

Briefs

Executive Magistrate
Appointed in Udaipur

Udaipur: District Magistrate Gaurav Agarwal has appointed Udaipur Development Authority Tehsildar Vijay Kumar Regar as the Executive Magistrate to maintain law and order during an upcoming religious procession. The event, organized by the Shri Mahakaleshwar Temple Public Trust located on Rani Road, is scheduled to take place on August 24. The traditional procession will begin from the temple at 12:45 PM, traverse through key city locations including Fatehsagar, Chetak Circle, Hathipole, Ghantaghar, Jagdish Chowk, and Ambamata, before returning safely to the main shrine.

Youth Festival Focuses
on Career Guidance

Udaipur: A youth festival titled Lok Seva Vidyarthi Samagam was organized at the Information Centre in Udaipur to engage young students in discussions regarding career development, personal values, and national service. During the interaction, counselor Chandra Prakash highlighted the rich traditions of Indian scientific heritage and urged youth to adopt civic etiquette, discipline, and social harmony in daily life. Guest speaker Amay Atma Krishna Das from the Akshaya Patra Foundation elaborated on personal development concepts, encouraging students to cultivate self-discipline and positive thinking.

Space Science
Program Marks
Space Day

Udaipur: The Udaipur Solar Observatory, functioning under the Physical Research Laboratory of the Department of Space, organized a comprehensive space science awareness program at Vidya Bhawan auditorium in collaboration with Vidya Bhawan Society to celebrate National Space Day. The initiative aligned with the national theme focusing on innovation, collaboration, and global space leadership toward a developed India. Senior space scientists from ISRO centers in Ahmedabad and Jodhpur delivered insightful presentations on space technology and satellite applications. An interactive space technology exhibition organized by the Regional Remote Sensing Centre-West attracted nearly four hundred students and teachers from various local schools. The event also highlighted the golden jubilee of the Udaipur Solar Observatory, which was established in September 1975 by Dr. Arvind Bhatnagar and continues to contribute significantly to global solar research.

BJP Appoints Kapasan
Election Conveners

Kapasan: The Bharatiya Janata Party has officially appointed key organizers for the upcoming Kapasan Municipality elections to oversee campaign strategy and administrative responsibilities. According to an announcement made by BJP District President Ratanlal Gadri, Advocate Radheshyam Vaishnav has been named as the official Convener for the municipal polls. Furthermore, former Municipality Chairman Gajendra Baghmar has been appointed to serve as the Co-Convener.

Tickets Will Be Distributed
Based on Public Consensus,
Says MLA Arjun Lal Jingar

Kapasan: A comprehensive assembly-level meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party was organized at SR Vatika on Wednesday to discuss electoral strategies and foundational preparations for the upcoming local municipality elections. Senior leaders and public representatives addressed the gathering to outline key organizational guidelines, candidate selection criteria, and grassroots campaign approaches necessary for securing victory in the municipal polls.

Addressing the assembled party members, MLA Arjun Lal Jingar emphasized that the local body election will be fought through party unity and hard work.

He stated that official election tickets will be awarded based on the preferences and recommendations of local residents. To execute this



process, ward incharges from neighboring divisions will interact directly with local citizens to gather public feedback, after which a consensus candidate will be finalized for each ward. Jingar instructed party workers to actively go among the electorate to raise awareness about the various public welfare schemes and infrastructure development projects initiated by both the central and state governments.

BJP District Incharge Narendra Jain highlighted

the importance of strengthening organizational structures at the booth level. He stated that continuous voter engagement, political discipline, and collective effort remain essential pillars for achieving success. Meanwhile, Kapasan Election Incharge Gabbar Singh Ahir discussed procedural strategies ranging from candidate selection to campaign management.

He noted that candidate evaluation would prioritize active participation, loyalty

to the organization, public service records, local acceptance, and overall electoral viability. Ahir appealed to all attendees to overcome personal differences and work cohesively for the success of officially nominated candidates.

Municipality Election Convener Radheshyam Vaishnav, Co-Convener Gajendra Baghmar, and GSS President Nandkishore Tailor noted that organizational strength depends entirely on each worker fulfilling their designated responsibilities with complete dedication.

The meeting brought together several key party leaders, including rural division presidents Dinesh Parashar, Ratan Nath Yogi, Shankar Sahu, Shambhu Gadri, and Hemendra Singh Ranawat, alongside former municipal leaders and a large gathering of local party workers.

Kherwara BJP Leaders Felicilate
Dr Mannalal Rawat on National Appointment



Kherwara: Local party leaders and office bearers in Kherwara organized a special felicitation ceremony to honor Udaipur Member of Parliament Dr Mannalal Rawat following his appointment as the National President of the Bharatiya Janata Party Scheduled Tribes Wing. During the celebratory gathering, party members warmly welcomed Dr Rawat by presenting him with a traditional Mewari turban, ceremonial shawl, coconut, and flower bouquets. The attending

leaders extended their heartiest congratulations and expressed confidence that his dynamic leadership would energize tribal communities nationwide and strengthen party organization across the country. The event saw participation from several senior party figures, including Paras Jain, Amit Kalal, Lakshmi Devi Ahari, Pramod Agarwal, and Ujjwal Jain, who also expressed their gratitude to the central leadership for bestowing this key national responsibility upon

Dr Rawat. The felicitation program concluded with a formal vote of thanks, during which local representatives expressed their enthusiasm to work closely under Dr Rawat's guidance to further strengthen the party's outreach among tribal communities. Members present at the venue reiterated their commitment to driving development initiatives in the region and ensuring that key central government welfare schemes reach every household across the constituency.

Kawar Yatra to Be Organized
from Pashupatinath Mahadev
Temple on August 22

Udaipur: The Shri Pashupatinath Mahadev Temple Seva Samiti located in Bhupalpura has officially announced that a grand Kawar Yatra will be organized on Saturday, 22 August 2026. The temple management has issued an appeal to all interested devotees to register their names in advance at the Bhupalpura temple premises so that the committee can prepare the required number of holy water containers according to the turnout.

According to Rajkumar Nennani, the president of the service committee, the holy procession will commence at 12:15 PM following the completion

of the grand afternoon prayer ritual at the Shri Pashupatinath Mahadev Temple. The gathering will proceed toward the Sandeshwar Mahadev Temple located in Ashok Nagar before returning back to the originating shrine.

Upon their return, the participating devotees will perform a sacred water ritual by offering the holy water carried in their containers onto the deity at the Shri Pashupatinath Mahadev Temple.

Committee patron Rajesh Khatri encouraged local citizens and devotees to actively participate in the spiritual march and ensure timely registration for smooth event management.

Charitable Food Distribution Drive Held in Kapasan
on Raksha Bandhan to Support Needy Families

Kapasan: A charitable food distribution drive was held at Ramdwara Kapasan on Wednesday, providing essential ration kits to ten needy families on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

The humanitarian initiative was organized on the 31st death anniversary of the late Parashram Vijayvargiya through the support of his wife, Kusum Devi Vijayvargiya.

The event was inspired by the teachings of prominent saints of the International Ramsnehi Sampradaya, including Ramprasad Maharaj from Baroda, Kimatram Maharaj from Ahmedabad, and Gyaniram Maharaj from Baroda. Each beneficiary family received a comprehensive food kit



containing staple items such as flour, sugar, cooking oil, rice, lentils, salt, chili, turmeric, along with a sacred coconut and thread.

To express gratitude for their generous contribution, Saint Tilakram Maharaj honored the Vijayvargiya family by presenting them with ceremonial shawls.

Trust President Damodar Somani shared details of the community drive and acknowledged

the valuable support offered by numerous volunteers, including Sunita Samdani, Gayatri Vijayvargiya, Tina Dad, Meena Somani, Manju Somani, Parvati Dad, Gayatri Somani, Jyoti Somani, Priti Somani, Poonima Somani, Sunita Somani, Nandlal Vijayvargiya, Ashok Samdani, Prahlad Somani, Sudarshan Patwari, Ram Kailash Somani, and Kailashchandra Chasta.

Young Man Ends Life by Hanging
in Bhilwara's Gulmandi Area

Bhilwara: The peaceful atmosphere of the Gulmandi neighborhood in the old city area was shattered on Wednesday afternoon following the tragic suicide of a twenty-two-year-old local resident named Yasin. The unfortunate incident converted a cheerful household into a scene of utter grief and silence within a matter of hours, leaving the family members completely devastated by the unexpected turn of events. Yasin, who was the son of local resident Zakir Lohar, woke up routinely on Wednesday morning like any other ordinary day. According to available information, he later walked up to a room located on the upper floor of his house and was seen talking to someone on his mobile phone. No family member suspected at the time that this telephone conversation would turn out



to be his final interaction. Shortly after ending the call, Yasin took the extreme step and hanged himself inside the room due to unknown circumstances. The tragedy came to light during the afternoon hours when family members went upstairs and discovered him hanging from the ceiling. Their cries of horror alerted neighbors, causing widespread grief throughout the entire locality. Panic-stricken relatives immediately brought him down from the

noose and rushed him to the nearby district hospital in a desperate bid to save his life. However, attending medical officers examined him upon arrival and officially declared him dead.

Upon receiving formal information about the suicide, Assistant Sub Inspector Shambhu Lal from the Bhimganj police station arrived at the hospital along with a police team to initiate legal proceedings.

The police officials conducted a formal post-

mortem examination before handing over the body to the bereaved family for the final rites. Authorities have registered a case and launched a detailed investigation to ascertain the exact cause and hidden emotional distress behind this drastic step, as no suicide note has been recovered so far. Local residents and community members gathered at the residence to offer their condolences to the grieving family following the tragic news. Neighbors described Yasin as a well-mannered individual, expressing profound shock over his sudden demise and noting that there were no visible signs of distress in the days leading up to the incident. Meanwhile, investigating officers from the Bhimganj police station have confiscated Yasin's mobile phone for forensic analysis.

