campaign. The ceremony, held at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium.

The Indian contingent, comprising 30 athletes and 19 support staff



President of SO Bharat Mallika Nadda & athlete Bharti felicitated by MOS Sports Raksha Khadse in New Delhi on Monday.

members, returned home with an inspiring collection of 33 medals, including 8 gold, 18 silver, and 7 bronze medals, won across six sporting disci-

plines: alpine skiing, snowboarding, floorball, snowshoeing, short track speed skating and cross country skiing.

Recognising the athletes' achievements, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has announced an increase in cash prizes for the medal winners. The gold medallists in the tournament receive a cash prize of Rs. 20 lakhs, and the silver and bronze medallists are awarded Rs 14 lakhs and Rs 8 lakhs, respectively.

FIRST INDIA 2ND FRONT

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Every journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step, though that first step is often the most challenging.

Dr Jagdeesh Chandra, CMD & Editor-in-Chief



08

CM: Rajasthan Mandapam to give state a new identity



CM Bhajan Lal Sharma chairs a meeting on the construction of Rajasthan Mandapam at CMR in Jaipur on Monday. Akhil Arora, Shikhar Agrawal, Ajitabh Sharma, Alok Gupta, senior officials from RICO and other concerned departments were also present.

Facilities should be developed with a holistic approach, asserts CM Sharma

Aishwary Pradhan
Jaipur

Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma emphasized that the state government is committed to making Rajasthan a \$350 billion economy. To achieve this, the government is focusing on promoting industrial, tourism, and cultural activities. He highlighted that Rajasthan Mandapam will provide world-class facilities for business and

CM PUSHES HERITAGE DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

CM Sharma emphasised developing Rajasthan Mandapam with high-tech facilities while preserving the state's heritage, in line with PM Modi's vision of "development along with heritage." The project aims to boost cultural and business events, local art, culture, and tourism. Guidelines for convention centres and parking facilities were provided.

cultural events, positioning the state as the first choice for large-scale events and boosting conference tourism.

Sharma made these remarks during a high-level meeting at the Chief Minister's residence in Jaipur, discussing the proposed action plan for Rajasthan Mandapam. He stressed the need for a holistic approach, en-

suring that events of all sizes can be hosted smoothly with all necessary arrangements and facilities. In line with PM Modi's vision of "development along with heritage," CM Sharma emphasised blending Rajasthan's heritage with modern facilities at Rajasthan Mandapam, promoting local art, culture, tourism, and state pride.

Rajasthan Day will be dedicated to public welfare: CM Sharma

First India Bureau
Jaipur

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma reviewed the preparations for Rajasthan Day celebrations at his residence on Monday. He directed officials from various departments to finalize the event plans and preparations. Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma emphasized that the welfare of the poor, youth, farmers, and women empowerment remains the state government's priority. He announced that Rajasthan Day 2025 (March 30) will feature extensive celebrations, including public welfare programmes, an

investment festival, cultural events, and the inauguration of development projects worth Rs 5,000 crore.

The CM also revealed plans for an employment festival where government job appointment letters will be distributed, along with job fairs at district headquarters.

In addition, the government will introduce a Skill & Youth Policy, and launch the Vishwakarma Yuva Udyami Protsahan Yojana and the Mukhyamantri Shikshit Rajasthan Abhiyan. Govt will organize fairs and transfer subsidies, empowering farmers and women.



CM Bhajan Lal Sharma chairs a review meeting regarding Rajasthan Diwas programme. Akhil Arora, Alok, Shikhar Agrawal, Kuldeep Ranka, Sreyas Guha, Praveen Gupta, Bhaskar A Sawant & others were present.

Pilot criticises Agniveer, calls for martyr respect and education reform

Manish Bansal
Karauli

Congress leader and former Deputy CM Sachin Pilot highlighted that joining the military requires immense hard work, and only those who pass various tests earn the honor of serving the country.

He criticised the Agniveer Scheme, calling it unjust to send soldiers home after a short service. Speaking at a Kisan Sammelan after unveiling martyr Kuldeep Singh's statue in Tigharia village, Pilot urged respect for martyrs' families and stressed the importance of education, particularly for daughters.

The Congress leader also noted that patriotism unites India despite differences & called for laws to ensure crop purchases at the support price.



Sachin Pilot during a Jan Sabha at Tigharia village in Hindaun City, Karauli district.

'India to share digital skills with Vietnam'



Om Birla discusses functioning of the Indian Parliament with Nguyen Duc Hai, Vice Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam, and his delegation at Parliament House in New Delhi.

First India Bureau
New Delhi

A Vietnamese parliamentary delegation, led by H.E. Nguyen Duc Hai, Vice Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam, visited India on Monday. During the visit, the delegation met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla at the Parliament House, where Birla briefed them on the functioning of India's Parliament and the ongoing Budget Session.

Birla highlighted the innovations and advanced technologies adopted by the Indian Parliament and emphasized that India is ready to share its expertise in digital technology and AI with the Vietnamese Parliament.

India and Vietnam share deep historical and civilizational ties, based on mutual trust and understanding, the Lok Sabha Speaker stated, announcing the formation of an India-Vietnam friendship group to strengthen parliamentary exchanges.

