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BJP to Take Guru Ravidas's Message of Social Harmony to Every Corner of Rajasthan PG.3

Bhumi Pednekar defends teenage protester facing rape threats online; says, "We cannot bully a young girl" PG.6

Diamond League: Neeraj faces world-class field in Lausanne PG.7

Stock markets end lower with Nifty below 24,700 PG.8

Lok Sabha introduces Taxation Reform Bill seeking to mordernise India's tax framework

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha on Tuesday introduced the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, with the government describing it as a key step towards modernising India's tax framework and strengthening the country's digital financial ecosystem. The legislation was introduced amid noisy protests by Opposition members and cleared for introduction through a voice vote.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman moved the Bill for introduction, seeking the House's permission to bring in the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which proposes amendments to the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, the Income-tax Act, 2025, and the Finance Act, 2026.

The Bill seeks to replace the Income-tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, which was promulgated on June 5, 2026, while introducing a broader set of legislative changes aimed at boosting foreign investment, simplifying the regulatory framework for digital payment systems and extending policy support to key manufacturing sectors.

According to the proposed legislation, the amendments are intended to update the legal architecture governing taxation and payment systems in response to the evolving needs of India's economy and its rapidly expanding digital ecosystem.

The government has maintained that the reforms are designed to improve the ease of doing business, enhance investor confidence and ensure that India's tax and financial laws remain aligned with technological advancements and changing commercial practices.

The proposed changes are also expected to streamline regulatory processes and create a more investment-friendly policy environment while supporting the country's long-term economic growth objectives.

Mudra Loans Boost Small Businesses

- **From small-scale industries to street vendors-everyone is benefiting from 'Mudra'**
- **Pradhan Mantri Mudra loans worth approximately 2.18 lakh crore sanctioned to over 2.55 crore beneficiaries in Rajasthan**

Jaipur: The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana has emerged as a major source of financial support for small businesses, street vendors and micro enterprises across Rajasthan. Under the scheme, more than 2.55 crore beneficiaries in the state have received institutional loans worth about Rs 2.18 lakh crore, helping many people become financially independent without relying on private moneylenders.

According to official figures, loans worth Rs 2,18,423 crore have been sanctioned to 2,55,91,381 beneficiaries in Rajasthan since the launch of the scheme. Women have been the biggest beneficiaries, with more than 1.54 crore women receiving loans worth over Rs 67,982 crore. Their share in the scheme stands at nearly 60 percent, showing strong participation in self-employment and small business activities. During the 2025-26 financial year alone, more than 23.74 lakh beneficiaries received loans worth Rs 31,460 crore.

The Union Minister of State for Finance informed the Lok Sabha that the Mudra Yojana has played a major role in providing collateral-free loans to people working in the unorganised sector. Across the country, loans worth more than Rs 41.71 lakh crore have been sanctioned to over 59.14 crore beneficiaries till June 2026.

Launched in 2015, the scheme provides loans of up to Rs 20 lakh to non-corporate micro and small enterprises under the Shishu, Kishor, Tarun and Tarun Plus categories. It supports manufacturing units, shopkeepers, fruit and vegetable sellers, transport operators, food service businesses, artisans, machine operators, food processors and street vendors. A large number of beneficiaries belong to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, enabling them to access formal banking services instead of depending on informal sources of credit.

Rajasthan Property Prices Rise Sharply

DLC rates in Jaipur increased by up to 49 percent

Jaipur: Buying land or property in Rajasthan has become more expensive after the state government implemented revised District Level Committee (DLC) rates across the state. The new rates, effective from August 3, 2026, have increased government property values by 5 to 49 percent. The revision follows proposals received from districts and a review of prevailing market prices. It is the second major increase this year after a 10 percent revision in April.

The new rates will directly increase the cost of property registration because stamp duty and registration charges are calculated on the basis of DLC values. In Jaipur, several residential and commercial areas have witnessed significant increases. Jamna Vihar New recorded the highest rise of 49 percent, while rapidly developing localities such as Nandpuri, Jagatpura and JLN Marg have also seen increases of up to

48 percent. The government said the revision was necessary to reduce the gap between market prices and official rates.

Bapu Bazaar has now become the costliest commercial area in Rajasthan, with the DLC rate for commercial land on roads measuring 40 to 60 feet rising to Rs 5.71 lakh per square metre. The rate on MI Road has reached Rs 3.97 lakh per square metre, while Airport Road and C-Scheme are also among the state's high-value locations.

The revised rates have also affected satellite towns around Jaipur, including Chomu, Chaksu, Kalwar, Jobner, Bagru, Bassi, Phagi, Bichoon and Dudu, where commercial land values have increased considerably. DLC rates represent the minimum government value for property registration and are also used to calculate stamp duty, registration charges and compensation in land acquisition cases. As a result, property buyers across Rajasthan will now have to pay higher registration costs.

Monsoon Set to Return Across Rajasthan

Weather in Rajasthan to change from August 7 to 10

Jaipur: Monsoon activity is expected to become active again in Rajasthan from August 7 to August 10, bringing relief to farmers who have been worried due to irregular rainfall in recent weeks. According to the Meteorological Department, a new circulation system is likely to develop over eastern Rajasthan and nearby areas on August 6-7, increasing rainfall across several parts of the state.

Heavy to very heavy rain is likely in some areas of the Bharatpur, Kota, Jaipur and Ajmer divisions between August 7 and 10. In the Jodhpur and Bikaner divisions, rainfall is expected to remain weak for the next two to three days before increasing again between August 7 and 9. Light to moderate rain is also expected in north-eastern and northern Rajasthan on August 5. The department said a circulation system remains active over north-eastern Rajasthan, while the monsoon trough is passing through its normal position over northern Rajasthan. On Tuesday, moderate to heavy rain is likely in parts of the Bharatpur, Jaipur and Bikaner divisions, with isolated heavy rainfall expected in the Bharatpur region.

During the last 24 hours, heavy rainfall was reported at some places in Dausa, Didwana, Hanumangarh, Kota and Sirohi districts. Mandawar in Dausa recorded the highest rainfall of 107 mm. The latest reservoir data released on August 3 also showed healthy water storage levels in several major dams. Kota Barrage was filled up to 96.76 percent of its capacity, while Morel Dam in Dausa reached 100 percent storage. Water levels also remained satisfactory in Rana Pratap Sagar, Jawahar Sagar, Mahi Bajaj Sagar, Bisalpur and several other reservoirs across the state.

Air India Phuket-Delhi flight hits severe turbulence, 12 injured

New Delhi: Twelve people were injured after an Air India flight from Phuket to New Delhi encountered turbulence on Tuesday, the airline said.

Air India flight AI2379 experienced mild turbulence while flying from Phuket to Delhi, causing the aircraft to suddenly drop altitude, an airline spokesperson said.

The incident occurred before landing, when the aircraft was descending into Delhi, according to sources. The turbulence briefly affected the aircraft, injuring 10 passengers and two cabin crew members. The flight landed safely at New Delhi airport at 11:07 am, the spokesperson said. All passengers and crew members were safely evacuated from the aircraft, and no serious injuries were reported. "There have been no serious injuries as of now. A small number of passengers and crew members with minor injuries requiring medical assessment have been taken to a medical facility at the airport for precautionary examination and care by Air India's airport team and medical personnel," Air India said in a statement.

BJP accuses Congress of double standards over paper leak issue

New Delhi: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday accused the Congress of adopting "double standards" on the issue of paper leaks and demanded an explanation from Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi over their silence on remarks made by Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge.

Addressing a press conference, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra said that Mallikarjun Kharge often delivers lengthy speeches in the Rajya Sabha. "It is good that at least discussions have started, but when his son makes an insensitive and inhuman statement on the same issue in Karnataka, both Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge remain silent," he said. Patra alleged that Priyank Kharge had made a "highly arrogant" remark regarding the students' protest over alleged irregularities in the Karnataka police constable recruitment process. He claimed that Kharge had said, "Let the students sit on a hunger strike for 25 days first, then we will resort to lathi-charge, and after that we will think about my resignation."

The BJP spokesperson said Rahul Gandhi's silence on the matter reflected the Congress party's "double standards." He also accused the Congress and some of its alliance partners of disrupting the Monsoon Session of Parliament. "Crores of rupees are spent on running a parliamentary session. However, since the session began, Question Hour has

not been allowed to function, and hardly any Bills are being discussed," Patra said.

Expressing criticism over the Opposition's conduct, Patra said, "I am surprised by their double standards. Attempts have been made to disrupt Zero Hour from the very beginning. The problem lies in the behaviour of the Congress and its allies. Their double standards are shocking."

BJP Kisan Morcha Announces New Team

Jaipur: The Bharatiya Janata Party's Rajasthan Kisan Morcha has announced its new state executive committee with several organisational changes aimed at strengthening the party's presence among farmers across the state. The new team was approved by the party's national and state leadership and announced by state president Kailash Choudhary. Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma congratulated all the newly appointed office-bearers and expressed confidence that they would help spread the government's programmes for farmers.

The new executive has been formed with an emphasis on regional and social balance. Former office-bearers have been assigned new responsibilities, while several district leaders have been included in the state working committee for their performance. Five special invitees have been appointed, including former state president Hariram Rinwa. Omprakash Yadav and Khimaram Choudhary have also been made special invitees.

The committee includes eight state vice-presidents, with Atmaram Tarad, Revant Singh Rajpurohit, Rajendra

Meena Shekhpura, Yogendra Nandwana, Bhanwar Singh Panwar, Mansharam Parmar, Praveen Yadav and Ramkishan Khichad taking charge. Badriram Jat and Shravan Singh Rao have been appointed state general secretaries. Prem Singh Banwasa has been named state treasurer, while Suraj Soni will serve as co-treasurer. The organisation has also appointed state ministers, spokespersons, office bearers for IT, social media, media, research and policy, natural farming, and the "Mann Ki Baat" programme. Chief Minister Sharma said the new team would play an important role in taking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a strong and prosperous farming community to every part of Rajasthan.

Kejriwal stopped on way to PM's residence during protest against E20 Petrol, stages road sit-in

New Delhi: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday was stopped by Delhi Police while leading a march to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence to submit more than 2.33 lakh public petitions demanding the withdrawal of E20-blended petrol.

Accompanied by around 100 people whom the party described as being affected by the fuel policy, Kejriwal staged a sit-in on the road after the delegation was denied permission to meet the Prime Minister.

The protest ended after police took custody of the petitions, which the party said numbered 2,33,238, and informed the delegation that the Prime Minister would not meet them.

Addressing a press conference later, Kejriwal accused the Centre of ignoring public concerns and alleged that the E20 policy was being implemented under pressure from US President Donald Trump. "PM Modi, what is the point of showing your strength against us? Show the same courage in front of Trump and stop imposing E20 on the country. Otherwise, the nation will once again be compelled to launch a major movement," he said. In a post on X after the protest, Kejriwal said the delegation had attempted to meet the Prime Minister with over 2.33 lakh petitions opposing E20 but was stopped by police. He added that all the petitions had now been sent to the Prime Minister.

Kejriwal said the party had sought an appointment with the Prime Minister nearly a month ago to discuss concerns surrounding E20-blended petrol but had received no response. He described the refusal to meet the delegation as evidence of what he called a "dictatorial attitude."

Questioning the rationale behind the policy, the former Delhi chief minister claimed that the Centre had acknowledged in Parliament that E20 fuel reduced fuel efficiency and affected certain engine components, particularly rubber parts. He asked why such a fuel was being made mandatory despite these concerns.

"The BJP-led Central Government itself admitted in Parliament that fuel efficiency decreases and engine components are affected. If mileage is reducing and engines are being damaged, why is it being imposed?" he asked. Kejriwal further alleged that the policy was intended to facilitate imports of ethanol from the United States rather than benefit Indian farmers. According to him, the government's claims that E20 would save foreign exchange and support domestic agriculture did not stand scrutiny.

"It is not Indian farmers who are benefiting but American farmers. We appeal to the Prime Minister to stop buying ethanol from the United States and learn to withstand Trump's pressure," he said.

Warning of an intensified agitation, Kejriwal said the party would soon announce its next course of action if the Centre did not reconsider the policy. "If E20 is not withdrawn, the country will once again be compelled to launch a major movement," he said, adding that citizens would have to "come out on the streets on a very large scale" if they wanted relief from the policy.

Briefs

BJP Mandal Prepares for Elections

Kanod: A strategy meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party Kanod Mandal was conducted on Monday at the residence of the Mandal President on Neemach Road to discuss preparations for the upcoming local body and Panchayati Raj elections. Mandal President Harendra Singh Rao presided over the gathering, while assembly constituency extension officer Sanjay Lohariya attended as the chief guest and key speaker. Addressing party members, Lohariya urged activists to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to ensuring a decisive victory for the party in the upcoming municipal elections. He emphasized strengthening the organizational structure across every ward, booth, and polling center. Furthermore, he asked workers to launch extensive public outreach programs and spread awareness about the various welfare schemes initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma so that maximum benefits reach ordinary citizens. Senior party leaders and local office bearers attended the session.

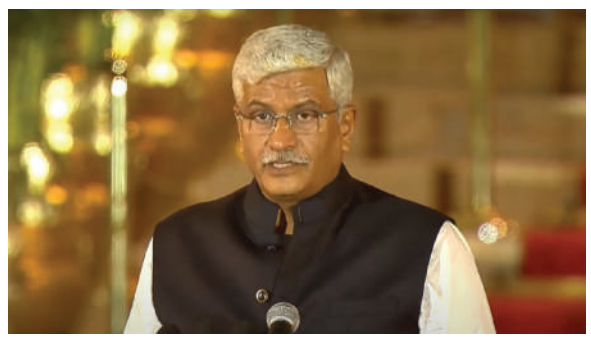
Honoring Our Stalwarts

Udaipur: The Udaipur Pensioners Welfare Committee will host its general body meeting on August 8 at the Vigyan Samiti premises in Ashok Nagar. Program Coordinator Bhanwar Seth announced that twenty-five members who have completed seventy-five years of age will be honored during the event for their contribution to the society. Committee President K. C. Shrimali stated that over three hundred senior members are expected to attend the gathering. General Secretary Vardhan Mehta added that attendees will discuss strategies to strengthen the organization, expand its membership base, and scale up social service initiatives across the district. Senior committee members attended the preliminary planning session.

Seamalwara Hosts Child Safety Event

Seamalwara: A special legal awareness program focused on child and female safety was organized at Maniben Pandya School to educate students on personal security and legal protection. During the event, school children were given detailed information about the difference between good touch and bad touch to help them recognize unsafe situations. Resource persons educated both boys and girls about physical, sexual, emotional, and mental abuse, while explaining key provisions of the POCSO Act, the Juvenile Justice Board, and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023. The session emphasized creating a secure environment at home, in school, and in the mind. Officials highlighted the active role of the Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority in offering free legal aid, child-friendly services, and protective support through Paralegal Volunteers. School staff, administrative officers, and students attended the informative session.

Center Approves ₹600 Cr Tourism Projects for Rajasthan



Udaipur: The Central Government has sanctioned eleven major tourism development projects for Rajasthan with a total budget allocation of six hundred forty-two crore rupees to elevate the state's tourism infrastructure to global standards.

Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat shared this information in the Lok Sabha while responding to a parliamentary question raised by Member of Parliament Doctor Mannalal Rawat.

The ambitious initiatives aim to transform key destinations, with Udaipur officially included under the Heritage Circuit project, which focuses on restoring, beautifying, and developing historical and cultural routes across the region.