Excise Department Launches Major
Crackdown on Illicit Liquor Across Rajasthan

Udaipur: Under the direct instructions of Excise Commissioner Namit Mehta, state excise teams have intensified preventive operations, including strategic roadblocks, regular patrolling, and surprise raids, to strictly curb the illegal manufacturing, storage, transportation, and sale of unauthorized liquor across Rajasthan. Adopting a zero-tolerance policy against cross-border smuggling and illicit production, departmental task forces executed widespread enforcement actions in multiple districts. In the Sriganganagar canal region near 500 LNP village, officials raided illegal manufacturing hubs, destroying five thousand liters of fermented wash and three illegal distillation units while filing formal criminal charges. In Parbatsar located within Nagaur district, officers intercepted a motorcycle during routine checking,

seizing forty-five liters of illegal handmade liquor and arresting the suspect. Similarly, inspections in the Nawa excise circle led to the recovery of various unauthorized local and branded liquor bottles along with beer units. In the Bhinmal circle of Jalore district, special enforcement teams seized illegal stocks and registered three separate cases.

Meanwhile, excise teams operating in Kota destroyed two thousand seven hundred liters of fermented wash and ten illegal stills, while intercepting a pickup vehicle carrying thirty-five liters of handmade liquor and sixty-six pouches of country liquor. Across all operational zones, Additional Excise Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, District Officers, and inspection teams continue to execute relentless enforcement drives to dismantle unauthorized liquor networks across the state.

Namita Mehta
Elected Mandal
President



Udaipur: The official elections for the new executive committee of the Chandanbala Mahila Mandal were successfully conducted on Tuesday at Mahaveer Bhawan located in Hiran Magri Sector Three under the supervision of election convener Ranjana Kothari. Following the completion of the voting and selection process, the administration announced the newly appointed office bearers who will lead the organization for the upcoming term. In the newly formed committee, Namita Mehta was elected as the President while Bhagwati Mehta was chosen as the Vice President. Renu Jain secured the position of Secretary, supported by Pushpa Mehta as the Joint Secretary. Anju Babel was selected to manage the finances as Treasurer, alongside Sushila Khamesra as the Joint Treasurer. Furthermore, Chandrakala Pokharna was appointed as Cultural Minister, Premlata Jaroli as Religious Propagation Minister, and Phool Kunwar Chavan as Organization Minister. The newly appointed team pledged to boost social service initiatives and streamline religious activities.

Master Trainers Trained for Elections

Udaipur: District administration officials in Udaipur have accelerated preparations for the upcoming local body and Panchayati Raj elections scheduled for 2026. Under the guidance of District Election Officer Gaurav Agarwal, a specialized training session for block-level master trainers was organized at the Sukhadia Rangmanch auditorium on Wednesday. During the program, four master trainers selected from each block across the district received comprehensive theoretical and practical

instruction regarding the handling, maintenance, and operation of Electronic Voting Machines and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail systems. State-level master trainer Mahamayaprasad Chaubisa explained technical procedures, operational guidelines, and necessary precautions required to resolve potential technical issues during voting. Trainees participated in hands-on practice sessions to build technical expertise, enabling them to effectively train polling personnel across all blocks in the coming days.

Forest Department Grants Approval for Lasadiya-Dhariyawad Road Construction Project

Lasadiya: Residents of the region received major encouraging news regarding the long-pending widening and strengthening of the Lasadiya to Dhariyawad road.

The Forest Department of the Rajasthan government has issued an official work permission order for the diversion of 15.531 hectares of forest land covering a thirty-kilometer stretch of the proposed road project. The issuance of the forest clearance removes a long-



standing hurdle in the road construction process.

Local political leader Kanhaiyalal Meena

expressed deep gratitude to Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma and Forest Minister Sanjay Sharma, as well as

officials from the Public Works Department, Forest Department, and Revenue Department for their coordinated efforts.

Meena stated that the Lasadiya-Dhariyawad road serves as a vital transportation route for thousands of local villagers. He noted that the construction will significantly ease daily transportation while boosting education, health services, local trade, and employment opportunities across the tribal-dominated region.

Rajasthan Police to Review Anti-Drug Action Every Wednesday

Jaipur: Rajasthan Police has prepared a special strategy to fight drug-related crimes and has decided to review anti-narcotics operations every week. On the directions of Director General of Police Rajiv Kumar Sharma, a special review meeting on state-level anti-drug campaigns and actions will now be held at Police Headquarters every Wednesday.

Strict Action Against Drug NetworksThe first weekly review meeting was held on Wednesday under the chairmanship of DGP Rajiv Kumar Sharma. During the meeting, senior police officers were directed to take strict action against drug networks and criminals involved in the illegal drug trade.

DGP Sharma said that criminals involved in drug trafficking and the drug business would not be spared under any circumstances. He directed the police to identify the sources of drugs, supply networks and people connected with the trade and take effective action against them.

DGP Sharma said that Rajasthan Police has carried out more anti-narcotics operations in the first seven months of 2026 than during the corresponding period of the previous year. He directed officers not to limit their action to drug seizures and arrests.



Instead, police must identify the entire network and take effective action against all those involved.

The DGP said that the infrastructure for anti-narcotics operations in Rajasthan is also being strengthened. This will help the police conduct the campaign with better coordination, a stronger information network and more effective monitoring.

He directed district police officials to identify drug hotspots and

keep them under regular surveillance. Strict action should also be taken against drug traffickers and their associates. He stressed that awareness activities should be increased continuously to keep young people away from drugs. During the meeting, directions were issued to conduct a special awareness campaign in all schools and colleges across the state from August 19 to August 31. The campaign will focus on creating greater awareness

among students and young people about the dangers of drug abuse and the need to stay away from drugs.

DGP Sharma directed police officials to prepare a strong action plan in coordination with all concerned government departments. He said that the weekly Wednesday meetings would review district-level action, progress in cases, arrests, seizures and action taken against drug networks in detail. The meeting was attended by Inspector General of Police (Crime Branch) Sharat Kaviraj, Deputy Inspector General of Police (Personnel and Chief Staff Officer) Kunwar Rashtradeep, Deputy Inspector General of Police (ANTF) Abhijit Singh, Superintendent of Police (ANTF) Amit Jain and other senior police officials. The law enforcement apparatus in Rajasthan has formulated a comprehensive and specialized strategic roadmap designed to aggressively counter drug-related offenses across the state. Under this newly instituted operational protocol, top police leadership will conduct rigorous assessments of all anti-narcotics actions on a weekly basis. This decisive policy shift was formally enacted under the direct instructions of the Director General of Police (DGP), Rajiv Kumar Sharma.

Two Special Train Services Extended to Meet Passenger Demand

Jaipur: In view of the increased passenger rush, the Railway Administration has extended the operating period of two pairs of weekly special train services to provide greater convenience to passengers.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, the operating period of train number 01905/01906 Kanpur Central-Asarva-Kanpur Central Weekly Special has been extended. Train number 01905 will operate from Kanpur Central from September 7 to September 28, 2026, making a total of four trips. In the return direction, train number 01906 will operate from Asarva from September 8 to September 29, 2026, also making four trips.

The operating period of train number 01910/01909 Asarva-Agra Cantt-Asarva Weekly Special has also been extended. Train number 01910 will operate from Asarva from September 7 to September 28, 2026, making four trips, while train number 01909 will operate from Agra Cantt from September 8 to September 29, 2026,

also making four trips.

The extension has been announced keeping in mind the additional passenger traffic and to ensure that passengers have more travel options during the period.

In response to a sustained increase in passenger volume, the Railway Administration has taken strategic measures to enhance regional transit by extending the operating tenure of two distinct pairs of weekly special train services.

This operational extension is designed directly to accommodate the continuous surge in passenger rush and provide seamless connectivity across critical industrial and urban centers.

Official details regarding the updated transit schedules were confirmed by North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, who outlined the revised service timelines for the affected routes.

Among the extended services, Train Number 01905/01906, running between Kanpur Central and Asarva, will continue its weekly operations to handle

sustained regional travel demands.

According to the revised itinerary, Train Number 01905 will originate from Kanpur Central every week starting from September 7 through September 28, 2026, completing four targeted trips.

In the reciprocal direction, Train Number 01906 will embark from Asarva between September 8 and September 29, 2026, also adding four trips to its overall operational schedule.

Simultaneously, the administration extended the operational timeframe for Train Number 01910/01909, which services the essential Asarva-Agra Cantt-Asarva regional corridor.

Under this extended schedule, Train Number 01910 is slated to run from Asarva starting September 7 until September 28, 2026, successfully delivering four weekly trips.

Correspondingly, Train Number 01909 will operate from Agra Cantt beginning September 8 and conclude its extended run on September 29, 2026, executing four complete trips.

Three Express Trains to Get Trial Halt at Ghatprabha Station

Jaipur : To make train travel more convenient for passengers, North Western Railway will provide a trial halt at Ghatprabha station for three pairs of express trains. The stoppages will remain in effect until further orders.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, train number 16210 Mysuru-Ajmer Express will stop at Ghatprabha from August 25, 2026. It will arrive at 10:48 am and depart at 10:50 am.

The return 16209 Ajmer-Mysuru Express will get the halt from August 28, 2026, arriving at 8:28 am and leaving at 8:30 am.

Train number 16532 Bengaluru-Ajmer Weekly Express will stop at Ghatprabha from August 28, 2026, arriving at 10:48 am and departing at 10:50 am. Its return service, 16531 Ajmer-Bengaluru Weekly Express, will have the halt

from August 24, 2026, arriving at 8:28 am and departing at 8:30 am.

Similarly, train number 16534 Bengaluru-Jodhpur Weekly Express will stop at Ghatprabha from August 30, 2026, arriving at 10:48 am and departing at 10:50 am.

The return 16533 Jodhpur-Bengaluru Weekly Express will have the halt from August 26, 2026, arriving at 8:28 am and departing at 8:30 am.

The trial stoppages have been introduced to improve passenger convenience and provide better connectivity through Ghatprabha station.

To enhance passenger convenience, North Western Railway has announced a new operational decision regarding three key express train services traversing its network.

The regional administration in Jaipur confirmed that three pairs of express trains will receive an exper-

imental temporary halt at Ghatprabha railway station to facilitate better travel options.

These newly designated stoppages are being introduced on a trial basis and are scheduled to remain in effect until further official orders are issued by the railway authorities.

According to Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, the decision aims to address the long-standing transit demands of local commuters and long-distance travelers passing through the area.

The first service included in this initiative is train number 16210, operating as the Mysuru to Ajmer Express.

Starting August 25, 2026, train number 16210 will make its scheduled arrival at Ghatprabha station at 10:48 am, departing shortly after a two-minute brief halt at 10:50 am.

The corresponding re-

turn service, train number 16209 running as the Ajmer to Mysuru Express, will implement its experimental stoppage starting August 28, 2026.