He reiterated that India is recognized as the "mother of democracy" due to its long-standing democratic traditions and history. In 2022, Birla had visited Vietnam to commemorate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations. H.E. Nguyen Duc Hai confirmed Vietnam's decision to join CDRI, finalize ISA membership, and support India's Act East Policy, boosting cooperation.

Paying Tributes



Deputy CM Dr Prem Chand Bairwa pays floral tributes to late Kadam Singh Yadav, father of Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, during a condolence meeting held at Yadav's residence in his ancestral village, Jamalpur in Gurugram, on Monday.



Former Chief Minister of Tripura Biplab Kumar Deb offers floral tributes to late Kadam Singh Yadav during a condolence meeting held in the memory of late Kadam Singh Yadav at Jamalpur village, Gurugram on Monday.



BJP leader Rajendra Rathore offers floral tributes to late Kadam Singh Yadav during a condolence meeting held in Jamalpur village on Monday.



BJP leader Dr Kirodi Lal Meena pays floral tributes to late Kadam Singh Yadav during a condolence meeting at the latter's residence.



BJP leader Dr Arun Chaturvedi with Union Minister Bhupender Yadav after paying tributes to Yadav's father, late Kadam Singh Yadav during a condolence meeting held at Jamalpur village. Also seen here are Dr Prem Chand Bairwa and others.

Diya discusses tourism boost for Rajasthan with Shekhawat

First India Bureau
New Delhi

Deputy CM and Tourism Minister Diya Kumari met Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat at his office in New Delhi on Monday. During the meeting, they discussed various aspects of Rajasthan's tourism development, including the preservation and promotion of tourist sites. The Union Tourism Minister listened to the points with a positive approach, assured necessary action, and also provided key suggestions.

Diya Kumari, with tourism officials, discussed enhancing tourism in Rajasthan, exploring new opportunities, and promoting border, tribal, and rural tourism. She highlighted the potential of the Shekhawati



Diya Kumari hands over a letter to GS Shekhawat regarding various tourism demands in Rajasthan during her visit to the latter's office in New Delhi on Monday. Also seen is Ravi Jain.



Diya Kumari greets Union Minister JP Nadda during a courtesy meeting in New Delhi on Monday.

region and the need for also submitted a formal letter to the Union Tourism Minister.

DESPITE ACB ACTION, THE POWERFUL CHAIR STAYS FIRM

How did Avinash stay in the same JDA seat for 11 years?

Rajendra Chhabra
Jaipur

The details of the black money amassed by JDA's Superintending Engineer (SE), Avinash Sharma, in the ACB's action are truly shocking and mind-boggling. The total worth of this illicit wealth is being estimated at around Rs 100 crore. What is most surprising is that this engineer, considered to be in a coveted position in JDA's ZONE 11, has been carrying out this large-scale plunder for the past 11 years without any fear, and yet,



Avinash Sharma

top officials in JDA were completely unaware of his activities.

It was only last week when the ACB, having set a trap, finally caught this engineer. Otherwise, who knows how many more crores of rupees he

ACB TIGHTENS GRIP ON JDA OFFICIALS, ARRESTS IN ZONE 9 STILL UNRESOLVED

In the last eight months, the ACB has tightened its grip on corrupt officials in the JDA for the second time. Notably, in August 2024, the ACB had arrested a dozen officers from ZONE 9, including Tehsildars, Giradawars, and Patwaris. This group of corrupt officials



would have earned if left unchecked. The million-dollar question remains: why and how did Avinash Sharma stay in ZONE 11 for such a long time, 11 years to be precise? During this time, several governments

changed, many JDCs came and went, but Avinash remained firmly entrenched in his "lucrative seat."

Thanks to his exceptional ability to "manage the system," he still holds onto his position, even five days after the ACB's action. According to experts in rules and laws, when there is a disproportionate asset case, the concerned government official does not necessarily have to be immediately placed on "APO."

However, keeping him in the same position is not considered appropriate from the standpoint of good governance, as it sends a wrong message. Moreover, given the media exposure and the public shame that Avinash Sharma has faced, there is widespread anger among the people. The public is now expecting strong action against Avinash Sharma. Administrative experts suggest the Chief Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) could intervene, directing JDA to take immediate, strict action against the corrupt Engineer.

Dotasra slams ministers, questions governance

Dinesh Dangi
Jaipur

The issue of PCC Chief Govind Singh Dotasra not attending the Assembly has sparked discussions. When questioned, Dotasra responded, "That decision is still reserved." Dismissing internal differences, he stated, "There are no conflicts among us. The LoP and MLAs are raising public issues in the Assembly, while ministers are failing to respond."

Commenting on MLA Reventaram Danga's letter, Dotasra criticized the government's functioning, saying, "Even minis-



Ashok Chandra during a meeting with Govind Singh Dotasra in Jaipur on Monday.

ters have no authority. One minister going to the DGP's office—this is a drama. Can they truly work for the state's welfare?" His remarks have intensified the ongoing political debate, raising concerns about govern-

City First

JAIPUR, TUESDAY | MARCH 18, 2025

FASHION GALA READY!

