

# Aryan Age

PRGI No.- RJENG/26/A5054 | VOL - 1 | ISSUE 4 | 8 PAGES | ₹ 2.00



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## Monsoon Covers 22 Rajasthan Districts in two days

### Jaipur receives 1.25 inches of rain, Water inflow into Bisalpur Dam increases

**Jaipur:** The southwest monsoon continued to bring widespread rain across Rajasthan for the second consecutive day on Friday, providing relief from intense heat and humidity. Heavy showers were reported in Jaipur, Chittorgarh, Banswara, Tonk, Ajmer and several other districts, although waterlogging disrupted normal life in many places.

Several areas witnessed water levels rising up to three to four feet. Jaipur's old walled city was submerged, while light to moderate rain continued throughout the day. According to the Jaipur Meteorological Centre,

strong winds accompanied heavy rain late Thursday night, with showers continuing until early Friday morning. Jaipur recorded more than 1.25 inches of rainfall.

The weather department said the monsoon has now advanced into more parts of the Udaipur, Ajmer and Jaipur divisions. The northern limit of the monsoon currently passes through Udaipur, Ajmer and Jhunjhunu. Conditions remain favourable for the monsoon to spread across most of the remaining parts of Rajasthan over the next three to four days. Within just two days, the monsoon has covered 22

districts.

During the last 24 hours, Ajmer received 46.5 mm of rain, Bhilwara 35 mm, Banasthali 15.6 mm, Jaipur 32.5 mm, Dabok 29 mm, Pratapgarh 20 mm and Nagaur 18.5 mm.

Rainwater has also started flowing into the Triveni River, the main source of water for the Bisalpur Dam, following continuous rainfall in Bhilwara district. Water overflowed the river's anicut, while the river level reached 2.30 metres by Friday evening. Water from the Banas, Bedach and Menali rivers is also flowing into the Triveni. Bigod recorded nearly 2.5 inches of rain.

The Bisalpur Dam catchment area, including Bisalpur, Nasirda, Raghunathpura and Ravata villages, also received steady rain for the second day. The dam's water level rose by 2 cm in the last 24 hours and by 5 cm over the past 36 hours. Assistant Engineer Dinesh Bairwa said the reservoir continues to receive inflows despite water supply and evaporation losses. The water level increased from 313.55 RL metres with 25.182 TMC storage on Thursday morning to 313.60 RL metres by Friday evening.

In a separate incident, one of three children struck by lightning in



Bhachadiya village of Dungarpur district died during treatment. The deceased, Rajdeep, had suffered severe burns and was shifted to a hospital in Modasa, Gujarat, where he died on Friday. The other two children have recovered and were discharged from hospital.

## Jaipur Rain Exposes Civic Failures

### Road caves in on Tonk Road; SMS Trauma Center flooded

**Jaipur:** The first spell of monsoon rain exposed major infrastructure failures across Jaipur, with a section of Tonk Road collapsing and water flooding the Trauma Centre of Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Hospital.

Near Gandhi Nagar Tiraha, opposite Apex Mall, a nearly 20-foot-wide crater opened on Tonk Road after the road caved in. Authorities diverted traffic and advised commuters to use alternative routes, warning that the surrounding soil had become unstable and the road could collapse further.

Heavy rain between 1 am and 3 am on Thursday night also caused an old drainage pipe to burst inside the SMS Hospital Trauma Centre. Water flooded the ground floor, ECG room, main corridor and Minor Operation Theatre, forcing doctors to temporarily stop treatment. Patients

in the Minor OT were shifted elsewhere for emergency care.

Water leaked rapidly through the ducting system, causing the



false ceiling near the Minor OT and plaster room corridor to collapse. Fortunately, no patients were passing through the area at that time, preventing a major accident. Waterlogging and accumulated dirt have also raised fears of infection inside the hospital, forcing critically

injured patients to receive treatment under difficult conditions.

This is not the first such incident at SMS Hospital. Last year, heavy rain flooded the ICU, operation theatres and several other sections. Although the government had released funds and directed the PWD wing to improve the infrastructure, the latest incident has again exposed poor maintenance.

After receiving information, Trauma Centre Nodal Officer Dr. Rajendra Mandiya, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Jagdish Modi, Additional Superintendent Dr. Pradeep Sharma and other officials reached the hospital. Dr. Mandiya said the flooding was caused by the burst drainage pipe and that the PWD wing had been instructed to immediately repair the pipeline and restore normal services.

## Jagdeep Dhankhar Hospitalised in Jaipur

**Jaipur:** Former Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has been admitted to a hospital in Jaipur for treatment related to a heart condition. He arrived in the city with his wife, Dr. Sudesh Dhankhar, and is scheduled to undergo angioplasty under the supervision of internationally renowned senior interventional cardiologist Dr. Sameer K. Sharma.

Dhankhar landed at Jaipur Airport at 8:15 am on an Air India flight before being taken directly to Eternal Hospital near Jawahar Circle. He was initially admitted to the emergency ward for routine medical tests. Doctors said the visit was part of a pre-planned cardiac follow-up, as several preliminary examinations had already been completed earlier.

Dr. Sharma and his team are closely monitoring Dhankhar's condition while



considering his medical history. Earlier, in March 2025, he underwent treatment for a serious heart problem at AIIMS in New Delhi. On January 12 this year, he was again admitted to AIIMS after fainting twice and underwent an MRI examination.

After the angioplasty and cardiac evaluation, Dhankhar will stay at Jaipur's

government guest house, Lok Bhavan. He will later visit Sharda Nursing Home, where

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to depart Jaipur at 8:50 am. Doctors continue to monitor his condition and the hospital is issuing regular medical bulletins.

Jagdeep Dhankhar's political career has remained in focus since he resigned as Vice President on July 21, 2025, before completing his term, citing health reasons and medical advice. The Congress and other opposition parties questioned the resignation, while the BJP rejected their allegations. C. P. Radhakrishnan was later elected as India's 15th Vice President in September 2025. Even after leaving office, Dhankhar has continued visiting Rajasthan and, in February 2026, met the family of MP Rahul Kaswan in Sadulpur.

## Congress urges Supreme Court to intervene on Electoral Roll Revision

**New Delhi:** The Congress on Friday intensified its attack on the Centre and the Election Commission of India, alleging that India's electoral democracy is facing an unprecedented challenge and urging the Supreme Court to intervene to safeguard the integrity of the country's election process.

In a statement, Congress general secretary in charge of organisation K C Venugopal said the party, along with 22 other Opposition parties and an Independent Member of Parliament, had written to the Chief Justice of India on June 28 raising concerns over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and the functioning of the Election Commission.

"Electoral democracy in our country faces the gravest of threats from the Modi-Shah regime," Venugopal alleged.

He said the joint letter flagged what the Opposition described as the "flawed SIR process", the "partisan role of the Election Commission of India" and other election-related issues that, according to the signatories, require

urgent judicial scrutiny. "It is the role of our judiciary to guard our democracy from the excesses of the executive - especially one which is hell-bent on destroying the Constitutional framework that gives us our democracy," Venugopal said.



Emphasising the constitutional role of the apex court, the Congress leader said the Supreme Court has the responsibility of ensuring that elections remain free and fair and that public confidence in the electoral process is protected.

"In our democracy, the Supreme Court is entrusted with the onerous responsibility of ensuring justice doesn't prevail. Therefore, it has a vital role to play in protecting the free and fair nature of elections, and also to make sure that they are seen to be free and

fair. Without this, injustice against 1.4 billion voters persists every single day," he said.

Venugopal said the Opposition had decided to make the letter public "in the interest of transparency" and expressed hope that the Supreme Court would take "the firm steps urgently required to restore the integrity and accountability of and faith in the election process of crores of our people."

The Opposition's appeal comes amid an escalating political controversy over the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls across the country. Several Opposition parties have alleged that the exercise could result in the exclusion of eligible voters and have questioned both its timing ahead of the Assembly elections and the documentation requirements prescribed by the poll panel.

The Election Commission, however, has maintained that the revision is being carried out in accordance with constitutional and legal provisions to ensure accurate and updated electoral rolls.

## ACB Seizes 2.63 Lakh Cash from agriculture officials' vehicle

**Jaipur:** Rajasthan's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has recovered ₹2.63 lakh in suspected illegal cash from the vehicle of an Agriculture Department inspection team. The money was allegedly hidden inside sealed agricultural sample bags in an attempt to escape detection.

ACB Director General Govind Gupta said the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) stopped the department's SUV at Devan Tiraha in Shajhpura on Thursday. When officials opened the sealed sample bags, they found two separate packets containing ₹2,63,500.

According to DIG Rameshwar Singh, the ACB had received reliable information that an inspection team from Jaipur was allegedly extorting money from fertiliser, seed and pesticide manufacturing units in the Bhiwadi and Kotputli industrial areas by threatening them with official action. A special team led by ASP Mahavir Singh monitored the officials for three days before

intercepting the vehicle.

The search found ₹1,48,500 inside the sample bag carried by Agriculture Officer Mahesh Kumar Meena and ₹1,15,000 inside the sample bag of Agriculture Officer Chandaram Gurjar. Agriculture Officer Bhagwan Sahay Yadav and driver Ramesh Chandra Meena were also travelling in the vehicle. Around ₹11,000 in cash was also recovered from their pockets. All four are being questioned, while ACB teams have started searches at their residences to determine the source of the money.

In another operation, the ACB caught a middleman allegedly accepting a ₹1 lakh bribe on behalf of a patwari in Alisar Patwar Circle near Chomu in connection with a land mutation case. The patwari fled the scene and is currently absconding. Additional SP Manoj Kumar Gupta said the complainant had purchased land at Charanvas in Alisar, Chomu, in December 2025, after which the alleged demand for the bribe was made. The investigation is continuing.

## J&K admin caps max number of pilgrims on Amaranth Yatra routes

**Jammu:** In an advisory to the Shri Amarnath Yatra pilgrims, Jammu and Kashmir administration has capped the maximum number of pilgrims on the twin yatra routes.

As per the officials, in accordance with the directives of the Supreme Court, a daily limit has been set for the maximum number of pilgrims allowed on the Yatra route.

"Adherence to this limit is mandatory to ensure the safety of pilgrims and the smooth conduct of the Yatra," they said.

Officials added that to facilitate pilgrims, the facility for 'advance registration' was made available across the country through bank branches and online channels well before the commencement of the Yatra, adding, "Most pilgrims have already availed themselves of this facility and completed their registration."

Consequently, slots for 'Tatkal' (immediate) registration are



extremely limited. All pilgrims are requested to travel to Jammu and Kashmir only after completing their advance registration.

It is not feasible to accommodate the thousands of unregistered pilgrims who arrive daily under the 'Tatkal' facility, they said, and added that therefore, such pilgrims are requested to wait for their turn and undertake the journey only on the date allotted by the administration.

"It has also been observed that many registered pilgrims are arriving in Jammu and Kashmir prior to their scheduled registration

date. No pilgrim will be permitted to undertake the journey before their registered date. Please arrive for the journey strictly in accordance with your registered date," they said.

They asserted that the pilgrims who have arrived in Jammu and Kashmir without registration are once again requested to wait for their turn.

"Rest assured, every pilgrim will get the opportunity to undertake the Yatra; however, this will be possible only in accordance with the prescribed procedure and available capacity," they said.

## PM to Launch 1.06 Lakh Crore Mega Projects in Rajasthan and Gujarat today

**New Delhi :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Rajasthan and Gujarat on July 4, 2026, where he will inaugurate, dedicate and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth around ₹1.06 lakh crore. The projects cover sectors including petrochemicals, urban transport, railways, roads, renewable energy and power transmission.

The Prime Minister will begin his visit in Jodhpur at around 10:45 AM, where he will inaugurate the new Jodhpur Airport Terminal Building and launch the Modified UDAN Scheme. Later, at around 12:15 PM, he will travel to Balotra, where he will unveil several major projects and address a public gathering. In the evening, at around 4:30 PM, he will visit Sanand in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, to inaugurate the CG Semi Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) Facility before addressing another public

meeting. The Modified UDAN Scheme has been allocated ₹28,840 crore over the next ten years to strengthen regional air connectivity. The scheme plans to develop 100 aerodromes from unused airstrips with an investment of over ₹12,000 crore, provide more than ₹2,500 crore for airport operations and maintenance, and build 200 modern helipads in remote regions. More than ₹10,000 crore has also been set aside as Viability Gap Funding for airlines to support regional routes. The scheme will also promote the use of Indian-made aircraft and helicopters, including HAL Dhruv and Dornier.

Prime Minister Modi will also inaugurate the new Jodhpur Airport Terminal, built at a cost of ₹480 crore. Spread across over 23,000 square metres, the terminal can handle 20 lakh passengers every year.

In Balotra, the Prime

Minister will dedicate India's first greenfield integrated Refinery-cum-Petrochemical Complex at Pachpadra. Built as a joint venture between Hindustan Petroleum



Corporation Limited (HPCL) and the Government of Rajasthan, the 9 MMTPA refinery has been developed at a cost of more than ₹79,450 crore. The complex combines refining and petrochemical production, with a petrochemical capacity of 2.4 MMTPA, a Nelson Complexity Index of 17.0, and petrochemical

yields exceeding 26 per cent, matching global standards.

Prime Minister Modi will also lay the foundation stone for Phase 2 of the Jaipur Metro Rail Project, which will



cost over ₹13,000 crore. The project includes a 41-kilometre north-south corridor from Prahladpura to Todi Mod with 36 stations, connecting major residential and industrial areas including Sitapura, Vishwakarma Industrial Area (VKI), Jaipur Airport, Tonk Road, SMS Hospital, SMS Stadium, Ambabari and Vidyadhar

Nagar. The new corridor will provide faster, safer and more convenient public transport. Jaipur's existing 11.64-kilometre Phase 1 Metro corridor with 11 stations is already operational.

The Prime Minister will dedicate the Churu-Sadulpur (58 km) and Churu-Ratangarh (46 km) railway doubling projects, built at a cost of around ₹900 crore. Together covering 104 kilometres, the projects will improve railway capacity, reduce congestion and support smoother passenger and freight train operations while encouraging industrial growth and investment.

He will also inaugurate the four-laning of NH-125A, Jodhpur Ring Road Section-2 (Karwar-Dangiyawas), developed at a cost of about ₹740 crore, to improve road connectivity and road safety around Jodhpur.

In the renewable energy sector,

Prime Minister Modi will dedicate SJVN Limited's 1,000 MW Bikaner Solar Energy Project, built with an investment of around ₹5,500 crore using 24.22 lakh Indian-made solar modules. He will also dedicate NHPC's 300 MW Karnisar Bikaner Solar Energy Plant, which uses around 7.75 lakh Indian-made solar PV cells and modules. In addition, he will inaugurate a power transmission line built at a cost of over ₹1,900 crore for evacuating renewable energy from the Rajasthan Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) and lay the foundation stone for a 530-kilometre transmission system, ensuring reliable power supply across the state.

During the programme, Prime Minister Modi will also hand over appointment letters to around 54,000 newly recruited youth across various Rajasthan

government departments, including Education, Energy, Home, Panchayati Raj, Transport, Higher Education, Skill Development, Planning, Agriculture, Information Technology and Administrative Reforms.

In Gujarat, the Prime Minister will inaugurate the CG Semi OSAT Facility in Sanand, marking a major milestone in India's semiconductor manufacturing sector. Developed under the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) with an investment of over ₹7,500 crore, the facility is one of the first four approved semiconductor projects in the country. Once fully operational, it will produce up to 5 billion semiconductor chips annually and serve industries including automotive, industrial manufacturing, telecommunications, 5G and the Internet of Things (IoT).