Passengers traveling on train number 16209 can expect the train to pull into Ghatprabha station at 8:28 am, before continuing its journey toward Mysuru at 8:30 am.

The second service impacted by this trial arrangement involves train number 16532, which operates as the Bengaluru to Ajmer Weekly Express.

This weekly service will begin halting at Ghatprabha starting August 28, 2026, touching down at 10:48 am and setting off again at 10:50 am.

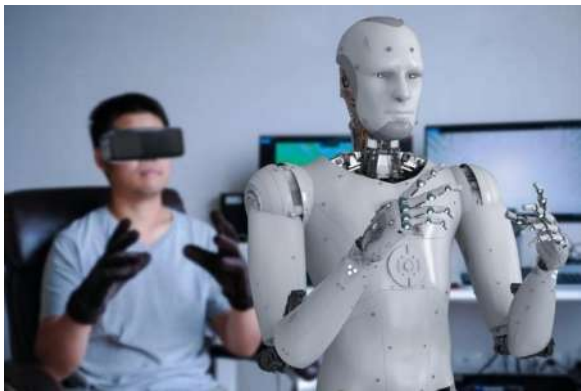
In the reverse direction, train number 16531, running as the Ajmer to Bengaluru Weekly Express, will inaugurate its temporary stop a few days earlier, beginning August 24, 2026.

AI, Robots and Virtual Reality to Transform Nursing Education in Jaipur

Jaipur: Nursing education is set to get a major technology boost as Jaipur will host the two-day Global Nursing Summit-2026 on September 5 and 6. The event will bring together nursing professionals, students, experts and representatives from more than 10 countries to discuss how artificial intelligence, robotics, virtual reality and advanced simulation can shape the future of nursing and healthcare.

The summit will be organized at the Rajasthan International Centre (RIC), Jaipur, by RH Healthcare Private Limited in association with NTAI-Rajasthan. The organisers said the event will connect nursing education with modern technology, international experience and the changing needs of the healthcare sector.

A press conference was held regarding the summit, where Dr Rahul Sharma, Chairperson of Global Nursing Summit-2026, Purushot-



tam Kumbhaj, Programme Secretary, Mahesh Sharma, Convener, and Dr Vishnu Soni, Treasurer, shared details about the preparations, international participation, academic activities and latest healthcare technologies planned for the event.

Dr Rahul Sharma, Chairperson of Global Nursing Summit-2026 and CEO and Director of RH Healthcare Private Limited, said the summit would not be just another conference but a global platform where par-

ticipants could experience the future of nursing and healthcare. He said healthcare is rapidly becoming technology-driven, making it important for Indian nurses and nursing students to understand artificial intelligence, robotics, virtual reality, advanced clinical simulation, innovation and leadership skills.

Dr Sharma said AI and robotics would not replace nurses. Instead, these technologies can strengthen their clinical skills, deci-

sion-making and patient care. He said the aim was to ensure that Indian nurses do not merely watch healthcare change but become leaders in that change. He also said efforts were being made to establish Rajasthan as a national and international centre not only for nursing education but also for advanced nursing simulation, AI, robotics and healthcare innovation. The landscape of healthcare education in Rajasthan is on the brink of a major technological evolution as Jaipur prepares to host the two-day Global Nursing Summit-2026 on September 5 and 6, 2026. This landmark international gathering will bring together nursing educators, practicing professionals, policy experts, and students from more than 10 countries to explore how cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, virtual reality, and advanced simulation can reshape the nursing profession.

Festival Rush Brings Special Train Service Between Reengus and Rewari

Jaipur : Keeping the upcoming festival season in mind, North Western Railway will operate a special express train between Reengus and Rewari to provide additional travel options to passengers.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, train number 09715 Reengus-Rewari Express Special will run for 12 trips. It will depart from Reengus at 11:55 pm on August 22, 23, 29 and 30, 2026, and on September 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 19, 20 and 22. The train will reach Rewari at 4:00 am the next day.

In the return direction, train number 09716 Rewari-Reengus Express Special will also operate for 12

trips. It will depart from Rewari at 8:20 pm on August 23, 24, 30 and 31, 2026, and on September 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 20, 21 and 23. The train will arrive at Reengus at 11:20 pm on the same day.

The special train will have 11 coaches, including nine general-class coaches and two guard coaches.

The Indian festival season is synonymous with immense joy, vibrant celebrations, and an extraordinary surge in travel across the nation. As millions of people prepare to journey back to their hometowns to celebrate with family and friends, the public transportation infrastructure faces one of its most demanding challenges of the year. Railways, being the primary artery of



long-distance transport in India, bear the brunt of this seasonal rush. To prevent overcrowding, reduce long waiting lists, and ensure that every passenger reaches their destination safely and

comfortably, railway authorities proactively design custom transport solutions tailored to high-demand regional corridors.

In direct response to this seasonal surge, North West-

ern Railway has officially announced the operation of a dedicated special express train service connecting Reengus and Rewari. This strategic initiative aims to absorb the sudden influx of daily and weekend commuters travelling through these vital hubs during late August and September. By introducing additional capacity along this specific route, the railway management seeks to alleviate the heavy pressure on existing regular trains, providing a reliable alternative for thousands of passengers during one of the busiest travel periods on the annual calendar.

The announcement was formally communicated by Amit Sudarshan, the Chief Public Relations Officer

of North Western Railway. According to official details, the targeted intervention will feature a carefully planned operational schedule designed to maximize convenience for passengers traveling during peak dates. The administration has mapped out a specific timetable that directly addresses the days most likely to experience severe overcrowding, ensuring that extra seats and space are made available exactly when regional demand reaches its highest levels.

Under this newly announced arrangement, train number 09715, designated as the Reengus-Rewari Express Special, is scheduled to complete a total of 12 distinct trips across the festive period.

Jodhpur-Ramdevra-Bhagat Ki Kothi Special Train to Run for Two Days

Jaipur : Keeping in view the expected increase in passenger traffic during the upcoming festivals, North Western Railway will operate a special train between Jodhpur, Ramdevra and Bhagat Ki Kothi for the convenience of passengers.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, train number 04867 Jodhpur-Ramdevra Special will operate on August 22 and 23, 2026, making two trips.

The train will leave Jodhpur at 9:30 am and reach Ramdevra at 1:00 pm.

In the return journey, train number 04868 Ramdevra-Bhagat Ki Kothi Special will also operate on August 22 and 23, 2026.

It will depart from Ramdevra at 2:00 pm and reach Bhagat Ki Kothi at

5:30 pm.

The special service has been introduced to handle the additional passenger rush expected during the festival period and provide better travel facilities to passengers.

To accommodate the significant influx of commuters during the upcoming festive season, Indian Railways continuously assesses regional travel patterns and deploys special train services.

The temporary addition of dedicated routes during high-demand periods is a key operational strategy used to prevent heavy overcrowding on regular train services.

These festive arrangements are designed to ensure smooth travel flow across busy pilgrimage routes and regional networks.

Daily Jammu Tawi-Bhagat Ki Kothi Express to Get Halt at Kathua

Jaipur : To make train travel more convenient for passengers, the daily Jammu Tawi-Bhagat Ki Kothi-Jammu Tawi Express will now stop at Shaheed Captain Sunil Kumar Chaudhary Kathua station.

According to North Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Amit Sudarshan, train number 14804 Jammu Tawi-Bhagat Ki Kothi Daily Express will stop at the station from August 23, 2026. It will arrive at 10:01 am and depart at 10:03 am.

In the return direction, train number 14803 Bhagat Ki Kothi-Jammu Tawi Daily

Express will get the stoppage from August 28, 2026. The train will arrive at 4:40 am and leave at 4:42 am.

The new halt has been introduced to improve connectivity and provide greater convenience to passengers travelling through Kathua.

The decision to introduce a new halt for the daily Jammu Tawi-Bhagat Ki Kothi Express at Shaheed Captain Sunil Kumar Chaudhary Kathua station marks a significant step forward in improving regional rail connectivity. Indian Railways routinely reviews train schedules and passenger demand patterns to optimize

route efficiency and serve local communities better. By adding strategic stops along established long-distance routes, the railway network ensures that smaller towns and regional hubs receive adequate transportation support without compromising overall service quality.

This major infrastructural and operational update was officially confirmed by Amit Sudarshan, the Chief Public Relations Officer of North Western Railway. The announcement reflects the continuous coordination between regional railway authorities to enhance passenger convenience

and respond to long-standing transit needs. Through carefully planned timetable adjustments, North Western Railway aims to make daily travel smoother, more accessible, and hassle-free for thousands of commuters who depend on this key northern rail link.

The targeted intervention focuses on train number 14804, which operates as the daily service running from Jammu Tawi to Bhagat Ki Kothi. Under the revised operational schedule, this long-distance express train will formally commence its official stop at Kathua station starting August

23, 2026. This date marks the beginning of expanded access for local residents, who will no longer need to travel to distant stations just to board this popular daily service. According to the official timings released by the railway administration, train number 14804 will reach Shaheed Captain Sunil Kumar Chaudhary Kathua station at 10:01 AM every morning. The train will pause for a brief two-minute stoppage before taking off again at 10:03 AM. While a two-minute window may seem short, it is precisely timed to allow sufficient duration for passengers

to embark and disembark safely while keeping the overall journey on schedule. The morning arrival time at Kathua offers an exceptionally convenient departure window for passengers heading toward Rajasthan and intermediate regional stations.

Reaching the station shortly after 10:00 AM allows commuters, students, and business travelers to board comfortably without having to travel during the extremely early hours of the morning. This optimal timing is expected to encourage greater turnout from local passengers using the express

service. To ensure balanced, two-way benefits for the region, the railway authorities have also scheduled a corresponding halt for the return direction of the service. Train number 14803, operating daily from Bhagat Ki Kothi back to Jammu Tawi, will also make a scheduled stop at Kathua. This comprehensive arrangement ensures that travelers traveling in either direction can enjoy identical levels of access and convenience. The return service, train number 14803, will officially incorporate the new stoppage starting August 28, 2026. The slight gap between the implementation

dates of the outgoing and incoming services allows operational teams to align signaling systems, platform management protocols, and ticketing infrastructure at Kathua station to seamlessly accommodate the new schedules without disrupting existing traffic flow. For the return leg, train number 14803 is scheduled to pull into Shaheed Captain Sunil Kumar Chaudhary Kathua station early in the morning at 4:40 AM. Following its brief operational pause, the train will depart promptly at 4:42 AM to complete its final stretch toward Jammu Tawi.