Alia Bhatt is all set to make her grand debut at the Cannes Film Festival in 2025 at the Met Gala and Paris Fashion Week, recently confirmed the news during a meet-and-greet with the paparazzi. **P11**



Yoshita Arora

Glamour Unleashed! Designer Sumit Goel with Showstoppers Abhishek Singh & Tanu Choudhary, along with models Isha, Sneha, Watson, Ayushi, Anushka, Shoib and Puspendra, dazzled the runway at the Kota Couture Show

SUMIT GOEL BLENDS TRADITION WITH MODERN GLAMOUR!

Majestic Drapes

Kota Couture Show, captivated fashion lovers as City First unveiled Sumit Goel's masterpiece collection, a perfect blend of traditional artistry and contemporary charm.



Watson



Puspendra Singh



Tripti Mahawar

cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

The Kota Couture Show, held at Lotus Ananta Elite on January 27, showcased the opulence of Rajasthani fashion in a spectacular display. Presented by Bharat24 – Vision of New India and First India Newspaper, and powered by Maruti Exchange, the event was a seamless fusion of tradition, culture, and modern fashion. Renowned designer Sumit Goel, representing his brand Krishnam, mesmerized the audience with an exquisite collection featuring sarees, wedding lehengas, Indo-western outfits, and men's wear. The highlight of the evening was the stunning ramp walk by showstoppers

Abhishek Singh and Tanu Choudhary, captivating the audience with their elegance and charisma.

The show was meticulously organised and choreographed by Gaurav Gaur, Founder & Director of Kota Couture Show 2025, ensuring a flawless presentation of style and creativity. Elite fashion models further elevated the event, gracing the ramp with poise and glamour, making every ensemble shine.

Reflecting on his 25-year journey, Sumit Goel expressed his gratitude and shared his vision of blending global trends with Rajasthan's heritage. "I am honoured to be recognized as one of Rajasthan's leading fashion designers. Every design reflects my passion for excellence, craftsmanship, and attention to detail," he remarked.

The event was a grand success, reinforcing Kota's growing prominence in the fashion industry while celebrating Rajasthan's timeless sartorial legacy.

SUNIL SHARMA



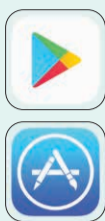
Top to Bottom: Ayushi Sharma, Isha Kohli, Alifirdoush Khan & Mitali Kumawat

WHAT'S NEXT?



Quiz Plus: First India OTT presents the renowned Quiz Plus - Brain Battle: Knowledge with Fun, on Tuesday, at Bhawani Niketan College, Jaipur. Scan the QR code to download the First India Plus OTT App.

When: March 18, 11:00 AM
Where: Bhawani Niketan College, Jaipur



Now enter new world of entertainment with First India. Click or Scan to download our own OTT 1st India+



Candlelight Tribute to AR Rahman: Jaipur's Jawahar Kala Kendra hosts its first Candlelight® Open-Air concert, featuring a tribute to AR Rahman and iconic movie soundtracks, blending orchestral music with a stunning candlelit ambience.

When: March 22, 6:00 PM onwards
Where: Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur



Rajasthani Cinema Festival: The Rajasthani Cinema Festival (Mahasangam of Cinema and Folk Music) Season 3 is under the Tourism, Art and Culture Department's aegis. The event features seminars, discussions and an award ceremony.

When: March 18-25, 6:00 PM
Where: Rangayan Auditorium, JKK, Jaipur

BIRTHDAY FORECAST!



Alisha Chinai
PISCES
March 18

Pisces, celebrate your recent achievements with a small get-together. Invite close friends for a cozy dinner or game night. Your charm will create a positive, connected atmosphere, potentially sparking romance. Take time to reflect on your success and enjoy both productivity and relaxation. You deserve it!

Lucky Number: 3 Lucky Colour: Yellow



Jaipur Flight Plan

- Bangalore-** Air India, Air India Express, Indigo
- Guwahati-** Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Spicejet
- Goa-** Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Spicejet
- Pune-** Air India, Air India Express, Akasa Air, Indigo, Spicejet
- Varanasi-** Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Spicejet
- Chennai-** Air India, Air India Express, Indigo
- New Delhi-** Air India, Air India Express, Alliance Air, Indigo
- Hyderabad-** Air India, Air India Express, Indigo, Spicejet
- Abu Dhabi-** Air India, Air India Express, Etihad Airways, Indigo, Spicejet
- Dubai-** Air Arabia, Air India, Air India Express, Emirates, Etihad Airways, Indigo



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Advancing gender EQUALITY



Alka Saxena

Additional Director
DIPR (Retd)



Gender equality refers to the equal rights, opportunities, and treatment of individuals regardless of their gender identity. It is considered a crucial component for achieving development, as it unlocks the full potential of nations and societies by ensuring equal access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and political participation for both women and men, leading to improved social, economic and health outcomes for everyone involved. It is not only a fundamental human right of every individual but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

Women represent half of the world's population and its potential. However, gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates social progress worldwide. Sexual violence and exploitation, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work and discrimination in public office are all areas of inequality that remain huge barriers for women. Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is not only an explicit Sustainable

Development Goal(SDG) by 2030, but also a driver of sustainable development in all its dimensions, from ending poverty and hunger, promoting prosperity and inclusive growth and building peaceful, just and inclusive societies to securing the well-being of people of all genders and ages. Though there has been progress over the last decades and international commitments to advance gender equality have brought about improvements in some areas the promise of a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and where all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed, remains unfulfilled. Thus Gender Equality is not only a human rights issue and a prerequisite for women empowerment but as a precondition for sustainable people-centered development.