## Briefs :

**Power Pole Sparks Panic After Cows Suffer Electric Shock, Residents Blame Company Negligence**

**Bhilwara:** A major accident was narrowly avoided in Sanjay Colony on Thursday morning when an electric pole became live and spread current, creating panic among local residents. The incident happened at around 9:30 am when three cows came in contact with the electrified pole and received electric shocks.

All three animals were injured, and one cow collapsed on the spot in pain. People living nearby quickly rushed to help and managed to pull the struggling cow away from the dangerous area, preventing a more serious tragedy. Their timely action saved the animal from further harm.

**Muslim Community Submits Memorandum Seeking Action Over Alleged Remarks**

**Simalwara:** Members of the Muslim community in Simalwara submitted a memorandum to the Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) addressed to the President of India, demanding legal action against Nazia Elahi over her alleged remarks made during a television debate. The memorandum stated that comments made about Prophet Muhammad and his wife Hazrat Aisha Siddiqah about 15 days ago had hurt the religious sentiments of Muslims in India and across the world.

According to the memorandum, community members alleged that despite protests and police complaints being filed in different parts of the country, strict legal action has not yet been taken. They also claimed that Nazia Elahi has repeatedly made statements that they consider insulting towards members of the Muslim community.

**Natural Farming Helps Farmer Couple Earn ₹32,000 from Okra Crop**

**Rishabhdev:** A farmer couple from Tapan village has become an inspiration for other farmers by earning a good income through natural farming on a small piece of land. Mani Devi and Prabhulal adopted advanced natural farming techniques with technical guidance from the CMF organisation and achieved excellent results by growing okra on just 400 square metres of land.

During the cultivation, the couple used natural farming methods such as Beejamrit, Jeevamrit, Ghan Jeevamrit, natural pest and disease management, timely irrigation, and regular weeding. These scientific and eco-friendly practices helped the crop grow well, kept the plants healthy and produced high-quality vegetables. From the 400-square-metre field, the couple harvested 825 kilograms of okra. By selling the produce, they earned around ₹32,000, which strengthened their family's financial condition and provided them with a reliable source of income.

Since they followed natural farming methods, their spending on chemical fertilisers and pesticides was also reduced, helping them save on cultivation costs.

**Youth Hospitalised After Alleged Custodial Assault, Family Accuses Policeman of Misuse of Power**

**Bhilwara:** A serious complaint alleging police misconduct has surfaced from the Raipur police station area in Rajasthan's Bhilwara district. A constable posted at the police station, along with two other policemen, has been accused of illegally detaining a young man, assaulting him throughout the night, and forcibly taking ₹1,000 from him. The victim is currently undergoing treatment at Mahatma Gandhi Hospital, Bhilwara. The victim's brother, Raju Singh, has submitted a written complaint to the Superintendent of Police (SP), Bhilwara, seeking legal action and a fair investigation into the matter. According to the complaint, Raju Singh Rajput, a resident of Ladki village under Raipur police station limits, said that his neighbour Bhairu Rawal had been trying to occupy the family's cattle enclosure and ancestral pathway. He alleged that on June 30, 2026, at around 1 pm, while his mother Uchhab Kanwar was alone at home, Bhairu Rawal entered their property, cut down four to five papaya and guava trees, and allegedly threatened her with an axe



when she objected. The complaint further claims that he also used abusive language during the incident.

The family has also alleged that Constable Gorakharam was supporting the accused in the dispute. According to the complaint, on the evening of July 1, the constable

and Bhairu Rawal again threatened the family. Later, the constable, accompanied by another policeman, allegedly took Godu Singh to the police station on the pretext of recording his statement. The family claims that when Godu Singh's mother reached the police station,

she was told that he was not there. The complaint further alleges that Godu Singh was beaten throughout the night by Constable Gorakharam and two other policemen without any legal reason, and that ₹1,000 was forcibly taken from his pocket.

Godu Singh was reportedly released on bail on July 2. His family says his health deteriorated due to the alleged assault. He was first taken to Raipur Hospital and later referred to Mahatma Gandhi Hospital, Bhilwara, where he remains under treatment.

In the written complaint submitted on July 3, the family has demanded that a criminal case be registered against Bhairu Rawal, Constable Gorakharam, and the other policemen allegedly involved. They have also sought suspension of the accused officers, a departmental inquiry, and an independent medical examination of Godu Singh. The allegations are based on the complaint submitted by the family. The police response or findings of any official investigation have not been mentioned in the information provided.

**Heavy Rain Brings New Hope for Farmers, Crops Saved from Major Damage**

**Bhilwara :** After several days of intense heat and dry weather, farmers in Akola and nearby areas have finally received much-needed relief as heavy rainfall has revived crops that were close to drying up. The delayed arrival of the monsoon and continuously rising temperatures had created serious concern among farmers, with many fearing that their crops would fail and their investment would go to waste. However, the recent spell of rain has completely changed the situation and brought fresh hope to the farming community.

According to agriculture experts, the timely rainfall has worked like a lifeline for newly growing crops. Paddy, maize, pearl millet and seasonal vegetables were in urgent need of water at this stage of growth. Experts said that if the rain had been delayed by just a few more days, the crops could

have suffered severe damage. After the rainfall, the dust covering the fields has been washed away, the soil has regained moisture and the plants that had started to wilt are now becoming green and healthy again. The improvement in the fields has brought smiles back to the faces of farmers. Many local farmers said they had almost lost hope because the water available from tube wells was no longer sufficient and the cost of irrigation was increasing every day. They believe the rainfall has saved their crops at the right time and has given them confidence that they may still get a good harvest this season.

The rainfall is also expected to reduce farming expenses. Since the soil now has enough natural moisture, farmers will not have to depend as much on diesel or electric pumps for irrigation, lowering their input costs.

**Lightning Damages Temple Dome, Major Mishap Averted in Bhilwara**

**Bhilwara:** A major accident was narrowly avoided on Friday morning after lightning struck the dome of the famous Charbhuj Nath Temple in Sanjay Colony. The incident took place at around 5:30 am, when a powerful bolt of lightning hit the temple during bad weather. The impact caused partial damage to the temple's dome and created panic among residents living nearby.

According to local people, the loud sound of the lightning could be heard across the surrounding area, leaving many residents frightened. People rushed out of their homes after hearing the explosion-like noise and later found that the temple dome had been damaged. Fortunately, no one was present inside or around the temple at the time of the incident. As a result, no injuries or loss of life were reported, and a potentially serious tragedy was avoided.

Residents said they con-

sider it a blessing of Lord Charbhuj Nath that the incident occurred when the temple premises were empty. If devotees or temple staff had been present at that moment, the situation could have been much more serious. The incident has also raised concerns about the safety of old religious structures during the monsoon season, when thunderstorms and lightning become more frequent.

Although the temple suffered only partial damage, local residents have appealed to the concerned authorities and temple management to inspect the structure carefully and carry out the necessary repair work at the earliest.

They believe that timely restoration will help protect the historic temple and ensure the safety of devotees visiting the shrine in the coming days.

The incident ended without any casualties, bringing great relief to the people of the area. Residents thanked

God that despite the powerful lightning strike and damage to the temple dome, no human life was affected, and the situation remained under control.

A major disaster was narrowly avoided during the early morning hours in Bhilwara after a powerful bolt of lightning directly struck the architectural dome of the prominent Charbhuj Nath Temple located in Sanjay Colony.

The atmospheric event occurred during a period of turbulent weather, instantly causing physical damage to the upper structure of the religious site. The sheer force of the strike, combined with the explosive sound that followed, sent waves of panic through the residential neighborhoods surrounding the temple complex.

According to local accounts, the lightning strike produced a deafening sound that resonated deeply across the entire locality, waking residents and leaving many in a state of fear.

**CBN Seizes 35 Kg of Illegal Poppy Husk from Passenger Bus, Two Arrested**

**Bhilwara:** The Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN) has achieved a major success in its ongoing campaign against drug trafficking by seizing 35.100 kilograms of illegal opium poppy husk (doda chura) from a passenger bus in Bhilwara.

During the operation, two accused were arrested on the spot after officials recovered the banned narcotic substance from their luggage. The action was carried out on the basis of specific intelligence received by the department. According to CBN officials, the team intercepted a passenger bus carrying a Madhya Pradesh registration number and conducted a detailed search. During the inspection, officers found 35.100 kilograms of illegal opium poppy husk hidden inside the bags and suitcase of two passengers identified as Mandeep and Sandeep. The officers immediately questioned the two men and asked them to produce valid documents or



permits for carrying the narcotic substance. However, the accused failed to provide any legal documents to justify its possession. Following the recovery, both men were taken into custody and a case was registered against them under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. The seized

narcotic substance has been taken into official possession, and further legal proceedings have been initiated. CBN officials said that the investigation is now focused on finding out where the illegal consignment originated, who supplied it, and where it was supposed to be delivered. The department is also trying to iden-

tify other people who may be connected to the drug trafficking network. The Central Bureau of Narcotics has appealed to the public to actively support the fight against drug trafficking. Officials requested citizens to immediately report any information related to the illegal sale, transport or storage of narcotic substances.

**New Team Takes Charge as Bharat Vikas Parishad Marks Foundation Day**

**Sagwara:** Bharat Vikas Parishad organised a seminar and oath-taking ceremony on Thursday evening to mark its Foundation Day and the beginning of the new office-bearers' term. The event was held at a private hotel on the Aspur Bypass in Sagwara and was attended by senior members, office-bearers and social workers.

The programme was held in the presence of Regional Service Activities Coordinator Girish Sompura as the chief guest and Provincial President Mayank Dosi as the chairperson. Vijayram Bhavsar and Patron Kuberal Joshi attended as special guests.

During the ceremony, Girish Sompura officially handed over responsibilities to the newly elected



office-bearers, including President Rajendra Shukla, Secretary Ramesh Vaishnav and Treasurer Dinesh Sharma.

Provincial President Mayank Dosi administered the oath to the new executive committee, while Lalit Panchal administered the

membership oath to newly inducted members.

Branch President Rajendra Shukla presented a detailed report on the social service activities carried out by the organisation during the previous year. Treasurer Dinesh Sharma shared

the financial report of the branch.

Addressing the gathering, Mayank Dosi said the Sagwara branch was established in 1987 and has since been actively involved in various social welfare activities across the region. He highlighted projects aimed at promoting values among children and youth and mentioned that a large number of students participate in the Know India Competition every year.

He also spoke about the anaemia awareness camp organised last year and efforts being made to help women become self-reliant through different projects. He appreciated the work done by the Chittorgarh and Banswara branches and urged members to support and use indigenous products.

**Udaipur Gears Up for Grand Jagannath Rath Yatra on July 16**

**Udaipur:** Preparations have begun on a grand scale for the annual Lord Jagannath Rath Yatra, which will be taken out from Jagdish Temple on July 16, 2026. The Bhagwan Jagannath Rath Yatra Committee, Udaipur, has started decorating the city and the entire procession route with colourful flags and banners to give a festive look to the occasion.

Committee spokesperson Rajendra Sen said that as the date of the Rath Yatra draws closer, enthusiasm among devotees is increasing. Members of the committee are personally inviting people from different communities, social organisations and religious groups by offering the traditional yellow rice invitation at their homes. The committee wants maximum public

participation in the religious procession.

Under the leadership of Committee Convener Dinesh Makwana, a team comprising Lokesh Vaishnav, Dilip Tamboli, Rajesh Chawla, Lala Vaishnav, Kesar Singh Bheru Seth, Kailash Jingar and Chandresh Dixit is actively engaged in decorating rooftops across the city and the entire Rath Yatra route with flags and decorative banners. The organisers said these preparations are being made to give a grand welcome to Lord Jagannath and create a devotional atmosphere throughout the city.

As part of the preparations, an important meeting of representatives from various communities, religious organisations, saints and temple committees will be held on July 5 at 5.30 pm

at Asind Ki Haveli, Jagdish Chowk Parking. During the meeting, the organisers will discuss the complete plan for the Rath Yatra and invite suggestions from all participating groups.

The meeting will also focus on the arrangements for attractive tableaux depicting the life of Lord Krishna, along with the participation of bands, horses, decorated buggies, sound systems and devotional music groups. The organisers said that after the meeting, community and organisation leaders will also be given ceremonial flags as part of the preparations for the grand religious event. The committee expressed confidence that this year's Rath Yatra will be celebrated with great devotion, enthusiasm and active participation from people across Udaipur.

**BJP MLA Begins Religious Campaign Seeking Reopening of 49-Year-Closed Temple**

**Bhilwara:** A unique campaign based on faith and religious commitment has started in Mandal town of Bhilwara district, where the ancient Lord Devnarayan Temple has remained closed for the past 49 years. Demanding that the temple be fully reopened for devotees, Mandal BJP MLA Udaylal Bhadana has taken a series of personal vows and is now launching the 'Sanatan Gaurav Mahayatra' to spread awareness about the issue across the country.

The MLA has announced that he will not celebrate his birthday until the temple doors are completely reopened for devotees. He said that only after the temple is opened will he celebrate the occasion. He has also continued earlier vows, including giving up food, footwear, wearing a traditional turban and cutting his hair and

beard. According to him, these sacrifices are part of his religious commitment and campaign. The Sanatan Gaurav Mahayatra will begin on July 5 from the Khadeshwari Ji Maharaj Ashram in Vrindavan. The programme will start with the blessings of saints and devotional chanting, while a famous group from Barsana will perform bhajans. During the visit, Bhadana will also perform the traditional walk around the Banke Bihari Temple and pray for the reopening of the temple.

On July 6, he will undertake the 21-kilometre Govardhan Parikrama on foot, dedicating it to public welfare and the protection of Sanatan traditions. During the larger journey, he plans to visit 108 major pilgrimage sites, including the Char Dham and 12 Jy-

otirlingas. He will collect sacred soil and holy water from every pilgrimage place before returning to Rajasthan. After completing the Mahayatra, special religious programmes will be organised in the Mandal Assembly area. A special worship ceremony will be held at the Jagdish Temple in Kareda, and 108 Shrimad Bhagwat Kathas along with Kalash Jalabhishek ceremonies will be organised in different villages with public participation. Throughout the journey, the MLA has also pledged to attend daily temple prayers and devotional programmes to encourage people to stay connected with Sanatan culture. The Lord Devnarayan Temple in Mandal is believed to be around 469 years old. It was constructed between 1555 and 1557 by Khetaji and Netaji, leaders of the Gurjar community.

**Street Vendors Honoured at Public Welfare Fair and PM SVANidhi Festival**

**Sagwara:** The Sagwara Municipal Council, in association with Nav Bhumika Manav Vikas Sansthan, organised a Public Welfare Fair and PM SVANidhi Festival to recognise the contribution of street vendors and spread awareness about food safety, cleanliness and government welfare schemes. The programme focused on empowering vendors and encouraging them to follow safe and hygienic business practices.

The event was held in the presence of Administrator and Executive Officer Jitendra Kumar Sharma, Senior Assistant Amritlal Meena, Assistant Accounts Officer Nirupa Parmar, BJP City President and Street Vendors Association President Yashwant Gawaria, BJP City General Secretary K.P. Singh, Community Organ-

iser Jayesh Pandya, Manish Yadav, Satish Yadav, along with several dignitaries, citizens and street vendors.

During the programme, street vendors were honoured for their important role in the city's economy and for providing essential services to the public. Experts explained the importance of food safety, cleanliness, proper storage of food items and maintaining hygiene while running food businesses.

Participants were also informed about government welfare schemes available for street vendors and encouraged to make full use of these benefits.

Representatives of Nav Bhumika Manav Vikas Sansthan conducted a training session where vendors were guided on maintaining cleanliness and following

food safety standards in their daily business. At the end of the programme, certificates were distributed to all beneficiaries who successfully completed the training.

The organisers said such awareness programmes help improve the quality of services offered by street vendors while also protecting public health.