The Union Minister highlighted that the Ministry of Tourism has formulated comprehensive national strategies covering sustainable tourism, rural homestays, adventure sports, medical wellness, and eco-tourism. These framework guidelines have been circulated to all state governments and Union Territory administrations for effective implementation. Furthermore, the central ministry actively promotes specialized travel segments such as destination weddings, wellness retreats, coastal tours, cruise travels, and spiritual circuits through both national and international promotional campaigns, while placing primary responsibility on regional authorities for local destination execution.

Under the Swadeshi Darshan scheme, significant funds have been allocated across various historic and religious landmarks in the state.

Key project approvals include fifty crore rupees for Sambhar Lake Town in Jaipur district, seventy-five crore rupees for the integrated development of Govind Dev Ji Temple in Jaipur, Khatu Shyam Ji in Sikar, and Nathdwara in Rajsamand, alongside eighty-seven crore rupees for spiritual circuits in Salasar Balaji, Churu, Viratnagar, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Mehandipur Balaji, and Chittorgarh.

Additionally, over seventy crore rupees have been set aside for heritage circuit developments across ten districts, including Udaipur, Rajsamand, Jaipur, Jhalawar, Chittorgarh, Jaisalmer, Hanumangarh, Dholpur, Nagaur, and Tonk.

Other major investments cover eighty-seven crore rupees for development work at Shri Khatu Shyam Ji Temple, forty-eight crore rupees for Malaseri Dungri in Bhilwara, ninety-six crore rupees for Jal Mahal, forty-nine crore rupees for Nahargarh Fort, twenty-one crore rupees for Keshoraipatan, twenty-two crore rupees for Karni Mata Temple in Bikaner, and thirty-two crore rupees for the integrated development of Pushkar and Ajmer.

Dead Calf Found Hidden in Sack Sparks Anger

Bhilwara: Tension flared near the LIC office lane by Subhash Nagar square under the Pratap Nagar police station area after local residents discovered the dead body of a calf stuffed inside a plastic sack thrown on the roadside. Upon receiving information about the suspicious bag lying in the alley around eleven in the morning, workers from various local cow protection groups, Bajrang Dal, and other social organizations rushed to the spot. When the activists opened the sealed sack in front of gathered onlookers, they found the carcass of a month to month-and-a-half-old calf packed tightly inside, which immediately sparked intense outrage among the community members present at the location.

The animal rights workers and organizational leaders promptly informed the Pratap Nagar police station about the incident, prompting a police team to arrive at the scene to maintain order and investigate the matter. Community leaders stated that dumping a dead calf on a public street inside a tied bag was a deliberate and malicious attempt by mischief-makers to disturb social harmony and hurt public sentiments in the city. The cow protection chief of Bajrang Dal, along with other activists, submitted a formal written complaint addressed to the Pratap Nagar station house officer, demanding strict legal action against the perpetrators. In their memorandum, the activists urged the police administration to identify the anti-social elements responsible for throwing the dead animal in the open and register a criminal case against them immediately. They also appealed to the authorities to take preventive measures against such acts to preserve peace and brotherhood throughout the region. Under police supervision, the deceased calf was subsequently given a proper and respectful disposal in accordance with local norms. The local police have launched an investigation into the matter and are currently scanning footage from surrounding security cameras installed along the street to identify the suspects who dropped the sack.

Sukhadia University to Host Creative Competitions for National Handloom Day

Udaipur: Mohanlal Sukhadia University is organizing a series of creative competitions titled The Loom, The Lens, The Legacy on August 7 to mark National Handloom Day. The initiative is being conducted jointly by the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Department of Fashion Technology and Designing in collaboration with the Western Regional Centre of the Anthropological Survey of India. The planned events include a heritage photography challenge, a short video reel competition, poster and illustration contests, art installation displays, and a heritage fashion show aimed at promoting traditional Indian textiles and craftsmanship.

Program Coordinator and Department Head Doctor Kunjan Acharya stated that the competitions are open to students, researchers, artists, designers, and photography enthusiasts of all age groups. Participants entering the poster and photography contests must submit hard copies to room number 162, while reel challenge entries should be emailed to the designated university handle and shared on social media platforms. Participants in the art installation category will assemble their displays at the Anthropological Survey of India campus on August 5 and 6. Department Head Doctor Dolly Mogra will coordinate the heritage fashion show to showcase traditional handloom garments on the ramp.

Legal Awareness Camps Held in Forty Bhilwara Schools

Bhilwara: Comprehensive legal awareness camps were organized across nearly forty schools in the district on Tuesday as part of the Transformative Tuesday campaign, conducted under the guidance of District Legal Services Authority Chairman Abhay Jain following directives from the Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority.

During a special session at the Government Girls Higher Secondary School in Gulmandi, District Legal Services Authority Secretary Rashmi Arya addressed the students as the chief speaker. She educated the young girls on identifying the distinction between good touch and bad touch, encouraging them to stand up against any form of exploitation and become their own protectors.

She advised students never to tolerate inappropriate behavior and to inform parents or teachers immediately without fear. The interactive program also informed students about free legal aid services, fundamental rights, protective child safety laws, and essential emergency helpline numbers. School principals, teachers, and staff members attended the event across all participating locations.

Maru Bunkar Community Decisions on Mass Wedding Conference in February

Kapasan: A general body meeting of the Maru Bunkar community and its associated regional units took place in Kapasan to deliberate on community development, organizational unity, and social reforms. Representatives and youth members discussed various proposals to strengthen ties across local areas.

During the discussions, youth worker Pintu Bunkar proposed organizing a mass wedding conference in Kapasan to ease financial burdens on families, a suggestion that received unanimous approval from all attending members. The community officially resolved to host its twelfth mass wedding conference in Kapasan during the coming month of February.

Attendees pledged financial contributions and volunteered their support to ensure the smooth execution of the grand gathering. The meeting also touched upon promoting education, social upliftment, and structural growth within the organization. A follow-up meeting has been scheduled for August 30 at the Shani Maharaj Temple premises in Jashma Magra at ten in the morning, where committee formations, auspicious dates, and detailed execution plans will be finalized. Community representatives from Rawatbhata and neighboring villages attended the assembly.

Man Dies in Gujarat Mine Landslide After Heavy Rain

Bhilwara: A young man from Rajasthan lost his life in a severe landslide triggered by continuous heavy rainfall inside a mining site located in Jamkhavav, Gujarat. The incident took place when torrents of rainwater began flooding the mining area rapidly, posing a threat to expensive machinery and equipment stationed at the location. The victim, identified as thirty-four-year-old Rajendra, a resident of Barana village in Bhilwara district, was actively working with his colleagues to move heavy equipment like poklane machines, dumpers, and compressors to safer ground to protect them from the floodwaters.

While the team was attempting to salvage the machinery, a major section of the nearby hill suddenly collapsed under the pressure of torrential water. The sudden and intense flow carried huge amounts of mud, debris, and water downhill, sweeping Rajendra away before he or his coworkers could react. Local authorities and emergency response personnel rushed to the scene immediately after receiving information about the disaster. However, the search and rescue efforts faced severe challenges due to continuous rainfall, waterlogging, and huge mounds of mud.

It took rescue teams nearly forty-eight hours of continuous effort to locate and retrieve the victim's body from under the heavy debris. Following the recovery, local authorities shifted the body to a nearby hospital in Jamkhavav, where necessary post-mortem procedures were completed before handing over the remains to the grieving family members. The body of the deceased was subsequently brought back to his native village in Bhilwara. The arrival of the body sparked deep sorrow throughout the entire village. Family members and fellow villagers gathered in large numbers to pay their final respects, and the last rites were performed in a heavy atmosphere filled with grief.

Women Wing Appointments Announced

Udaipur: National President Lilian Grace and State President Sunita Jain of the Narendra Modi Vichar Manch Women Wing have announced key organizational appointments in the state with the consent of the working committee. Sonika Chordia from Udaipur has been appointed as the State Secretary for the women's wing of the organization. Along with her, Supriya Khandelwal, also a resident of Udaipur, has been nominated as the District President of the Narendra Modi Vichar Manch Women Wing. Both newly appointed office bearers expressed their commitment to strengthening the organization across the region

Married Woman Dies Under Suspicious Circumstances Prompting Dowry Harassment Investigation

Begu: Police have registered a case against four individuals, including a deceased woman's husband and parents-in-law, for dowry harassment and abetment to suicide following her suspicious death in Bichhor gram panchayat area. According to police reports, Maina, wife of Sunil Goswami and a resident of Gusaiyon Ka Jhopda village, died while undergoing medical treatment at a hospital in Ahmedabad. She had fallen severely ill three days prior and was initially rushed to Udaipur before being transferred to Ahmedabad, where she succumbed during treatment. Following her demise, the victim's parents filed an official police complaint alleging that her in-laws had been subjecting her to relentless physical and mental harassment for a long time. The family alleged that the accused were demanding ten lakh rupees in cash along with gold and silver jewellery. They claimed that the continuous torture pushed the young woman to consume a poisonous substance, adding that she had been subjected to physical violence on several occasions in the past. Relatives of the deceased gathered at the Parsoli police station to protest the incident, raising objections to the initial post-mortem examination performed in Ahmedabad and demanding a re-examination by a medical board. Yielding to their demand, local police arranged a second autopsy conducted by a medical board before releasing the body to the parents for final rites. Station House Officer Ashutosh Singh stated that the couple had been married for around six years. In accordance with legal guidelines for cases involving early years of marriage, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Begu is conducting the formal inquiry. Police have filed a case against the victim's husband Sunil, her father-in-law, mother-in-law, and one other individual, while investigating all aspects of the case.

Shilpgram to Host Two Day Classical Music and Dance Festival Malhar

Udaipur: The West Zone Cultural Centre is organizing a two-day classical music and dance festival titled Malhar at the Darpan Auditorium in Shilpgram on August 8 and 9 to celebrate the monsoon season. The festival will begin on the first evening with a classical vocal performance by Gauri Pathare, followed by an energetic tabla recital by Hetal Mehta. The second evening will showcase a soulful sitar performance by Vinayak Chittar, followed by a graceful Mohiniyattam classical dance recital by renowned artist Pallavi Krishnan. West Zone Cultural Centre Director Doctor Ashwin M. Dalvi stated that performances will begin at seven in the evening on both days with free admission for all art enthusiasts. The event aims to preserve and promote traditional Indian classical performing arts among audiences of all ages during the monsoon season. Organizers have invited music lovers and local residents to attend the grand cultural showcase, which will offer a rich artistic experience highlighting both vocal and instrumental mastery alongside classic Indian dance forms.

Thieves Break Into House and Steal Jewellery Worth Two Lakhs

Bhilwara: Unidentified thieves targeted a locked house in Pithas village under the Bagor police station area late at night, stealing gold and silver jewellery valued at around two lakh rupees. The burglary occurred while the homeowner was away from the village for personal work, while his wife and children were asleep in a different room inside the same house. The daring break-in has triggered widespread panic and serious safety concerns among the local residents regarding night security.

According to the official complaint lodged with the police by Bhanwar Lal Gadri, the incident happened around midnight when suspects quietly entered the house belonging to his younger brother, Chaturbhuj Gadri. Taking advantage of the vacant space, the burglars broke into an unoccupied room, smashed open the lock of a heavy iron box kept inside, and decamped with all the valuable ornaments stored in it.

The victim's wife, Seema Devi, was sleeping with her children in an adjacent room and did not hear any noise during the break-in. She discovered the crime early the following morning around five o'clock when she noticed the open door of the neighboring room and the broken iron trunk lying on the floor. After searching the surrounding area in vain, the family informed the authorities about the missing valuables, which included two gold sets, a gold armlet, and two pairs of silver anklets.

Following the formal complaint, the Bagor police registered a case against unknown perpetrators and initiated an investigation to trace the culprits. Police teams have set up checkpoints and increased patrols in surrounding areas to gather clues and catch the suspects. Local villagers expressed strong anger over rising theft cases in the region, demanding stricter night patrolling and the swift arrest of the criminals along with the full recovery of the stolen items.

In response to the growing unease among residents, local leaders and community representatives met with senior police officers to air their grievances and urge immediate preventative action. They pointed out that similar incidents of burglary and petty crime have been rising across neighboring villages over the past few months, creating an atmosphere of fear and insecurity among rural households. Police authorities assured the residents that special investigation teams have been formed to track down the gang behind the recent break-ins.

Salumber District Collector Inspects Polling Stations and Reviews Schools in Lasadiya

Lasadiya: Salumber District Collector Muhammad Junaid P.P. inspected sensitive polling stations in the Lasadiya sub-division area on Tuesday to ensure proper infrastructure and basic facilities. During his visit to the Government Higher Secondary School in Aggad and Mahatma Gandhi Government School in Lasadiya, he checked essential arrangements including electricity supply, drinking water, doors, windows, and physical infrastructure. He directed the concerned officials to repair and upgrade all basic amenities well in time for smooth operations. The Collector also interacted with students of classes ninth and tenth at the Aggad school to assess academic progress and educational standards. Following the classroom interaction, he chaired a staff meeting to review mid-day meal quality, sanitation, drinking water availability, and general school maintenance. Later, the District Collector visited the Lasadiya Tehsil office to review revenue records, land registrations, and branch operations with local administration staff.

He issued strict instructions to officers, including Tehsildar Kanti Chand Kohli and Development Officer Mangu Singh Meena, to resolve all pending land and revenue cases within stipulated timeframes. Salumber District Collector Muhammad Junaid P.P. inspected sensitive polling stations in Lasadiya sub-division to check essential facilities, including electricity, drinking water, and overall school infrastructure.

BJP to Take Guru Ravidas's Message of Social Harmony to Every Corner of Rajasthan

Jaipur: Deputy Chief Minister Dr Premchand Bairwa said on Tuesday that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will take the message of Sant Shiromani Guru Ravidas Maharaj on social harmony, service, social justice and nation building to every section of society. He was speaking at a press conference at the BJP state office in Jaipur about the nationwide "Shri Guru Ravidas Maharaj Samrasta Sankalp Abhiyan" being organised to mark the 650th birth anniversary of Guru Ravidas Maharaj.

Dr Bairwa said the campaign began on July 29, 2026 and will continue until February 20, 2027. The main aim of the campaign is to spread Guru Ravidas Maharaj's message of equality, social harmony, service, social justice and nation building among people and further strengthen unity in society. Public representatives, BJP workers, saints, religious leaders, social organisations and party workers will take part in various programmes across Rajasthan.

The campaign began on the occasion of Guru Purnima on July 29 at Govardhanpur in Varanasi, the birthplace of Guru Ravidas Maharaj. After a large public meeting and Maha Aarti, a Rajasthan delegation brought the sacred urn containing holy soil from the birthplace to Rajasthan. On July 30, the urn received grand welcomes at around 54 places, including Bharatpur, Dausa and Jaipur. After reaching Jaipur, it was welcomed at Shri Ram Mandir in Raja Park in the presence of Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma, saints, religious leaders, public representatives and thousands of BJP workers.

Dr Bairwa said the Sant Sampark Abhiyan will be conducted from July 29 to August 31. During this campaign, BJP leaders and workers will personally meet and honour saints, mahants and gurus belonging to different communities across the state. Discussions will also be held with different sections of society to spread the message of social harmony and national unity.

He said the Guru Ravidas Samrasta Yatra will be organised from October 5 to November 5. After this, the Shri Guru Ravidas Maharaj Hostel Contact Campaign will be conducted from November 26, 2026 to January 15, 2027. Under this programme, Samrasta dialogue programmes will be organised in different hostels across Rajasthan. Pictures of Sant Ravidas Maharaj and his inspiring messages will be displayed during these programmes.

Dr Bairwa said young people and students will also be encouraged to discuss Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Viksit Bharat–2047". Discussions will focus on social harmony, nation building and the positive role of young people in the development of the country.

Dr Bairwa also said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has highlighted the contribution of Guru Ravidas Maharaj in fighting caste-based discrimination and bringing society together. According to Dr Bairwa, following the path shown by Guru Ravidas will help fulfil the vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas".