The concepts of Women Empowerment and Gender Equality are interrelated and intertwined with each other. Promo-

tion of Gender Equality is the first and foremost prerequisite for Empowerment of Women. Thus, Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality propel as well as require each other.

The path to women empowerment and gender equality in India is a journey of resilience, struggle and hope. While there have been significant achievements in doing away with gender inequality, the journey toward dismantling deeply ingrained patriarchy and achieving women empowerment and gender parity in India in a true sense still remains an arduous task.

Women Empowerment, broadly, refers to the process by which women gain power and control over their own lives and acquire the ability to make strategic choices. It involves promoting a sense of self-worth among women,



along with their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to have access to opportunities and resources and to influence social change for themselves and others.

Women empowerment in India focuses on enhancing women's social, economic and political status to ensure equality and dignity in society.

Initiatives like Save the Girl Child, Educate the Girl Child, women's self-help groups, and reservation policies for women aim to empower women and enable them to contribute to the nation's development. Despite progress, challenges like patriarchy, illiteracy, and safety concerns persist, necessitating sustained efforts to achieve true gender equality. In India, despite legal frameworks promoting equality; significant challenges remain in ensuring women and girls have equal access to opportunities, resources and decision-making power as men and boys,

If we look at the history of our country, Indian society has always revered women with deities like Saraswati, Durga, Lakshmi, Kali, etc worshipped across the country. However, the patriarchal system has prevailed since the Vedic Period with customs and traditions favoring men. Indian history finds mention of many prodigious women such as Gargi, Maitreyi, and Sulabha, whose faculty of reasoning was far superior to that of ordinary mortals, but on the darker side, women have also been silent sufferers. Discrimination against them has prevailed since ancient times. The beginning of organized efforts for women's empowerment and gender equality in India can be traced back to the Socio-Religious reform movements of the 19th century.

Efforts made by Raja Rammohan Roy, Swami Dayananda Saraswati & Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar helped in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in India. This resulted in the enactment of Sati Abolition Act of 1829, Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, Child Marriage Restraint Act (Sarda Act) of 1929. During India's freedom struggle, Gandhiji emphasised the collective mobilization and women participation in various movements against the Britishers. He encouraged women to fight for political freedom as well as for their social & political rights. This participation in national movements was not directly aimed at questioning the patriarchal society, helped to promote gender equality in India by generating a sense of self-confidence & a realization of strength among women, breaking away several barriers of old traditions & customs. With studies suggesting a 4.2% GDP boost if gender gap in employment is reduced by 10%.

besides addressing deep-rooted societal norms that often disadvantage females in areas like education, healthcare, economic participation, and political representation, due to factors like patriarchal structures, gender-based violence and unequal access to education and employment opportunities. Gender equality is a keystone for achieving sustainable development. In India, the advancement of gender equality has made significant progress, but, it has faced persistent challenges. Though improvements are visible in sectors like education and health, still deep-rooted cultural norms and systemic barriers continue to hinder the full realisation of access and progress for girls and women. Women in India face significant disadvantages compared to men in areas like education, health, economic participation, and political representation. Social, cultural factors, patriarchal norms, early marriage, dowry practices and son preference contribute to gender inequality. Though several laws promoting gender equality, including the Equal Remuneration Act

have been enacted in the country, their effective implementation remains a deep concern.

Several Government initiatives aim to address gender disparities in education and health. Still, there are many challenges to address such as gender-based violence, high rates of domestic violence, sexual assault, and honor killings against women, disparity in access to quality education, especially in rural areas and less number of women in elected positions.

Despite improvements, India's overall score is 49 in SDG goal 5 which deals solely with gender equality. This observation suggests that a little more than half the distance needs to be covered to achieve the targets specified under this goal alongside the need for better infrastructure facilities, safe work spaces and organised efforts to end gender-based discrimination otherwise women would continue to face challenges. As per the Overall Gender Gap Report, 2023, India ranks 127 out of 146 countries in terms of gender parity, highlighting a wide socio-cultural, economic and political disparity between men and women in the country.

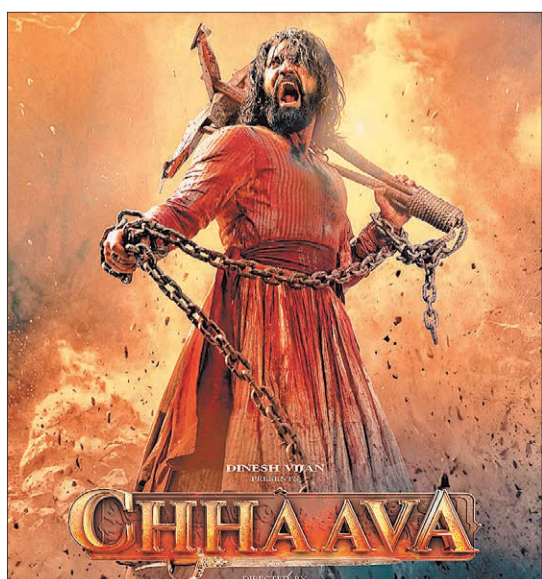


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WHAT'S JAIPUR WATCHING TODAY?