The event concluded with all guests administering a pledge to the vendors to maintain cleanliness, provide safe and quality food products and take advantage of government schemes meant for their welfare and economic development. The programme was conducted by Siddharth Sharma.

The Sagwara Municipal Council, operating in a structural collaboration with the Nav Bhumika Manav Vikas Sansthan, recently

executed a dual-purpose Public Welfare Fair and PM SVANidhi Festival designed to explicitly validate the socioeconomic contributions of local micro-entrepreneurs.

The public event was established to honor the continuous efforts of street vendors, who form a crucial part of the urban economy, while simultaneously driving educational initiatives around food safety protocols, civic cleanliness, and available central welfare initiatives.

By creating a unified platform for learning and recognition, the municipal administration intended to foster a more dignified working environment for these traders while raising the standard of public health and hygiene across the municipality.

## Housing Board Employees Submit 21-Point Charter, Warn of Protest Over Pending Demands

**Jaipur:** Employees of the Rajasthan Housing Board held a gate meeting at the board headquarters in Jaipur to raise several long-pending demands related to land acquisition, removal of illegal encroachments, recruitment, employee welfare and new housing schemes.

The meeting was organised during the lunch break on July 1, 2026, under the banner of the Rajasthan Housing Board Employees Union. The gathering was led by the union's State President Mohan Singh, after which a 21-point memorandum was submitted to Housing Commissioner Arvind Poswal for consideration.

Union General Secretary Ramesh Chand Sharma and Senior Vice President Govind Natani said that the board should immediately begin the process of obtaining land from the state government in exchange for the land being used for the construction of the City Park on VT Road. The union also demanded strict control



over what it described as excessive spending on advertisements, taxis and other non-essential expenses. It urged the Housing Board to continue following its original cost-based policy and focus on achieving the objectives for which it was established.

The memorandum also called for the launch of rental housing schemes for employees and new residential projects for Low Income Group (LIG) and Middle Income Group (MIG) families across the state with easy instalment facilities.

The union demanded the re-opening of the general registration housing scheme and opposed concessions in administrative charges for special categories, instead seeking an increase in administrative fees. Another major demand was to fill 983 vacant posts out of the sanctioned strength of 1,583 posts through direct recruitment and implement the approved staffing pattern. The union also requested that employees appointed after 2004 should receive medical reimbursement benefits similar to those available to

other staff members.

The memorandum was presented by State President Mohan Singh, Working President Dara Singh, Senior Vice President Govind Natani, Vice President Rohit Singh, General Secretary Ramesh Chand Sharma, Joint General Secretaries Manoj Thakur and Mohd. Yusuf Khan, Treasurer Mahesh Sharma, Sports Secretary Madhur Malik, Advisory Secretary Vijay Singh, Women's Secretary Neha Fojdar, Publicity Secretary Jinesh Sharma, Office Secretary

Anand Singh, and other office-bearers. During the meeting, the union also discussed its future course of action and warned that if the administration fails to act on the demands within a reasonable time, employees will launch an agitation. Several union leaders, including Anup Mishra, Dhansyam Meena, Vinod Sharma, and Pushpendra Meena, also addressed the gathering.

The Rajasthan Housing Board headquarters in Jaipur recently became the focal point of labor activism as employees gathered to voice their collective grievances. Under the organizational banner of the Rajasthan Housing Board Employees Union, a massive gate meeting was staged directly outside the central administrative building.

The primary objective of this organized gathering was to bring a spotlight onto a wide range of long-pending demands that workers feel have been neglected by the management for an extended period.

## Ambedkar Law University Invites Applications for PhD Supervisors

**Jaipur:** Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Law University, Jaipur has invited applications from eligible faculty members to become PhD Research Supervisors under the University Grants Commission (UGC) Regulations 2022. The university has started this process to strengthen research standards and promote quality academic work in legal education. Interested and eligible teachers working in affiliated law colleges can submit their applications before July 24, 2026.

According to Public Relations Officer Vikram Rathore, Registrar Virendra Verma (RAS) has issued an official order asking principals of all law colleges affiliated with the university to invite applications from eligible faculty members. The university plans to prepare a panel of qualified PhD Research Supervisors in accordance with the provisions of the UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of PhD Degree) Regulations, 2022. Faculty members who fulfil the prescribed eligibility conditions

can apply by following the procedure laid down by the university. Detailed guidelines, eligibility criteria and the complete application process have been made available on the university's official website.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nishtha Jaswal said that the university is committed to improving the quality of research in legal education by encouraging experienced and research-oriented teachers to take up the responsibility of guiding PhD scholars. She said that the participation of qualified supervisors will help create a strong research environment and provide students with better academic guidance. According to her, experienced teachers can play an important role in encouraging meaningful, innovative and high-quality research that will benefit both students and the legal education system.

Prof. Jaswal further stated that the university is focused on promoting academic excellence, innovation and a healthy research culture. By appointing

competent and experienced PhD supervisors, the institution aims to ensure that research scholars receive proper mentoring and produce quality research work that meets national academic standards. The university believes that this initiative will further strengthen research activities in affiliated law colleges and contribute significantly to the overall development of legal education in Rajasthan.

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Law University, situated in the city of Jaipur, has officially opened the application window for qualified faculty members who wish to serve as PhD research supervisors. This academic initiative aligns directly with the standards established under the University Grants Commission Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of PhD Degree Regulations of 2022. The primary objective of launching this process is to elevate the overall benchmarks of legal research and cultivate high-quality, impactful academic contributions within the realm of legal education.

## Fake RTO e-Challan APK Scam Targets Bank Accounts, Rajasthan Police Issues Public Alert

**Jaipur:** The Cyber Crime Branch of Rajasthan Police has issued a special advisory warning people about a new online fraud in which cyber criminals are sending fake RTO e-Challan APK files to steal money from bank accounts.

Fraudsters are sending fake SMS and WhatsApp messages to vehicle owners, claiming that a traffic challan has been issued. These messages contain a link or an APK file which, once installed, can give hackers complete control over the victim's mobile phone.

According to Additional Director General of Police (Cyber Crime) V.K. Singh, cyber criminals are pretending to be officials from the

Transport Department or Traffic Police.

They send messages warning that legal action will be taken if the challan is not paid within a specified time. Along with the message, they send a file named "RTO eChallan.apk" or a suspicious link.

If a user downloads and installs the APK file, the malware can access important data stored on the phone, including SMS messages, contact lists, photo galleries and other personal information.

It can also capture one-time passwords (OTPs), allowing criminals to carry out unauthorised transactions through internet banking and UPI accounts.

## Bhopal-Jodhpur Train to Skip Kota for Two Weeks Due to Station Redevelopment

**Jaipur:** Passengers travelling between Bhopal and Jodhpur will face temporary changes in train operations as Kota Railway Station undergoes redevelopment work. The West Central Railway has announced a block on Platform No. 4 at Kota Station to carry out redevelopment activities. Because of this work, train movement on the route will be affected for a limited period.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, two trains operating on the North Western Railway network will run

on a changed route between July 4 and July 18, 2026. During this period, both trains will not stop at Kota Railway Station. Instead, they will receive a temporary halt at Sogaria Station to reduce inconvenience for passengers.

Train number 14814 Bhopal-Jodhpur Express, departing from Bhopal between July 4 and July 18, will operate through the diverted route Sogaria-Kota C Cabin-Gudla. Due to the route change, the train will skip Kota Station. It will stop temporarily at Sogaria Station, where it will arrive at 2:10 am and depart at



2:20 am.

Similarly, train number 14813 Jodhpur-Bhopal Express, departing from Jodhpur during the same period, will also operate on a changed route through Gudla-Kota C Cabin-Sogaria.

This train will also bypass Kota Station because of the redevelopment work.

Instead, it will halt at Sogaria Station, arriving at 11:30 pm and leaving at 11:40 pm.

Railway officials have

advised passengers travelling on these trains to check the revised schedule before starting their journey and reach the appropriate boarding station accordingly.

The temporary route diversion has been introduced to ensure that redevelopment work at Kota Station continues smoothly while maintaining train operations.

The railway administration has appealed to passengers to cooperate during this period and has expressed regret for any inconvenience caused by the temporary changes. Passengers planning their journeys between

Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are being alerted to a significant, albeit temporary, alteration in regional rail operations.

The West Central Railway has officially announced that the prominent rail corridor connecting the cities of Bhopal and Jodhpur will witness substantial changes in its routine schedule and routing over a forthcoming two-week period. This operational adjustment is necessitated by critical infrastructure upgrades that are currently being undertaken at one of the region's busiest and most vital transit hubs.

## Rajasthan Police Launch Statewide Traffic Crackdown, Over 18,000 Drivers Penalised on Day One

**Jaipur:** Rajasthan Police has launched a statewide special traffic enforcement campaign to improve road safety, reduce accidents and encourage people to follow traffic rules. The special drive began on July 2 and will continue until July 16, 2026. During the campaign, police teams across the state are taking strict action against people riding without helmets, speeding, illegal parking on highways and other roads, and violating lane discipline on national highways. The campaign is also focused on creating greater awareness about safe driving and responsible road behaviour among the public.

The special drive is being conducted under the directions of Director General of Police Rajeev Kumar Sharma and under the supervision of Director General of Police (Training and Traffic) Anil Paliwal. District Superintendents of Police and Deputy Commissioners



of Police across Rajasthan have been instructed to carry out intensive checking in their respective areas. Along with enforcement under the provisions of the Motor Ve-

hicles Act, police personnel are also educating motorists about the importance of road safety and the need to follow traffic rules to prevent accidents.

Additional Director General of Police (Traffic) Dr. B.L. Meena said that awareness messages are being widely circulated during the campaign.

## Sadulpur Railway Station Set for Modern Upgrade, Boost Expected for Trade and Tourism

**Jaipur:** Sadulpur Junction Railway Station, one of the most important railway stations in Churu district, is set to receive a major transformation under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Named after Maharaja Sadul Singh of Bikaner, the station is located on the Delhi-Rewari-Loharu-Sadulpur-Churu-Bikaner and Hisar-Sadulpur-Churu-Jodhpur railway routes. The station serves as a key transport hub for passengers and supports the region's thriving agricultural trade. Sadulpur is well known for its wholesale commodity market, especially its grain market, which plays an important role in the local economy. The town is also famous for its beautiful Shekhawati-style havelis decorated with traditional fresco paintings, making it an attractive destination for tourists.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer

Amit Sudarshan, the redevelopment work at Sadulpur Railway Station is now almost complete. The project aims to provide passengers with better facilities while improving connectivity and supporting local businesses. Major improvements include renovation of the station building, separate entry and exit routes, construction of a boundary wall, beautification of the circulating area, separate parking facilities for two-wheelers and four-wheelers, upgraded booking offices, improved retiring rooms and the construction of new toilet blocks.

The redevelopment project is being carried out at an estimated cost of ₹18.70 crore. Modern LED lighting is being installed to improve the station's appearance, while proper signage will ensure easy access for differently-abled passengers. The station will also showcase local art and culture through

attractive paintings on its walls and ceilings. Passenger information systems are being upgraded with coach guidance display boards, multiline and single-line display boards, public address systems, large LED screens and GPS-based digital clocks.

A 12-metre-wide foot overbridge, costing around ₹8.84 crore, is also under construction, with nearly 75 percent of the work already completed. In addition, a 40-kilowatt solar power plant, built at a cost of about ₹18 lakh, has been installed to support green energy and ensure uninterrupted railway operations. The redevelopment has also created employment opportunities for local workers and artisans during the construction phase. Railway officials believe that the modernised station will promote tourism, encourage the growth of local handicrafts and strengthen agricultural

trade by improving transport facilities. The upgraded station is expected to contribute significantly to the economic and social development of the entire region while providing passengers with a safer, cleaner and more comfortable travel experience.

The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme is ushering in a dramatic and comprehensive transformation for the Sadulpur Junction Railway Station, which stands as a vital transit gateway within the Churu district of Rajasthan. Named in honor of the historical ruler Maharaja Sadul Singh of Bikaner, this crucial rail hub occupies a highly strategic geographical position on several major northern routes. Specifically, it intersects the busy lines connecting Delhi, Rewari, Loharu, Sadulpur, Churu, and Bikaner, while simultaneously bridging the regional network operating between Hisar, Sadulpur, Churu, and Jodhpur.

## Rajasthan SI Recruitment 2025: Physical Efficiency Test to Be Held in Last Week of July

**Jaipur:** The Physical Efficiency Test (PET) for candidates who qualified in the written examination of the Sub-Inspector/Platoon Commander Direct Recruitment-2025 will be conducted in the last week of July 2026.

The announcement was made by Deputy Inspector General of Police, Recruitment and Promotion Board, Rajasthan, Manoj Kumar. Candidates who cleared the written examination have been advised to begin their physical preparation according to the prescribed standards.

The written examination for the recruitment was conducted by the Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC), Ajmer on April 5 and 6, 2026, while the result was declared on June 19, 2026. Candidates who

passed the written examination will now appear for the Physical Efficiency Test, which will be organised by a board constituted at the Police Headquarters. The PET will be held at the police range headquarters in Jaipur, Udaipur, Kota, Jodhpur, Bharatpur, Bikaner and Ajmer.

DIG Manoj Kumar said that all eligible candidates should prepare for the test according to the syllabus and physical standards mentioned in Permanent Order No. 10/2025 issued by the Director General of Police, Rajasthan. Admit cards for the PET will be released shortly. Candidates will be able to download their admit cards through their SSO ID. They must carry the admit card along with a valid photo identity card while reporting at the examination

venue on the scheduled date and time.

He further informed that detailed instructions and all updates related to the Physical Efficiency Test will be made available on the official websites of Rajasthan Police and RPSC. Candidates have been advised to visit these websites regularly to stay updated about the examination schedule, admit cards and other important announcements.

The Recruitment and Promotion Board has also clarified that no separate personal communication regarding the PET will be sent to candidates. Therefore, all applicants are responsible for checking the official notifications and website updates regularly to avoid missing any important information related to the recruitment process.

## North Western Railway Extends Two Jaipur-Bandra Special Trains to Meet Passenger Demand

**Jaipur:** To handle the increasing number of passengers, North Western Railway has decided to extend the operation of two pairs of special train services. The move has been taken to provide better travel facilities during the busy travel season. The announcement was made by North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, who said that the special trains will continue to run for additional trips without any change in their existing timings or stoppages.

The first service is Train No. 09705/09706, Jaipur-Bandra Terminus-Jaipur Weekly Special. The train will now continue to operate from Jaipur between July 19 and August 16, 2026, com-

pleting five additional trips. In the return direction, it will run from Bandra Terminus between July 20 and August 17, 2026, also completing five additional trips. The extension is expected to benefit passengers travelling between Rajasthan and Mumbai during the peak travel period.

The second service is Train No. 09707/09708, Jaipur-Bandra Terminus-Jaipur Weekly Special. This train has also received an extension in its operating schedule. It will now run from Jaipur between July 15 and July 29, 2026, completing three additional trips.

The return service from Bandra Terminus will operate between July 16 and July 30, 2026, with three additional trips included in the

extension.

Railway officials said this decision has been taken after reviewing the heavy passenger demand on the route.

North Western Railway has clarified that only the operating period of these special trains has been extended.

There will be no changes in the train timings, route or station stoppages. Passengers who regularly use these services can continue to travel according to the existing schedule.

Railway authorities believe that the additional trips will help reduce waiting lists and provide more convenient travel options for people travelling between Jaipur and Bandra Terminus during the coming weeks.

Passengers are advised to check ticket availability and make their reservations in advance to avoid last-minute inconvenience.

The North Western Railway administration has taken a proactive step to address the growing influx of travelers by officially extending the operations of two pairs of highly utilized special train services.

This critical decision is aimed squarely at providing enhanced travel facilities and accommodating the dense passenger traffic that typically characterizes the peak travel season.