BJP state general secretary and campaign coordinator Bhupendra Saini said a state-level sacred soil urn worship ceremony will be organised at the Sawai Mansingh Indoor Stadium in Jaipur on August 5, 2026, at 10.30 am.

Rajasthan Police Warns: Data Saved on Your Phone Can Become a Gateway for Cyber Fraud

Jaipur: Rajasthan Police's Cyber Crime Branch has issued an advisory warning people about the risks of storing personal and sensitive information on smartphones. The advisory was issued under the directions of Director General of Police Rajiv Kumar Sharma. Police said that smartphones are no longer used only for calls and messages. They now contain banking details, personal documents, digital records and other private information. A small mistake in protecting this data can lead to cyber fraud, identity theft and financial loss.

Additional Director General of Police, Cyber Crime, VK Singh said that recent cases, including the Bank of Baroda data leak and digital arrest incidents, show the growing risks linked to personal data. In one reported case, around 1 terabyte of data from an employee's email was leaked on the dark web.

According to the information cited by the police, 61 per cent of people keep personal documents on their mobile phones, while 60 per cent store photos and videos. Around 38 per cent keep banking information, 48 per cent store office emails, 37 per cent keep AI chat history and 34 per cent save passwords on their phones.

ADG Singh said that more than 1.3 lakh cyber attacks take place in India every day. He warned that even a small mistake in protecting personal information can increase the risk of financial fraud and identity theft.

Cyber criminals mainly target four types of information. In identity theft, details such as Aadhaar, PAN, passport and driving licence can be misused to obtain fake SIM cards, open bank accounts or take loans in another person's name. In financial fraud, criminals can try to gain access to banking applications, UPI accounts and OTPs and use them to steal money.

Private photos, videos and AI chat history can also be misused for blackmail or other cyber crimes, including digital arrest scams. Office emails and confidential documents are another major target.

Criminals can steal such information and later demand money from companies.

Rajasthan Police has advised people to avoid banking and other sensitive activities while using public Wi-Fi. If such services must be used, police have advised citizens to use a trusted VPN.

Police has also advised smartphone users to keep storage encryption and screen lock activated at all times. Apps should be given only the permissions they actually need, while unnecessary access should be disabled.

The police advisory further said that banking apps and important documents should not be left openly accessible on the home screen or gallery.

Users should keep such information in secure or hidden folders. Cloud backups should also be protected with strong passwords and two-factor authentication.

Citizens have been advised to download applications only from official platforms such as Google Play Store or Apple App Store and to use strong passwords for important accounts. Rajasthan Police has also advised users to keep location tracking, automatic backup and screen lock features active on their phones.

Rajasthan Central University Trains Staff on Workplace Etiquette and Institutional Protocol

Jaipur: Rajasthan Central University organised a special training programme on "Workplace Etiquette and Institutional Protocol" for all university employees on Tuesday. The programme was organised by the Establishment Section under the leadership and guidance of Vice-Chancellor Prof. Anand Bhalerao. More than 200 employees participated in the programme.

The university has been regularly organising capacity-building and professional development programmes with the aim of developing Rajasthan Central University as an excellent Knowledge Institute.

The latest training programme was organised as part of these ongoing efforts.

The main speaker at the programme was Lieutenant General S. P. S. Katewa (Retired), who delivered a lecture on the theme "One University – One Team." He said that the progress of any institution depends on four basic pillars — harmony, mutual connection, efficiency and the reputation of the institution. He called upon all employees to work together as a strong and coordinated team to achieve institutional excellence.

Comparing a university with the human body, Lt. Gen. Katewa said that every organ of the body has a different role and each one is equally important. In the same way, every member of a university has an important role in its growth and success.

He urged the employees not to underestimate their contribution to institution-building.

He said that a friendly work environment, mutual respect and commitment towards organisational goals are important foundations for the progress of an institution.

Lt. Gen. Katewa also explained ten important aspects of professional conduct. These included punctuality, maintaining confidentiality, cleanliness, suitable dress, use of positive language, developing healthy relationships at the workplace and following the prescribed procedure for resolving complaints.

He also explained various administrative protocols, including the Chain of Command, procedures for official meetings, official correspondence, communication with the media, guest and visitor management, financial and purchase procedures, official WhatsApp communication and other administrative arrangements. He said that proper compliance with these procedures is necessary for the smooth, transparent and effective functioning of the university.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Anand Bhalerao called upon all officers and employees to work with team spirit and keep the interests of students as their highest priority.

He urged everyone to make an active contribution towards taking Rajasthan Central University to new heights.

Earlier, Prof. D. C. Sharma welcomed all guests and participants, gave a brief introduction to Rajasthan Central University and introduced the main speaker. At the end of the programme, Registrar Amardeep Sharma proposed a vote of thanks.

The programme was organised under the direction of Deputy Registrar of the Establishment Section, Manish Bhomia. Public Relations Officer Anuradha Mittal conducted the programme.

Rajasthan Central University conducted a specialized training session on "Workplace Etiquette and Institutional Protocol" on Tuesday for over 200 university staff members at its Bandarsindari campus. Organized by the Establishment Section under the guidance of Vice-Chancellor Prof.

Anand Bhalerao, the professional development initiative was designed to enhance operational efficiency, transparency, and team cohesion across all administrative and academic departments.

Prayagraj-Sikar Weekly Express Gets New Stop at Jhinjhak Station

Jaipur: To make train travel more convenient for passengers, the Railways has added an additional stoppage for the Prayagraj-Sikar-Prayagraj Weekly Express at Jhinjhak station.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, train number 04161, Prayagraj-Sikar Weekly Express, will arrive at Jhinjhak station at 9:01 PM and depart at 9:03 PM.

Similarly, train number 04162, Sikar-Prayagraj Weekly Express, will reach Jhinjhak station at 3:21 AM and leave at 3:23 AM. The additional stoppage has been introduced to provide greater convenience to passengers travelling on this route.

The Indian Railways has introduced an additional operational halt for the Prayagraj–Sikar–Prayagraj Weekly Express at Jhinjhak railway station in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur Dehat district. The decision aims to address long-standing demands from local commuters, daily passengers, and pilgrims traveling between eastern Uttar Pradesh, central railway corridors, and key religious and educational hubs across Rajasthan.

According to official details provided by North Western Railway (NWR) Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, the new operational arrangement has been implemented to streamline regional rail connectivity and offer greater convenience to passengers traveling along this busy interstate sector.

The introduction of this stoppage at Jhinjhak expands boarding and deboarding options for rural and suburban populations situated along the NCR (North Central Railway) and NWR routes.

Under the revised timetable, Train No. 04161 (Prayagraj–Sikar Weekly Express) will arrive at Jhinjhak station at 9:01 PM and depart after a scheduled two-minute halt at 9:03 PM on its onward journey toward Sikar.

In the reverse direction, Train No. 04162 (Sikar–Prayagraj Weekly Express) will reach Jhinjhak station in the early morning hours at 3:21 AM, halting for two minutes before departing at 3:23 AM toward Prayagraj Junction.

Urban Service Camps Bring Government Services Closer to People Across Rajasthan

Jaipur: Urban service camps being organised across Rajasthan under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma are emerging as a strong example of good governance.

Through these camps, the government is working to solve public problems with sensitivity and provide basic services to people at one place. The initiative has provided relief to thousands of citizens and is also giving new momentum to urban development.

From June 12 to July 30, a total of 11,479 urban service camps were organised across the state. These camps provided citizens with various government services and schemes at a single location. During this period, 53,078 property leases were issued, while 18,004 cases of name transfer were completed. A total of 8,644 building map cases were also disposed of through the camps.

The camps also helped people access several other important services. During the campaign, 1,32,722 birth, death and marriage registrations were completed. A total of 20,900 applications for PM SVANidhi loans were received, while 48,504 electricity connections were provided to citizens.

The camps also focused on improving cleanliness and basic facilities in cities.

As part of the drive, 85,767 street lights were repaired and 27,284 new street lights were installed. The authorities also removed 34,675 garbage-prone spots in different urban areas. In addition, 15,500 verifications were completed under the Palanhar Scheme.

The state government aims to ensure that welfare schemes reach every eligible person, especially those at the last level of society, and that no deserving person is left out.

Bikaner-Madurai Express to Depart Late Due to Track Renewal Work

Bikaner: Rail traffic on the Bikaner-Merta Road section will be affected as the Railways carries out complete track renewal work between Alai and Chilo stations.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, train number 22632 Bikaner-Madurai Express will be rescheduled because of the track renewal work.

The train will depart from Bikaner 1 hour and 30 minutes later than its scheduled departure time on August 9, 16, 23 and 30, 2026, and on September 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2026, as well as October 4, 2026. The change has been made to allow the Railways to carry out the track renewal work safely.

The North Western Railway has announced significant modifications to its operational schedules along the Bikaner-Merta Road railway section to facilitate essential complete track renewal work. This maintenance activity will take place specifically on the railway stretch situated between the Alai and Chilo stations. The execution of these technical track upgrades is intended to enhance long-term railway infrastructure, improve overall track stability, and ensure safer train travel across the regional rail network.

Because of the planned engineering blocks required to execute the track renewal safely, rail traffic along this specific corridor will experience temporary operational adjustments over the coming weeks. Train operations are being carefully managed and rescheduled by railway authorities to ensure that engineering crews have adequate time to carry out heavy track replacement activities without compromising safety standards. These maintenance windows are a critical component of routine railway infrastructure management.

According to an official statement issued by North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, the temporary track maintenance work will directly impact the departure schedule of train number 22632, the Bikaner-Madurai Express.

Cooperative Bank Workers Protest Removal of Long-Serving Contract Staff

Jaipur: Suraj Bhan Singh Amera, a cooperative sector leader and office-bearer of several bank employees' unions, has strongly opposed the removal of contract employees who have been working for many years in cooperative banks across Rajasthan. He said removing employees who have served for 10, 15 and even 25 years is unfair labour practice and creates a serious livelihood crisis for their families.

Amera, who is the state general secretary of the All Rajasthan Cooperative Bank Employees Union, state president of the Cooperative Credit Societies Employees Union Rajasthan and deputy general secretary of the Rajasthan Pradesh Bank Employees Union, raised the issue of contract employees working in district central cooperative banks, Apex Bank and Land Development Banks.

He said many of these employees have been working against vacant posts of assistant staff and computer operators for several years. He strongly objected to the sudden termination of their services and called it an inhuman decision that can leave families without a regular source of income.

A memorandum was submitted under the leadership of Suraj Bhan Singh Amera to Dr Samit Sharma, Secretary to the Government and Registrar, Cooperative Societies, Rajasthan Government. The union requested immediate intervention in the matter and demanded protection of the jobs of long-serving contract employees.

In the memorandum, Amera urged the Registrar of Cooperative Societies to ensure full compliance with the Labour Codes and the directions mentioned in the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment letter number Z-20025/13/2019-LRC(E)/e-119357 dated April 24, 2026. He specifically demanded implementation of the Code on Wages, 2019, the Code on Social Security, 2020 and other applicable labour laws.

The union demanded that employees who have been serving for 10, 15 or 25 years should not be removed from their jobs. It also demanded that employees who have already been removed should be taken back immediately.

Amera further demanded that a policy should be prepared to regularise eligible contract employees against posts that have remained vacant in cooperative banks for nearly 40 years. He also demanded that all employees should receive their salaries on time along with appointment letters, salary slips, Provident Fund, ESI, bonus, insurance and other statutory benefits.

The union also demanded that every cooperative bank appoint a nodal officer to ensure compliance with the Labour Codes and other labour-related provisions.

Amera said that exploitation of workers in the name of cooperation would not be tolerated. He said removing employees by violating labour laws was unjust and that workers who had given many years of service should not be treated unfairly.

Rail Traffic Hit as Fifth Line Work Begins on Igatpuri-Bhusawal Route

Jaipur: Rail traffic will be affected on the Igatpuri-Bhusawal section of Bhusawal Division due to non-interlocking work being carried out for the construction of a fifth railway line. The work is being undertaken to improve railway infrastructure and expand the line capacity.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, the movement of some trains will be changed during the work.

Train number 17019, Hisar-Hyderabad service, departing from Hisar on August 11, 2026, will run on a diverted route through Bhusawal C Cabin, Akola and Purna.

Similarly, train number 20625, Chennai Egmore-Bhagat Ki Kothi service, departing from Chennai Egmore on August 11, 2026, will remain regulated for two hours between Manmad and Jalgaon.

Passengers travelling on these trains have been advised to keep the changed route and revised running arrangements in mind while planning their journey.

Editorial

New Taxes,New Test

Changes in tax laws are not merely a matter of figures or the budget; they are directly linked to the pockets of every citizen and the future of every industry. In the new era of the digital economy, India has taken a major decision to modernize its tax system. However, the true verdict on whether a law is modern or not is not delivered in Parliament; it emerges from the experience of the ordinary taxpayer. Therefore, the biggest question facing these new tax reforms today is whether they will simplify the system or make it even more complex.

The 'Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026' introduced in the Lok Sabha to give a new direction to the country's digital financial ecosystem and modernize the tax structure must be regarded as a crucial step in India's economic journey. Passed amidst opposition uproar and via voice vote, this bill is not merely a legislative formality but a strategic effort to align with the needs of evolving technology and a rapidly growing digital economy. Through this bill, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has proposed comprehensive amendments to three significant statutes: the 'Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007', the 'Income Tax Act, 2025', and the 'Finance Act, 2026'. Notably, this move aims to convert the 'Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026' issued on June 5, 2026 into a permanent law. While replacing the ordinance issued on June 5, the government has clarified that the bill's primary objectives are to boost foreign investment, simplify the regulatory framework for digital transaction systems, and provide strategic support to key manufacturing sectors in the country. Given the rapid transformation of the Indian economy in recent years, reforming tax laws and the financial framework had become an imperative. Considering India's global success in digital payments and the emerging opportunities for foreign investment, it was essential to liberate the economy from the web of archaic and complex regulations. Against this backdrop, the new amendment is welcome, as it aims to foster a business-friendly environment, simplify statutory procedures, and boost international investor confidence in India's economic stability. However, when such significant tax laws with far-reaching consequences are passed amidst parliamentary uproar and without adequate, in-depth deliberation, it raises questions about the quality and inclusivity of parliamentary proceedings in a democracy. The failure to engage in thorough deliberation on legislation capable of reshaping the nation's entire tax system solely due to political discord must be viewed as a significant flaw in the democratic process.

A close examination of the bill's key provisions reveals a clear intent to streamline administrative and regulatory processes. The legislative changes offer much-needed relief to digital-transaction-based businesses and new startups by addressing the legal and administrative hurdles they previously faced. Provisions offering special strategic protection and incentives to the manufacturing sector will provide fresh momentum to initiatives like 'Make in India.' There is no doubt that establishing a more transparent and simplified regulatory framework for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) will help attract international capital to the Indian market. Ultimately, however, the success of these reforms will depend not merely on the laws as written, but on their actual implementation. It has often been observed in the past that laws introduced to simplify the tax system have ended up causing greater inconvenience at the implementation stage due to complex bureaucratic rules. Therefore, the administration must ensure that taxpayers and the business community do not face any undue hardship during the actual implementation of this new law.

While adopting this new path of economic reforms, it is equally crucial to assess the broader social and economic implications. In a country like India, characterized by a vast population and significant inequality, the benefits of tax reforms must not remain confined to large industrialists or a select few companies in the digital sector. While technology facilitates easier tax collection and administration, a key question remains: will the country's Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) find it easy to adapt to this new framework? As the digital economy expands, challenges such as cybersecurity, data privacy, and digital literacy are becoming increasingly acute. Although amendments to the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, claim to bring greater speed and clarity to digital transactions, it is imperative to establish robust legal and technical safeguards to address the system's technical glitches and security risks.While passing legislation amidst parliamentary chaos and opposition boycotts may be politically convenient for the ruling dispensation, it poses a grave threat to the sustainability of the nation's economic policies. Sensitive matters like tax reforms which directly impact the finances of every citizen should ideally be advanced through all-party consensus and in-depth study.