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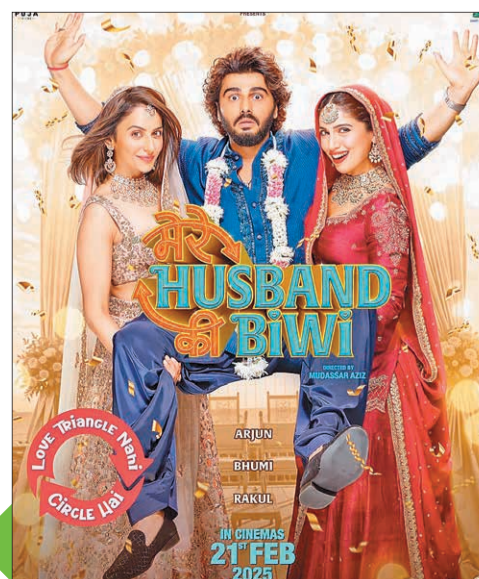


Movie: Chhaava
Director: Laxman Utekar
Cast & Crew: Vicky Kaushal, Rashmika Mandanna, Akshaye Khanna



Scan or click here to book your movie tickets

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



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Power-Packed Wrap!



Taapsee Pannu

CANNES Spectacle!

Alia Bhatt is all set to make her grand debut at the Cannes Film Festival in 2025. The actress, known for her stunning international appearances at the Met Gala and Paris Fashion Week, recently confirmed the news during a meet-and-greet with the paparazzi. Alia, accompanied by husband Ranbir Kapoor, shared her excitement about stepping onto the Cannes red carpet for the first time. "So I am very nervous and very excited," she expressed, looking forward to the prestigious event. The 78th annual Cannes Film Festival will take place from May 13 to May 24, 2025, and fans eagerly await her dazzling appearance. Alia has already established a

strong global presence. She made her Paris Fashion Week debut in 2024, walking the runway at the 'Walk Your Worth' event. At the Met Gala 2024, she stunned in a mint-green floral saree by Saabyasachi, perfectly aligning with the 'Garden of Time' theme. On the work front, Alia is currently shooting Love & War with Ranbir Kapoor and Vicky Kaushal. She also has Alpha, an action thriller from Yash Raj Films' Spy Universe, set to release this year.

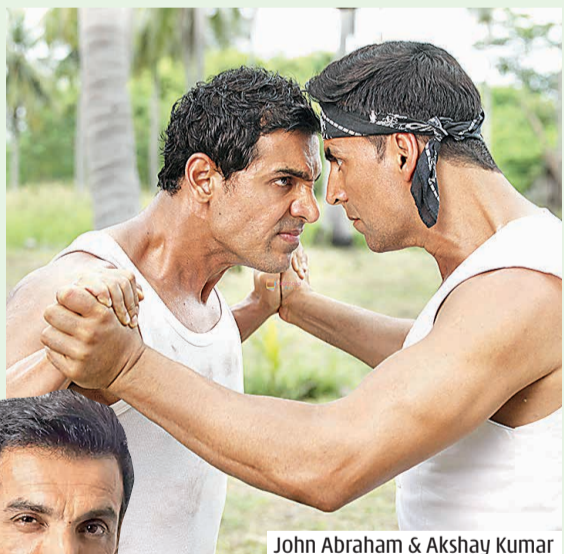
Taapsee Pannu has officially wrapped up shooting for her upcoming Netflix action thriller "Gandhari", which explores the deep bond between a mother and child. This marks her return to Netflix after "Phir Aayi Haseen Dillruba". On Monday, Taapsee took to Instagram to share a heartfelt post along with behind-the-scenes pictures. The first image featured her standing among children, while another showed her celebrating the wrap with co-star Ishwak Singh, writer-producer Kanika Dhillon, and director Devashish Makhija. A cake with "It's a wrap!" written on it was also part of the celebration. Expressing her emotions, Taapsee wrote, "If there is a NOS mode for the human body, I experienced it in this film. If there is something called running on the fuel of grit and determination, I saw it in this film. Some bruises give a feeling of contentment like never before. We gave it all!" Ishwak Singh, known for Paatal Lok, also shared his excitement, calling the journey "an unforgettable ride full of passion and hard work." Backed by Netflix, Gandhari promises high-octane action and emotional depth. The release date is yet to be announced.