By offering these additional trips, the railway authority seeks to alleviate the pressure on regular scheduled routes and ensure a smoother transit experience

for regional commuters.

Making the formal announcement on behalf of the transportation network, the Chief Public Relations Officer for the North Western Railway, Amit Sudarshan, detailed the logistics of the extended services.

He confirmed that the special trains have been granted permission to run for multiple additional trips beyond their original cut-off dates.

Furthermore, the administration has assured the public that these extensions will be seamlessly integrated into the current system, meaning the trains will continue to run with absolutely no modifications made to their existing arrival times, departure schedules, or designated station stoppages.

## Editorial

### In which direction is the opposition headed?

In Parliament, the role of the opposition is just as vital to democracy as that of the ruling party. Consequently, the position of the Leader of the Opposition is not merely a parliamentary convention but a significant responsibility involving holding the government accountable. Although the Congress party has once again placed its trust in Mallikarjun Kharge, he now faces the formidable challenge of not only retaining the post but also uniting a fragmented opposition and demonstrating effective parliamentary leadership.

The true strength of a democracy lies not only in the decision-making capability of the ruling party but also in the effective role played by a competent and well-informed opposition. The position of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament is not merely a constitutional formality; it is a crucial responsibility that maintains the democratic balance. Following his re-appointment as a Rajya Sabha member, Congress National President Mallikarjun Kharge was reappointed as the Leader of the Opposition in the Upper House. While this decision underscores the Congress party's preference for experience, it has also raised questions regarding the development of leadership within the party. Although Kharge's reappointment reaffirms the confidence placed in him, he now bears the major responsibility of proving himself as an effective leader not just for his party, but for the entire opposition.

Mallikarjun Kharge had assumed the mantle of Leader of the Opposition on February 16, 2021, following the conclusion of former Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad's tenure in the Rajya Sabha. There had been considerable speculation in political circles that the Congress might offer the opportunity to a new face after the completion of his initial term. The names of several senior leaders aspiring to the position had also been circulating. However, opting against any experimentation, the Congress once again endorsed Kharge's leadership. This decision is viewed not merely as an expression of faith in an individual, but also as a recognition of the importance of parliamentary experience. At the same time, political speculation has begun that this decision signals limited confidence in other senior leaders within the party.

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi is now also a member of the Rajya Sabha. Given this context, there was a need to carefully strategize every political move within the House. Kharge was entrusted with this responsibility once again because he is a leader who understands the nuances of parliamentary proceedings, is capable of engaging with various parties, and possesses extensive administrative experience. In the politics of parliamentary numbers, aggressive speeches alone do not suffice; success requires consistent attendance, an in-depth study of bills, and the ability to keep various opposition parties united. It is inevitable to mention Ghulam Nabi Azad's political journey here. He had expected the Congress to send him back to the Rajya Sabha after his term ended, but that did not happen. The resulting resentment eventually led him to quit the party and establish his own independent party in Jammu and Kashmir. Prior to this, the 'G-23' a group of dissenters had written to Sonia Gandhi expressing concerns about Rahul Gandhi's leadership style; Azad was a key leader within that group. Consequently, it was speculated at the time that political differences were a major reason for his not being re-nominated to the Rajya Sabha. This incident clearly highlighted the dynamics of leadership and loyalty within the Congress party. There is no reason to question Mallikarjun Kharge's experience. His long political journey spans from Karnataka state politics to roles as a Union Minister, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Congress National President, and now Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha. However, given his advancing age and health-related issues, there was an expectation that the Congress would offer an opportunity to the new generation. Yet, the party prioritized experience. While the intention may have been to maintain continuity in parliamentary politics, the question of leadership transition remains. When looking at the history of the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Ghulam Nabi Azad's name stands out prominently. Across two stints, he served in this role for a total of six years and 252 days. He effectively articulated the opposition's stance during the Modi government's first term. Now, Kharge has the opportunity to break that very record; if he remains in the position for approximately another year, he could achieve the distinction of serving as the Leader of the Opposition for the longest duration. During Kharge's tenure, Piyush Goyal and J.P. Nadda had served as the Leader of the House, whereas Azad had parliamentary face-offs with Arun Jaitley and Thawar Chand Gehlot during his time. Many stalwarts have held the position of Leader of the Opposition in the history of the Rajya Sabha. Before becoming Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh held this post for six years and 64 days; during his tenure, Sikandar Bakht and Jaswant Singh served as Leaders of the House (representing the ruling party). The BJP's Arun Jaitley served as Leader of the Opposition for nearly five years from June 3, 2009, to May 26, 2014 whereas Jaswant Singh's tenure fell short of the five-year mark by just eighteen days. Sikandar Bakht achieved the rare distinction of serving as both the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the House. Congress leader Shankarrao Chavan held the position of Leader of the Opposition for a mere nine days, while the tenures of M. S. Gurupadaswamy and Bhola Paswan Shastri were also extremely brief. L. K. Advani served as Leader of the Opposition for 77 days representing the Janata Party, while Kamalapati Tripathi handled this responsibility across two separate terms. Shyamnandan Prasad Mishra of the Organisation Congress is considered the first person in history to hold the official title of Leader of the Opposition. Alongside the Leader of the Opposition, the role of the Deputy Leader in the Rajya Sabha is also significant. S. S. Ahluwalia and Ravi Shankar Prasad have served as Deputy Leaders for the BJP, while Anand Sharma, P. Chidambaram, and Pramod Tiwari have held the role for the Congress. Anand Sharma set a record by serving in this position for seven years and 298 days. Notably, however, no Deputy Leader has yet had the opportunity to subsequently become the Leader of the Opposition. Thus, one cannot say that the ladder of advancement in parliamentary politics always follows a straight path. Today, the country's political landscape has become increasingly confrontational. Even though the ruling party possesses formidable numerical strength, the responsibility of the opposition remains undiminished. Questioning the government in Parliament, scrutinizing bills, presenting alternative viewpoints on national issues, and effectively voicing the concerns of the people constitute the fundamental duties of the Leader of the Opposition. Kharge holds two significant positions: Party President and Leader of the Opposition. Consequently, he must strike a balance between managing the party organization and fulfilling his parliamentary responsibilities. His second term will be evaluated not merely on the basis of speeches, but on how effectively he holds the government accountable, unites the opposition, and facilitates robust democratic discourse within Parliament. Thus, for Kharge, this is not simply a re-appointment to a post, but the ultimate test of his political career.

## 'Electric Mobility: Building India an Electric Mobility Hub for Viksit Bharat'

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, presided over the National Conference on 'Electric Mobility: Building India an Electric Mobility Hub for Viksit Bharat', as Chief Guest, in New Delhi today. The Conference was convened by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), bringing together senior policymakers, industry leaders, automotive manufacturers, technology providers and other stakeholders to deliberate on the roadmap for accelerating India's electric mobility transition and strengthening the country's position as a global EV manufacturing hub.

The deliberations highlighted a need for policy continuity, stronger charging infrastructure, localisation of manufacturing, resilient battery supply chains, financing support and technological innovation to accelerate EV adoption and position India as a global electric mobility hub under the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Addressing the Inaugural Session of the Conference, Shri Yadav stated that India's transition to electric mobility is not merely about replacing one technology with another—it is about building a sus-



tainable industrial ecosystem that strengthens manufacturing, creates green jobs and supports Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. "As we accelerate this transition, our focus must remain on green growth, resilient infrastruc-

ture, transparent governance and a circular economy that ensures long-term environmental sustainability", he added.

The Minister informed that the Government has undertaken a series of reforms to simplify environ-

investments while ensuring responsible development, he said.

"India's future lies in moving from a linear 'take-make-dispose' model towards a circular economy based on reuse, recycling and sustainable resource management" Shri Yadav noted. He stated that electric mobility must be supported by robust charging infrastructure, localisation of advanced manufacturing, secure critical mineral supply chains, battery recycling and resource efficiency.

Further, the Minister said that industry, policymakers and institutions must work together to build an innovation-led ecosystem that positions India as a global hub for clean mobility. He concluded by saying, "Ecology and economy must progress together, and through collaborative action. India can emerge as a global leader in sustainable manufacturing, green mobility and climate-conscious development."

The inaugural session featured the presence of Shri Nirmal K. Minda, President, ASSOCHAM and Chairman, UNO Minda; Shri Nishant Arya, Chairman, ASSOCHAM National Council on Green Mobility and Vice CMD, JBM Group; and Shri Saurabh Sanyal, Secretary General, ASSOCHAM.

## MPEDA Concludes Second National Skill Olympiad on Seafood Value Addition at Seafood Expo Bharat 2026

The grand finale of the second edition of the National Skill Olympiad on Seafood Value Addition was held during Seafood Expo Bharat 2026 in Kochi on Wednesday. An initiative of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), the Olympiad brought together ten trained seafood processing professionals, who demonstrated their culinary skills and technical expertise in preparing value-added seafood products. In a closely contested finale, P. Surya Bhaskar of Devi Fisheries Ltd., Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, emerged as the winner.

Muthu Kumaran of Theva & Co., Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, secured the second position, while Ms Sagatika Sardar of SS Seafoods Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata, West Bengal, and Ms Barasrani Jena of Sabri Food Products Pvt. Ltd., Bhubaneswar, Odisha, secured the third and fourth positions, respectively.

The winner received a cash prize of Rs 1,00,000, while the second and third prize winners received Rs 75,000 and Rs 50,000,

respectively. A consolation prize of Rs 25,000 was awarded to the fourth-position holder.

In the run-up to the event, MPEDA conducted 50 Seafood Value Addition Training Programmes across the east and west coasts of India, through which more than 2,500 seafood processing workers and professionals were trained in preparing seafood products with high demand in international markets.

The regional rounds of the Olympiad were held in Mumbai for the West Coast Zone and Visakhapatnam for the East Coast Zone. The ten finalists were selected from among the participants in the regional rounds held on June 30.

During the grand finale, the finalists were tasked with preparing six value-added seafood products that are in demand in international markets—Nobashi Shrimp, Breaded Butterfly Shrimp, Cooked Peeled Deveined Tail-On (PDTO) Shrimp, Marinated Shrimp Skewers, Breaded Squid Rings and Fish Fillets.

Chairman, MPEDA, Shri P. Jawahar; Director, Dr Ram Mohan M.K.; Secretary, Dr Gibin Kumar; Joint Director, Shri Anilkumar; and Chief Guest and CEO, Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI), Dr K. N. Raghavan, distributed cash prizes, medals and certificates to the winners.

The competition was evaluated by a jury comprising Senior Scientist, ICAR-CIFT, Kochi, Dr Sarika K.; Processing and Quality Assurance Supervisor, NIPPHATT, Kochi, Dr Nithin C.T.; Production Manager, Parayil Seafood Pvt. Ltd., Shri Francis Assisi; General Manager, Sandhya Aqua Exports Pvt. Ltd., Shri Jayan Jacob; and General Manager, VKM Foods, Shri Vijayakrishna. The participants were assessed on the basis of technical skill, hygiene, precision, presentation and the quality of the finished products.

Chairman, MPEDA, Shri P. Jawahar, said the Olympiad represents an important milestone in building a resilient and globally competitive seafood sector capable of meeting the

evolving expectations of international markets. He said MPEDA is making sustained efforts to strengthen quality assurance, food safety, processing excellence, workforce skilling, sustainable seafood production and reliable supply chains. He added that the Olympiad serves as an important platform for strengthening India's seafood export ecosystem.

The event was attended by senior officials from the Central and State Governments, seafood exporters, international buyers, industry leaders, technical experts and delegates participating in Seafood Expo Bharat 2026.

The award-winning value-added seafood products prepared by the finalists were showcased at the Skill Olympiad Pavilion, along with live demonstrations and tasting sessions featuring export-oriented seafood value-added products developed through MPEDA's training programmes. A tasting session of the products was also organised at the MPEDA Skill Olympiad Pavilion.

## Department of Commerce, Ministry of AYUSH and AYUSHEXCIL Convene Government-Industry Brainstorming Session

The Department of Commerce under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in collaboration with the Ministry of AYUSH and the AYUSH Export Promotion Council (AYUSHEXCIL), organised a high-level Government-Industry Brainstorming Session on the AYUSH sector at Vanija Bhawan in New Delhi on July 1, 2026. The session focused on strengthening India's position as a global leader in traditional wellness and holistic healthcare through policy support, innovation, quality enhancement and international collaboration.

Held under the theme "Strengthening India's Global Leadership in Traditional Wellness: Innovation, Quality, Exports and International Collaboration in the AYUSH Sector," the event served as a major platform for dialogue between policymakers and industry stakeholders. It reflected the Government's growing emphasis on promoting AYUSH as a strategic export sector with significant global potential.

More than 150 participants attended the brainstorming session, including senior government officials, exporters, manufacturers, MSMEs, startups, researchers, representatives of industry associations, State Licensing Authorities and other stakeholders. Their participation highlighted the broad-based interest in expanding India's traditional medicine ecosystem and taking it to international markets.

The discussions during the session revolved around the opportunities emerging from India's expanding network of Free Trade Agree-



ments and how these trade arrangements could help Indian AYUSH products gain easier access to international markets and reduce barriers to exports.

Global branding of AYUSH products and services emerged as a key area of focus. Stakeholders stressed the importance of positioning India's traditional wellness systems—including Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy—as trusted and scientifically backed solutions for preventive and holistic healthcare. Export facilitation measures were also discussed in detail, with participants highlighting the need for smoother regulatory processes, easier documentation and better trade support systems. Several industry representatives called for simplified procedures to improve the ease of doing business for AYUSH exporters.

Quality assurance and

compliance with global standards formed another important pillar of the discussion. Special emphasis was placed on WHO-GMP

Experts noted that stronger evidence-based research would help bridge traditional knowledge with modern healthcare expecta-

seekers looking for holistic treatment, preventive care and rejuvenation therapies.

Delivering the special address, Member of Parliament and AYUSHEXCIL Chairman Anurag Sharma highlighted the growing global acceptance of traditional medicine. He said India is well positioned to emerge as a trusted global hub for holistic healthcare and stressed the importance of closer collaboration between government, industry and research institutions. Dr. Sharma also emphasised the need to strengthen scientific validation, quality assurance, innovation and global branding. He underlined AYUSHEXCIL's role in supporting exporters through market development initiatives, capacity building programmes and international outreach efforts aimed at expanding market access.

In his keynote address,



compliance and the Ayush Quality Mark, both of which are seen as critical for improving credibility and acceptance of Indian products in overseas markets. Participants also stressed the importance of scientific validation and research-driven innovation.

tions, thereby enhancing consumer trust worldwide.

Medical value travel and wellness services were identified as emerging opportunities for India. Stakeholders observed that India can leverage its rich heritage in traditional medicine to attract global wellness

Secretary of the Department of Commerce Rajesh Agrawal stated that the government views AYUSH as a high-potential sunrise export sector. He clarified that the objective is not merely to increase export volumes but to build globally competitive Indian AYUSH brands capable of sustaining long-term international presence.

Agrawal encouraged industry players to focus on innovation, branding, value addition and maintaining high quality standards. He also highlighted the important role of intermediaries, trade facilitators and ecosystem partners in connecting Indian AYUSH products with global consumers, while urging successful exporters to share their stories to inspire wider participation. Secretary of the Ministry of AYUSH, Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, called for faster implementation of flagship initiatives such as Ayush Mark and Ayurveda Aahar. He stressed that improving packaging, branding and international market readiness would be essential for strengthening the global competitiveness of Indian AYUSH products and services. The session concluded with an interactive open-house discussion where exporters, manufacturers, startups and MSMEs shared recommendations on market access, regulatory facilitation, innovation and international collaboration. The suggestions gathered during the event are expected to guide future policy interventions and export promotion efforts, helping strengthen Brand India AYUSH and reinforcing India's leadership in the global traditional wellness ecosystem.