Rather than engaging in opposition for the sake of it, opposition parties were also expected to offer well-researched and constructive suggestions regarding amendments that strengthen the economy. The prevalence of a chaotic atmosphere in Parliament, rather than an objective scrutiny of economic policies, undermines the principles of democratic accountability. Even though the government claims its task is complete after passing the bill, the true test of these legislative amendments will lie in their actual implementation. The value of any law or reform is determined not merely by how modern or appealing it appears on paper, but by the extent to which it offers ease and convenience to the common taxpayer and the most marginalized sections of society. Striking a balance between transparency, accountability, and the fair rights of taxpayers while modernizing the digital financial ecosystem should be the primary duty of any progressive government. While modernizing laws is crucial, it is equally important to ensure that the administrative machinery implementing them becomes more sensitive, transparent, and citizen-centric.The tax system should be designed such that industrialists find it easy to invest, small entrepreneurs do not feel burdened by regulations, and the common taxpayer views the administration with trust rather than fear. Only if these new tax laws instead of serving merely as tools to boost government revenue genuinely foster 'Ease of Doing Business' for the nation's traders, industrialists, and ordinary citizens, can the true objective of these legislative amendments be considered fulfilled. Otherwise, this new legal framework despite its technological veneer risks getting trapped in the same old, oppressive bureaucratic structures, reducing the entire claim of modernization to nothing more than empty administrative paperwork.

On International Clouded Leopard Day, India Strengthens Conservation through Dedicated Conservation Action Plan for the Wild Cat

On the occasion of International Clouded Leopard Day, the Government of India reaffirmed its commitment to protecting one of Asia's most elusive and endangered wild cats by implementing the Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP). Developed under the Government of India–GEF–UNDP initiative, the Action Plan represents a comprehensive roadmap aimed at ensuring the long-term survival of the species through habitat conservation, scientific research, community participation and strengthened wildlife protection measures.

The Conservation Action Plan was formally released during the 91st meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life (SCNBWL), held in Coimbatore during the second week of July 2026.

The initiative reflects India's growing emphasis on science-based wildlife conservation and integrated landscape management to safeguard vulnerable species across their natural habitats.

The Clouded Leopard is among Asia's most secretive and least-studied big cats, primarily inhabiting the dense forests of Northeast India.

Its survival is closely linked to healthy forest ecosystems, making the protection of its habitat equally important for conserving the region's extraordinary biodiversity and ecological balance.

The newly launched Action Plan provides a strategic framework for conserving the species through habitat protection, restoration of degraded forests, scientific monitoring, strengthening ecological connectivity and increasing public participation in conservation efforts. It seeks to establish a coordinated approach involving government agencies, researchers, conservation organisations and local communities.

One of the central features of the Action Plan is its emphasis on landscape-level conservation rather than focusing only on isolated protected areas. This approach recognises that Clouded Leopards require large, connected forest landscapes to move, hunt and breed successfully, making habitat connectivity a critical conservation priority.

As part of this strategy, the Action Plan identifies 14 priority conservation landscapes across Northeast India. These landscapes have been selected based on their ecological significance and their importance for sustaining viable Clouded Leopard populations. Conservation efforts in these areas will include habitat restoration and protection of wildlife corridors linking fragmented forests.

Restoring forest connectivity forms another major pillar of the programme. By strengthening ecological corridors between protected areas and adjoining forests, the government aims to reduce habitat fragmentation, improve genetic exchange between animal populations and enhance the long-term resilience of Clouded Leopard habitats.

Institutional support for the species has also been strengthened through its inclusion under the Species Recovery Programme of the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) Scheme. This move enables focused conservation planning, dedicated funding and improved coordination among wildlife authorities working to protect the species.

Scientific research and monitoring constitute another key aspect of the Conservation Action Plan. The programme introduces standardised monitoring protocols using modern tools such as camera traps, occupancy surveys, genetic analysis and environmental DNA (eDNA) techniques. These technologies will help scientists better understand the species' population size, distribution, movement patterns and habitat requirements.

The Action Plan also seeks to strengthen anti-poaching measures and combat wildlife crime. Enhanced surveillance, intelligence gathering and coordinated enforcement efforts are expected to reduce illegal hunting and trafficking, which continue to pose serious threats to many wildlife species across the region.

Recognising that front-line forest personnel play a crucial role in conservation, the programme places considerable emphasis on capacity building and skill development. Forest officials and field staff will receive specialised training, while digital tools such as the M-STrIPES (Monitoring System for Tigers – Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) smart application will be used to improve patrolling, monitoring and field-level data collection.

Another important component of the Action Plan is its focus on community-based conservation. The programme acknowledges that local communities living near forests are indispensable partners in wildlife protection. By promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities and encouraging community participation, the initiative seeks to reduce human-wildlife conflict while fostering long-term stewardship of natural resources.

Given that Clouded Leopards are distributed across multiple countries in South and Southeast Asia, the Conservation Action Plan also highlights the importance of transboundary cooperation. Collaboration with neighbouring range countries will facilitate coordinated conservation strategies, information sharing and joint efforts to protect habitats extending across international borders.

Climate resilience has been integrated into the Action Plan to address emerging environmental challenges. Conservation strategies will incorporate adaptive management practices that help ecosystems and wildlife respond to changing climatic conditions, ensuring that forest landscapes remain resilient in the face of future environmental pressures.

The conservation of the Clouded Leopard extends far beyond protecting a single species. As an apex forest predator and an indicator of healthy ecosystems, its survival is closely connected with the preservation of Northeast India's rich forests, biodiversity and ecological heritage. Through the Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan, India is adopting a holistic conservation model that combines habitat restoration, advanced scientific monitoring, technological innovation, community participation and international collaboration to secure the future of this remarkable wild cat and the forests it inhabits.

Dipka OC: Powering India's Growth through Scale, Efficiency and Sustainable Mining

Dipka OCP of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) stands out as one of the most vivid reflections of the remarkable transformation of India's coal mining sector. From producing barely 1 million tonne of coal in 1992, Dipka OC has evolved into one of the largest coal-producing complexes in the country, recording an all-time high production of 37.5 million tonnes and despatch of 39.43 million tonnes during FY 2025-26. With the recent enhancement of Environmental Clearance to 40 MTPA and a well-defined roadmap towards 60 MTPA, Dipka OC today stands as a strategic national asset, combining scale, efficiency and sustainability in equal measure.

A Strong Start to FY 2026-27

Building upon last year's record performance, Dipka OC has begun the current financial year with equally impressive momentum.

Up to 25 July 2026, the mine has produced 12.66 million tonnes of coal, achieving 104% of the progressive production target. Even more encouraging is the 30.5% year-on-year growth in coal production compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, reflecting substantial improvement in mine productivity and equipment utilisation. Coal dispatch has been equally robust, touching 13.87 million tonnes, exceeding the progressive target by achieving 109%, thereby ensuring uninterrupted fuel supply to thermal power stations and industrial consumers.

The seamless synchronization between coal production and despatch demonstrates Dipka's operational maturity, where mining, transportation and logistics function as an integrated value chain rather than as isolated activities.

Creating Value Beyond Production

While production remains the principal indicator of mining performance, Dipka's success is equally reflected in its financial contribution.

During FY 2025-26, the mine generated an overall profit of ₹3,230.91 crore, making it one of the strongest profit centres within SECL. Profitability has improved not merely because of higher production but also due to better cost management and enhanced operational efficiency. With profit per tonne increasing to ₹827, the mine has demonstrated that large-scale production can be achieved without proportionate escalation in operating costs. These financial outcomes underline Dipka's growing contribution to Coal India Limited's overall profitability.

Strengthening the Foundation for Future Growth

Behind Dipka's impressive production performance lies a series of strategic initiatives that have strengthened the mine's long-term production capability. Among these, land acquisition and rehabilitation have emerged as the most significant enablers for sustained capacity expansion.

Following the successful possession of Malgaon village, the Area has made substantial progress towards rehabilitation and resettlement of Hardi Bazar, one of the largest and most complex R&R initiatives in the region. Rather than viewing rehabilitation merely as a statutory obligation, Dipka has adopted a development-oriented approach by initiating development of a well-planned rehabilitation township equipped with essential civic infrastructure, including roads, schools, healthcare facilities, community amenities and public utilities. This participative and transparent approach has facilitated progressive land availability for mining while strengthening stakeholder confidence and social acceptance of the project.

Infrastructure that Supports High Production

Large-scale mining demands equally robust evacuation infrastructure. Dipka possesses one of the most diversified coal evacuation systems in Coal India Limited, comprising MGR-connected silos, First Mile Connectivity (FMC) silos, railway loading facilities and road transport systems. This integrated network provides operational flexibility and enables uninterrupted dispatch to major consumers, including NTPC Sipat and several thermal power stations across western and central India. Efficient evacuation has ensured that increasing production is promptly translated into higher consumer supplies without creating stock accumulation at the pithead.

Technology Driving Productivity

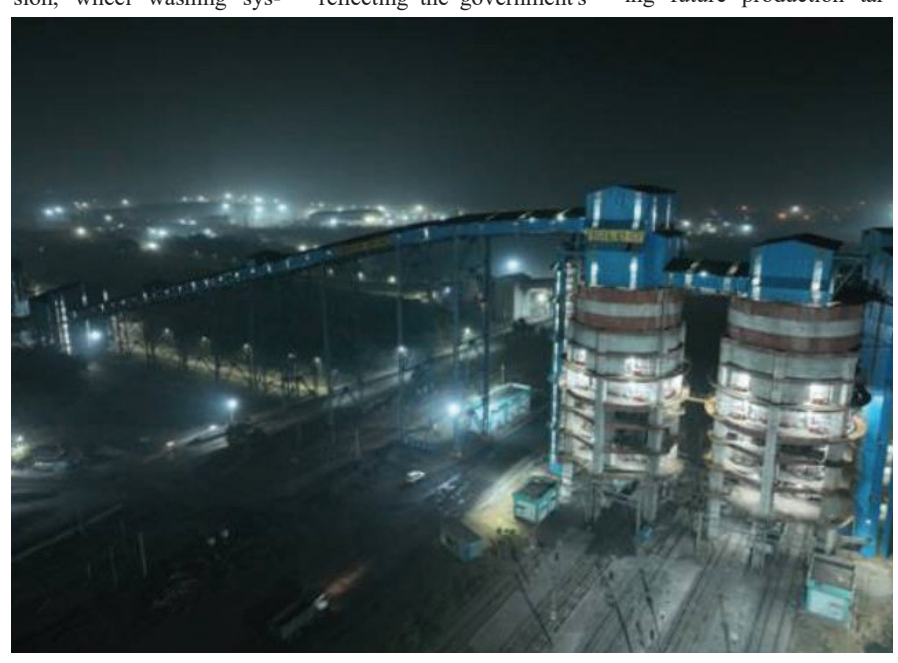
Dipka's remarkable production journey has been powered by sustained investment in technology and modernization.

The mine has progressively upgraded its mining systems with 42-cubic metre electric rope shovels, high-capacity surface miners, long in-pit belt conveyor systems, advanced silo loading facilities, drone-based mine monitoring and digital mine management platforms. These technologies have significantly improved equipment productivity, optimized mine planning, reduced operational delays and strengthened monitoring of mining activities. As production volumes continue to grow, technology remains one of the strongest differentiators enabling Dipka to maintain high operational efficiency.

Responsible Mining for Sustainable Growth

Dipka has demonstrated that high production and environmental stewardship can progress together.

The Area has implemented an array of initiatives including Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Systems (CAAQMS), fog cannon-based dust suppression, wheel washing systems, plantation drives, deployment of electric vehicles and plastic waste recycling facilities. These measures have substantially strengthened environmental management while improving the overall sustainability of mining operations. Digital environmental monitoring through integrated online platforms has further enhanced regulatory compliance and operational transparency.At the same time, systematic rehabilitation and development of modern resettlement infrastructure have enabled timely land availability for future mining while maintaining constructive engagement with project-affected families. This balanced approach has significantly strengthened the long-term production outlook of the Area.



Looking Beyond 40 Million Tonnes

The recent enhancement of Environmental Clearance (EC) to 40 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) marks a significant milestone in the evolution of Coal India Limited's flagship Dipka Open Cast Mine. Rather than representing the culmination of its development, the expanded clearance lays the foundation for the mine's next phase of growth, positioning it to play an even greater role in meeting India's rising energy requirements.

Backed by a well-defined long-term development strategy, Dipka is now preparing for a substantial increase in production capacity. The mine has outlined an ambitious roadmap to expand its annual production capability to 60 MTPA, reflecting the government's broader objective of strengthening domestic coal production and enhancing national energy security.

The expansion programme is being supported by progressive land acquisition, which is creating the necessary space for future mining operations and associated infrastructure. Timely acquisition of land remains one of the most critical aspects of large-scale mining projects, enabling planned expansion while ensuring smooth operational continuity.Parallel to land acquisition, comprehensive rehabilitation and resettlement initiatives are being implemented for project-affected families. The mine management has continued to emphasise responsible development by balancing industrial growth with the welfare of local communities through rehabilitation measures and livelihood support.

Infrastructure development also forms a major component of the expansion strategy. Investments in mine infrastructure, transportation networks, coal handling systems and supporting facilities are expected to improve operational efficiency while enabling the mine to safely manage significantly higher production volumes in the coming years.

With these essential building blocks already in place, Dipka possesses the operational capability required to sustain long-term growth. The combination of resource availability, modern infrastructure, technological advancement and strategic planning provides a strong platform for achieving future production targets.Over the years, Dipka has emerged as one of the country's most successful mining operations through scientific mine planning and efficient resource management. Careful geological assessment, systematic extraction methods and effective production scheduling have helped maximise coal recovery while ensuring safe mining practices.Technological innovation has played a vital role in transforming the mine into a modern, high-performing operation. The adoption of advanced mining equipment, digital monitoring systems, mechanised operations and data-driven decision-making has significantly enhanced productivity while improving workplace safety and operational reliability.

SP and Opposition's conduct in UP assembly is uncivil, unconstitutional, and shameful: CM Yogi

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has strongly criticised Samajwadi Party legislators and other Opposition members in the Legislative Assembly on the second day of the Monsoon Session for their undemocratic and unconstitutional act.

Launching a sharp attack on what he described as the uncivil conduct of SP legislators, he stated, "The conduct of the Samajwadi Party and the Opposition is unconstitutional and shameful. By disrupting the proceedings of the House, the Opposition is playing with the interests of 25 crore people of the state, and every resident of Uttar Pradesh is witnessing it."

He said, "During the Monsoon Session, every member had an excellent opportunity to discuss issues concerning the sentiments and interests of 25 crore people in the House. However, those who have no faith in democratic values insult and undermine all institutions that strengthen parliamentary democracy. This conduct of the Samajwadi Party and the Opposition is not only unconstitutional but also shameful."

The Chief Minister added that the agenda of the House had already been finalised during the meeting of party leaders and the Business Advisory Committee.

However, members of the Opposition did not show interest in even a single legislative proposal or supplementary budget-related proposal listed on the agenda. Instead, they are trying to waste the valuable time of the House by raising unnecessary issues.

The Chief Minister stated, "Even before the House convened, during the meeting of party leaders, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister and I had assured everyone that every proposal brought before the House under the Rules would be discussed, and the government would respond to them. However, the Samajwadi Party and other Opposition parties have no faith in discussion, constitutional values, or the high traditions of the House. By continuously disrupting the proceedings of the House, they are playing with the interests of the state's 25 crore people."