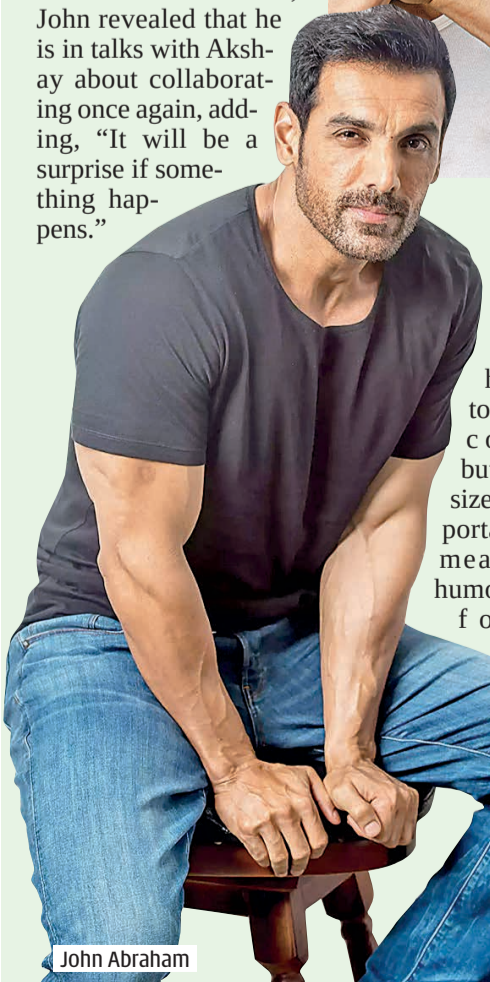
Alia Bhatt

John-Akshay REUNION?

Bollywood star John Abraham has hinted at a possible reunion with Akshay Kumar for a comedy film. The duo, known for hit comedies like Garam Masala, Desi Boyz, and Housefull 2, has been a fan favourite. In a recent interview, John revealed that he is in talks with Akshay about collaborating once again, adding, "It will be a surprise if something happens."



John Abraham & Akshay Kumar



John Abraham

The 52-year-old actor expressed his desire to return to comedy but emphasized the importance of meaningful humour over forced jokes. He cited Garam Masala as an example of a well-executed comedy that left a lasting impact. John also shared that he and Akshay "feed off each other's energy" and are actively looking for an opportunity to work together again. Additionally, he praised director Shivam Nair's knack for creating slapstick comedy and expressed interest in collaborating with him. While no official confirmation has been made, John's statements have certainly fueled excitement among fans eager to see the iconic duo back on screen.

Sealed with Love!

Bollywood stars Rakul Preet Singh and Jackky Bhagnani tied the knot in a stunning beachside wedding in Goa on February 21, 2024. Having been in a relationship since 2021, the couple celebrated their love in the presence of close friends and family. Rakul, adored for her candid nature, recently shared insights into her married life, emphasizing that their bond is built on happiness, not dependence. When asked if anything had changed post-marriage, Rakul revealed that they had already discussed this topic three years ago. She stressed that they are complete as individuals and together, they are just happier. "I don't have to call him 15 times a day," she remarked, highlighting their mutual respect for personal space. Their wedding honoured both cultures, beginning with an Anand Karaj for Rakul's Sikh heritage and concluding with Pheras for Jackky's Sindhi traditions. The grand celebration saw Bollywood stars like Shilpa Shetty, Varun Dhawan, and



Rakul Preet Singh & Jackky Bhagnani

Ananya Panday in attendance. Rakul later shared a heartwarming wedding teaser on Instagram, featuring cherished moments from their pre-wedding festivities, including Haldi, Mehendi, and Sangeet. The couple continues to celebrate their love, sharing glimpses of their blissful married life.

Support New Talent

Sonu Sood recently took to X (formerly Twitter), calling for kindness towards debutants as Ibrahim Ali Khan and Khushi Kapoor face criticism for their film Nadaaniyan. The actor emphasized that "nobody was perfect when they started" and that a film's success depends on the entire team, not just newcomers. On Saturday, Sood wrote, "Be kind to debutants in the film fraternity and elsewhere. Nobody was perfect when they started. We all learn with experience. Only a handful get a second chance." He urged audiences to support aspiring actors instead of tearing them down. While he didn't explicitly name Nadaaniyan, many interpreted his words as a response to the film's backlash. Fans echoed his sentiment, with one user commenting, "Every expert was once a beginner. Let's encourage growth." Directed by Shauna Gautam and produced by Karan Johar, Nadaaniyan features Ibrahim Ali Khan, Khushi Kapoor, Jugal Hansraj, and Dia Mirza. The film is now streaming on Netflix.



Sonu Sood

MEET & GREET!



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra was greeted by Pawan Tank, Founder & Director of Miss and Mrs India Glam along with Sheetal Vishwakarma, Miss India Glam Rajasthan 2025 during a courtesy visit at his residence on Monday. During the meeting, they extended warm Holi greetings and sought Dr Chandra's blessings.

EVENTS!



SANTOSH SHARMA

Jaipur is set to gain global recognition for cow-based natural agriculture as a nationwide campaign begins on March 26. The event will see participation from three state governors, ministers and international representatives. Public representatives and members of the organising committee have invited Governor Haribhau Bagade to the National Farmers and Cowherd Conference. A three-day 'Agri Kisan Mela' will promote organic farming, cow-based agriculture, and farmer welfare. Organised under the guidance of Datta Sharnanand Maharaj and Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj, the initiative aligns with India's 'National Mission on Natural Farming' to boost sustainable agriculture and environmental conservation.

A grand Sundarkand feast was hosted at the residence of Dr Ajay Kapoor on Sunday, bringing together prominent dignitaries. The event saw the presence of MLA Vishwanath Meghwal, MLA Jethanand Vyas and several esteemed personalities of the city. Devotees gathered for the spiritual recitation, creating a deeply religious atmosphere. The event highlighted the significance of faith and community bonding, leaving attendees with a sense of divine connection and cultural reverence.