## 'Never since Independence has Bengal fared so poorly under any CM': Suvendu Adhikari

**Kolkata:** West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Friday launched a scathing attack on his predecessor Mamata Banerjee, claiming that the state had "never since Independence fared so poorly under any Chief Minister".

Adhikari called on the newly elected legislators to work together to restore the state's democratic institutions and legislative traditions.

Speaking at the inaugural session of a two-day orientation programme for newly elected members of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly, he underlined that his intention was not to make political attacks but simply place the facts before the first-time legislators.

"I will not say negative things, but I want to place the facts before you. Never since Independence has Bengal fared so poorly under any Chief Minister," he said.

The Chief Minister alleged that during the Left Front's 34-year rule, key decisions were taken outside the Assembly.

For 34 years, everything happened according to the party office's directives. Nothing happened from the Assembly," he said.

He claimed the situation deteriorated further during the subsequent 15 years, but softened the blow saying that he does not intend to dwell on political criticism in the presence of Leader of the Opposition Ritabrata Banerjee.



"We are moving together. We want to make Bengal stand on its feet now," Adhikari said.

Recalling the Assembly's historic role during the Partition of India in 1947, he said the House had voted in favour of West Bengal remaining with India after Syama Prasad Mookerjee argued the case before legislators.

"Bengal's future was decided in this very Assembly. We must acknowledge that history and uphold its legacy," he emphasised.

Addressing the newly elected MLAs, Adhikari urged them to make full use of the orientation programme. "Many of you have been elected for the first time. You have to

learn, and these two days are meant for that learning," he said.

Drawing on his own experience as an MLA since 2006 and as Leader of Opposition, Adhikari alleged that Opposition legislators were denied due respect under previous administrations.

"I was Leader of the Opposition for five years and was suspended from the Assembly five times, before almost every Budget and important session," he said.

He also claimed that district officials and police officers often ignored elected representatives from the Opposition and that they were excluded from official government functions.

"Elections are about political contests. Governance is different. That is not the way democracy should function," he said.

Contrasting the present administration with the past, Adhikari said MLAs from all parties were now invited to administrative meetings and Budget discussions.

"I call every MLA, including those from the Opposition, to my administrative meetings and Budget discussions. We want to build Bengal together," he said.

Adhikari also highlighted West Bengal's strategic location, industrial base, educational institutions, natural resources and transport network, describing the state as the gateway to the North East as well as Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

"We have every resource needed for development. Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we must strengthen democracy, reinforce the parliamentary system and make Bengal great once again," he said.

The two-day orientation programme, inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, has been organised jointly by the Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE), under the Lok Sabha Secretariat, and the West Bengal Legislative Assembly to familiarise first-time legislators with parliamentary procedures and legislative functioning.

## T'gama Dy CM Bhatti challenges KCR to public debate on Telangana debt, accuses BRS of financial mismanagement

**Hyderabad:** Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu on Friday launched a sharp attack on the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi leadership, challenging party president and former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, popularly known as KCR, to a public debate on Telangana's financial condition. The Telangana Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister accused the previous BRS government of leaving behind a massive debt burden that continues to impact the state's finances.

Addressing a press conference at the Secretariat in Hyderabad, Bhatti alleged that the former BRS administration had saddled Telangana with liabilities amounting to Rs 8.21 lakh crore. According to him, this figure includes direct borrowings, government guarantees, pending liabilities and unpaid dues accumulated during the BRS regime.

The Deputy Chief Minister claimed that the debt inherited by the present Congress government was significantly larger than what was officially projected. He argued that the financial obligations created under the



previous administration placed severe pressure on the state treasury and limited fiscal flexibility for the current government.

Bhatti accused senior BRS leaders, including K. T. Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao, of deliberately spreading misinformation about the state's finances. He alleged that their public statements were designed to mislead people and obscure the actual extent of the financial burden inherited by the Congress administration.

Using strong language, Bhatti described the BRS leaders' campaign as "Goebels-style" propaganda, suggesting that repeated false claims were being used as a political strategy. He said such narratives were intended to distort facts and shift

attention away from the financial decisions taken during the BRS government.

He further stated that despite inheriting heavy liabilities, the current government has made significant progress in debt servicing. According to Bhatti, the Congress-led administration has repaid Rs 2.08 lakh crore over the past two-and-a-half years, including both principal repayments and interest obligations.

The Finance Minister emphasized that these repayments were made while the government simultaneously continued welfare schemes and public spending commitments. He said this demonstrated the administration's ability to balance fiscal responsibility with social welfare obligations.

## BJP to give rousing welcome to party president Nitin Nabin on his maiden visit to Lucknow

**Lucknow:** The Uttar Pradesh BJP will give a rousing welcome to party national president Nitin Nabin on his first visit to Lucknow on Saturday.

The BJP National President will be on a two-day organizational tour of Lucknow on July 4 and 5.

According to party leaders here on Friday, Nitin Nabin will reach Lucknow Airport tomorrow at 11 am from Delhi.

A grand welcome will be given to him by party workers at the airport and thereafter a grand roadshow will begin from the airport to the BJP State Headquarters at Hazratganj covering over 18 kilometers.

The roadshow will pass through Alambagh, T.N. Chaturvedi Square, Charbagh, Deendayal Smritika, Maharana Pratap Square, and Burlington Square.

At the party office at 2 pm, the BJP president will chair an important organi-



zational meeting with state party officials, regional presidents, front presidents, and district presidents.

At 4 pm, he will offer prayers at the Shri Hanuman Setu Temple in Lucknow and after the puja, he will meet Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at 5 Kalidas Marg.

He will then hold meetings with both Deputy Chief Ministers, MPs, MLAs, and Legislative Council members.

Following this, he will hold an important meeting of the UP BJP Core

Committee.

At 7:45 pm, he will interact with prominent intellectuals of the state at the residence of Padma Shri Dr. Vidya Bindu Singh.

Later he will join a dinner hosted by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath late in the evening.

On Sunday, Nitin Nabin will have a tea discussion with former state presidents and then attend a joint meeting of UP NDA leaders at 9:30 am.

He is likely to hold separate meetings with both Deputy Chief Ministers at 10:30 am.

The BJP president will also visit the Rashtriya Prerna Sthal memorial complex at 2:45 pm and later will address the Shakti Kendra Convenor Conference.

He will visit the residence of both president Shivaji Rawat in Peer Nagar at 5 pm where he will review booth-level organization and upcoming programs.

## Centre to fully fund digitisation of Bengal Assembly under NeVA: union Parliamentary Affairs Minister

**Kolkata:** The Centre will provide a 100 per cent financial grant to digitise the West Bengal Legislative Assembly under the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA), union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said at the sidelines of the inaugural session of an orientation programme for the West Bengal MLAs in New Town on Friday. According to Rijiju, the Centre has already signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the West Bengal Assembly for the project. "On behalf of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, we have provided the necessary funding to fully digitise the West Bengal Assembly under the One Nation, One Applica-

tion initiative. We are providing a 100 per cent financial grant through my ministry for this purpose," he said. "The West Bengal Assembly is set to become fully digital and technologically advanced. We have already signed a Memorandum of Understanding to this effect," the union Minister added. Rijiju said the NeVA platform would enable legislators to access Assembly business and official documents digitally, making legislative work more efficient. "As a result, MLAs will no longer have to struggle to locate information. Members will be able to access all relevant information with a single click," he said. Highlighting the signifi-

cance of the orientation programme, Rijiju said it had been organised because a large number of first-time legislators had entered the Assembly following the recent elections. "A major programme has been organised here. Since a large number of newly elected MLAs have joined the West Bengal Assembly, an orientation programme is essential for them," he said. The union minister also praised the institution's history, saying, "I hold the West Bengal Assembly in high regard because of its long and historic legacy." Emphasising the importance of informed legislative debate, Rijiju said, "We aspire to have high-quality debates and discussions in

this House, leading to the enactment of sound legislation. We want the future of West Bengal to be shaped here through deliberations that genuinely benefit the people." Referring to his participation in the event, Rijiju said, "I had promised the West Bengal Chief Minister and the Speaker that I would certainly attend this programme. This initiative will be immensely beneficial, especially for the newly elected MLAs." Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari, along with other dignitaries, inaugurated the two-day orientation programme, which has been organised jointly by the Parliamentary Research.

## RSS seeks tough action, reforms over Ram temple theft

**Bengaluru:** The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh on Friday sought stringent punishment for those behind the alleged theft from donation boxes at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple and pressed for a comprehensive overhaul of the temple's management and operational systems, saying the incident had shaken the faith of crores of Ram devotees.

In a statement, RSS Sarkaryavah (General Secretary) Dattatreya Hosabale said the Sangh expected the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust to treat the theft as an extraordinary matter, plug all loopholes in temple administration and financial management, and restore the confidence of

devotees through transparent and accountable systems.

Describing the incident as "highly condemnable", Hosabale said the grand Ram temple, built after generations of struggle and the dedication, sacrifice and martyrdom of crores of Ram bhakts, had become a symbol of faith and reverence for the entire Hindu society.

"The unfortunate theft from the donation boxes has deeply hurt the sentiments and faith of the entire society and Ram devotees. We are all extremely pained and angered by this incident," he said. Hosabale noted that, at the request of the Trust, the Government of Uttar Pradesh had constituted a Special Investigation Team

(SIT) and initiated legal proceedings. He said those found guilty after the investigation should be awarded the strictest punishment.

He said transparent financial management, flawless operational mechanisms and an atmosphere reflecting purity, sanctity and true dharmik values were essential to ensure that the faith of crores of devotees in the Ayodhya temple remained unshaken. The RSS leader also called for an end to the prevailing confusion surrounding the episode and expressed confidence that both the Trust and the government-appointed SIT would take all necessary corrective measures to strengthen public trust.

## 16 help desks set up across ero offices to assist voters in sir process

**Hyderabad:** The Hyderabad district administration has set up 16 help desks across Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) offices to assist voters and citizens in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process.

These help desks are aimed at guiding the public on the dos and don'ts of the SIR exercise, assisting in filling out enumeration forms, and providing details of the concerned Electoral Registration Officer (ERO), Assistant ERO (AERO), and Booth Level Officer (BLO) for respective households, an official release said here on Friday.

Each help desk is headed by an in-charge officer to ensure smooth facilitation and

grievance support for voters.

Assembly-wise Help Desk Locations: In 57-Musheerabad, the help desk has been set up at the municipal office, Domalguda. In 58-Malakpet, it is located at the Municipal Office, Government Quarters, Block B (2, 4 & 5). The 59 Amberpet help desk functions from the 6th floor of the Abids Parking Complex. In 60-Khairatabad, the facility is available at the Municipal Office, 1st floor, while in 61-Jubilee Hills, it is located at the Municipal Office near the Yousufnagar checkpoint. The 62 - Sanathnagar desk operates from Harihara Kalabhavan Municipal Office.

The 63-Nampally help desk is located opposite Sai

Baba Temple, Guddi Malkapur. In 64 - Karwan, it functions from the 2nd floor of the Khairatabad Municipal Office, while 65 - Goshamahahal is operating from the 4th floor of the Abids Parking Complex. In the old city, 66-Charminar has its help desk at the Municipal Office, Mugalpur, followed by 67-Chandrayangutta at Jangam and 68-Yakutpura at Phool Bagh. The 69 Bahadurpura help desk is also located at Phool Bagh. In the Secunderabad region, the 70-Secunderabad help desk has been set up beside the Secunderabad Court at the municipal office, while 71-Cantonment operates from the CEO's Cantonment Board office.

## Manipur rights bodies call for ratification of UN Convention against torture

**Imphal:** Several civil society organisations and individuals in Manipur have submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Y. Khemchand Singh urging him to press the Government of India to immediately ratify the (UNCAT).

The memorandum, submitted in connection with the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture observed on June 26, called on the Manipur Government to formulate an action plan for implementing the UN Charter of Rights of Victims and Survivors of Torture, 2026. The organisations, including Human Rights Alert (HRA), in collaboration with Manipur

International Youth Centre (MIYC), People's Progressive Alliance Manipur (PPAM), stated that although India signed the UN Convention Against Torture in 1997, it has yet to ratify the treaty despite recommendations by the Law Commission of India in 2017 and repeated recommendations during successive Universal Periodic Reviews at the United Nations. Describing Manipur as one of the regions most affected by alleged torture and human rights violations, the signatories urged the Chief Minister to recommend to the union Government the immediate ratification of UNCAT.

## KTR urges CM Revanth Reddy to fill 20,000 police constable vacancies

**Hyderabad:** K. T. Rama Rao, working president of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi, has written an open letter to A. Revanth Reddy, demanding the immediate filling of 20,000 police constable vacancies in Telangana. In the letter, KTR accused the Congress government of failing to honour its commitments to unemployed youth and delaying crucial recruitment processes.

Writing on behalf of police constable aspirants across the state, KTR highlighted the hardships faced by thousands of candidates preparing for recruitment examinations. He noted that many aspirants come from poor, middle-class and rural families and have invested significant time, effort and resources in pursuing government jobs.

KTR pointed out that many of these candidates



have relocated to Hyderabad to prepare for examinations, often under financially difficult conditions. According to him, these aspirants continue to struggle with rising living expenses, coaching costs and prolonged uncertainty regarding recruitment notifications.

He urged the state government not to shatter the hopes of these young aspirants, stressing that delays in recruitment not only affect livelihoods but also create

deep frustration among unemployed youth. He said timely recruitment is essential to restore confidence in government promises.

Recalling the Telangana statehood movement, KTR referred to the slogan "Water, Funds and Appointments" as one of its foundational pillars. He argued that employment generation and fair recruitment were central promises made to the people during the movement for statehood.

KTR alleged that the present Congress government had committed a grave injustice by delaying police recruitment despite publicly acknowledging that around 17,000 vacancies currently exist in the police department. He questioned why recruitment notifications had still not been issued despite repeated assurances.

The BRS leader further claimed that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and several ministers had repeatedly promised to fill thousands of vacant police posts. However, he alleged that those assurances have remained limited to public statements without meaningful administrative action.

According to KTR, the delay in recruitment has raised concerns among job seekers who had expected faster action after the Congress came to power.

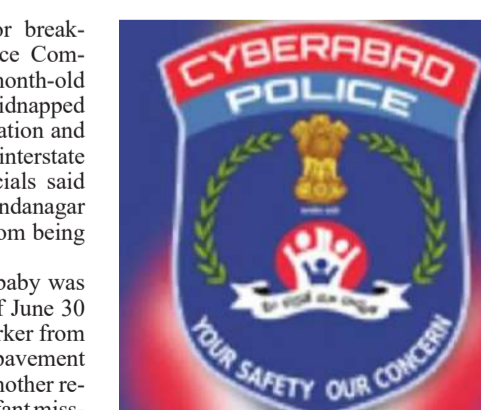
## Cyberabad Police rescue kidnapped one-month-old baby, bust interstate child trafficking racket

**Hyderabad:** In a major breakthrough, the Cyberabad Police Commissionerate rescued a one-month-old baby girl who was allegedly kidnapped near Lingampally Railway Station and arrested five members of an interstate child trafficking racket. Officials said the swift operation by the Chandanagar Police prevented the infant from being trafficked out of the state.

According to police, the baby was abducted in the early hours of June 30 while her mother, a circus worker from Karnataka, was sleeping on a pavement near the railway station. The mother reportedly woke up to find her infant missing and immediately alerted authorities, prompting an urgent search operation.

Based on the complaint lodged by the mother, police registered a kidnapping case and launched a detailed investigation. Given the sensitive nature of the case and the possibility of trafficking, senior officers moved quickly to mobilize resources and coordinate a multi-agency search effort.