In his address, the Chief Minister assured the House that the government is prepared to discuss every issue.

He informed, "The government wishes to hold meaningful discussions on every issue that the Chair invites for discussion under the Rules because our government is committed to public welfare."

However, Opposition parties have never believed in democratic values. Instead, they deliberately seek to undermine the dignity of the House and make a mockery of democracy. They are continuously vitiating the atmosphere of the House.

The people of Uttar Pradesh are witnessing this undemocratic conduct of the Samajwadi Party."

No new members for now, says Bengal BJP amid defection buzz

Kolkata: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which recently formed the government in West Bengal after its victory in the Assembly elections, has temporarily suspended its membership drive and ruled out the induction of leaders or workers from other political parties until further notice, party sources said on Tuesday.The decision comes amid growing political speculation over a possible influx of leaders from rival parties, particularly the Trinamool Congress (TMC), into the BJP following the change of government. However, the party's state leadership has made it clear that organisational discipline will take precedence over expansion at this stage.State BJP president Samik Bhattacharya had earlier announced that the enrolment of new members would remain suspended. The same message has also been conveyed by the party's national general secretary and West Bengal in-charge, Sunil Bansal. According to BJP sources, no new memberships will be issued at any organisational level in the state, including morchas, divisions, or district units, until fresh instructions are received from the central leadership.Even the renewal of existing memberships has been put on hold for the time being. Clarifying the party's stand, BJP state spokesperson Debajit Sarkar said the party follows a well-defined organisational process for granting membership, which is initiated only after approval from the central leadership."Since the formation of the BJP government in West Bengal on May 4, no fresh membership has been issued in the state. Therefore, anyone claiming to have become a BJP member during this period is not recognised by the party. At present, only those holding valid memberships issued earlier are considered members of the BJP," Sarkar said.He added that district-level committees constituted by the party are currently reviewing the records of existing members, membership renewals and the framework for future enrolment. The reports submitted by these committees will form the basis of the central leadership's decision on when and how the membership drive will resume. Sarkar also stressed that supporting the BJP does not automatically make an individual a party member."The BJP is not merely a political party but a large organisational platform working across different sections of society. Many people may support the party, but membership can only be obtained by completing the prescribed organisational process. That process remains suspended at present," he said.The announcement is being viewed in political circles as a clear message that the BJP is unwilling to encourage large-scale defections immediately after assuming office in the state.

Bihar bypoll verdict reflects public anger against BJP government: RJD

Patna: Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) working President and Leader of Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, Tejaswi Prasad Yadav, ton Tuesday said the Bankipur Assembly bypoll verdict reflected growing public resentment against the BJP government and Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, alleging that the government led by Choudhary failed to deliver during its 100 to 150 days in office.

Addressing a press conference here, Yadav said the people had lost faith in Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary and the BJP government, claiming the bypoll outcome was a clear expression of public anger against the government's policies.Responding to questions over the RJD candidate forfeiting his security deposit, Yadav said his party fully accepted the people's mandate but maintained that the verdict also exposed widespread dissatisfaction with the BJP-led government.

He claimed that within about 150 days of assuming office, the BJP under Samrat Choudhary had suffered defeats in two major electoral contests, including an MLC election and the Bankipur Assembly bypoll.Launching a scathing attack on the Chief Minister, Yadav alleged that Choudhary had failed to undertake a single significant developmental initiative since taking charge.He accused the government of pursuing "negative politics" rather than governance and development."

The Chief Minister has only indulged in rhetoric. There has been no positive politics or visible governance," Yadav alleged.

The RJD leader further charged that the government was targeting the Opposition instead of addressing public concerns and asserted that its failure to perform had prompted voters to "punish" the BJP in the election.

CM Suvendu Adhikari meets NCPI MPs in Delhi, focuses on development; alliance questions persist

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari held an hour-long meeting with MPs of the Nationalist Congress Progressive India (NCPI) at Banga Bhawan in New Delhi on Tuesday afternoon.

Though questions over the party's equation with the BJP and the NDA continued to surface, the NCPI maintained that discussions centred on development projects for their respective constituencies.

Apart from Deb, all 20 NCPI MPs, who had defected from the Trinamool Congress, attended the meeting.

Sources in the party said that Deb was not present because of a pre-scheduled shooting appointment.

Addressing reporters after the meeting, NCPI MP Satabdi Roy said the discussions were confined to development-related issues.

"We spoke only about the development of our area. The Chief Minister asked us to submit proposals. We will meet him again at Nabanna and place our proposals," Roy said.

Dismissing the speculation that NCPI MPs would formally join the BJP, Roy said, "There was no discussion regarding this. We are in the NDA, so there should be no confusion," she said.

The meeting was also attended by three BJP Rajya Sabha MPs — Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Sushmita Deb, and Prakashchik Baraik — who had resigned from the Trinamool Congress before joining the BJP.

Speaking to reporters, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy described the interaction as a courtesy meeting.

"This was only a courtesy call. We are in the BJP, so there is no confusion regarding my presence in the meeting," he said.The meeting came hours after the NDA parliamentary meeting at the Parliament Library Building, where NCPI parliamentary party leader Sudip Bandopadhyay asserted that "everyone in the NCPI is united."

However, despite the claim, three NCPI MPs — Abu Taher, Khalilur Rehman and Yusuf Pathan — skipped the NDA meeting, triggering speculation over differences within the party.

All three, however, later attended the meeting with the Chief Minister at Banga Bhawan.

Explaining their absence from the NDA parliamentary meeting earlier in the day, Abu Taher said the three MPs had maintained a different political position."We have said we are neither in the BJP nor in the NDA, and so we did not attend the NDA meeting. But we will always speak with the Chief Minister because it is about the development of our district and our area," Taher said.

Khalilur Rehman also underlined the group's political position, saying, "We will not support anything that goes against the interest of the Muslim community."

Despite the absence of the three MPs from the NDA meeting, the NCPI leadership sought to play down the issue.

Sudip Bandopadhyay said the MPs might have their own constraints and that the party respected their position.

"They might have some issues and we honour that. The Chief Minister is also aware of their limitations. They attended the meeting with him and spoke about the development of their areas. Their proposals were taken seriously," Bandopadhyay said.

"We need to understand that at the ground level there are still negotiations to be held. There is nothing wrong with that," he added.

Manipur CM urges NIT graduates to lead nation

Imphal: Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Tuesday reaffirmed the State Government's commitment to establishing a permanent campus for NIT Manipur.

He said the Government is actively working towards finding a suitable place while attending the 13th Convocation of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Manipur at the City Convention Centre, here.

Addressing the graduating students, the Chief Minister congratulated them on successfully completing their academic journey and wished them success in their future endeavours.

He said that NIT Manipur has a vital role to play in the development of both the State and the Nation.

He also acknowledged the support of Rameshwar Singh, MLA of Kakching Assembly Constituency, to facilitate land for the permanent campus at the earliest.

Highlighting the importance of technical education in achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, Khemchand said that graduates from disciplines such as Civil Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, Electronics and Communication Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering will play a significant role in nation-building.

He expressed confidence that institutions like NIT Manipur would contribute immensely towards realising the Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat.

Describing NIT Manipur as one of the emerging premier technical institutions in the North Eastern Region, the Chief Minister urged the graduating students to strive for excellence, become future administrators, innovators and leaders, and dedicate their knowledge and skills towards the progress of Viksit Bharat and Viksit Manipur.

MMU raises concern over demolition threat to Jauhar University

Srinagar: Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU), the largest amalgam of religious, educational and social organisations in Jammu & Kashmir, on Tuesday expressed serious concern over recent developments affecting Muslim students and educational institutions, particularly the threat of large-scale demolition at Mohammad Ali Jauhar University in Rampur Uttar Pradesh.

The MMU headed by Kashmir's chief cleric and Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said that reports of the proposed demolition of 38 out of 40 buildings of Mohammad Ali Jauhar University, where nearly 3,000 students are pursuing their education, were deeply disturbing.

"While the demolition order has reportedly received interim relief, the continuing uncertainty over the future of the institution remains a matter of grave concern," MMU said in a statement.

The MMU said that Kashmiri students studying at the university approached them regarding the matter, directly affecting them and their future, and the future of their families who send them to outside institutions for education .

The MMU said that whatever legal or regulatory violations may be alleged against an institution, there are established legal and administrative mechanisms to address them.

"The future of thousands of innocent students cannot be bulldozed along with university buildings. Students have no role in such disputes and must not be made to pay the price for them," the statement said

Odisha Police ink five-year pact with NFSU to bolster cyber policing

Bhubaneswar : The CID-Crime Branch of Odisha Police on Tuesday signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU), Bhubaneswar, to enhance capacity in cybercrime investigation and digital forensics.

The MoU was signed by Crime Branch DGP Vinaytosh Mishra and NFSU Bhubaneswar Campus Director Dr. Purabi Pokhariyal while Odisha Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania inaugurated the first training programme on "Cyber Crime Investigation and Digital Forensics."

Describing the partnership as a significant step in the modernisation of Odisha Police, Khurania said the collaboration would strengthen institutional capacity to tackle evolving cyber threats through advanced training, forensic expertise, joint research and technical cooperation.Highlighting the changing nature of crime, the DGP said digital evidence has become central to almost every criminal investigation, while cyber offences such as mule account frauds, online investment scams and "digital arrests" are increasing rapidly.

With the new criminal laws placing greater emphasis on forensic science, he stressed the need for every police officer to be proficient in the seizure, preservation and handling of electronic evidence.Odisha has already established 20 Cyber Crime and Economic Offences Police Stations and equipped police stations across the state with modern cyber investigation hardware and software worth nearly Rs 15 crore.The new partnership with NFSU, he added, would ensure that police personnel are adequately trained to use these resources effectively.

Besides the training, the collaboration will also cover crime scene management, higher education, forensic infrastructure development, joint research and technical consultancy.

Crime Branch DGP Vinaytosh Mishra, speaking on the occasion, said the initiative would facilitate specialised technical training for police personnel at all levels.

By January 2027, a total of 480 officers and personnel from all 34 police districts and the Crime Branch will be trained in 16 batches.

DP World PGTI tournament put Kashmir back on India's golf map: Omar

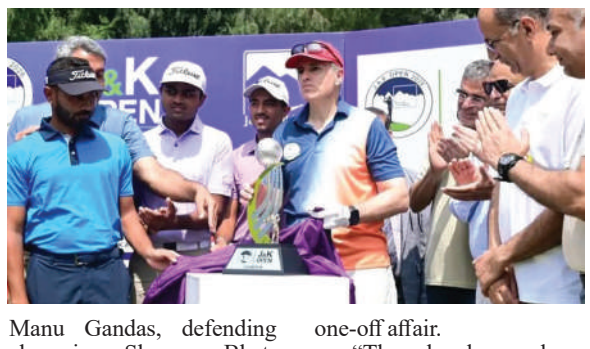
Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the DP World Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) tournament at the Royal Springs Golf Course (RSGC) marked an important milestone in putting Kashmir, particularly the Srinagar course, "back on India's golf map".

He said golf tourism was an important component of the government's overall tourism promotion strategy and expressed hope that the DP World PGTI would become an annual fixture.

The Chief Minister described the golf tournament as an important milestone.

"This year we have seen even without active promotion of golf tourism, we have seen the beginnings of what we actually want, which is people is flying into Srinagar for a long weekend of golf…. And this tournament is an important milestone in putting Kashmir and particularly RSGC back on India's golf map. We have more than 100 professional golfers who have come as part of the DP World PGTI.We have more than 10 overseas entries as well," Omar told reporters in Srinagar after inaugurating the J&K Open 2026 on Tuesday. Omar also unveiled the trophy.

The four-day DP World PGTI tournament features a strong field of leading Indian professionals, including Saptak Talwar, Veer Ahlawat, Om Prakash Chouhan,



Manu Gandas, defending champion Shaurya Bhattacharya and Angad Cheema, among others.

The tournament also carries a prize purse of Rs 1 crore, double the Rs 50 lakh offered in the previous edition.The Chief Minister said the government's endeavour was to make the tournament an annual event rather than a one-off affair.

"There has been a long gap between the previous such effort and this tournament. So this is the beginning. From here we hope to scale up both the prize money as well as the participation and ensure that it is a regular feature of the calendar for at least the next five years," he said.

On promoting local golfers, Omar said the government wanted to provide greater exposure to young talent through tournaments and proposed setting up a golf academy.

"We want to start a golf academy here, so that we can groom young golfers at a very young age, so that they can represent India at a national level," he said.

He said local amateurs were already getting opportunities to play alongside foreign professionals through Pro-Am tournaments, while local competitions were also being organised.

Asked whether the abrogation of Article 370 had contributed to the revival of golf tourism, Omar rejected the suggestion that such tournaments were a new phenomenon.

"We organised such tournaments before 2014 as well. And on a large scale," he said, recalling that before the onset of militancy in the 1980s, Jammu and Kashmir had hosted some of the country's biggest golf tournaments.

On concerns that golf courses could become loss-making government assets, Omar said their value should not be measured solely in terms of direct profits.

"Golf course will not be a profit centre in itself. But in terms of promotion, there is no competition for it," he said.

H-FAST seizes 25 tonnes of adulterated spices, arrests three in Hyderabad crackdown

Hyderabad: Hyderabad Police Commissioner V C Sajjanar on Tuesday announced that the Hyderabad Food Adulteration Surveillance Team (H-FAST), in coordination with the GHMC Food Safety Department, conducted a major crackdown on spice trading and processing units, leading to the seizure of over 25 tonnes of adulterated spices and the arrest of three persons.

Addressing a press conference, Sajjanar said that 13 spice trading and processing establishments were inspected following public complaints.

Three criminal cases were registered at Mailardevpally and Balapur police stations, and the accused were identified as Rahul Bhati, Vishal Panwar, and Dulichand Kachhawar.

Officials found spices such as jeera, ajwain, mustard, cloves and shahjeera adulterated with industrial dyes, synthetic colours, talcum powder, rice bran oil and other hazardous chemicals to enhance their appearance and weight. Samples have been sent for laboratory analysis, and legal action has been initiated under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

Sajjanar warned that consumption of such adulterated food could lead to liver and kidney damage, cancer, gastrointestinal disorders, allergic reactions and long-term health complications.

Highlighting H-FAST's performance, he said that within 140 days of its formation, the team conducted 659 raids, registered 202 FIRs, and seized 246 tonnes of adulterated food.

Don't be afraid of rejection, learn from it: Kranti Prakash Jha

Mumbai: Actor Kranti Prakash Jha, who has earned widespread appreciation for his performances in films and OTT projects, has spoken candidly about the struggles that defined his acting career. Reflecting on his journey in the entertainment industry, the actor said that rejection is an unavoidable part of life and should never discourage aspiring artists from pursuing their dreams. Instead, he believes every setback offers an opportunity to learn, improve and move closer to success.

Known for his powerful performance in the crime drama series Raktanchal, Jha said the road to recognition was anything but smooth. Long before audiences recognized him for his acting talent, he spent years facing repeated disappointments, financial uncertainty and countless auditions. Those experiences, he said, ultimately shaped both his personality and his career.

Speaking about the realities of the entertainment industry, Jha remarked that rejection is a universal truth that everyone must face. According to him, no one can completely avoid failure or disappointment, regardless of the profession they choose. He believes accepting rejection with the right mindset is the first step towards achieving long-term success.