Womanaari, in collaboration with tarot expert Suriti Chugh, hosted 'Rangpaashi - The Power of Tarot and Colors', blending Holi's vibrancy with spiritual insights. Founder Neelam Saxena emphasized the psychological and spiritual impact of colours. Suriti Chugh guided participants through tarot readings, while artist Neetu Ahuja conducted a session on colour personality insights. Esteemed guests, including Dr Shailja Jain, graced the event. Womanaari's dedicated members ensured its grand success, making it a memorable celebration of colours and energy.



In a unique initiative, Vraksha Katha and Vraksha Maha arti were performed for environmental conservation in Jaipur's Prakriti Kunj, Maruti Nagar, on Sunday. Organised by Jan Samasya Nivaran Manch, the event featured international environmentalist Ashok Kumar Sharma, who delivered an inspiring message on tree conservation. The program, inaugurated by Captain BL Soni, saw participation from environmentalists, administrative officers, and dignitaries, including former MP Ramcharan Bohra. Chairman Suraj Soni emphasized fostering environmental consciousness through such initiatives.

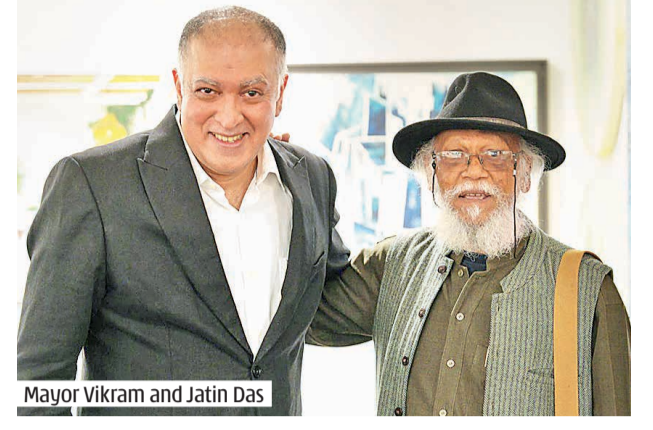
Iconic Brushstrokes

City First
cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

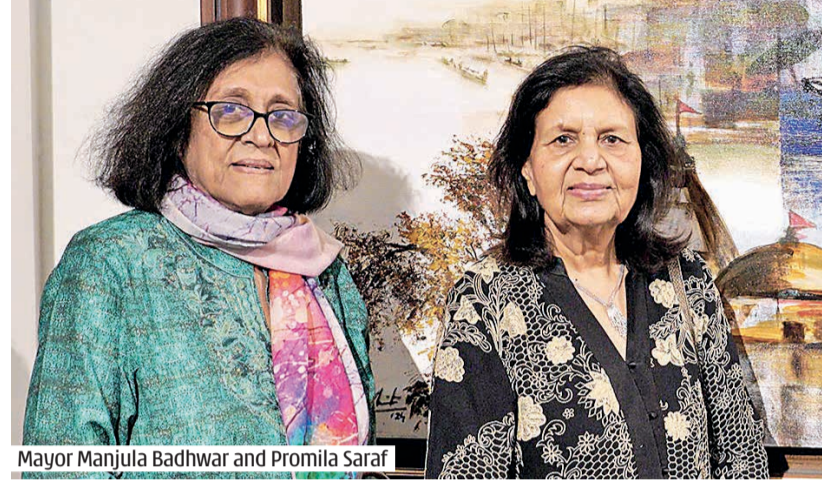
Gallery Silver Scapes unveiled 'Harmony', an exclusive art exhibition at Bikaner House, showcasing 100 years of Indian art. The exhibition bridges modern masters with contemporary artists through 100 remarkable works. The VIP preview was

graced by dignitaries including former Minister of State for External Affairs & Culture, Meenakshi Lekhi, Ambassador HE Juan Angulo, Lady Mohini Noon, Indrajit Mukherjee, Sakti Burman, and Samar Jodha. A highlight was the book launch on Shri Bimal Das Gupta, celebrating his artistic legacy. Curated by Vikram Mayor, the exhibition features masters like Jamini Roy, FN

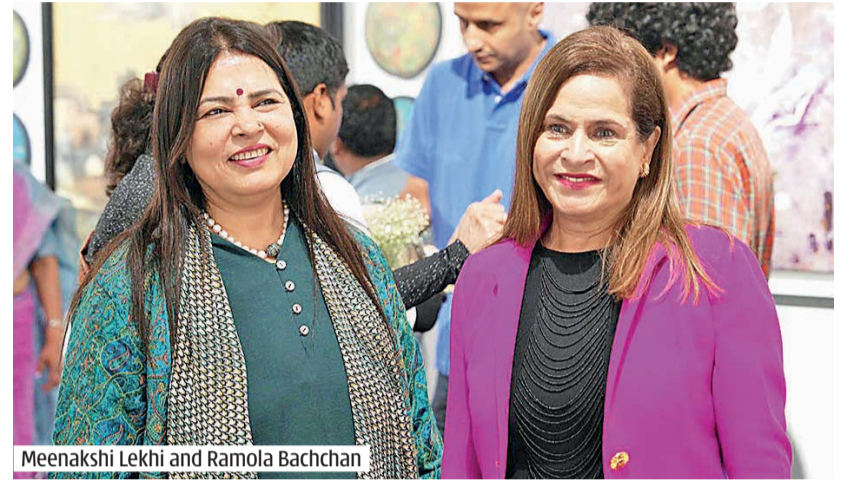
Souza, SH Raza, Akbar Padamsee, alongside senior contemporaries Paresh Maity, Jatin Das, Thota Vaikuntam, and emerging artists like Shanaka Kulathunga. Honouring undervalued pioneers, the spotlight was on Anita Roy Chowdhury, a leading abstractionist. Blending tradition with innovation, Harmony is open for public viewing until March 20.