Three special investigation teams were formed to track down the accused and locate the missing infant. The teams focused on tracing movement patterns



and identifying suspects who may have been involved in the abduction. Investigators examined extensive CCTV footage collected from multiple locations across Hyderabad, Cyberabad and Malkajgiri. Hours of surveillance footage were analyzed to reconstruct the sequence of events and follow the suspects' movements after the kidnapping. Police said the sustained technical and field investigation helped identify the accused within just three days. The rapid progress in the case enabled officers to prevent the child from being moved

far from the region. A total of five accused were arrested in connection with the case. Those taken into custody included two individuals allegedly involved in the kidnapping, two mediators who facilitated the illegal transaction, and the intended buyer linked to the trafficking network. According to investigators, the intended purchaser was a woman from Kolkata. Police said the accused had planned to transport the infant to West Bengal after completing the illegal sale. Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused had conspired specifically to kidnap a newborn child for sale. Officials believe the child trafficking racket targeted vulnerable families and exploited situations where infants were left temporarily unprotected. Police said the traffickers intended to sell the baby to a childless woman in West Bengal in exchange for money. The motive behind the kidnapping was allegedly purely financial, with the accused seeking profit through illegal adoption-like arrangements. Investigators further revealed that the prime accused had allegedly received Rs 1.5 lakh through an online transfer as part of the deal. Digital transaction records re-

# Nagraj Manjule unveils stirring teaser for 'Khashaba'

**Mumbai** : Acclaimed filmmaker Nagraj Manjule has unveiled the first teaser of his much-awaited Marathi sports drama Khashaba, bringing to the big screen the extraordinary story of Khashaba Dadasaheb Jadhav, the first athlete to win an individual Olympic medal for independent India. The film aims to celebrate the legacy of one of India's pioneering sporting heroes through a powerful cinematic narrative.

Based on the inspiring life of Khashaba Jadhav, the film traces his journey from humble beginnings to becoming a national icon. Known for his grit, discipline and relentless dedication to wrestling, Jadhav etched his name in history by becoming independent India's first individual Olympic medal winner, an achievement that remains a landmark in Indian sports history.

The film is scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on January 1, 2027, setting the stage for a major start to the new year for Marathi cinema. The announcement has already generated strong anticipation among film enthusiasts and sports lovers alike.

Khashaba will showcase Jadhav's inspiring struggle, perseverance and determina-



tion as he pursued excellence in wrestling despite numerous obstacles. His journey to winning a bronze medal at the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki is expected to form the emotional and dramatic core of the story.

The teaser, which was initially released exclusively in theatres, received an overwhelming response from audiences. Following the strong reception, the makers have now made it available on digital platforms, allowing a wider audience to witness the first glimpse of the ambitious project.

The teaser offers a visually striking look at traditional Indian wrestling arenas, capturing the raw intensity and

discipline of the sport. It also hints at the film's large-scale production values, emotional depth and powerful storytelling.

Manjule, widely regarded as one of Marathi cinema's most influential contemporary filmmakers, returns with another ambitious venture after delivering critically acclaimed films such as Fandry and Sairat. His work is known for blending social realism with emotionally compelling narratives, raising expectations for Khashaba.

The film's music has been composed by celebrated duo Ajay-Atul, whose powerful soundtracks have played a major role in the success of several major Marathi

and Hindi films. Their involvement is expected to add emotional and dramatic weight to the story.

In an interesting casting decision, the makers conducted thousands of auditions before selecting a new actor to portray Khashaba Jadhav. The lead actor's identity has been kept under wraps for now, and the official announcement is expected soon.

The film also features a strong supporting cast including Jitendra Joshi, Mahesh Manjrekar, Girish Kulkarni, Vaibhav Mangle, Chhaya Kadam and Gargi Kulkarni in pivotal roles, adding further depth to the ensemble.

Produced under the banner of Jio Studios and Aapat Productions, the film is backed by producers Jyoti Deshpande and Gargi Kulkarni. Their collaboration signals significant production support for the ambitious sports drama.

With a blend of historical significance, emotional storytelling and grand visuals, Khashaba is positioned as more than just a biographical sports film. It seeks to reintroduce a forgotten national hero to younger generations and honour the sacrifices behind India's early Olympic success.

The film also arrives at a time when sports biopics continue to resonate strongly with audiences, particularly stories centered on perseverance and national pride. By focusing on Khashaba Jadhav's life, the film highlights an important chapter in India's sporting history that deserves wider recognition.

As anticipation builds, Khashaba promises to be a tribute to courage, resilience and sporting excellence. Through Nagraj Manjule's direction, the film is expected to celebrate the enduring legacy of a wrestler whose historic Olympic achievement inspired generations of Indian athletes.

## Rukmini Vasanth's powerful style in teaser of 'Toxic' trending on social media

**Mumbai**: Rukmini Vasanth has emerged as one of the biggest talking points from the latest promotional glimpse of Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups, with her striking portrayal of Melissa leaving a strong impression on audiences and triggering widespread discussion across social media platforms. Her brief but impactful appearance in the teaser has significantly raised anticipation around her character.

Vasanth, who previously drew attention for her performance in Kantara: Chapter 1, appears in a dramatically different avatar in this upcoming action drama. The contrast between her earlier screen presence and her look in Toxic has become a major point of interest among fans and industry observers.

In the teaser, her character Melissa is presented as enigmatic, commanding and potentially dangerous. The makers have revealed very little about her backstory, but the glimpses suggest she will play a powerful role within the film's narrative and may be central to its darker themes.

One particular moment from the preview has captured widespread attention—Melissa standing with a gun in hand, wearing a composed yet intimidating expression. The calm intensity in her demeanor has sparked conversations online, with many viewers praising the subtle menace she brings to the



screen. Social media reactions following the teaser's release have been overwhelmingly positive. Fans have praised the 29-year-old actress for her transformation, describing her look as bold, stylish and captivating. Many viewers believe this role could mark a major milestone in her career.

Several users online have also speculated that Melissa could emerge as one of the most stylish and memorable characters in the film. Her styling, screen presence and commanding body language in the teaser have fueled theories about her significance in the storyline.

The buzz around her role has added to the growing excitement surrounding Toxic, which is already being positioned as one of the most ambitious upcoming Indian films. The project has generated strong interest due to its scale, visual style and unconventional world-building.

The film is directed by

Geetu Mohandas, known for her distinctive storytelling and visually rich cinematic style. Her involvement has heightened expectations that Toxic will offer a layered narrative beyond conventional action cinema.

Leading the film is Yash, whose pan-India popularity surged after the massive success of K.G.F.: Chapter 2. His presence has made Toxic one of the most anticipated releases in Indian cinema.

The film is already creating buzz for its expansive universe, stylized action sequences and intriguing character dynamics. Early promotional material suggests a dark, gritty and visually immersive world unlike typical mainstream action dramas.

Rukmini's inclusion in such a high-profile project is being seen as a significant step in her career. Industry watchers believe the film could further establish her as a major talent capable of handling layered and unconventional roles.

## Rajkumar Hirani to carry forward musical tradition with 'Pritam and Pedro'

**Mumbai** : Music has long been an integral part of Rajkumar Hirani's storytelling, and the acclaimed filmmaker is set to carry that creative signature forward with his upcoming series "Pritam and Pedro".

According to the producers, even before the release of the series, its songs are getting a good response from the audience. Especially the song 'Kabhi Kisi Se Mafi Maang Lo', sung by Shreya Ghoshal, is in the news. Mona Singh is playing the role of a singer in the series, due to which music becomes an integral part of the story and her character.

Music in Hirani's films has always been an effective tool in advancing the story. Songs like "All Is Well" and "Give Me Some Sunshine" from "3 Idiots" remain popular with audiences even today. Songs like "Love Is a Waste of Time" and "Bhagwan Hai Kahan Re Tu" from "PK" reinforced the emo-



tional depth of the story.

The producers say that "Pritam and Pedro" will also strive to create a unique identity in the hearts of audiences

through its blend of music and storytelling.

The series will exclusively stream on JioHotstar starting July 3.

## Shreya Ghoshal reflects on joining 'Kalyani remix': "The sincerity of its emotion struck me"

**Mumbai** : Shreya Ghoshal has shared her excitement about being part of the newly released 'Kalyani Remix', revealing that it was the song's heartfelt emotions and captivating melody that instantly drew her to the project. The celebrated playback singer has lent her voice to the reimagined version of the hit track, which was originally created by ARJN, KDS, RONN, and FIFTY4 and went on to become a massive success among listeners. Speaking exclusively to IANS, Shreya reflected on the overwhelming popularity of the original song and explained why she chose to be part of its latest rendition. She said, "It's always exciting to discover a song that has organically found such a deep connection with listeners. What struck me about 'Kalyani' was the sincerity of its emotion and the beauty of its

melody." The singer further emphasized that the objective behind the remix was not to alter the identity of the original composition but to offer audiences a fresh musical experience. "The song already had a strong identity and a devoted audience, so my intention was not to change that, but to contribute a new perspective to its story. I loved the idea of bringing a Hindi voice into a song that had already transcended language barriers, and I hope listeners enjoy this new chapter as much as we enjoyed creating it." Following the remarkable success of the original track, the makers returned with a refreshed version featuring Shreya's vocals. The collaboration marks a significant milestone for the song, which has gained popularity well beyond its roots. Sharing his thoughts, ARJN expressed

gratitude for the love the song has received. "The response to 'Kalyani' has been beyond anything we imagined. It started as a song that was deeply personal to us and our culture, but watching it travel across regions and resonate with North Indian audiences has been incredible. When the opportunity to collaborate with Shreya Ghoshal came along, it felt like the perfect way to bring the song to a wider audience while staying true to its essence. Her voice brings a completely new emotion to the record while preserving everything people loved about the original." Echoing similar sentiments, KDS said, "'Kalyani' has always been a song about emotion first and language second. That's why it resonated the way it did. Bringing Shreya Ghoshal onto the remix felt like a natural next step be-

cause she has a unique ability to make songs feel timeless and universally relatable." Meanwhile, FIFTY4 reflected on the song's unexpected journey beyond Kerala. "When we first made 'Kalyani', we were simply creating something that felt honest to us. The fact that it travelled so far and connected with

people beyond Kerala was a reminder that genuine emotion always finds its audience." He further added,

"Having Shreya Ghoshal on that journey to another level."



## Disha Patani reveals comedy is the toughest challenge; says, "I've also learned a lot just by watching actors on set"

**Mumbai** : Disha Patani is enjoying the success of Welcome To The Jungle, but the actor says the film has given her a fresh perspective on comedy, making her realize that it is one of the most demanding genres for an actor. While audiences often perceive comedy as effortless entertainment, Disha believes it requires immense skill and precision to make people laugh naturally. In a conversation with Hindustan Times, she said, "Making people laugh is much harder than it looks. The challenge is to make it look effortless and natural." She credits her co-stars, including Akshay Kumar, Johnny Lever and Arshad Warsi, for helping her better understand the nuances of comic timing. "I've also learned a lot just by watching actors on set—Akshay (Kumar) sir, Johnny (Lever) sir and Arshad (Warsi). Observing them really helped me understand comedy as a genre better," she shared. The actor also describes being part of such a large ensemble cast as a memorable experience. "It's not every day that you get to be part of a film with such a huge ensemble cast and so many talented people coming together. I love comedy, and the scale of this film was something that really excited me," Disha says. She adds that she has never viewed acting as a competition, explaining, "As an actor, I don't think you focus on competing or proving

yourself. You focus on your character, do your best, and trust that if you're sincere, your work will connect with the audience." Having made her Bollywood debut with M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story in 2016, Disha has steadily built a diverse filmography with projects like Malang, Ek Villain Returns, Yodha and Kalki 2898 AD. While she has earned recognition for glamorous roles and action entertainers, she says her off-screen personality is quite different.

Despite her strong social media presence, Disha reveals that she is naturally introverted. "It hasn't always been easy, and there have been a lot of challenges along the way, but every experience has taught me something valuable. Being an introvert, it's not always easy to put yourself out there, but I think that's part of the process. Looking back, I think the journey has made me stronger, more resilient and more appreciative of every opportunity," she said.

The actress also admits that she feels most connected to subtle, emotionally grounded characters. "The more quiet, simple and emotionally grounded characters are probably closest to who I am in real life. I'm actually quite reserved and prefer letting my work speak for itself," she explained.

In Welcome To The Jungle, Disha also featured in the recreated version of the icon-

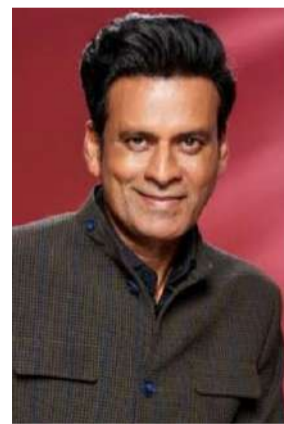
ic song 'Uncha Lamba Kad', originally picturised on Akshay Kumar and Katrina Kaif in Welcome (2007). Acknowledging that comparisons with Katrina were expected, she says, "Comparisons are inevitable, but our intention was to celebrate a much-loved iconic song and present it in a fresh avatar." On the work front, Disha will next star in Awarapan 2 alongside Emraan Hashmi and Shabana Azmi. Calling it an honour to join the beloved franchise, she said, "The music of Awarapan (2007) has stayed with audiences, and to be part of a

film that carries so much emotion and nostalgia is a privilege. I've always admired Shabana ma'am. Her dedication and command over her craft are inspiring. Even Emraan has such a strong understanding of cinema." As for her future aspirations, Disha is eager to expand her acting repertoire by taking on darker and more layered characters. "I'd love to do a psychological thriller or an intense character-driven drama, or even action dramas," she concluded.



## Abhay Verma has the potential to become a superstar like Hrithik Roshan: Manoj Bajpayee

**Mumbai** : Bollywood actor Manoj Bajpayee believes Abhay Verma has all the makings of a future superstar, saying the young actor evokes the same confidence he felt about Hrithik Roshan before the latter rose to stardom. Bajpayee said, "What I felt first seeing Hrithik years ago, I felt the same conviction for Abhay when we met for the web series The Family Man. God has given me the ability to recognise talent in people; these instincts played very strongly for both Hrithik and Kartik Aryan." Bajpayee said that when



Roshan was filming "Fiza", he saw his performance and



instantly believed he would become a major superstar.

According to him, he felt the same way when he met Verma today.

The 57-year-old actor believes that the young actor has the talent, dedication and impressive screen presence, which will help him have a long and successful innings in the film industry.

Verma is next set to portray Kargil War hero R.S. Dhaliwal in "Operation Safed Sagar". Apart from this, he will play a pivotal role in Shah Rukh Khan's "King" and is also working on two upcoming films, "JC" and "Laikay Laikaa".

## Mahesh Babu unleashes the trailer of 'Rao Bahadur'

**Mumbai**: The makers of the upcoming Telugu psychological thriller Rao Bahadur have unveiled the film's official trailer, offering audiences a gripping first look at its haunting and suspense-driven narrative. The trailer launch gained additional attention as superstar Mahesh Babu personally introduced the film, adding significant buzz to the project ahead of its release.

Presented by Mahesh Babu and Namrata Shirodkar's GMB Entertainment, Rao Bahadur is positioned as an ambitious attempt to bring a fresh psychological thriller experience to Telugu cinema. The backing of the production house has already heightened anticipation among moviegoers and industry observers.

The film is directed by Venkatesh Maha and features Satyadev Kancharana in the lead role. Known for choosing content-driven projects and intense performances, Satyadev's involvement has generated strong curiosity about the psychological depth of the character he portrays.

Jointly produced by AS Movies and Srichakras Entertainments, the film appears to be mounted on a scale that balances strong storytelling with atmospheric visuals. The makers seem focused on creating an immersive thriller rather than relying solely on conventional suspense tropes.

The trailer opens with a voiceover by Mahesh Babu, immediately setting a mysterious and unsettling tone. His nar-

ration serves as an entry point into the film's dark and layered universe, hinting that the story revolves around psychological conflict and emotional tension.