The actor explained that every unsuccessful audition strengthened his determination instead of weakening it. Rather than dwelling on missed opportunities, he chose to focus on improving his craft and preparing himself for the next chance. This attitude helped him remain motivated during some of the most difficult phases of his career.Recalling his early days in Mumbai, Jha painted a vivid picture of the challenges he encountered while trying to establish himself in the film industry. He revealed that he frequently travelled by local train from Goregaon to Mahalaxmi studios to attend auditions, often navigating overcrowded compartments and long commuting hours in the city.

Because the crowded train journeys would leave him drenched in sweat before auditions, he developed a routine of carrying an extra set of clothes. Upon reaching the studio, he would change into fresh attire before facing the casting directors. For Jha, maintaining a professional appearance despite difficult circumstances was essential, and he considered it part of the discipline required to survive in the industry.The actor also recalled that landing a role in the biographical sports film M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story did not immediately transform his career as many people expected. Although the film became a major success and received appreciation from audiences across the country, the breakthrough he had hoped for did not arrive right away.

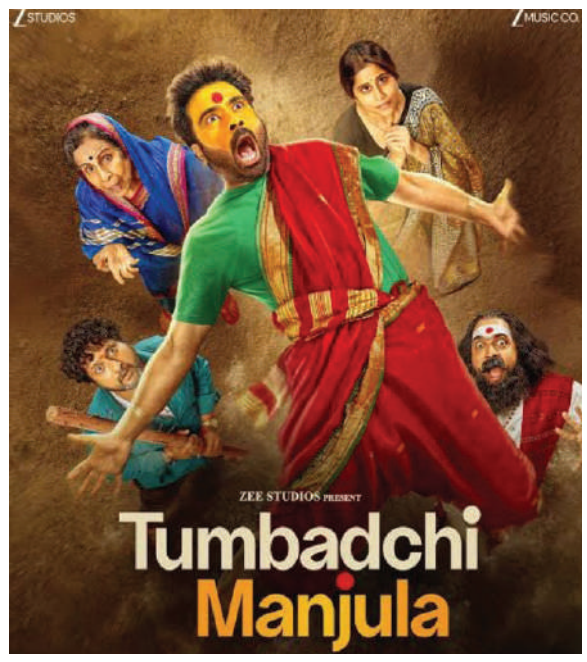
Jha revealed that the period following the film's release turned out to be one of the toughest phases of his professional life. For nearly two years after appearing in the movie, he struggled to secure meaningful acting assignments. Despite positive feedback about his performance, offers remained scarce, leaving him frustrated but determined.

Financial difficulties added to the pressure during that period. The actor admitted that there were times when he had neither regular work nor a stable source of income. While people praised his acting abilities, those compliments did not immediately translate into professional opportunities. Nevertheless, he refused to let temporary setbacks define his future.

Reflecting on those years, Jha said he never allowed success or praise to influence his attitude. He emphasized that he never considered himself a star simply because he had acted in a successful film. According to him, his parents instilled values of humility and simplicity, lessons that have continued to guide him throughout his professional journey.

The actor believes remaining grounded is just as important as achieving fame. In an industry where success can be unpredictable, he feels humility helps performers stay focused on their craft instead of becoming distracted by recognition or public attention.

'Tumbadchi Manjula' to stream on Marathi Zee5 on Aug 7



Mumbai: Marathi horror-comedy Tumbadchi Manjula, one of the most talked-about Marathi releases of 2026, is all set to reach a wider audience with its digital premiere. After earning appreciation from moviegoers and critics during its theatrical run, the film will begin streaming on ZEE5 in Marathi from August 7, giving viewers another opportunity to experience its unique blend of horror, comedy and social commentary.

Directed by Vividh Korgaonkar and produced by Zee Studios, the film features a talented ensemble cast led by Jitendra Joshi, Om Bhutkar, Makarand Anaspure, Sai Tamhankar and Usha Nadkarni. Their performances received praise during the film's theatrical release, contributing significantly to its positive reception.

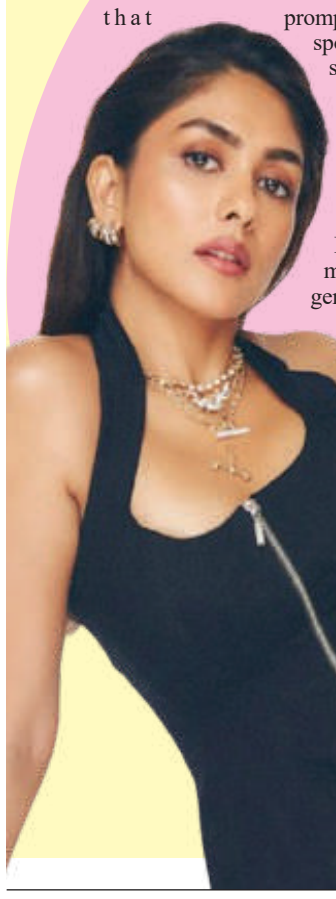
Following its successful run in cinemas, the makers are optimistic that the OTT release will introduce the film to a much larger audience. With the growing popularity of Marathi cinema on digital platforms, the streaming premiere is expected to help the film reach viewers who were unable to watch it on the big screen.

At the heart of the story is Keshav, a young man whose harmless prank unexpectedly changes the course of life in his village. In a moment of mischief, Keshav falsely claims that he has been possessed by the spirit of a woman named Manjula. What begins as a joke soon spirals into a series of strange and unpredictable incidents.

As rumors spread rapidly across the village, fear and superstition begin to take hold of the residents. The fabricated story gains credibility with every passing day, creating confusion and panic among the villagers. The narrative explores how easily misinformation can influence communities when driven by deeply rooted beliefs and social conditioning.

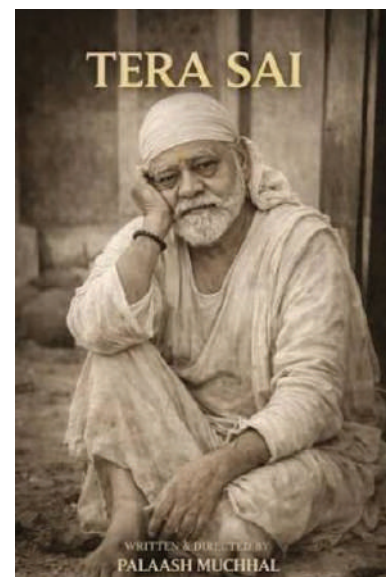
Blending elements of horror and comedy, the film keeps audiences entertained while also presenting an engaging social message. Rather than relying solely on supernatural scares, the story cleverly uses humor and suspense to highlight the consequences of blind faith, gossip and irrational beliefs that continue to exist in society.

Mrunal Thakur warns of legal consequences over AI deepfake misuse: "Stop immediately"



Mumbai : Mrunal Thakur has issued a strong public warning against the misuse of artificial intelligence to create deepfake content using her identity. Taking to Instagram on Tuesday, the actress made it clear that any unauthorised use of her likeness through AI-generated content would not be tolerated and could lead to legal action. Although Mrunal did not reveal the specific incident that prompted her statement, she described the post as a formal notice and urged those responsible to stop such activities immediately. In her message, she wrote, "Creating or sharing deepfake content using my likeness is illegal and unacceptable. Consider this your formal notice to stop immediately. Any further misuse of my identity will result in legal action."Her statement comes at a time when concernsover AI-generated deepfakes and identity misuse have been growing across the entertainment industry. Several prominent actors have already approached courts to safeguard their image, personality and identity rights against unauthorised AI-generated content. Among those who have sought legal protection are Akshay Kumar, Varun Dhawan, Anil Kapoor, Shilpa Shetty, Preity Zinta, Kartik Aaryan and Suniel Shetty.The issue has also been highlighted by Rashmika Mandanna, who has previously spoken about the harmful misuse of artificial intelligence, particularly in creating vulgar and misleading content targeting women. In December last year, she wrote on X, "When truth can be manufactured, discernment becomes our greatest defense."She further added, "AI is a force for progress, but its misuse to create vulgarity and target women signals a deep moral decline in certain people. Remember, the Internet is no longer a mirror of truth. It is a canvas where anything can be fabricated. Let us rise above misuse and use AI to build a more dignified and progressive society. Choose responsibility over recklessness. If people cannot act like humans, then strict and unforgiving punishment must be meted out to them."Earlier, authorities had arrested an individual for allegedly circulating deepfake content involving Rashmika Mandanna, underscoring the growing legal scrutiny surrounding AI misuse.On the work front, Mrunal Thakur is currently attached to the upcoming action drama Raaka, directed by Atlee Kumar. The film also stars Allu Arjun, Deepika Padukone and Rashmika Mandanna in key roles. While the makers are reportedly aiming for a December 2027 release, an official confirmation regarding the release schedule is still awaited.

Shooting of 'Tera Sai' wrapped, film to release in 2027



Mumbai: Singer, composer and filmmaker Palash Muchhal has completed the shooting of his upcoming spiritual drama Tera Sai, a film inspired by the life, teachings and timeless legacy of Sai Baba of Shirdi. With filming now wrapped up, the project has officially entered its post-production phase ahead of its planned theatrical release in 2027.

Presented by Red Eye Studios, Tera Sai has been written and directed by Palash Muchhal, marking another significant milestone in his journey as a filmmaker. The film seeks to bring the spiritual philosophy and humanitarian message of Sai Baba to audiences through an emotionally engaging cinematic experience.

Inspired by the life of Sai Baba, the film explores his teachings of love, compassion, equality and selfless service. Rather than presenting only historical events, the narrative aims to highlight the enduring relevance of his message in today's world, emphasizing values such as faith, hope, kindness and humanity.

The makers have described the project as an emotional and spiritually uplifting story that celebrates the universal principles preached by Sai Baba. Through powerful storytelling and meaningful performances, the film hopes to inspire audiences while encouraging reflection on compassion, unity and the importance of helping others.

National Award-winning actor Sanjay Mishra plays the central role of Sai Baba in the film. Known for his versatility and ability to portray emotionally layered characters, Mishra is expected to bring depth and authenticity to the revered spiritual figure.

The ensemble cast also features Sayaji Shinde, Manoj Joshi, Omkar Das Manikpuri, Avika Gor and Rohan Mehra in important roles.

The diverse cast is expected to add strength to the narrative through their performances.

Speaking after the completion of filming, Palash Muchhal said Tera Sai has been much more than a film project for him. He described the experience as a deeply personal and spiritual journey that allowed him to connect with the philosophy and teachings of Sai Baba while bringing the story to life on screen.

Muchhal shared that every scene was filmed with complete sincerity, dedication and respect for the subject. He expressed gratitude to the cast and crew, acknowledging that the entire team worked tirelessly to translate his creative vision into a meaningful cinematic experience.

The filmmaker emphasized that the story revolves around faith, humanity and hope—values that transcend religion and cultural boundaries. He expressed confidence that audiences from different backgrounds would emotionally connect with the film and its inspiring message.

With principal photography now complete, the production has moved into post-production, where editing, background score, visual enhancements and other technical work will shape the final version of the film before its release. The makers are focused on ensuring that the spiritual drama delivers a visually rich and emotionally impactful experience.

According to the production team, Tera Sai will showcase Sai Baba's life not merely as a historical account but as a timeless source of inspiration. The film intends to portray his compassion, unconditional love, service to humanity and spiritual wisdom in a way that resonates with contemporary audiences.

Shantanu Maheshwari continues Campus Beats: The Game of Love promotions despite ankle injury

Mumbai : Actor Shantanu Maheshwari, who has been receiving praise for his portrayal of Ishaan in Campus Beats: The Game of Love Season 7, recently suffered an ankle injury during a promotional event in Pune. Despite the unexpected setback, the actor chose to continue with his scheduled appearances, demonstrating his commitment to the series and its promotional campaign.

The incident occurred during a college visit in Pune, where Shantanu was interacting with students as part of the promotional tour for the latest season of the show. The event witnessed an enthusiastic response from students, who welcomed the actor with loud cheers and excitement. The lively atmosphere soon turned into an impromptu celebration, with Shantanu joining the students on stage for a dance performance.

Known for his exceptional dancing skills, Shantanu enthusiastically became part of the celebration, matching the students' energy with his signature moves. The spontaneous performance added to the excitement of the event and created memorable moments for the audience gathered at the college.

However, during one of the energetic dance moves, the actor accidentally twisted his ankle. According to sources, the injury occurred after he made a large jump towards the crowd while dancing. The awkward landing caused pain in his ankle, forcing him to briefly deal with the unexpected injury in the middle of the event.

Although he was visibly uncomfortable, Shantanu did not allow the injury to interrupt the day's schedule. Instead of cancelling the remaining promotional activities, he decided to continue fulfilling all his commitments, determined not to disappoint the fans who had gathered to meet him across different locations in Pune.

A source close to the promotional team revealed that Shantanu's enthusiasm to dance with the students ultimately led to the accident. Despite experiencing considerable pain, he remained aware of the packed itinerary planned for the day and chose to carry on with every scheduled appearance.

According to the source, the actor attended each promotional event despite the discomfort, interacting with audiences and promoting the series with the same enthusiasm.

His determination ensured that the campaign continued without disruption, allowing fans at every venue to meet him as originally planned.

The source further stated that Shantanu displayed remarkable professionalism throughout the day. Even while managing the pain caused by the injury, he maintained a positive attitude, completed interviews, participated in promotional interactions and remained fully engaged with the campaign.

The Movie's first song 'Do Numberi' unleased

Mumbai: The makers of "Mirzapur: The Movie" on Monday unveiled the film's first song, 'Do Numbari', offering audiences a glimpse into the gritty and power-driven world of the much-awaited big-screen adaptation of the hit web series. The song also marks the Bollywood debut of Haryanvi rapper Dhanda Nyoliwala, who has written, composed and sung the track. With powerful Haryanvi beats and an energetic style, the song gives a glimpse of the film's world of crime, power struggle and bullying.

The makers say that the song effectively brings out the atmosphere of the film and the bold image of the characters.The makers announced that the official trailer for the film is set to release on August 11. The teaser, released earlier this month, received a positive response from audiences, leading to growing anticipation for the film."Mirzapur: The Movie" brings the story of the popular web series "Mirzapur" to the big screen for the first time. The film stars Ali Fazal, Pankaj Tripathi, and Divyenndu in lead roles. Abhishek Banerjee, Rasika Duggal, Mohit Malik, Sheeba Chaddha, Rajesh Tailang, Pramod Pathak, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Harshita Shekhar Gaur, Shweta Tripathi, and Sonal S. Chauhan also play pivotal roles.Directed by Gurmmeet Singh and written by Puneet Krishna, "Mirzapur: The Movie" has been produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar under with Kassim Jagmagia and Vishal Ramchandani serving as co-producers.

Bhumi Pednekar defends teenage protester facing rape threats online; says, "We cannot bully a young girl"

Mumbai: Actor Bhumi Pednekar has strongly condemned the online abuse and alleged rape and death threats directed at a teenage protester, urging people to reject harassment and engage in respectful dialogue even when opinions differ. Her statement comes days after she faced criticism on social media for condemning the use of abusive language against Prime Minister **Narendra Modi> during a students' protest at Jantar Mantar. The controversy began after a video of 15-year-old Ruchika Singh, who participated in the protest, went viral on social media. In the widely circulated clip, the teenager was seen using coarse language while expressing her views during an interview. The video sparked intense online debate, drawing both criticism and support from different sections of social media users.Following the circulation of the video, Singh allegedly became the target of widespread online harassment. According to Bhumi, the teenager has been subjected to repeated rape threats and death threats, with abusive messages also being directed at her family members, including her mother.Sharing a video message on Instagram, Bhumi expressed concern over the emotional condition of the young protester. She said she had watched a recent video in which the teenager appeared visibly distressed and shaken by the barrage of online abuse she had received since the earlier clip went viral.She stressed that disagreement in a democracy should never escalate into threats, bullying or attempts to create fear in someone's mind.People may disagree with an individual's views or conduct, but expressing those disagreements through intimidation, abuse or threats crosses the boundaries of civil discourse.She also highlighted the broader issue of harassment faced by women, particularly in online spaces. Bhumi remarked that women are often subjected to personal attacks and abuse simply for expressing opinions, making the digital environment increasingly hostile for many. Drawing from her own experiences as a public figure, the actress said she understands the emotional toll that online harassment can take. She revealed that she too has experienced targeted abuse on social media.