 Editorial

Tibet’s Identity Under Threat

Conquering the territory of a nation may be relatively easy. But when an attempt is made to erase the language, religion, culture and historical memory of the people living on that land and thereby alter their distinct identity it ceases to be merely a question of political control. It becomes a question of the very survival of a community.

The Tibetan community in India has called for nationwide protests on August 20 against China’s “Ethnic Unity and Progress Promotion Law,” which came into effect on July 1, 2026. Tibetans fear that the law will impose further restrictions on the Tibetan language, culture, religion and distinct ethnic identity. China, however, views the legislation as a means of strengthening national unity. Therefore, this conflict is not merely a protest against a particular law; at its core lies a fundamental question: where should the line be drawn between “national integration” and “cultural assimilation”? According to official Chinese information, the law was approved on March 12, 2026, and came into force on July 1. According to China’s official position, the law recognises the right of ethnic minorities to learn and use their languages and also provides for the protection, research and preservation of ancient literature belonging to minority communities. At the same time, the law emphasises strengthening the “sense of community for the Chinese nation,” promoting a particular perspective on national history, and disseminating it through institutions ranging from the media to the education system. China argues that such measures are necessary to promote unity among different ethnic communities. Beijing’s argument cannot be dismissed entirely. Every sovereign nation has the right to formulate policies aimed at strengthening national unity. However, if the process of building unity results in distinct languages, religious traditions and cultural identities being pushed into a secondary position, questions are bound to arise. This is precisely where Tibetan exile organisations raise their objections. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has strongly opposed the law, alleging that China’s policies are aimed at forcibly assimilating Tibetan society into the Chinese mainstream. In March itself, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile passed a resolution opposing the legislation and called upon the United Nations and the international community to examine it. Its position is that the right to preserve the Tibetan language, Buddhism and traditional social identity is not merely a cultural concern but a question of survival. The August 20 protest, therefore, has not emerged suddenly; behind it lies mistrust accumulated over several decades. The Tibetan issue cannot be understood without looking at history. Relations between China and Tibet have remained contentious since the middle of the twentieth century. Following the Tibetan uprising of 1959, the Dalai Lama came to India, where he was granted asylum. Dharamshala subsequently became the principal centre of the Tibetan administration in exile. Over the past six decades, India has provided refuge to thousands of Tibetans. Consequently, Tibet is not merely a distant human-rights issue for India. It has historical, cultural, geographical and strategic dimensions. Developments in the Himalayas can affect India in several areas, ranging from national security to water resources. Another sensitive aspect of China’s Tibet policy concerns religion. China has consistently emphasised the “Sinicisation” of religion and the need to adapt Tibetan Buddhism to the socialist system. Chinese President Xi Jinping has also stressed national unity, a shared Chinese identity, promotion of the national language and the Sinicisation of religion in Tibet. From Beijing’s perspective, this is part of the process of nation-building. Tibetans, however, see it as a process that weakens their distinct cultural identity. These two sharply contrasting interpretations of the same policy make the Tibetan issue even more complicated. A disturbing example of the intensity of this conflict emerged in July. According to the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, just one day after implementation of the new law began, Losang Palden self-immolated in New York in an attempt to draw attention to the Tibetan issue and subsequently died. According to the Tibetan exile organisation, more than 150 Tibetans in Tibet and in exile have resorted to self-immolation since 2009. Acts such as self-immolation cannot be supported; political struggles should be pursued through dialogue, not by ending one’s life. Yet the world should also not ignore the depth of anguish that drives individuals towards such extreme forms of protest. India’s position on the Tibetan issue is extremely delicate. On one hand, China is India’s largest neighbour and an important trading partner. On the other, tensions along the Line of Actual Control, China’s claims over Arunachal Pradesh and broader questions of Himalayan security remain unresolved. At the same time, the Dalai Lama and a large Tibetan exile community live in India. India must therefore balance the protection of humanitarian and cultural values with the realities of foreign policy. The recent appeal by members of the Tibetan community in Mysuru to Member of Parliament Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar to raise the Tibet issue in Parliament is also an indication that the matter is finding a renewed voice within India. The Tibetan issue cannot be ignored from India’s strategic perspective either. The Himalayas are not merely mountain ranges on a geographical map. The Tibetan Plateau is connected to the source regions of several of Asia’s major rivers. China itself considers Tibet an environmentally significant “water tower of Asia” and is undertaking major infrastructure projects there. Political, environmental and demographic changes in Tibet, therefore, need to be examined by India not only through the framework of human rights but also from the perspective of its long-term national interests. Most importantly, the world must understand the difference between “integration” and “uniformity.” Bringing diverse communities together within the political framework of a nation is integration. Weakening their languages, historical memories, religions and cultural characteristics in order to achieve that goal amounts to imposing uniformity. The strength of a modern nation does not lie in forcing all its citizens into a single cultural mould. It lies in creating a sense of equal citizenship while safeguarding diverse identities. Giving Tibetan society the space to pass its language, religious traditions and cultural heritage on to future generations should not be considered a threat by any political system. It will once again place an old question before the world: how high a price should a community be expected to pay in terms of its distinct cultural existence in the name of development, national security and political integration? China has claimed that it has brought development to Tibet, and an objective debate cannot simply dismiss those claims. But roads, railways, industries and rising incomes cannot substitute for cultural freedom. Material development and the protection of identity should be able to coexist. China may be concerned about its sovereignty, while Tibetans are concerned about their identity. Creating space for dialogue between these two concerns may be the only sustainable long-term solution. A culture cannot simply be erased through legislation, nor can discontent be permanently suppressed through the force of security measures.

When Tibetans take to the streets across India on August 20, what matters more than how loud their voices are will be the question those voices are asking.

Indian Defence Estates Service officer trainees call on Raksha Mantri

Officer Trainees of the Indian Defence Estates Service (IDES), 2025 Batch, undergoing professional training at the National Institute of Defence Estates Management (NIDEM), met Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh in New Delhi on August 17, 2026. The interaction provided the young officers an opportunity to discuss the responsibilities and challenges associated with public administration in the defence estates sector.

During the meeting, Rajnath Singh appreciated the contribution of the Defence Estates Department in managing defence land and overseeing municipal administration in Cantonment Boards located across the country. He highlighted the importance of efficient administration in ensuring that defence establishments, civilian residents and local communities receive appropriate services.

The Raksha Mantri said that the role of the Defence Estates Department goes well beyond the administration and management of defence land and properties. The department is also entrusted with important civic responsibilities, including the maintenance of essential facilities and effective municipal administration in cantonment areas. As a result, the work carried out by its officers has a direct bearing on the everyday lives of citizens residing in these areas.

Addressing the Officer Trainees, Singh emphasised that public servants must remain sensitive to the changing needs, aspirations and expectations of citizens. He said that the nature of governance and public administration continues to evolve with time, requiring officers to remain flexible and responsive while ensuring that transparency, accountability and efficiency remain integral to their functioning.

The Raksha Mantri stressed the importance of cultivating a strong spirit of ‘Seva Bhav’ among government officials. He said public service should be approached as a responsibility towards society, with officers making sincere efforts to ensure that government services reach people in a manner that is accessible, courteous and sensitive to their requirements.

Singh urged the young officers to maintain regular contact with citizens while carrying out their official responsibilities. He said direct interaction with people would provide officers with a better understanding of issues at the grassroots level and enable them to formulate solutions that address actual problems rather than relying



solely on administrative procedures.

He particularly advised the trainees to listen patiently to public grievances and concerns. According to Singh, the responsibility of an officer is not limited to formally receiving complaints. It is equally important to give citizens the confidence that their concerns have been heard and that the administration is genuinely committed to finding appropriate solutions.

The Raksha Mantri said sustained communication between government officials and the public can play an important role in strengthening people’s confidence in public institutions. When citizens are able to approach officials and receive a patient and sympathetic hearing, it creates a sense of assurance and helps build greater trust in the administrative machinery.

Singh also highlighted the importance of integrity, professionalism and a strong sense of responsibility in the career of a civil servant. He called upon the Officer Trainees to discharge their duties with honesty and dedication and to ensure that public interest remains at the heart of their decisions and actions.

Referring to the demanding responsibilities associated with public service, the Raksha Mantri advised the young officers not to neglect their physical and mental well-being. He noted that maintaining good health is essential for officials who are required to make important decisions, manage administrative responsibilities and regularly interact with citizens.

He also encouraged the trainees to pursue a spiritual path and make meditation a part of their routine.

Singh said practices that promote mental calmness and inner balance can help officers improve concentration and develop the resilience necessary to deal with the pressures and challenges of a demanding public-service career.

The interaction also brought into focus the broader contribution of civil servants to nation-building and effective governance. Rajnath Singh encouraged the Officer Trainees to approach their careers with a clear sense of purpose, responsibility and dedication. He reminded them that decisions taken by government officials can directly influence the lives of citizens and have a wider impact on the efficiency and credibility of public institutions.

The Officer Trainees of the 2025 Batch are currently receiving professional training at the National Institute of Defence Estates Management (NIDEM). The training programme is intended to prepare them for the diverse responsibilities they will undertake as members of the Indian Defence Estates Service and to strengthen their understanding of administration, management and public service. During their careers, the officers will be entrusted with responsibilities relating to defence estates as well as the functioning and administration of Cantonment Boards. Their duties will require them to address the requirements of defence establishments while simultaneously dealing with civic and administrative matters affecting local residents.

Given the nature of these responsibilities, the trainees will need to maintain a careful balance between administrative priorities

and the interests of the people they serve. Sensitivity towards public concerns, effective communication and sound decision-making will therefore remain important elements of their professional responsibilities.

The Defence Estates Department has a significant role in the administration and management of defence land located across different parts of the country. Alongside this core responsibility, it also performs important civic functions in cantonment areas, making its officers an important link between defence administration and local communities.

The interaction with the Raksha Mantri provided the young officers with valuable guidance on the importance of combining administrative effectiveness with empathy and responsiveness. Singh’s message encouraged them to ensure that procedural efficiency is complemented by a strong understanding of the concerns and expectations of citizens.

The guidance assumes significance as the Officer Trainees prepare to enter a service that involves both specialised administrative responsibilities and regular interaction with the public. Their ability to understand local issues and respond appropriately will be essential for ensuring effective governance in cantonment areas.