Mayor Vikram and Jatin Das



Mayor Manjula Badhwar and Promila Saraf



Meenakshi Lekhi and Ramola Bachchan

WHAT'S HAPPENING!



Josh Vanskike, Namrata Dev, Dr Soorya Dev, Manish Dev, Parul Dev, Aneesh Dev, Phhagun Dev and Reshma Dev

The grand wedding of Dr Soorya, son of Reshma and Aneesh Dev, with Shreya, daughter of Shweta and Sanjay Verma, was joyously celebrated at the picturesque Le Meridien recently. The lavish ceremony was attended by family, friends, and notable guests who gathered to bless the newlyweds. The celebrations were filled with love, laughter, and heartfelt moments, making it a truly memorable occasion for all present. **MUKESH KIRADOO**



The newlyweds Dr Soorya and Shreya

ACHIEVEMENT!

Karate Queen Juhi Kumari, a sixth-grade student of The Palace School, was honoured with the prestigious Sarva Samaj Nari Gaurav Award at a ceremony organised by Ambedkar Utthan Parishad at Maharana Pratap Auditorium, Delhi West Bihar MP Yogendra Chandolia and MLA Ramsahay Verma graced the event. Juhi, a seven-time Rajasthan State Champion, six-time national champion, and two-time open international champion, has won 60 medals, including 40 gold. Dignitaries congratulated her on this achievement.



WHAT'S HAPPENING!



In a display of deep spirituality, a grand Mata Jagran was organised at Kali Mata Temple, in Balana village near Jaisamand, nestled in the foothills of the Aravali range. Temple Mahant Sushmita Nand Giri Maharaj shared that a massive feast (bhandara) was held for devotees before the event. Enthusiastic participation was witnessed from urban and rural areas, with saints from Kashmir who blessed the devotees.



Salasar Balaji Temple hosted the Hanuman Seva Samiti elections on Monday, where SatyaPrakash Pujari was unanimously elected as the new president, succeeding Yashodanandan Pujari. The committee, responsible for temple management, also appointed Kuldeep Pujari as vice-president. Key members including Mahaveer Pujari, Mangilal Pujari, Bhanwarlal Pujari, Nagarmal Pujari and Ajay Pujari extended their congratulations to the newly elected representatives, marking a smooth transition of leadership within the Pujari family.



Rahis Bharti, founder of the world-renowned Dhoad Band, has taken Rajasthani folk music to 119 countries, earning recognition as a global cultural ambassador. Hailing from Dhod, Rajasthan, Bharti's performances at iconic venues like the Eiffel Tower and Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee highlight India's rich musical heritage. Celebrating 25 years of Dhoad Band, his mission aligns with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, empowering over 700 artists, promoting gender equality, and preserving folk traditions. Bharti's work transforms music into a tool for cultural preservation, economic growth, and global unity, making India proud worldwide.



The Jaipur Silver Association organised its first-ever Holi Milan function at Jai Club, Ashok Marg, on Sunday. Over 500 jewellery traders attended the event, which featured a vibrant musical night and cultural performances. The evening began with the lighting of lamps in the presence of Deputy CM Prem Chand Bairwa, BJP leader Arun Chaturvedi, and other dignitaries. Association President Ujjwal Derawala emphasized the event's role in fostering business connections. Enthusiastic participation marked the celebrations.



As part of the Net Theat series, emerging flute player Anil Kumar Sharma enchanted the audience on Saturday with his soulful performance, reminiscent of Lord Krishna's divine melodies. He began with Raga Bihag, mesmerizing listeners with Alaap, Jod, Jhala and Gat. His rendition of 'Vaishnav Jan Toh' received immense appreciation, followed by a captivating Rajasthani folk tune, Languria. Tabla player Manvendra Dangri's rhythmic brilliance enhanced the performance. The artists were honoured by program coordinator Naval Dangri and Imperial Prime Capital's Manish Agarwal.



The Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) organised a press conference to announce its latest rapeseed-mustard production estimates for Rabi 2024-25. Based on SEA's survey and SatSure's satellite analysis, India's mustard acreage is projected at 92.15 lakh hectares, with an estimated production of 115.2 lakh tonnes. Rajasthan leads with 34.74 lakh hectares, yielding 52.45 lakh tonnes. SEA President Sanjeev Asthana emphasized boosting domestic oilseed production, while Dr BV Mehta urged NAFED to ensure price stability. A final survey in April-May will refine these estimates. **MUKESH KIRADOO**