Diamond League: Neeraj faces world-class field in Lausanne

New Delhi: Almost three weeks after winning a silver medal at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra will return to action at the Lausanne Diamond League (Athletissima) on August 21, where he is set to face another world-class javelin field.

The Lausanne meet will be Chopra's third competition since returning from the lower-back injury that sidelined him in September last year. The 28-year-old began his comeback with a fourth-place finish at the Doha Diamond League in June, throwing 85.69m, before improving to a season-best 85.83m to clinch the silver medal at the Commonwealth Games.

"Although we always want the National anthem to play, I did my season's best and the comeback is going okay. There are other competitions as well. I am happy," Chopra had said after his silver in Glasgow.

In Switzerland, the Indian star will once again renew his rivalry with reigning Olympic champion

Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan and Commonwealth Games champion Rumesh Pathirage of Sri Lanka. Also in the star-studded field are Grenada's two-time world champion Anderson Peters and Trinidad and Tobago's Olympic champion Keshorn Walcott, making it one of the strongest javelin line-ups of the season.

The field also features Czech Republic's Olympic silver medallist Jakub Vadlejch, Germany's Julian Weber, world No. 2 Curtis Thompson of the United States and Switzerland's rising talent Simon Wieland.

"The five javelin superstars, who have won the last four editions of the Olympic Games and World Championships, will be present at Athletissima on August 21 for a competition of extraordinary quality," the organisers said.

Five of those throwers, including Chopra, Nadeem, Pathirage, Peters and Walcott, also competed in the Commonwealth Games final in Glasgow. Pathirage claimed the gold with a championship-winning throw of 89.75m despite difficult windy conditions, while Chopra finished second with his season-best effort of 85.83m. Peters was fourth with 83.88m, whereas Nadeem endured a disappointing outing, finishing ninth with 77.41m.

The Lausanne leg also carries added significance in the race for a place in the Diamond League Final. Chopra, the 2022 Diamond League champion, is currently seventh in the standings with five points and will be aiming to climb the table. Pathirage and Peters have already secured qualification for the final after accumulating 23 points each this season.

With Olympic and world champions once again sharing the runway, Lausanne will provide another stern test for Chopra as he continues his comeback and builds momentum for the remainder of the season.

Alexandra Eala stuns Pegula for first WTA Tour title

Washington: Alexandra Eala won her first WTA Tour singles title, beating topseed Jessica Pegula 4-6, 6-4, 6-0 in the final of the Mubadala DC Open in Washington, D.C.

The 21-year-old became the first tennis player from the Philippines to win a WTA Tour singles title on Monday.

Ranked No. 28 at the start of the week, she's projected to break into the world's top 20 for the first time ahead of the U.S. Open.

The final began on August 2 but was suspended by heavy rain and lightning, with Pegula leading 6-4, 1-2. Play resumed at midday on Monday, and Eala took control from there, closing out the match in one hour and 45 minutes, according to olympics.com.

Eala was clinical behind her first serve, winning 84.4 per cent of those points (38 of 45) to Pegula's 56.5 per cent. She converted four of her

nine break-point chances and won 79 of the 140 points played, despite hitting no aces and three double faults.

"To all my supporters, thank you guys. Especially the Filipino community. Here in DC and back home, whatever you are in the world. I really feel all the love," Eala said after the match."Before the final yesterday, I got so many sweet messages from my family and my friends.I thought to myself, 'I feel so much love'. Standing here in the middle of all this love, my first chance at a title, knowing it won't be my last.

Babar closes in on ton as Pakistan coach feels satisfied

Port of Spain: Pakistan assistant coach Asad Shafiq was thrilled with the way hisside responded to his urgings on the second day of the second Test against Pakistan in Trinidad.

Right-hander Abdullah Shafique scored his sixth Test century and skipper Babar Azam (86 not out) closed in on his first Test hundred in almost four years as Pakistan dominated the second day at Port of Spain as they look to level the two-match series in the Caribbean.

Shafique and Babar put on an unbeaten stand of 168 late in the day at Queen's Park Oval to help Pakistan reach 266/2 at stumps, trailing the West Indies by just 78 runs on the first innings in the ICC World Test Championship contest.

It was just what Pakistan needed after a disappointing first Test from their top six, with Shafiq admitting he was thrilled with the response from the duo as they scored at ease against the West Indies, according to ICC.

"It's been a very satisfying day for me as batting coach," Shafiq said.

"The way Abdullah and Babar batted, and the partnership they built, was truly

remarkable.

"That's exactly what we had been missing in the last two or three Test matches.

"They took responsibility, and seeing that gives me immense satisfaction."

Shafique wasn't originally named in Pakistan's squad for the series in the Caribbean, with the

26-year-old only earning a reprieve when Abdullah Fazal was ruled out of the tour due toa back injury prior to the first Test.

The Pakistan No.3 has already hit 10 fours and two sixes during his unbeaten innings of 107 against the West Indies and Shafiq has been impressed with his ability to choose when toattack the opposition bowlers and when to defend.

"Abdullah has only recently joined the team, but he has been scoring heavily in domestic cricket," Shafiq noted.

"He saw this opportunity and seized it with both hands.

"The hallmark of his innings was the way he punished the loose deliveries while showing respect to the good ones. That balance really stood out."

And with Babar just 14 runs away from his first Test century since December 2022, Shafiq believes his side is well placed to keep the pressure on the West Indies and move intoa dominant position in the match.

"Given the position we're in, if we bat well tomorrow, we can put ourselves in a commanding position," Shafiq said."From there, we'll be able to dictate the course of the game."

Graeme Smith relishes 50-over World Cup return to African soil

Cape Town : Former South Africa captain and ICC Hall of Famer Graeme Smith has described the return of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup to Africa after more than two decades as a landmark moment for the sport. The tournament, scheduled for 2027, will be jointly hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, bringing cricket's biggest 50-over event back to the continent for the first time since 2003.

South Africa last staged the Men's Cricket World Cup in 2003 alongside Zimbabwe and Kenya. The 2027 edition will see the country once again play host, this time in partnership with Zimbabwe and Namibia, highlighting the growing strength of cricket across southern Africa.

Speaking at a star-studded ceremony in Johannesburg during the announcement of the 12 venues that will host the tournament, Smith said Africa had waited a long time for another opportunity to stage a global men's cricket event. He described the occasion as a well-deserved recognition of the region's contribution to international cricket.

According to Smith, the

passion for cricket across the three host nations, combined with the quality of players and the enthusiasm of supporters, makes Africa an ideal destination for a tournament of this magnitude. He said the continent's vibrant cricket culture deserves to be showcased on the global stage.

The former skipper also stressed that the Cricket World Cup continues to occupy a unique and prestigious place in world cricket despite the rapid evolution of the sport through multiple formats and franchise leagues. He believes lifting the ODI World Cup remains the ultimate ambition for international teams.The 2027 tournament will be the 14th edition of the Men's Cricket World Cup and will feature 14 teams, marking the first time since the 2015 tournament that the competition will be contested by more than 10 nations. The expanded format is expected to make the event more competitive and inclusive.Drawing comparisons with the recently concluded 2026 FIFA World Cup, Smith noted how the participation of 48 nations created an atmosphere of global celebration, bringing together diverse cultures and passionate supporters from around the world.He expressed hope that cricket would witness a similar festival-like atmosphere during the 2027 World Cup, with fans from participating nations travelling to South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia to support their teams and experience the unique hospitality of the host countries.

Smith said global sporting events held every four years carry unmatched significance because of their rarity and prestige. According to him, the Cricket World Cup has built a rich tradition over several decades, making it the most coveted trophy in One-Day International cricket.He added that while various ICC tournaments are highly competitive, the ODI World Cup continues to stand apart because of its history, stature and emotional significance. Every international cricketer, he said, dreams of winning the World Cup, making it the pinnacle of the sport. The expansion from 10 to 14 teams has also received Smith's strong support. He believes the decision reflects the steady growth of cricket worldwide and provides emerging nations with a valuable opportunity to compete against the game's leading teams on its biggest stage.According to Smith, the quality of cricket among developing nations has improved considerably over recent years, while fan engagement has grown significantly across new markets.

Sindhu seeded ninth, Satwik-Chirag fifth

New Delhi: Japan Open champion PV Sindhu will be seeded ninth for the upcoming BWF World Championships, while the 2022 Asian Games gold medallist combination of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will begin the tournament as the fifth seeds in men's doubles.

The World Championships will be held at the Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi from August 17 to 23, with India fielding two entries in each of the five events. The country has at least one seeded player or pair in four of the five categories.

Apart from Sindhu and Satwik-Chirag, former World Championships bronze medallist Lakshya Sen has been seeded 14th in the men's singles, while the mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto are the 15th seeds.

Qualification for the World Championships was based on the BWF world rankings published on April 28, while the seedings have been determined using the latest rankings released on July 28.

Reigning men's singles world champion Shi Yuqi of China has been named the top seed, while South Korea's An Se Young leads the women's singles seedings.

Mandaviya urges CWG medallists to build India's sporting future

New Delhi: union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday felicitated India's medal winners from the 2026 Commonwealth Games, congratulating the boxing, judo and para-athletics contingents for their historic performances in Glasgow.

The event celebrated three of India's most successful teams at the Games. While the boxers topped the medal standings with 10 medals, including seven gold and three silver, the judokas produced their best-ever Commonwealth Games campaign with four medals, including two historic golds. The para-athletics team was also honoured after delivering a memorable performance in Glasgow.

The medallists received cash rewards of Rs 30 lakh for gold, Rs 20 lakh for silver and Rs 10 lakh for bronze in recognition of their achievements.

Interacting with the athletes, Mandaviya encouraged them to think beyond their competitive careers and contribute to the growth of Indian sport by mentoring the next generation.

Referring to the recently expanded Khelo India programme, backed by a Rs 36,000-crore investment, he urged the athletes to consider starting sports academies after retirement.

"Let us not just win a Commonwealth Games medal with the aim to bag a government job. I urge all of you to run sports academies once you retire from your active career," Dr Mandaviya said, adding that the athletes' mission should be "India firs"While you were playing for the gold in Glasgow, we launched the expanded Khelo India scheme by investing a total of Rs. 36000 Crore, that will take care of greater continued investment in the growth of Indian sports in the coming years," he added.With the Asian Games just weeks away, the union Minister asked the athletes to carry the confidence from Glasgow into the continental event."I want all of you to use this morale boost to win more gold medals at the 2026 Asian Games. Those who have won silver and bronze must strive for gold, while those who have won gold must sustain this level of excellence," he said.

Cabo Verde keeper Vozinha signs with Colo-Colo

Santiago: Colo-Colo has completed the signing of Cabo Verde international goalkeeper Vozinha for the rest of Chile's 2026 domestic season, the club said.

The 40-year-old passed a medical before concluding paperwork at Colo-Colo's Santiago headquarters.

"Together with our president, Anibal Mosa, Vozinha signed his contract and officially became a new Colo-Colo player. Welcome to the Colo-Colo family," the club said in a social media post on Monday.

Vozinha arrived as a free agent after parting ways with Portuguese second-division side Chaves in June.

Colo-Colo did not provide details of the deal but local media reported it would initially run until December, with the option to extend for another year.

Vozinha was one of the standout players of the World Cup in June and July, helping Cabo Verde reach the knockout stage at its first appearance at the tournament. The African team's run endedin the round of 32, when it pushed Argentina to extra time before falling 3-2, according to Xinhua.

Vozinha kept a clean sheet in his team's opening draw with eventual champion Spain before repeating the feat in the final group stage match against Saudi Arabia. His move to Colo-Colowas announced last week but was delayed by visa problems and personal issues.

Sri Lanka & Pakistan stars climb latest ICC women's ODI and T20I player rankingd

Dubai: Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu has been rewarded for her outstanding performances against Pakistan with a career-best rating in the latest International Cricket Council Women's T20I Player Rankings. The experienced all-rounder played a pivotal role in Sri Lanka's series victory over Pakistan in Dambulla, leading her side from the front with two impactful innings.

Athapaththu scored a quickfire 39 off 22 deliveries in the opening T20 International before following it up with an explosive 40 from just 15 balls in the second match. Her aggressive batting provided Sri Lanka with strong starts in both games and helped the hosts secure an unassailable lead in the three-match series.

Her consistent performances earned her a one-place rise in the ICC Women's T20I Batting Rankings, taking her to a career-best 729 rating points. The latest achievement further cements her status as one of the world's premier batters in the shortest format of the game.

Another major contributor to Sri Lanka's success was Imesha Dulani, who recorded the biggest rankings improvement among the home side's batters. Her remarkable unbeaten 101 off just 64 balls in the series opener guided Sri Lanka to a comfortable six-wicket victory.

The maiden century not only proved decisive in the match but also propelled Dulani 33 places up the ICC Women's T20I Batting Rankings to 23rd position, marking one of the week's most significant gains in the rankings.Pakistan's players also made notable progress despite losing the series. Opening batter Muneeba Ali climbed four places to 30th in the T20I batting rankings after registering fluent scores of 42 off 24 balls and 45 off 30 deliveries in the first two matches.Those performances also earned Muneeba a career-best rating of 538 points, reflecting her growing consistency at the top of Pakistan's batting order and her ability to provide aggressive starts in the shortest format.

The week's biggest leap in the batting rankings belonged to Shawaal Zulfiqar, who produced an extraordinary rise of 869 places. Her impressive knocks of 63 and 48 against Sri Lanka lifted her to a career-best 52nd position, making her one of the standout performers in the latest rankings update.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka also enjoyed success in the ICC Women's Championship One-Day International series, defeating Pakistan 2-1 in Hambantota. The series victory was accompanied by significant improvements in the ICC Women's ODI Batting Rankings for several Sri Lankan players.

Harshitha Samarawickrama continued her excellent form with a composed 71 off 92 balls in the deciding ODI.

World Cup qualification the main focus for new Ireland coach Gary Wilson

Bready (Ireland): Recently-appointed Ireland coach Gary Wilson is focused on helping his side qualify for next year's ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

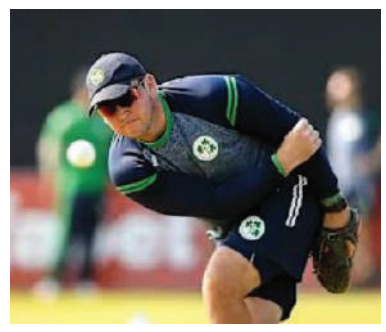
Wilson only took over the coaching reins in June from outgoing coach Heinrich Malan and the former Ireland international has wasted no time in making his priorities clear for the ever-improving Irish side.

Ireland have only ever qualified for the men's 50-over World Cup on three occasions - Wilson played in their two most recent visits in 2011 and 2015 - and the new head coach is determined

to ensure his charges earn the right to appear at the 14-team tournament in 2027 that will beco-hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

"We're laser-focused on 50-over cricket right now for that reason," Wilson told BBC Sport.

"I've been lucky enough to be part



of two and they are amazing experiences."

Ireland's quest to feature at the 2027 World Cup will go up a notch when they host Afghanistan

for a five-match ODI series commencing on Wednesday in what will be the side's first 50-over matches in more than 12 months.

From there they will then play at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Qualifier event, where the top four sides from the 10-team tournament will progress to the main event in 2027, according to ICC.