Director General Defence Estates Shobha Gupta was also present during the interaction. Her presence added significance to the engagement, which focused on preparing the newly inducted officers for the responsibilities and challenges associated with their future assignments.

The meeting provided the Officer Trainees with an opportunity to gain insights from the Raksha Mantri on the values expected from public servants. The emphasis remained on maintaining professionalism while ensuring that administrative decisions are guided by public interest and a commitment to service.

Concluding the interaction, Rajnath Singh reiterated the importance of commitment, empathy, discipline and integrity in public service. He called upon the young officers to uphold these values throughout their careers and contribute towards strengthening an efficient and citizen-oriented administrative system.

He also emphasised that effective governance depends not only on policies and procedures but also on the manner in which officials engage with the people. A responsive administration, he noted, must be capable of understanding public concerns and providing services in a manner that is transparent, accessible and people-friendly.

For the Officer Trainees, the interaction served as an important orientation ahead of their entry into professional responsibilities. The guidance from the Raksha Mantri underlined the need for them to remain committed to both their institutional duties and their responsibilities towards citizens.

The emphasis on physical and mental well-being, along with professional integrity and public sensitivity, also highlighted the comprehensive nature of the responsibilities expected from civil servants. The trainees were encouraged to develop qualities that would help them handle administrative pressures while maintaining balance and clarity in their decision-making.

As they progress through their training at NIDEM, the Officer Trainees are expected to gain practical and professional knowledge that will prepare them for assignments across the Defence Estates Department. Their future work will contribute to the management of defence estates and the administration of cantonment areas across the country. The interaction concluded with a message of service, responsibility and dedication, with Singh urging the young officers to remain firmly committed to the principles of people-centric governance. The guidance is expected to help the Officer Trainees approach their careers with a greater understanding of the importance of empathy, accountability and efficient public administration.

Senior Officers from BRICS Member Countries hold discussions on Key Priorities of the Environment Working Group and Contact Group on Climate Change and Sustainable Development in New Delhi

Under India’s BRICS Chairship for 2026, the Senior Officers’ Meeting of the Environment Working Group and the Contact Group on Climate Change and Sustainable Development was held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on August 17, 2026. The meeting brought together senior representatives from BRICS member countries to deliberate on pressing environmental and climate-related challenges and strengthen cooperation on sustainable development.

The meeting was chaired by Tanmay Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India. Senior officials and representatives from the BRICS member countries participated in the deliberations, including Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates.

In his keynote address, the Chair highlighted the transformation of BRICS over the past two decades. He said the grouping, which initially emerged as an economic dialogue, has gradually evolved into an important platform for cooperation on a wider range of global challenges, including environmental protection, climate change and sustainable development.

Kumar pointed to the growing environmental pressures confronting countries across the world. Increasing pollution, biodiversity loss and global warming, he noted, require stronger international cooperation and coordinated responses. He said BRICS has an increasingly important role to play in shaping collective approaches to these challenges.

He observed that the scope of cooperation among BRICS countries has expanded considerably in areas such as sustainable development, climate resilience, adaptation, resource efficiency, circular economy and environmental governance. The growing relevance of these issues, he said, demonstrates the need for BRICS members to work together and share experiences, knowledge and solutions.

The Chair said India’s BRICS Chairship in 2026 has been guided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision that international cooperation should remain people-centric and driven by a humanity-first approach. This vision has been reflected in India’s Chairship theme, ‘Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation, and Sustainability’.



India has sought to promote environmental action through an approach that balances ecological sustainability with developmental priorities. The Chair emphasised that environmental protection and economic development should not be viewed as competing objectives, but should be pursued together through sustainable and innovative approaches.

During India’s BRICS Chairship, the Environment Working Group and the Contact Group on Climate Change and Sustainable Development have worked jointly on a set of interconnected priorities aimed at strengthening environmental cooperation among member countries. The discussions have centred on sustainable lifestyles, afforestation, forest fire management, disaster resilience, circular economy and climate adaptation.

These priority areas were identified in view of the common environmental challenges confronting BRICS nations, while also taking into account the different national circumstances and developmental requirements of member countries. The participating nations explored opportunities to share knowledge, experiences and best practices to develop practical and locally appropriate approaches to environmental protection.

The Chair emphasised that issues such as climate resilience, ecosystem restoration, resource efficiency and sustainable development cannot be addressed independently. He stressed the need for integrated strategies that recognise the close links between environmental protection, climate action and eco-

nommic development.

According to the Chair, fragmented approaches may not be sufficient to tackle the increasingly complex environmental challenges facing the world. A coordinated and holistic response, supported by international cooperation, would be necessary to achieve long-term resilience and sustainability.

The meeting also highlighted the extensive engagement undertaken since India assumed the BRICS Chairship. Member countries have participated in 21 virtual thematic and negotiation meetings, 10 bilateral consultations, two thematic dialogues and two technical webinars as part of the process.

The large number of consultations reflected the active participation of BRICS members in advancing the environmental agenda. These engagements provided platforms for countries to exchange views, discuss their respective experiences and identify areas where greater cooperation could deliver tangible outcomes.

The consultations also helped narrow differences and build common ground on issues of shared concern. Through sustained discussions, member countries worked towards developing a consensus on key priorities and strengthening the foundation for collective action on climate and environmental issues.

The Senior Officers’ Meeting served as an important stage in consolidating the outcomes of these extensive consultations. The deliberations focused on building agreement on the priority areas and preparing the framework for consideration at the ministerial level.

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The discussions also reflected the broader objective of ensuring that BRICS cooperation on environmental matters remains relevant to the developmental needs of member countries. By combining environmental sustainability with innovation, resource efficiency and resilience, the grouping aims to support approaches that can contribute to sustainable growth.

Concluding his address, Tanmay Kumar expressed confidence that the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect that had guided the discussions would continue throughout the deliberations. He stressed that consensus-based engagement would remain central to advancing the shared environmental priorities of BRICS members.

The collaborative approach adopted during India’s Chairship has provided member countries with opportunities to strengthen dialogue on a wide range of environmental concerns. It has also encouraged greater exchange of technical knowledge and experiences in areas such as climate adaptation, forest management, disaster preparedness and the circular economy.

The outcomes of the Senior Officers’ Meeting are expected to provide important inputs for the next stage of BRICS environmental cooperation. The discussions will also help shape the issues and recommendations to be considered by the environment ministers of the member countries.

The 12th BRICS Environment Ministers’ Meeting was scheduled to be held in New Delhi on August 18. The ministerial meeting is expected to build on the discussions among senior officials and provide further direction to cooperation on environmental protection, climate action and sustainable development.

The meeting also demonstrated the continued importance of BRICS as a platform for dialogue on global environmental challenges. Member countries recognised that cooperation and coordinated action would be essential to address issues that transcend national boundaries. Participating delegations congratulated India for its leadership of BRICS in 2026 and appreciated its efforts to facilitate extensive and productive discussions among member countries. They welcomed the atmosphere of trust, mutual respect and consensus-based decision-making that has characterised the environmental dialogue under India’s Chairship.

Majhi thanks PM Modi, Vaishnaw for multitracking railway projects in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Wednesday thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for their continued support towards strengthening the State's railway network and boosting its infrastructure and economic growth.

In a post on the social media platform X, Majhi said the union Cabinet's approval of multitracking railway projects covering Odisha marked a significant step towards strengthening rail infrastructure and improving connectivity across the State.

He said the projects would enhance rail capacity, facilitate the movement of passengers and freight, improve connectivity with key economic centres and contribute to Odisha's continued growth and development.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved four multitracking



projects of the Ministry of Railways at an estimated total cost of Rs 9,450 crore.

The projects include the 173-km Kharagpur-Bhadrak (Ranital) fourth line covering West Bengal and Odisha; the 75-km Bhadrak-Haridaspur fourth line in Odisha; the 90-km Gummidipundi-Gudur third and fourth lines covering Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu; and the 72-km Cuttack-Paradeep (Badaband-

ha) third and fourth lines in Odisha.

The additional railway lines are expected to significantly enhance line capacity, improve operational efficiency and strengthen service reliability while easing congestion on the existing network. The four projects will cover eight districts across West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and add around 410 km to the existing railway

network. They are expected to improve connectivity to around 6,448 villages with a combined population of nearly 60 lakh.

The projects will also strengthen rail connectivity to several important tourist and religious destinations, including Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Bhitarkanika National Park, Maa Bhadrakali Temple, Maa Dhamarai Temple, Panchalingeswar Temple, Talsari-Udayapur

and Chandipur beaches, Pulicat Lake, Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary, Lord Veeraraghava Perumal Temple, Gada Kujanga Jagannath Temple, Sarala Temple, Dhabaleswar Temple and Lalitgiri, a prominent Buddhist site.

The multitracking works will also facilitate the transportation of key commodities, including coal, iron ore, cement, iron and steel, containers, automobiles and foodgrains.

The capacity augmentation is expected to generate additional freight traffic of around 76 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), further strengthening the logistics network and supporting economic activity in the region.

The projects are in line with the Centre's vision of comprehensive infrastructure development and are expected to create greater opportunities for employment and self-employment while contributing to the economic development of the regions connected by the new railway lines.

240-member Japanese delegation to begin Immersive UP Cultural tour from today

Lucknow: A 240-member high-level delegation from Japan's Yamanashi Prefecture is set to begin an immersive four-day journey across Uttar Pradesh from August 20, with UP Tourism curating experiences around the state's living culture, Buddhist heritage, cuisine, and spirituality.

Led by Yamanashi Governor Kotaro Nagasaki, the delegation includes representatives from government, business, academia, and youth. After completing its engagements in New Delhi on Wednesday, the group will enter Uttar Pradesh the following day, travelling through Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi before concluding its visit on August 23.

The Uttar Pradesh leg will begin in Agra on Thursday, where a traditional 'Braj'-themed welcome will introduce the Japanese visitors to the region's cultural identity.

Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh and senior Tourism Department officials will interact with the delegation before the visitors experience the Taj Mahal and proceed to Lucknow.

The tourism engagement will take centre stage in Lucknow on August 21, where Jaiveer Singh will address the delegation on Uttar Pradesh's Buddhist tourism potential and emerging areas of cooperation with Japan. Discussions will focus on strengthening tourism movement between the two regions while exploring opportunities around Buddhist tourism, wellness, experiential travel, cuisine and cultural exchange.