As the trailer progresses, viewers are introduced to a psychological mystery where a seemingly small suspicion begins to affect multiple lives. This central idea suggests that the narrative will explore how doubt, fear and perception can spiral into larger consequences.

The preview carefully builds suspense without revealing too much of the plot.

Instead of providing direct answers, it raises several questions, encouraging viewers to piece together the mystery themselves and deepening intrigue around the storyline.

## Ind vs Eng 2nd T20I: Samson under scanner as Sooryavanshi pushes for debut on today

**New Delhi:** An off-colour Sanju Samson will be under pressure to deliver when India face England in the second T20I at Old Trafford in Manchester tomorrow, with teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi waiting in the wings.

The opening match of the five-game series ended without a result after rain washed out England's chase. India had posted a competitive 189/7, thanks to half-centuries from Abhishek Sharma and captain Shreyas Iyer.

Despite the strong batting display, Samson's poor form remains a major talking point. The wicketkeeper-batter managed just one run off seven balls in the first game and has struggled to make an impact in recent matches.

In another situation, Samson's match-winning performances during India's successful T20 World Cup campaign earlier this year would have earned him a longer run in the side. But the emergence of 15-year-old Sooryavanshi has changed the equation.

Abhishek has strengthened his place at the top of the order with scores of 49 and 59 in two of his last three innings, leaving Samson as the batter under the most pressure.

The biggest concern for Samson has been his inability to handle seam-



friendly conditions. Ireland's Jai Moondra exposed those weaknesses during the previous series, and similar issues were visible again in the opening game against England. The Kerala wicketkeeper-batter's international career has often been marred by inconsistency and will be desperate to make amends before it gets too late.

For now, the Indian team man-

agement has made it clear that they do not want to rush Sooryavanshi into the playing XI, giving Samson a much-needed backing. However, if Samson's struggles continue for another game or two, it may become difficult to keep the teenager out.

Samson is not the only batter searching for answers. Vice-captain Tilak Varma has also struggled to accelerate during the middle overs, es-

pecially against spin and slower bowling. In 12 T20Is this year, Tilak has hit only 12 sixes, a modest return for a player expected to finish innings strongly.

India are unlikely to make any changes to their bowling attack. Old Trafford generally offers some assistance to spinners, particularly wrist spinners. Interestingly, the best bowling figures in a T20I at this venue belong to Kuldeep Yadav, although he is not part of the current squad.

England will once again rely on their powerful batting line-up, with captain Harry Brook, Phil Salt and Tom Banton leading the charge, and it will be interesting to see who makes way for express quick Jofra Archer.

Squads:

**India:** Shreyas Iyer (captain), Sanju Samson, Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan, Tilak Varma (vc), Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Ravi Bishnoi, Prasidh Krishna, Harshit Rana, Prince Yadav, Suryansh Shedge, Arshdeep Singh, Washington Sundar, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Varun Chakravarthy.

**England:** Harry Brook (captain), Phil Salt, Jos Buttler (wk), Jacob Bethell, Tom Banton, Sam Curran, Will Jacks, Liam Dawson, Adil Rashid, Luke Wood, Saqib Mahmood, Sony Baker, Jordan Cox, Jofra Archer, James Coles, Rehan Ahmed.

## South Africa coach Mashimbyi vows to learn from semi-final heartbreak

**London:** South Africa coach Mandla Mashimbyi insists his side will learn valuable lessons from crashing out of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup to England in the semi-final stage.

The Proteas were outclassed in a final four match at The Oval on Thursday, with the tournament hosts moving through to Sunday's title decider against Australia with an impressive 40-run triumph over Mashimbyi's charges.

There were glimpses of South Africa's best as they made early inroads with three quick wickets, but a century partnership from Nat Sciver-Brunt and Heather Knight swung the momentum back into the hosts' favour much to the chagrin of Mashimbyi, according to ICC.

"You just lose and you learn," Mashimbyi said after the semi-final defeat to England.

"And we've learned a lot in this World Cup, and we're going to make sure that we go back to the drawing board.

And make sure that we put things in place that's go-

ing to make us even more dangerous, even better as a team.

"We know where our gaps are, and that's the only thing we can do really. We can't change the results.



"It's about the work that we put in going forward and make sure that when we get an opportunity to play World Cup again or ICC Trophy tournament, we are sitting at the same table as other teams."

There were plenty of positives for South Africa throughout their T20 World Cup campaign, with hard-hitting right-hander Tazmin Brits scoring 225 runs and pace duo Marizanne Kapp and Shabnim Ismail each collecting eight wickets across the six matches to showcase their talents.

Ismail had reversed her retirement decision to play for the Proteas at the T20 World Cup and Mashimbyi

is expecting the talented 37-year-old to continue to make herself available at international level.

"I think she's still in for the long haul," Mashimbyi said.

"She's going to have to make a decision. But as we stand, she's still a Proteas player."

Mashimbyi dismissed the notion that his side were too reliant on the new-ball pairing of Kapp and Ismail, but admitted they may have missed the chance to provide support for front-line spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba.

"I think we had too much of the same type of bowlers and teams could work out what we're trying to do," he said.

"Shabnim and Kapp can put any team under pressure with a new ball, and that's what we've been doing.

"And now obviously the biggest thing is to go back and go back to the drawing board and make sure that we put processes in place to make sure that we've got players that are coming through that are going to do, if not similar, or better."

## India's Canada Open campaign ends in second round

**Ontario (Canada):** India's campaign at the Canada Open came to an end in the second round, with both Indian contenders in women's singles bowing out after tough matches. The exits of Aakarshi Kashyap and Tanya Hemanth marked the end of India's challenge at the tournament. The matches were played at the Markham Pan Am Centre in Ontario, where Indian shuttlers faced stiff competition from higher-ranked opponents. Despite flashes of brilliance, neither player could progress to the quarterfinal stage of the BWF Super 300 event. Aakarshi Kashyap, ranked world No. 71, produced a spirited performance against Beiwenn Zhang of the United States, who is ranked world No. 33 and entered the tournament as the fourth seed. Aakarshi pushed her experienced opponent to three games before going down 20-22, 21-17, 21-17 in a hard-fought contest.

The 24-year-old Indian shuttler had entered the second round with confidence after defeating Anna Tatránova of France in the opening round. Her first-round victory had raised hopes of a deep



run in the tournament. Aakarshi started strongly in the opening game and quickly established control, racing to a 10-6 lead. Her aggressive shot-making and court coverage put Zhang under pressure during the early exchanges. However, Zhang gradually found her rhythm and fought back to level the score at 10-10. From there, the first game turned into a gripping battle, with momentum swinging repeatedly between the two players. The closing phase of the first game was especially intense, as both players traded points in a neck-and-neck contest. Aakarshi showed resilience by saving a game point and briefly regaining the advantage, but Zhang held her nerve to edge the game 22-20. In the

second game, Zhang looked dominant and surged to a commanding 17-8 lead. At that stage, the match appeared to be slipping away from the Indian shuttler. Aakarshi, however, mounted an impressive comeback, steadily reducing the deficit with determined rallies and sharper placement. Her fightback energized the contest, but the early gap proved too large to overcome as Zhang forced the decider. The deciding game saw both players locked in another tight battle. Neither was able to build a decisive lead, and the contest remained evenly poised deep into the final stretch. With the score tied at 17-17, Zhang elevated her level at the crucial moment. The American won four consecutive points to close out the match in one hour and seven minutes, sealing her third straight win over Aakarshi in their head-to-head record. Meanwhile, world No. 56 Tanya Hemanth endured a much tougher outing against Riko Gunji of Japan, ranked world No. 21 and seeded third. Tanya lost 21-11, 21-11 in just 31 minutes, unable to match the Japanese player's pace and consistency.

## Zverev, Swiatek, Rybakina cruise into Wimbledon third round

**London:** Top contenders continued to make their mark at Wimbledon as Alexander Zverev, Iga Swiatek and Elena Rybakina all advanced comfortably to the third round.

Men's second seed Alexander Zverev produced an assured performance to defeat France's Valentin Royer 6-1, 6-3, 7-6 (3) on Court One on Thursday. The German struck 14 aces and converted five break points to secure his 50th tour-level victory on grass and extend his winning streak at Grand Slam events to nine matches.

"For two and a half sets I played an almost perfect match," Zverev said after allowing Royer back into the contest late in the third set. "I'm happy to get through in straight sets."

Zverev, who has never advanced beyond the fourth



round at Wimbledon despite reaching Grand Slam finals on all other surfaces, will next face American Marcos Giron.

Elsewhere in the men's draw, fifth seed Alex de Minaur delivered a dominant 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 victory over veteran Frenchman Adrian Mannarino, while sixth seed Taylor Fritz continued his impressive grass-court form with a 6-2, 6-2, 7-5 win against compatriot Patrick Kypson.

Karolina Pliskova 6-1, 6-3 in just 70 minutes.

"The first round was really emotional," Swiatek said. "Today I felt like it was another day in the office. I stayed focused and I'm very happy with my performance."

Former champion Elena Rybakina responded with an equally commanding display, dispatching American Caty McNally 6-1, 6-2 to set up a third-round meeting with Belgium's Elise Mertens.

The Kazakh, who lifted the Wimbledon title in 2022, remains among the leading contenders for the championship.

Sixth seed Amanda Anisimova survived a major test, defeating fellow American Sofia Kenin 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (10-3) after a deciding match tiebreak.

## Spain boss Luis de la Fuente demands more after Austria win

**Los Angeles:** Head coach Luis de la Fuente described Spain's 3-0 win over Austria on Thursday as nearly flawless but warned tougher challenges await as La Roja seeks a second World Cup title.

Mikel Oyarzabal scored either side of Pedro Porro's first international goal as Spain cruised into the round of 16 at Los Angeles Stadium.

"The big teams turn up when their presence is needed," De la Fuente said. "I think today we've seen a great game."

"I'm happy because in all aspects we've been almost perfect, but we have to keep improving.

Every match now is going to be very difficult."

Spain will meet the win-

ner of the match between Portugal and Croatia for a place in the quarterfinals. Despite praising his team's performance against Austria, De la Fuente said there was still scope for improvement.

"In the last 16, the opponents are now even more demanding. You can always improve and on top of that, it's what this team demands. These players always want more and more.

[Oyarzabal] showed the footballing potential he has - and the rest of his team-mates exactly the same.

They played an extraordinary match.

Oyarzabal became the first Spain player since Emilio Butragueno in 1986 to score more than one goal

for La Roja in a World Cup knockout match.

The Real Sociedad forward has now scored four goals in this tournament, having also netted a brace in a 4-0 win over Saudi Arabia in the group stage, according to Xinhua.

"He's an extraordinary footballer but a normal person. That's his strength," De la Fuente said.

The game was also notable for goalkeeper Unai Simon's new record of 519 consecutive World

Cup minutes without conceding a goal, eclipsing Walter Zenga's previous record of 517 set in 1990.

The clean sheet was Simon's fifth in successive World Cup matches dating back to the 2022 tournament in Qatar.

## Sciver-Brunt turns attention to Lord's after Oval masterclass

**London:** England captain Nat Sciver-Brunt remains on track to lift the ICC Women's T20 World Cup trophy at Lord's after she successfully helped her side move through to the title decider with an emphatic victory over South Africa on Thursday.

Sciver-Brunt returned from injury in style with an innings of 75 that saw her named the Aramco Player of the Match, as England stayed unbeaten at their home T20 World Cup and booked a place in the final against Australia with an impressive showing against the Proteas.

England posted a good total of 169/5 on the back of Sciver-Brunt's 75 from 47 balls and an eye-catching all-round display with the ball meant South Africa's run

chase never really threatened the victory target.

It means England get the chance to match their exploits from the 2009 Women's T20 World Cup and break a 17-year drought at the tournament when they take on six-time champions Australia in Sunday's final and Sciver-Brunt is already looking forward to the occasion.

"I guess when you see a home World Cup in the diary, you always sort of imagine yourself there at the final and, with a chance to lift the trophy," Sciver-Brunt said after the 40-run win.

"So yeah, I guess that drive has always been there." It's obviously a great common goal to have as a team, to be able to try and reach a final of a home edi-

tion of a World Cup."

Sciver-Brunt received ample batting support from former skipper Heather Knight, with the duo putting on a partnership of 133 in good time after the hosts lost three early wickets against the Proteas' strong pace bowling lineup, according to ICC.

England's bowlers then made regular breakthroughs in reply, with Sciver-Brunt turning her attention to the final just moments after the victory over South Africa was confirmed. "I guess it's what we've been preparing for, and not only during this competition but in the months before that, throughout the sort of winter camps that we've had and everything to be able to perform on the bigger stage," she said.

## Endrick embraces Brazil supporting role in World Cup



**New Jersey:** Brazil forward Endrick has said that he is content with a supporting role as the Selecao prepares to face Norway in the World Cup round of 16.

The 19-year-old has been limited to substitute appearances so far at this tournament, but said he was prepared to wait for manager Carlo Ancelotti to give him an opportunity.

"He isn't going to do what's best for me, he's going to do what's best for the team," the Real Madrid forward told a news conference ahead of Sunday's match at New York New Jersey Stadium.

"He's fearless, he does what he believes is right, and things work out. Everything Carlo does seems to work out. Whenever the manager tells me to do something, I won't look back. I'll simply do whatever he asks of me."

Endrick was an unused substitute in Brazil's opening draw against Morocco but has made substitute appearances in every match since.

The former Palmeiras attacker is yet to score at the tournament but drew praise for his second-half display against Japan in the round of 32, when he created space for teammates from a central role, according to Xinhua.

"I'm very grateful to be here. For me, just being part

of this group and playing at a World Cup is already a victory," he said.

"I think all 26 players are eager to play and everyone is fully prepared. If any of the 26 weren't ready, they wouldn't be here."

He described the chance to reunite with Ancelotti in the national team as "wonderful" after spending his first season at Real Madrid under the Italian.

"He was my first manager when I arrived in Europe," Endrick said. "For me, having him as my first coach was one of the best experiences I could have had. It was incredible because I learned

so much from him. It's been no different with the national team. I don't think Brazil could have a better fit than Ancelotti as head coach. We hope to keep improving, because that's what's most important for us during this cycle."

He added: "In my first season with the coach at Real Madrid, I played a lot. It wasn't many minutes, but I was coming on in almost every game. He always told me to stay calm because my moment would come." In the Copa del Rey, he gave me more opportunities and started me in almost every match. I managed to score in almost all of those games and I always stayed calm.

## Cabo Verde dares to dream against Argentina in World Cup

**New York:** Cabo Verde has already achieved more than almost anyone expected at this World Cup, reaching the round of 32 unbeaten to set up a meeting with Lionel Messi and defending champion Argentina in Miami.

The gap between the two teams could hardly be wider. Three-time champion Argentina is the world's second-ranked side, led by an eight-time Ballón d'Or winner chasing his 20th World Cup goal.

Cabo Verde is making its World Cup debut and, with a population of just over 500,000 people and a land area of about 4,000 square kilometers, is the smallest nation ever to reach the tournament's knockout stage. Ranked

64th in the world by FIFA, Cabo Verde's progress has been built on discipline, a clear sense of identity and self-belief.

That confidence extends well beyond the dressing room. President Jose Maria Neves has predicted a 1-0 victory, while head coach Bubista insists "nothing is impossible".

Midfielder Deroy Duarte this week described facing Argentina as "a dream", but quickly added: "Let's believe."

If Cabo Verde is to prolong that dream, much will depend on goalkeeper Vozinha. The 40-year-old, whose real name is Josimar Dias, was one of the stars of the goalless draw with Spain and has become the symbol of a team that has

frustrated every opponent it has faced in North America.