While that tournament might be still some time away, Wilson wants his players to create their own history and chase lofty goals during his time in charge.

"Irish cricket is really in its infancy in many ways and there's been a lot of firsts within the last20 years," he said.

"We've had Ed Joyce as the first player to play for England, we've had the first World Cup in 2007, we've had the first Test win, why can't we go on and do something huge at a World Cup? If you'd said 30 or 40 years ago where the Irish rugby team would be now, you'd have got laughed at.

"Whether it's in our lifetime or not, one day we will do something amazing. A challenge I've put to this group is to create their own firsts.

BSE Sensex		Nifty 50		Nifty 500		Nifty Next 50		Nifty 100		Nifty Bank		Nifty Midcap 100	
Close	Percent chenge	Close	Percent chenge	Close	Percent chenge	Close	Percent chenge	Close	Percent chenge	Close	Percent chenge	Close	Percent chenge
78,428.95	-0.27%	24,614.90	-0.64%	23,690.15	-0.47%	74,210.55	-0.53%	25,719.15	0.62%	57,907.20	-0.58%	63.491.60	-0.29%
Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open
78,639.03	79,132.97	24,774.30	24,703.90	23,802.85	23,771.45	74,608.70	74,551.50	25,880.45	25,816.80	58,247.95	58,068.95	63,679.30	63,739.90
High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
79,143.15	78,211.87	24,703.90	24,427.95	23,771.45	23,573.60	74,667.20	74,037.15	25,816.80	25,553.40	58,068.95	57,352.65	63,679.30	63,278.95

Top Gainers

Company	Current	% Gain
Apollo Hospital	9,050.00	2.61
Hindalco	1,020.00	2.52
Trent	3,107.70	1.89
Jio Financial	265.00	0.76
ITC	289.00	0.70

Top Losers

Company	Current	%Loss
Grasim	3,138.00	-3.74
HDFC Life	535.95	-3.10
Bajaj Auto	11,600.00	-2.16
Reliance	1,290.90	-2.13
Max Healthcare	1,077.00	-2.13

Commodities

Commodity	Price	Change (%)
Gold Aug 05	141,998.00	903.00 0.64
Silver Sep 04	219,480.00	2,734.00 1.26
Crudeoil Aug 19	7,639.00	-6.00 -0.08
Naturalgas Aug 26	262.00	-2.40 -0.91

Stock markets end lower with Nifty below 24,700

Mumbai : Indian stock markets on Tuesday ended lower, snapping a four-session winning streak. The markets responded as investors booked profits amid weekly derivatives expiry.

At the time of close, Sensex was down 210.08 points or 0.27 per cent at 78,428.95, and the Nifty was down 159.40 points or 0.64 per cent at 24,614.90. Nifty midcap index shed 0.3 per cent, while smallcap index was up 0.2 per cent.

Indian rupee ended marginally lower at 95.38 per dollar on Tuesday compared with the previous close of 95.34.

Among the sectors, most of the indices remained largely negative. Nifty Realty emerged as the top loser, declining 2.4pc. It was followed by Nifty Oil & Gas (-1.1pc), Nifty FMCG (-0.9pc), Nifty Private Bank (-0.7pc), Nifty IT (-0.8pc), Nifty Bank (-0.6pc), Nifty Consumer Durables (-0.7pc), Nifty Infra (-0.9%), Nifty Auto (-0.4pc).

Further, on the gaining side were Nifty Media, advancing 2pc, Nifty Metal, which gained 0.9pc.Around 150 stocks touched 52-week high. These included Ather Energy, Deepak Fertilisers, Gabriel India, Siemens, Sai Life Sciences, Gland Pharma, Welspun Corp, RBL Bank, Balrampur Chini Mills, Nestle India, Bajaj Auto, Piramal Industries, United Spirits, Dr Lal PathLab, Sona BLW, TVS Motor, Titan Company, Craftsman, Federal Bank, among others.

On Nifty, the gainers included Hindalco, Trent, Apollo Hospitals, Jio Financial and Eternal, while on the losing end were Grasim Industries, HDFC Life, Max Healthcare, Bajaj Auto, and Reliance Industries.

Market participants are closely tracking geopolitical developments in the Strait of Hormuz and the outcome of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) ongoing monetary policy meeting, as both factors are expected to play a crucial role in determining the near-term direction of domestic financial markets, according to Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Investments Limited.

Nair said investors continue to keep a close watch on the evolving situation in the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most strategically important oil shipping routes. Any improvement in geopolitical stability in the region could significantly reduce concerns over disruptions in global crude oil supplies and help restore confidence across international markets.According to him, greater clarity regarding developments in the region would likely ease upward pressure on crude oil prices.

Hyundai strengthens EV ownership confidence with assured buyback prog for CRETA Electric

Chennai: Passenger car makers Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) today announced introduction of its Assured Buyback Program for the CRETA Electric, offering customers 60% assured buyback value till 3-years/up to 45,000 kms.

The initiative addresses one of the key considerations influencing EV purchase decisions i.e. future resale value and further reinforces Hyundai's commitment to making electric mobility more accessible, convenient and confidence inspiring, a company statement said.

Commenting on the announcement, HMIL MD and CEO Tarun Garg said "The next phase of electric vehicle adoption in India will be driven equally by advancements in vehicle technology and by greater customer confidence. Hyundai CRETA Electric has been engineered to deliver an exceptional ownership experience backed by Hyundai's global EV expertise and the trust of the iconic CRETA brand. Our Assured Buyback Program, offering 60% assured buyback value, reflects our confidence in the product's outstanding quality, reliability and long-term value."

"Together with our Battery-as-a-Service initiative, expanding charging infrastructure and future EV roadmap, we are building one of India's most comprehensive EV ecosystems, enabling customers to embrace electric mobility without compromising on convenience, confidence or peace of mind", he said.

Quick TV to invest Rs 100 crore in AI-powered microdrama production

Bengaluru: ShareChat-owned Quick TV on Tuesday announced India's first dedicated AI-powered microdrama slate, unveiling six original AI-assisted series and committing to invest up to Rs 100 crore over the next year to expand AI-driven content production and strengthen its artificial intelligence capabilities.The announcement builds on the launch of *Main Amar Hoon*, which the company described as one of India's first AI-assisted microdrama series. The production used a hybrid pipeline combining live-action filmmaking, motion capture, advanced visual effects and generative AI to create cinematic fantasy settings while preserving actors' performances. Quick TV said the approach is designed to augment, rather than replace, human creativity.Mohalla Tech, the parent company of ShareChat and Moj, said the planned investment will be directed towards scaling AI-generated entertainment, expanding production capacity and building AI talent as demand for premium short-form content continues to grow.The company said its AI-generated microdramas have recorded Episode-20 completion rates of around 50 per cent, indicating strong viewer engagement with the format.Leading the August slate is *Pashu Samrat*, an epic fantasy about a farmer who discovers divine powers. Other titles include *Badshah Benaqab*, a royal action drama; *Port Ka King*, a rags-to-riches story of a Goan fisherman; *Odiyan*, inspired by Indian folklore; *Jadugar Rajkumar*, a fantasy adventure centred on a prince with magical powers; and *Hamari Lucky Jia*, a family drama about a young girl with healing abilities. Quick TV said the six originals span fantasy, action and family genres but share a common AI-assisted production workflow that combines traditional filmmaking with advanced digital tools to deliver mobile-first entertainment.

Sitharaman tables Tax Amendment Bill to ease rules for offshore investment funds

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday introduced the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha, proposing sweeping changes to India's tax framework aimed at attracting overseas capital, simplifying rules for offshore investment funds and strengthening the country's position as a global fund management destination.

The proposed legislation seeks to replace the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, promulgated on June 5, which had granted tax exemptions on interest income and capital gains earned by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) from investments in government securities.

A key feature of the Bill is the significant relaxation of eligibility conditions for Eligible Investment Funds (EIFs) managed from India. The government has proposed removing several existing requirements that offshore funds currently need to satisfy to claim tax exemption on their global income.

If enacted, eligible offshore funds will no longer have to meet conditions such as maintaining a minimum of 25 investors, limiting a single investor's participation to 10 per cent, restricting investments in a single entity to 25 per cent of the corpus, avoiding investments in associate entities, or maintaining a minimum monthly average corpus of Rs 100 crore.

The government believes these changes will make India a more attractive location for global fund managers by reducing regulatory complexity and creating a more competitive investment ecosystem.

The Bill also proposes tax incentives for foreign companies engaged in electronics manufacturing supply chains. Under the proposal, foreign entities storing and selling electronic components through customs-bonded warehouses for supply to Indian manufacturers will receive tax exemptions, a move aimed at supporting domestic manufacturing and improving supply chain efficiency.

In another measure to promote India's gem and jewellery sector, the Bill seeks to exempt income earned by eligible foreign companies from the sale of rough diamonds through notified special trading zones in India. The benefit will remain available until March 31, 2041, providing long-term policy certainty for global diamond traders.

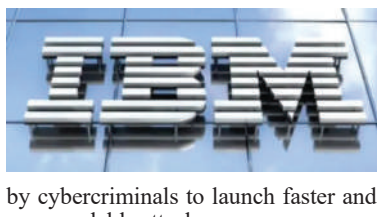
The Statement of Objects and Reasons accompanying the Bill says additional taxation measures are required to comprehensively achieve the objectives that were initially addressed through the June ordinance. It adds that evolving global economic conditions warrant a timely legislative response to facilitate foreign capital inflows and improve India's investment climate.

India's data breach cost hits record Rs 25.5 crore: IBM

Bengaluru: India's average cost of a data breach rose to a record Rs 25.5 crore in 2026, a 15.9 per cent increase from Rs 22 crore last year, as cyberattacks became more sophisticated with growing use of artificial intelligence (AI), according to IBM's 2026 Cost of a Data Breach Report released on Tuesday.

The report said the average number of compromised records per breach also increased to 39,500 in 2026 from 38,200 in 2025, highlighting the growing scale of cyber incidents.

It found that 26 per cent of malicious breaches in India were AI-generated, reflecting the increasing use of AI



by cybercriminals to launch faster and more scalable attacks.

However, AI adoption in cybersecurity remains limited. Only 32 per cent of Indian organisations reported extensive use of AI and security automation, while 36 per cent had limited deployment and 32 per cent reported no use at all.

According to the report, organisations without AI and security automation suffered the highest average breach cost of Rs 31.6 crore, compared with Rs 21.3 crore for organisations with extensive deployment. Breaches also took significantly longer to identify in organisations without AI-enabled security, averaging 236 days compared with 175 days for those with extensive automation.

Shadow AI, referring to unauthorised use of AI tools within organisations, added an average Rs 1.79 crore to the cost of a breach, making it one of the leading cost-increasing factors along with regulatory non-compliance and cloud migration.

FSSAI orders Dabur to halt sale of products carrying '100 Percent' claims

New Delhi: Dabur India has been directed by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to immediately stop selling a range of food products carrying "100 per cent" claims, with the regulator stating that such descriptions are ambiguous, cannot be independently verified, and may mislead consumers.

The order covers multiple products, including honey, apple cider vinegar, virgin coconut oil, sesame oil, cow ghee, coconut water, and coconut milk that were marketed using claims such as "100 per cent Natural", "100 per cent Pure", "100 per cent Purity Guaranteed", "100 per cent Organic" and "100 per cent Tender Coconut Water".

According to FSSAI, these claims violate the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (Advertising & Claims) Regulations, 2018, which govern how food products can be advertised and labelled.

The regulator clarified that its action is related to product labelling and advertising practices and should not be interpreted as an indication that the products are unsafe or adulterated.

FSSAI noted that it had already issued an industry-wide advisory in May 2025 asking food business operators to avoid using "100 per cent" claims on labels, packaging, and promotional material.

The regulator had said the phrase is not defined under existing food safety regulations and may create an inaccurate impression of absolute purity or superior quality.

Apart from the marketing claims, FSSAI also raised concerns over the use of the Jaivik Bharat logo on Dabur Himalayan Organic Apple Cider Vinegar and Dabur Organic Honey, stating that the products were displaying the certification mark without a valid FSSAI organic endorsement.

The Jaivik Bharat logo is intended to identify certified organic food products that comply with India's prescribed organic certification standards.

FRAI warns against growing illicit trade, market distortion in India's online retail ecosystem

Chennai: Leading retailers, trader associations and policymakers on Tuesday flagged the alarming rise of illicit trade and the increasing prevalence of unfair market practices in India's online retail ecosystem. At a seminar organised by the Federation of Retailers Association of India (FRAI) Tamil Nadu State Chapter on "Confronting Illicit Trade in Modern Markets" retailers, trader associations and policymakers together deliberated on two rapidly growing threats impacting India's retail ecosystem — the alarming rise of illicit trade and the increasing prevalence of unfair market practices.The participants expressed serious concern over the growing circulation of counterfeit products, illegal distribution channels and non-compliant goods across markets, while also highlighting how predatory pricing, deep discounting and unchecked expansion of certain quick commerce and e-commerce models are creating severe imbalances for small retailers and traditional businesses.The seminar highlighted that both illicit trade and unfair market practices are adversely affecting genuine businesses, government revenues, consumer trust and the livelihoods of lakhs of small traders across the state. In his address, FRAI TN Chapter President C.Chelladurai said "Illicit trade is no longer merely a commercial issue; it has become a serious threat to consumer safety, fair competition and the livelihoods of millions of honest retailers. Counterfeit and illegally sourced products not only expose consumers to substandard and unsafe goods but also undermine the credibility of legitimate businesses that operate within the law. We remain committed to working closely with the government, law enforcement agencies and industry stakeholders to strengthen enforcement, raise consumer awareness and build a transparent retail ecosystem where genuine businessescan thrive."Retailers further highlighted that while quick commerce and e-commerce platforms are rapidly transforming the retail landscape and making products instantly accessible to consumers, the same ecosystem is also creating serious concerns around the rapid spread of illicit trade and counterfeit

products.Participants also stated that flash sales, unrealistic discounting, aggressive pricing strategies and the constant push for ultra-fast delivery have created an environment where consumers are often unable to differentiate between genuine and counterfeit products.They also pointed out that today almost everything — from food products, groceries and personal care items to skincare products, electronics and even premium mobile phones worth thousands of rupees — is being delivered within minutes through quick commerce and e-commerce platforms. However, this extreme accessibility and race for cheaper prices are also opening dangerous entry points for banned, illegal and counterfeit products to penetrate the market at an unprecedented scale.According to the retailers, illicit traders and unethical sellers are increasingly exploiting these rapidly expanding digital platforms to push counterfeit and non-compliant products into the market, taking advantage of weak monitoring mechanisms and the growing consumer obsession with deep discounts and instant availability. Retailers warned that consumers are gradually becoming more price-sensitive than quality-conscious, creating fertile ground for illicit trade to flourish unchecked across digital commerce channels. While the rapid rise of such platforms is adversely impacting consumers through the circulation of low-quality and potentially unsafe products, it is equally devastating for genuine offline retailers who spend years building trust, ensuring product authenticity and serving their local communities with accountability.Retailers emphasised that unfair market practices, uneven competition and aggressive pricing structures are making it increasingly difficult for traditional traders to survive despite working tirelessly for 14 to 18 hours every day to sustain their businesses, educate their children and support their families. Participants stressed that this is no longer merely a business issue, but a serious social and livelihood concern affecting millions of honest small retailers across the country.During the seminar, participants highlighted that the rapid expansion of platform-driven retail models and the growing circulation of counterfeit and non-compliant products are creating serious challenges for traditional businesses. Retailers said while small traders operate with limited margins and high accountability, several large platforms continue to dominate markets through aggressive discounting and rapid expansion strategies, while cautioning that illicit trade and counterfeit goods are harming genuine businesses.

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