The interaction will build on earlier discussions between Uttar Pradesh and Yamanashi, where both sides had explored possibilities beyond conventional sightseeing, including meditation and wellness experiences, tourism infrastructure, cuisine, cultural exchanges and greater engagement between tour operators and tourism stakeholders.

The Buddhist connect remains a natural anchor. Uttar Pradesh is home to some of the most important destinations associated with the life and teachings of Lord Buddha, including Samath, Kushinagar, Shravasti, Kapilvastu, Kaushambi and

Sankisa. The state has been steadily strengthening infrastructure, connectivity and visitor facilities across these destinations while promoting them internationally.

Samath's recent inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List has added fresh global weight to this effort. The recognition is expected to strengthen Uttar Pradesh's outreach to Buddhist source markets, particularly countries such as Japan, while supporting the state's larger effort to present its Buddhist destinations as a connected travel experience.

"Uttar Pradesh and Japan share deep civilisational and Buddhist ties, but the possibilities through tourism extend much further. From Kashi's spirituality and Braj's traditions to our cuisine, wellness, and living culture, Uttar Pradesh has experiences that can resonate strongly with Japanese travellers.

This visit is an opportunity to turn that cultural familiarity into stronger people-to-people connections and greater tourism movement between the two regions," Jaiveer Singh said.

BJP-JD(S) protest rocks Karnataka Council over Nagendra row

Bengaluru: The Karnataka Legislative Council witnessed noisy scenes on Wednesday as BJP and JD(S) members protested demanding the resignation of Minister B Nagendra over the alleged irregularities in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation, forcing the Chair to conduct the Question Hour amid the uproar.

The opposition members insisted that the House could not function smoothly until Nagendra stepped down from the Cabinet and demanded a detailed discussion on the transfer of funds belonging to the Valmiki Development Corporation to various bank accounts.

Council Opposition Leader Chalavadi Narayanaswamy raised the issue at the beginning of the proceedings and said several important matters needed to be discussed in the House. He demanded that Nagendra first resign from the ministe-



rial post before any further discussion. The opposition members subsequently raised slogans against the government, expressing their dissatisfaction with the ruling party's handling of the issue. Former Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti intervened and said the Question and Answer session had not been conducted properly for the previous two days. He suggested that the scheduled Question Hour be taken up first and that other issues, including the Valmiki Corporation matter, be discussed thereafter. Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara said the state was facing sev-

eral pressing issues that required discussion in the Legislature. "There are burning issues in the state. Let there be a discussion on this. Let there be a discussion after giving a notice before asking for Nagendra's resignation. Then we will clarify why we made Nagendra a minister," he said. Parameshwara also referred to the prevailing drought situation and said Karnataka had not witnessed such a situation in 75 years. He said several matters, including the need to submit a report on the drought to the Centre, required the attention of the House.

Naveen Patnaik opposes MMDR Amendment, says it will cause serious damage to Odisha

Bhubaneswar: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday strongly opposed the recently passed amendment to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, saying it would cause serious damage to Odisha and its people.

In a video message, Patnaik said such an important amendment Bill was passed by the Centre without adequate discussion in Parliament and claimed that only BJD MPs opposed it in the Rajya Sabha.

The Leader of Opposition said no one was bigger than the interests of Odisha and its people and called for unity to protect the state's interests.

"We must come together not for the sake of any political party, but for the interests of our state and our soil," he said.

Patnaik said he had written to Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi urging him to convene an all-party meeting and call a special session of the Odisha Legislative Assembly to discuss the MMDR Amendment Bill, which, he alleged, had taken away the state's rights over its mineral resources.

Odisha has some of the country's largest reserves of chromite, bauxite, iron ore, coal and manganese, he said, adding that the amendment would ad-



versely affect the state's rights over these resources.

"Why should we not be able to collect taxes from our own mines for the welfare of our people?" Patnaik asked.

He alleged that while the people of Odisha would bear the dust and pollution caused by mining, the Centre would benefit from the state's mineral resources. "We will not allow this to happen," he asserted.

Patnaik said that during his 24-year tenure as Chief Minister, he had protected the interests of Odisha and claimed that successive governments at the Centre, irrespective of their political affiliations, had not attempted to undermine the state's rights.

Referring to the change of govern-

ment in Odisha in 2024, he said, "You brought about a change and elected a new BJP government. Within just two years, everything has changed. Odisha will now have to depend on the Centre's mercy."

He also criticised the BJP MPs from Odisha for allegedly failing to raise the state's concerns in Parliament.

"You elected 20 BJP MPs from Odisha to the Lok Sabha. But not a single one of them raised their voice for this state. They failed miserably in discharging their duties towards the state and protecting its interests," Patnaik said.

The BJD president said former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik had always emphasised financial autonomy as essential for the state's development.

He claimed that the amended legislation would substantially reduce Odisha's tax resources and result in losses of thousands of crores of rupees every year.

According to Patnaik, the funds could otherwise have been used to construct schools, colleges and hospitals, as well as roads, bridges, power projects and other infrastructure.

The money could also have supported new welfare programmes and provided greater assistance to farmers and economically weaker sections.

Telangana NRI panel studies Philippines' Migration Policy for Gulf workers

Hyderabad: A delegation of the Telangana State NRI Advisory Committee on Wednesday visited the Indian Embassy in Manila and held discussions with officials of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas to study best practices in migration policies for the benefit of Telangana workers employed in Gulf countries. Government Whip Adi Srinivas and Nizamabad Rural MLAR Bhupathi Reddy said the delegation would examine the Philippines' migration system, considered among the better-established models globally. The delegation held detailed discussions with Indian Ambassador to the Philippines Harsha Kumar Jain and First Secretary Nilesh Kumar Rai at the Indian Embassy. Officials of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas made a presentation on the Philippines' migration policies and mechanisms for protecting overseas workers.

Railway, Kaladan projects could transform Mizoram's economy

Aizawl: Mizoram's two major connectivity projects could open up new economic opportunities for the state, but the benefits will depend heavily on advance preparations, better regulation and stronger links between local producers and emerging markets, according to an impact study submitted to the state government. The Impact Study Committee on the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KM-MTTP) and the Bairabi-Sairang Railway Link submitted its Final Draft Report to Chief Minister Lalduhoma on Sunday, completing a task originally assigned to it for 12 months in just 10 months. Receiving the report, Lalduhoma appreciated the committee for completing the study ahead of schedule and acknowledged the work put in by its members. He said the government would continue to seek the committee's assistance in following up on its recommendations and addressing issues arising from the implementation of the two major connectivity projects. The meeting also examined some of the broad findings emerging from the committee's situational analysis and field studies, with particular attention to the economic opportunities and challenges that Mizoram could face as the KM-MTTP and railway connectivity become fully operational. One of the key areas identified by the committee was cross-border trade between Mizoram and Myanmar. It examined both the existing pattern of trade and its future potential, while stressing the need for appropriate mechanisms for revenue collection and taxation

so that the state government can secure a greater share of the economic benefits generated by expanding commercial activities. The committee also discussed ways to make it easier for Mizoram's products to reach markets outside the state, including other parts of India and international destinations. According to the findings, traders and logistics service providers in Mizoram are already deriving considerable benefits from existing trade and logistics activities. However, the committee suggested that local traders could expand their opportunities further by developing proficiency in Zakhai, or Burmese, which could make communication and business dealings across the border easier. The report also called for greater public awareness about security requirements, laws and regulations governing cross-border activities. With the KM-MTTP expected to become operational in 2027, the committee stressed that Mizoram cannot afford to wait until the project becomes fully functional before putting necessary systems and safeguards in place. It identified several areas where action needs to be accelerated and preparations made in advance to ensure that the state is ready to take advantage of the opportunities that the project could bring. Railway connectivity was another major focus of the study. While the arrival of the railway is expected to significantly improve Mizoram's connectivity with the rest of the country, the committee cautioned that infrastructure alone would not guarantee that the people of the state would derive its full benefits.

Address AYUSH students' stipend demands immediately: Ramchander Rao

Hyderabad: BJP Telangana State president N Ramchander Rao on Wednesday demanded that the State government immediately increase stipends for AYUSH PG students and house surgeons on par with Allopathy students and clear all pending arrears. Ramchander Rao visited the relay hunger strike at Dr B R K R Government Ayurveda College and Hospital in Erragadda, where AYUSH students have been protesting for 16 days, and expressed the BJP's full solidarity with their demands.

He said AYUSH doctors in Ayurveda, Unani and Homeopathy were being discriminated against despite working alongside Allopathy doctors in public healthcare.



He pointed out that AYUSH PG students receive Rs 30,000 and house surgeons Rs 13,000 per month in Telangana, compared to Rs 60,000 and Rs 25,000 respectively in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. Referring to court directions and the 2006 government order providing for parity between AYUSH and Allopathy students, he demanded that Telangana

implement the Supreme Court verdict and follow the Andhra Pradesh model. Ramchander Rao criticised the Congress government for failing to resolve the issue despite the students' prolonged protest and warned that the BJP would intensify its agitation if the government failed to raise stipends and release the pending arrears immediately.

Cong MP Imran Masood and SP MLA Ashu Malik clash during DISHA committee meeting

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President Pankaj Chaudhary has targeted the opposition alliance over the heated exchange between Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA and Congress MP at the Saharanpur DISHA Committee meeting.

At the DISHA meeting in Saharanpur on Wednesday, Congress MP Imran Masood and SP MLA Ashu Malik clashed over road construction. A video of the heated exchange between the two, following the tea-and-pakoras comment, is currently circulating.

Later in a tweet on 'X', the BJP state chief said that instead of looking around, opposition leaders should see the true face of their "selfish alliance."

Chaudhary said that the open altercation between an SP MLA and a Congress MP at the Saharanpur meeting was not a coincidence, but rather a testament to the true character of the opposition "family alliance."

He alleged that what the opposition calls a "grand alliance" is actually an opportunistic platform formed out of greed for power.

BJP state president said that opposition parties are not concerned with the development of people and the problems of the region. Their sole objective is to pursue political interests and gain power. He said that this alliance, formed out of a desire for power, has now been exposed before the public. He said that opposition parties claim unity, but on the

ground, a struggle for supremacy is visible among their leaders. The Saharanpur incident is the latest example of this contradiction.