Now he is focused on trying to keep Messi, who

such as Roberto "Pico" Lopes, whose mother, Judy, believes her son will revel in the chance to face one of



has scored six goals in this World Cup and 19 overall, off the scoresheet. That task will also fall to defenders

the greatest player the game has seen, according to Xinhua.

"I don't think it'll faze

BSE Sensex		Nifty 50		Nifty 500		Nifty Next 50		Nifty 100		Nifty Bank		Nifty Midcap 100	
Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change
77,763.91	0.34%	24,270.85	0.39%	23,301.15	0.16%	72,268.95	-0.21%	25,301.90	0.28%	57,938.50	-0.16%	62,190.30	-0.19%
Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open
77,502.12	78,152.34	24,175.70	24,375.65	23,264.80	23,416.65	72,418.55	72,701.90	25,230.20	25,418.80	58,031.65	58,343.25	62,307.90	62,556.25
High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
78,157.52	77,710.01	24,378.15	24,252.35	23,416.65	23,284.30	72,701.90	72,169.90	25,418.80	25,280.60	58,343.25	57,799.05	62,556.55	62,136.50

**Top Gainers**

Company	Current	% Gain
HCL Tech	1,139.00	5.65
Max Healthcare	1,153.40	2.31
Apollo Hospital	8,893.50	2.27
Bajaj Finserv	1,895.60	2.15
Dr Reddys Labs	1,374.10	2.11

**Top Losers**

Company	Current	% Loss
Axis Bank	1,342.10	-1.50
M&M	3,136.90	-1.21
SBI	1,040.00	-1.10
Larsen	4,026.60	-0.81
Tech Mahindra	1,410.10	-0.79

**Commodities**

Commodity	Price	Change (%)
Gold Aug 05	147,705.00	1,947.00 1.34
Silver Sep 04	237,404.00	4,100.00 1.76
Crudeoil Jul 20	6,560.00	20.00 0.31
Naturalgas Jul 28	309.70	3.70 1.21

**India's services sector growth slows to 17-month low as domestic demand weakens**

**New Delhi:** India's services sector expanded at a slower pace in June as softer domestic demand, weaker client interest and a pause in hiring weighed on business activity, according to the HSBC India Services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) survey released on Friday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index fell to 57.4 in June from 59.8 in May. While the reading remained well above the 50-mark that separates expansion from contraction, it marked the weakest pace of growth in the sector in 17 months.

The moderation was largely driven by the slowest rise in new business inflows in more than two-and-a-half years. Survey respondents said competitive pricing, stronger e-commerce demand, higher customer bookings and improved local tourism supported activity.

However, many firms reported that challenging market conditions and reduced client interest continued to weigh on sales.

Hiring activity was broadly stagnant during the month, with companies indicating that existing workforce levels were sufficient to meet current business requirements. This followed solid employment growth in April and May. Outstanding business volumes also remained broadly stable, suggesting limited pressure on capacity.

Despite weaker domestic demand, export business remained a bright spot. New export orders grew at the fastest pace in three months, supported by stronger demand from clients in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Malaysia, Nepal, Oman, Qatar, Singapore, the UAE and the US.

Inflationary pressures eased further in June. Input cost inflation slowed to a five-month low, although firms continued to report higher costs for electricity, food, fuel and transportation. At the same time, prices charged by services providers increased at the slowest pace since November 2025 and remained below the survey's long-run average.

**Sensex climbs 262 points**

**Mumbai:** Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty ended higher on Friday, extending their winning momentum to the third day running, amid a rally in IT stocks and softer-than-expected US jobs data tempering expectations of near-term monetary tightening by the Federal Reserve.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 261.79 points, or 0.34 per cent, to settle at 77,763.91. During the day, it jumped 655.4 points, or 0.84 per cent, to 78,157.52.

The 50-share NSE Nifty went up 95.15 points, or 0.39 per cent, to end at 24,270.85. From the Sensex pack, HCL Tech surged 5.79 per cent, followed by Tech Mahindra, which climbed 1.81 per cent. Bharti Airtel, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Finserv, UltraTech Cement, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, Tata Consultancy Services, and ICICI Bank were also among the winners.

Axis Bank, State Bank of India, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Larsen & Toubro were among the laggards. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi rebounded nearly 6 per cent. Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also ended in positive territory.



"Domestic markets closed the session higher, despite intermittent volatility and profit-booking, aided by supportive global cues and growing expectations of a more accommodative global environment following softer US labour market data."

"Sentiment was further lifted by positive outcomes from the India-Japan Summit and continued recovery in the IT sector," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

On the domestic front, softening crude oil prices remain a key macro tailwind, supporting the inflation outlook, external balances, and overall economic stability, he added.

Markets in Europe were quoted on a mixed note. US markets ended on a mixed note, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average surging 1.14 per cent, while the Nasdaq Composite declined 0.80 per cent.

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US markets ended on a mixed note, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average surging 1.14 per cent, while the Nasdaq Composite declined 0.80 per cent.

**Industry sees gains in formalisation and efficiency, MSMEs call for simpler compliance**

**New Delhi:** As the Goods and Services Tax (GST) completes nine years, industry leaders say the landmark tax reform has significantly transformed India's business landscape by driving formalisation, improving supply chain efficiency and enhancing transparency. However, they believe the next phase of reforms should focus on easing compliance requirements and addressing working capital challenges faced by micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Vishal Devanath, Co-Founder and CEO of SMERGERS, said GST has helped bring thousands of MSMEs into the formal economy by providing them with GST registration and a digital compliance trail, enabling banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) to better assess their creditworthiness and

improve access to formal financing.

"The purpose of GST is sound, but its practical impact on MSMEs needs improvement. On one hand, it has pushed many small businesses into formalisation by giving them a GSTIN and a digital compliance record, helping banks and NBFCs assess creditworthiness through GST filings. On the other hand, MSMEs continue to face higher compliance pressure and cash-flow strain," Devanath said.

He noted that despite the availability of input tax credit, many small businesses still find their indirect tax burden higher than before GST. He said one of the biggest concerns is that GST liability arises when an invoice is raised or goods are supplied, even if customer payments are delayed, forcing businesses to pay taxes from their own working cap-

ital.

Devanath also highlighted refund delays that block input tax credits for exporters and pointed to compliance risks under the Reverse Charge Mechanism (RCM), particularly for foreign SaaS, cloud and consultancy services. "Overall, GST has improved transparency and credit access, but the government must address cash-flow stress, refund delays and complex RCM compliance to make it truly MSME-friendly," he added.

Offering a different perspective, Sahil Aggarwal, Co-founder of Robotek India, said GST has fundamentally reshaped the consumer electronics industry by eliminating multiple indirect taxes, state-level levies and fragmented warehousing that previously increased logistics costs and created pricing disparities across markets.

**Raghu Vamsi Group plans IPO in 18-24 months; targets indigenous aircraft by 2035**

**Hyderabad:** Aerospace and defence manufacturer Raghu Vamsi Machine Group is planning to launch an initial public offering (IPO) within the next 18-24 months as part of its expansion strategy, while targeting the development and manufacture of its first indigenous aircraft by 2035, the company's Chief Executive Officer S. Siva Arvinth said on Friday.

Talking to UNI, he said the company is setting up a new eight-acre aerospace and defence manufacturing facility near the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad.

The plant will feature robotics and automation, AI-enabled paperless manufacturing, integrated engine assembly and maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) capabilities, along with aerospace special processes, he said.

The upcoming facility will manufacture products for the aerospace, gears, heavy machining, oil and gas, power, deep-tech product



assembly, engine assembly and MRO, and general precision machining sectors, said Arvinth.

The company currently employs more than 1,200 people and plans to expand its workforce to around 1,500 employees by next year to support its growing operations, he said.

Arvinth said the company has multiple aerospace and defence

projects in the pipeline with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), involving precision machining, assemblies with special processes and gear manufacturing. These projects are expected to commence over the next eight to 12 months, depending on customer requirements.

The Hyderabad-based company has also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the

Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) to establish a 100-acre aerospace and defence manufacturing facility in Andhra Pradesh with a planned investment of Rs 500 crore.

The proposed facility will manufacture micro turbojet engines, undertake unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) manufacturing and integration, and house a dedicated UAV testing, evaluation and flight validation range, he said.

He said the project is aimed at strengthening indigenous capabilities in propulsion systems, autonomous defence technologies, tactical unmanned platforms and export-oriented aerospace manufacturing.

The Andhra Pradesh project is expected to generate around 1,000 direct jobs and another 2,000 indirect employment opportunities through ancillary industries, logistics, services and supply chain networks. Commercial operations are expected to commence within the next 18-24 months, the CEO added.

**Suzuki bets bigger on India with Rs 35,000 crore Kharkhoda mega plant, eyes manufacturing dominance**

**New Delhi:** Reaffirming its long-term commitment to India, auto major Suzuki Motor Corporation today said its new vehicle manufacturing facility at Kharkhoda in Haryana represents a major step towards expanding production, boosting exports and strengthening India's position as a global automobile manufacturing hub.

The facility, inaugurated during the India-Japan Joint Economic Forum, begins operations with an annual production capacity of five lakh vehicles and will eventually be expanded to one million units with a total investment of Rs 35,000 crore.

Once fully operational, it will rank among the world's largest automobile manufacturing facilities and is expected to generate more than 21,000 jobs, including those in the supplier ecosystem. Describing the project as a milestone for both Suzuki and India's manufacturing ambitions, Toshihiro Suzuki, Representative Director and President of Suzuki Motor Corporation, said the facility reflects the success of the India-Japan partnership and the government's 'Make in India' initiative. "It is a testament to the success of the India-Japan partnership and the Make in India initiative. From the current capacity of half a million units, the plant will be further scaled up to one million units, making it one of the largest car manu-

facturing plants in the world," Suzuki said.

He said the favourable policy environment has encouraged Suzuki to accelerate investments, employment generation, exports and technology development in India, contributing to the country's vision of becoming a developed nation.

Highlighting India's growing strategic importance within the Suzuki Group, Suzuki said the company's first battery electric vehicle, the e VITARA, is being manufactured exclusively at Maruti Suzuki's Gujarat facility for exports to nearly 100 countries. "Thanks to exports of Made-in-India cars, Suzuki has become the largest car importer in Japan, one of the most demanding automobile markets. This demonstrates the growing global trust in India's quality, capability and manufacturing excellence," he said. The Kharkhoda plant has been developed on Suzuki's Smart Factory concept, integrating advanced digital manufacturing technologies and Industry 5.0 practices, including human-aware collaborative robots (CO-BOTS), to improve productivity, quality and workplace safety. Sustainability is another key feature of the facility. Maruti Suzuki said the plant meets its entire electricity requirement through renewable energy, combining solar generation with green power procurement.

**QBE Insurance Group Limited becomes sole owner and shareholder of Raheja QBE General Insurance Company Limited**

**Mumbai:** QBE Insurance Group Limited, an international general insurer and reinsurer, has acquired 100% ownership of Raheja QBE General Insurance Company Limited (Raheja QBE), following approval from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

The acquisition follows 18 years of joint ownership with Prism Johnson Limited and marks a significant milestone in QBE's strategic expansion in the Asian region. Raheja QBE is also being renamed and will be known as QBE as part of this acquisition. This transaction underscores QBE's view of India as an important growth market. "India is one of the world's most dynamic markets - and we are well



positioned to deploy QBE's capabilities and unlock the next phase of growth in a country we believe has enormous long-term potential," said Rob Kosova, CEO, QBE Asia.

Sole ownership will enable QBE to explore new opportunities for product and

operational innovation, with the goal of improving and creating customer-centric solutions across the Indian insurance landscape. Both QBE Asia and Raheja QBE teams will continue to drive the local business forward.

"While ownership is changing, our focus remains exactly the same: supporting our customers, partners and people," said Kosova. "Our priority is to build on the strong foundations already in place, preserve continuity for customers and create new opportunities for growth, innovation and career development. We are excited to welcome the India team fully into the QBE family and shape the future of this business together."

**Tata Motors, Welspun Renewable Energy inks PPA for 86 MW wind-solar hybrid project**

**Chennai:** CV makers Tata Motors on Friday signed a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Welspun Renewable Energy Private Limited (WREPL), a frontrunner in India's clean energy transition, to co-develop an 86 MW wind-solar hybrid renewable energy project supplying power to Tata Motors' manufacturing plants in Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Karnataka.

Estimated to generate 200 million units of clean

electricity annually, the project is expected to offset over 1.4 lakh tons of CO2 emissions each year. Enabled through co-investment and a long term PPA, this integrated wind-solar hybrid solution will provide a reliable supply of green energy exclusively to the four manufacturing facilities supporting the production of commercial vehicles. This initiative will significantly catalyse Tata Motors' clean energy transition and support its RE100 target by 2030, accelerating

meaningful progress toward climate-resilient operations. It also marks a major milestone in Tata Motors' sustainability roadmap, aligning with the company's broader ambition to achieve net-zero emissions through responsible manufacturing.

Signing the PPA, Vishal Badshah, Vice President - Operations, Tata Motors said, "this project reflects our continued focus on building greener and more energy-efficient manufacturing operations.

**India real estate investments rise 70 pc to \$2.9 Billion in April-June period**

**New Delhi:** Institutional investments in India's real estate sector witnessed a sharp surge in the April-June quarter of 2026, underlining sustained investor confidence despite global geopolitical and trade-related uncertainties. According to a report by Colliers India, institutional inflows into the sector rose 70 per cent year-on-year to \$2.9 billion during the quarter, reflecting strong momentum in capital deployment across asset classes.

The report highlighted that total institutional investments in Indian real estate reached \$4.5 billion during the first half of 2026, marking a 50 per cent increase compared to the corresponding period last year. This also represents the highest first-half investment level recorded in the past six years, signaling the sector's resilience amid global market volatility.

Despite uncertainties stemming from geopolitical tensions in West Asia and broader disruptions in global trade and capital flows, investor sentiment toward India's property market remained strong. Analysts noted that the Indian real estate sector continues to attract capital due to stable macroeconomic fundamentals and long-term growth prospects.

Colliers attributed the sustained investment momentum to rising domestic

participation, strategic deployment of foreign capital and increased investor appetite for mixed-use developments and alternative asset classes. These factors helped offset external headwinds and maintained a healthy investment pipeline.

Long-term investor confidence has also been supported by India's favorable economic outlook. The report noted that the International Monetary Fund recently raised India's FY2027 GDP growth forecast by 10 basis points to 6.5 per cent, reinforcing optimism around the country's economic expansion and its impact on real estate demand.

Domestic investors emerged as the strongest contributors during the first half of 2026, investing \$2.6 billion, an 80 per cent increase over the year-ago period. Their contribution accounted for nearly 57 per cent of total institutional inflows, indicating strong local confidence in the long-term potential of India's real estate market.

The increasing share of domestic capital reflects a maturing investment ecosystem, where local institutional investors are taking a more active role in large-scale real estate transactions. Market experts believe this growing domestic participation provides stability and reduces depen-

dence on external capital flows.

Foreign investments also showed recovery, particularly during the second quarter of 2026, aided by a few large-ticket transactions. Overseas investors deployed \$1.9 billion during the January-June period, marking a 24 per cent year-on-year rise.

Most foreign capital entered through strategic equity investments, stake acquisitions and funding for mixed-use and alternative assets. This suggests global investors are increasingly seeking diversified opportunities beyond conventional real estate categories while maintaining confidence in India's growth story.

The office segment continued to dominate as the largest investment destination, attracting nearly \$1.9 billion during H1 2026. This accounted for over 40 per cent of total institutional inflows, reaffirming the strong demand for commercial office assets in major business hubs.

Domestic investors played a particularly dominant role in office investments, with most capital directed toward income-generating, operational properties. Stable rental yields and sustained leasing activity in premium office spaces contributed to the segment's attractiveness.