Chaudhary claimed that in the coming days, this "mismatched alliance" will disintegrate like a house of cards, and the real political conflict between its constituent parties will emerge.

Earlier, during the DISHA meeting held in the Vikas Bhawan auditorium in Saharanpur on Tuesday evening, the political tension between Congress MP Imran Masood and SP MLA Ashu Malik came to the fore. During the meeting, the MLA raised questions about the road and incomplete drain constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in Behda Sandal village.

Calcutta High Court defers hearing on Abhishek Banerjee's plea against bank account freeze

Kolkata: The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday deferred the hearing of Trinamool Congress leader and Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee's petition challenging the freezing of his personal bank account. The matter was heard by Justice Krishna Rao, who directed the concerned bank authorities to submit a report on the issue on Thursday.

Banerjee's counsel, Ayan Bhattacharya, had approached Justice Rao on Monday seeking an urgent hearing of the petition. The request was made in view of Banerjee's proposed overseas travel for medical treat-

ment and the freezing of his personal bank account shortly before his scheduled trip.

Appearing for Banerjee, Bhattacharya told the court that the account had been frozen without the Trinamool Congress leader being informed about the reasons behind the action. He sought the court's intervention, questioning the circumstances under which the bank had taken the decision.

The lawyer also raised questions over the legal procedure followed in freezing the account. He argued that the action could not have been taken without following the procedure prescribed

under Section 107 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).



According to Bhattacharya, the provision requires the police to approach the concerned magistrate and

obtain an appropriate order before freezing a bank account in such circumstances.

He claimed that no such procedure had been followed in Banerjee's case. The court subsequently

permitted Banerjee to file the petition and sought clarification regarding whether any investigation was currently pending against him. The issue was raised as the court considered the circumstances surrounding the freezing of the account.

Banerjee's counsel informed the court that the Trinamool Congress leader was cooperating with an ongoing investigation in accordance with directions issued by the court. However, he maintained that the investigation in question had no connection with the freezing of Banerjee's personal bank account. After hearing the

submissions, Justice Rao directed that notices be served on the other parties involved in the matter. The court also sought a report from the concerned bank authorities, which has been directed to be submitted on Thursday. The court's decision to seek a report is expected to provide greater clarity on the circumstances leading to the freezing of the account and the procedure followed by the bank before taking the action. The development comes against the backdrop of Banerjee's ongoing legal efforts to secure permission to travel abroad for medical treatment.

Mukesh Chhabra, Bosco Martis launch The Big Break

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: Bollywood casting director Mukesh Chhabra and choreographer Bosco Martis have joined hands to launch ‘The Big Break’, billed as India’s first digital talent-hunt platform aimed at discovering promising singers, actors and dancers from across the country.

Produced by BARD and created in collaboration with format producer Rajiv Laxman, ‘The Big Break’ will provide an opportunity to talented people in acting, dancing and singing to showcase their talent on a single platform. The show will run on various digital platforms and will conclude with a grand gala.

Participants will no longer need to wait in long audition lines or travel to other cities to join the programme. They can enter by creating a video of their acting, singing, or dancing performance and submitting a collaboration request to the programme’s official social media accounts.

Each day, 40 to 60 entries will be selected and shared on the show’s social media platforms. This way,



the selection process isn’t limited to the judges, but the audience will also be able to see their talent.

“The Big Break” will feature talent discovery as part of the show’s content. The competition will progress through various stages as a reality-based competition on social me-

dia. Chhabra will mentor the contestants in acting and Martis in dance. For singing, a special jury of leading singers and composers from Hindi cinema will be formed, which will be announced in the coming weeks.

The next stage of the competi-

tion will see selected participants being flown to Mumbai for training. They will perform in front of mentors in weekly programmes and live sessions. The competition will conclude with a grand gala event attended by several prominent figures from Hindi cinema.

Singers who perform well may be offered the opportunity to work in upcoming BLM Music productions. The programme’s original music will also be released through the music organisation.

Chhabra said that talent isn’t limited to a single city or background. “The Big Break” is an effort to bridge the gap between talent and the film industry and give artists the opportunity to make their mark.

Martis said that India has many talented singers, actors, and dancers who have not yet found a proper platform to showcase their talent. The programme aims to bring a platform to these talents.

Entry for ‘The Big Break’ opens on August 5, 2026. Participation information and terms and conditions are available on the show’s official website.

Awarapan 2 producer Vishesh Bhatt speaks on Disha Patani’s casting: “It is a very modern character”

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: Disha Patani and Emraan Hashmi are set to share the screen for the first time in ‘Awarapan 2’, bringing a new pairing to the franchise. Producer Vishesh Bhatt has now spoken about the decision to cast Disha and explained why the actress was considered a strong fit for the role.

Bhatt said Disha’s journey as an actor, along with her personality and screen presence, played an important role in the casting process. He noted that he had been familiar with her work for several years and had also met her when she was still at the beginning of her career.

Speaking about bringing Emraan and Disha together, Bhatt pointed out that the two actors had not previously appeared together on screen. He said their pairing adds an interesting dimension to the upcoming film and offers audiences a fresh combination within the franchise. The producer recalled watching Disha in ‘Malang’, directed by Mohit



Suri, and said he had first met the actress around 2012 or 2013, when she was just starting out in the industry. Over the years, Bhatt said he had observed Disha’s evolution as an actor and developed a sense of her strengths as a performer. According to him, her screen presence and personality ultimately aligned well with what the makers were looking for in the character. Bhatt described Disha as someone with a charming face and an appealing personality, qualities that he felt would complement the character being created for ‘Awarapan 2’.

He explained that the role required a performer who could bring a contemporary quality to the story. The producer said the character’s personality and journey were important factors behind the casting decision. He believed Disha could bring the right combination of modernity and charm to the part while fitting naturally into the world of the film. Bhatt also clarified that Disha’s character has been deliberately designed to be different from the female lead portrayed by Shriya Saran in the original ‘Awarapan’.

India’s Best Dancer Season 5: Karisma Kapoor recalls Geeta Kapur giving her a “Michael Jackson” dance routine

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: Karisma Kapoor and choreographer Geeta Kapur recently took a nostalgic trip down memory lane during an episode of ‘India’s Best Dancer Season 5’, where the two reflected on their long-standing association and recalled several memorable moments from the early stages of their careers.

The conversation gave viewers a glimpse into the relationship they have developed over the years, including their first meeting on the sets of ‘Dil To Pagal Hai’ and their subsequent experiences working together on stage shows.

Recalling their first encounter, Geeta said she met Karisma in 1996 when she was at the beginning of her career as an assistant choreographer. At the time, Karisma was already an established Bollywood star and was shooting for ‘Dil To Pagal Hai’.

Geeta remembered that their first interaction took place while Karisma was filming the ‘Pyaar Kar’ sequence for the film. She said the meeting left a lasting impression on her, as it was one of her first experiences working with a major star.

She also recalled Karisma’s appearance from that day, revealing that she remembered the actress wearing a light blue gown. Geeta said she immediately found Karisma striking and admired her appearance, adding that the actor continues to look gorgeous even today.

More importantly, Geeta recalled the warmth and respect Karisma showed towards her despite being an established star at the time. She said Karisma treated her with affection and respect, something she continued to remember years later.

Karisma, in turn, shared her own



memories of working with Geeta. Although the two never had the opportunity to work together on a feature film after their initial association, Karisma revealed that they collaborated on several stage shows.

According to the actor, Geeta was deeply involved in those performances and was responsible for choreographing some of the routines. Karisma particularly remembered how demanding some of the dance sequences assigned to her were.

Karisma recalled one instance when Geeta gave her a particularly challenging routine while other performers were given comparatively simple steps. She remembered being surprised when she saw the choreography and jokingly questioned what Geeta had planned for her.

The actor said she noticed that the other artists were performing easier steps, while she had been given a complicated routine that included what she

described as a Michael Jackson-style move. The unexpected difficulty left her wondering why she had been given such a demanding sequence.

Karisma recalled confronting Geeta about the choreography and telling her that it did not seem fair to give her difficult steps while others were performing simpler routines. However, Geeta remained confident that Karisma would be able to pull off the performance.

According to Karisma, Geeta simply encouraged her by telling her that she could do it. The anecdote highlighted the choreographer’s faith in Karisma’s dancing abilities and also reflected the professional rapport that developed between the two over their years of association.

During the conversation, Karisma also recalled a memorable moment from her career surrounding her National Film Award recognition for ‘Dil To Pagal Hai’.

Anushka Sen Bridges Indian-Korean Pop Culture with Oreo x BTS

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: Anushka Sen is strengthening her position as a recognisable Gen Z personality for brands looking to engage young, digitally active audiences. Her latest collaboration with Oreo for its limited-edition BTS x Oreo collection adds to her growing association with campaigns that combine youth culture, entertainment and global pop-culture trends. As part of the campaign, Anushka incorporates the BTS-themed purple Oreo cookies into her Sen Kitchen Diaries content. She pairs the limited-edition treats with customised Dalgona coffee and relaxed K-drama viewing sessions, creating a setting that reflects the interests and digital habits of her audience. Rather than presenting the product through a conventional promotional format, the collaboration places Oreo within content built around lifestyle and entertainment. The approach allows the brand integration to feel more natural while connecting the product with themes already familiar to Anushka’s followers. The association also brings together two strong elements of contemporary youth culture: Indian digital enter-

tainment and the growing popularity of Korean pop culture. With K-pop, K-dramas, Korean food and fashion finding a wider audience in India, collaborations that bridge the two cultures are increasingly gaining relevance among younger consumers. Anushka’s existing interest in Korean culture further strengthens the connection. Her familiarity with Korean entertainment and lifestyle trends gives her a natural platform to introduce global cultural influences to Indian audiences through content that is accessible and relatable. The Oreo collaboration is also part of a wider pattern of brands associating with Anushka to reach younger consumers. Her strong digital presence and established connection with Gen Z provide brands with an opportunity to create awareness while encouraging conversations around new campaigns and products. Her content frequently brings together entertainment, lifestyle and culture, areas that have become increasingly important in digital marketing. This allows

commercial collaborations to be presented through formats that align with the way younger audiences consume content across social media platforms. The ability to communicate with Gen Z without making promotional content appear excessively commercial has become an important consideration. Anushka’s

digital-first approach enables campaigns to be integrated into lifestyle-led storytelling while retaining their connection with brand message.



Rohit Saraf takes on striking new avatar as freedom fighter Sachindra Nath Sanyal

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: Actor Rohit Saraf is set to present a dramatically different avatar in the upcoming historical series ‘The Revolutionaries’, marking a significant departure from the youthful, boy-next-door image audiences have associated with him.

The makers recently released a glimpse of Saraf’s character, offering viewers a first look at his transformation and the intensity he brings to the role. The clip portrays his character as a passionate patriot driven by the determination to fight against British rule.

In the video, Saraf’s character speaks about keeping the revolutionary spirit alive, confronting death without fear and remaining committed to the larger objective. The dialogue captures the determination and sacrifice associated with the freedom struggle depicted in the series.

‘The Revolutionaries’ revolves around a group of young Indian freedom fighters who believed that armed resistance was necessary to challenge and ultimately end British colonial rule. The series explores their convictions, struggles and commit-



ment to the cause of independence.

Saraf’s new appearance has drawn attention because of how substantially it differs from his earlier screen portrayals. The actor has moved away from his familiar romantic and youthful persona to embody a character rooted in the turbulent period of India’s independence movement.

For his role as Sachindra Nath Sanyal, the 29-year-old actor underwent a significant

physical and visual transformation. He has developed a muscular physique and adopted a moustached look to reflect the appearance of the revolutionary he portrays.

His costume has also been designed in keeping with the period in which the story is set.

The combination of the traditional attire, physical transformation and overall styling gives Saraf a more rugged and historically grounded appearance.

Akshay Oberoi says he feels “fortunate” to join Geetu Mohandas’ female-led cast in Toxic

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: Actor Akshay Oberoi is preparing for the release of Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups, his Kannada film debut, directed by Geetu Mohandas and headlined by Yash. The film brings Oberoi into a new industry as part of an ensemble that includes several established female actors from Bollywood and the south.

Speaking about his experience on the project, Oberoi said, “I feel incredibly fortunate to be part of such a powerful female-led cast curated by Geetu Mohandas. It has been a truly special opportunity for me. Geetu has a very distinct vision and the world she has created with Toxic is unlike anything I have experienced before. I’m grateful to her and Yash for believing in me and giving me the opportu-



nity to be part of this film.”

He further said, “It’s not often that you get to work on a film that brings together such an exceptional group of actors from different industries. There is so much to learn from everyone on set, and being surrounded by such incredible talent has made the experience creatively enriching. I’m excited for audiences to see the world we have created together.”

The project marks a milestone for Oberoi as he enters the Kannada film industry through one of its most closely watched Pan-India productions, joining a cast drawn from multiple film industries.

Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups is directed by Geetu Mohandas and stars Yash alongside an ensemble cast. The film is scheduled for a worldwide release on August 26, 2026.

‘Naagin’ slithers to silver screens

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: The much-loved supernatural television franchise “Naagin” is set to make the leap from the small screen to cinema, marking a new chapter for one of Indian television’s most successful supernatural series.

Producer Ekta Kapoor recently revisited the journey of the “Naagin” franchise through an Instagram post, featuring glimpses of the actresses who have portrayed the iconic shape-shifting character over the years. The post celebrated the show’s long-standing popularity while also revealing plans to expand the franchise beyond television.

A text featured in the video stated that “Naagin” has ruled the small screen for 11 years and indicated that Balaji Telefilms Ltd is now preparing to take the popular franchise into a new format. The announcement immediately generated curiosity among fans of the television series. Kapoor accompanied the post with a brief but intriguing caption, writing, “Something exciting is coming! #WaitForIt Happy Nag Panchami!” Her message added to the anticipation surrounding the upcoming project without revealing further details.

While the move to the big screen has been confirmed, the makers have not yet announced the film’s

cast, director, storyline or release date. Details regarding which actors will be associated with the cinematic adaptation are also being closely watched by fans of the franchise.

The “Naagin” franchise first premiered on television in 2015 and quickly developed a strong following with its combination of supernatural drama, romance, mystery and fantasy. The series centred on shape-shifting serpent characters and their relationships, rivalries and battles. The inaugural season featured Mouni Roy in the titular role, with Arjun Bijlani playing the male protagonist. Roy’s portrayal of the shape-shifting Naagin became closely associated with the early

success of the franchise and helped establish the character as a major television icon. Over the years, the franchise continued with different storylines and new generations of characters, with several popular actresses taking on the role of Naagin. The changing cast and evolving narratives allowed the series to maintain its presence on television across multiple seasons. The franchise has also become known for its distinctive blend of fantasy and drama, creating a format that has consistently attracted audiences interested in supernatural storytelling. Its longevity has made “Naagin” one of the most recognisable titles associated with Indian television entertainment.

BSE Sensex			Nifty 50			Nifty 500			Nifty Next 50			Nifty 100			Nifty Bank			Nifty Midcap 100		
Close		Percent change	Close		Percent change	Close		Percent change	Close		Percent change	Close		Percent change	Close		Percent change	Close		Percent change
76,909.68		-0.42%	24,078.30		-0.32%	23,386.20		-0.37%	73,900.65		-0.55%	25,242.25		-0.36%	57,239.75		-0.040%	63,408.75		-0.21%
Previous close		Open	Previous close		Open	Previous close		Open	Previous close		Open	Previous close		Open	Previous close		Open	Previous close		Open
77,235.46		77,218.05	24,154.90		24,152.05	23,472.40		23,475.35	74,308.90		74,264.60	25,333.65		25,328.40	57,262.40		57,260.65	63,539.40		63,582.10
High		Low	High		Low	High		Low	High		Low	High		Low	High		Low	High		Low
77,347.81		76,822.89	24,172.85		24,025.65	23,488.25		23,348.30	74,280.05		73,752.10	25,345.70		25,192.30	57,356.85		57,001.75	63,593.00		63,198.40

Top Gainers

Company	Current	% Gain
HCL Tech	1,324.80	2.06
JSW Steel	1,285.80	1.44
Sun Pharma	1,900.00	1.33
Eternal	320.00	1.30
Wipro	179.55	0.84

Top Losers

Company	Current	%Loss
Max Healthcare	997.00	-1.72
Coal India	400.00	-1.70
Power Grid Corp	263.50	-1.68
Bajaj Finance	1,080.20	-1.29
ITC	267.05	-1.09

Commodities

Commodity	Price	Change (%)
Gold Oct 05	155,730.00	1,468.00 0.95
Silver Sep 04	234,131.00	1,712.00 0.74
Crudeoil Sep 21	8,055.00	-33.00 -0.41
Naturalgas Aug 26	272.70	7.90 2.98

Stock markets extend losing streak; crude prices, global uncertainty weigh

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai : Indian stock markets on Wednesday extended their losing streak as investors remained concerned. The elevated crude oil prices, higher global bond yields and persistent global uncertainty were keenly watched.

At close, the Sensex was down 325.78 points or 0.42 percent at 76,909.68, and the Nifty was down 76.60 points or 0.32 percent at 24,078.30. The mid-cap index fell 0.2pc and small-cap index down by 0.5pc.

Among the sectors, except IT index (up 0.7pc) , all other sectoral indices ended in the red with Defence index shed nearly 1.5pc and Energy index down 1.2pc.

On Nifty, the gainers were HCL Technologies, JSW Steel, Sun Pharma, Eternal and Wipro. The biggest Nifty losers were Power Grid Corporation, Max Healthcare, Coal India, ITC, Bajaj Finance.

More than 160 stocks



touched 52-week high including Welspun Living, Chennai Petro, GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals, Leela Palaces, Welspun Corp, Lenskart Solutions, Action Construction, Samvardhana Motherson International, Ramkrishna Forging, Bosch, Radico Khaitan, Craftsman Automation, Zen Technologies, HFCL, among others.

Indian rupee ended lower for the third consecutive session, declining 8 paise to 95.76 per dollar.

In terms of some of the key performers, Mahanagar Gas,

Indraprastha Gas (IGL) and Adani Total Gas all posted gains of more than 3pc.

Ola Electric, Reliance Power, Bharat Dynamics, L&T Finance, Tata Technologies, Solar Industries, Sobha, and Tata Chemicals, all of which declined more than 2.5pc.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Investments Limited, said markets adopted a cautious stance ahead of the release of the US Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) minutes, with investors remaining concerned that the Federal

Reserve could continue its fight against inflation.

He said the absence of a diplomatic breakthrough following the conclusion of the US-Iran ceasefire added to uncertainty in global markets. Persistently elevated crude oil prices and bond yields further strengthened risk-off sentiment among investors.

The weakness seen across Asian markets was also reflected in Indian equities, which witnessed broad-based selling pressure.

However, IT stocks remained relatively resilient, supported by value buying and the weakness in the rupee, which provided some support to the sector.

Nair noted that the Q1FY27 corporate earnings season is now nearing its conclusion, with overall results performing better than market expectations. The stronger-than-anticipated earnings have helped reinforce confidence in the resilience of corporate profitability.

AI will transform jobs, create new roles: Phenom CEO

Hyderabad : Artificial Intelligence (AI) will transform the nature of work by converting many existing jobs into tasks while creating new employment opportunities, Phenom CEO and Co-Founder Mahe Bayireddi said on Wednesday.

Addressing a press conference in Hyderabad, Bayireddi said Phenom was founded with the mission of helping a billion people find the right work and uses AI-driven talent solutions to improve hiring, onboarding and employee retention. The company's platform receives more than 50 million jobs and serves over a billion users annually.

Explaining AI's impact on employment, Bayireddi said some traditional jobs would disappear, but new roles would emerge as workflows evolve. Comparing the transition to the disappearance of typist jobs after computers became widespread, he said technology changes the nature of work rather

than eliminating employment altogether.

He said India's large and young workforce was well positioned to adapt to the AI-driven transformation, but stressed the need for education and skilling systems to evolve, with greater focus on technical, behavioural and cognitive skills.

Bayireddi also announced that IAMPHENOM India 2026 will be held at Novotel Hyderabad on December 17, bringing together HR professionals to discuss how AI will reshape workplace workflows and talent management. During the question-and-answer session, Bayireddi said Phenom currently has around 900 employees in India, including about 700 in Hyderabad, and plans to add more than 2,000 employees in India over the next few years. He said the expansion is expected during 2028-29, depending on market conditions and the pace of AI adoption.

GIF II seeks to turn BRICS ties into trade, investment

Bengaluru: Can civilisational ties translate into business deals? That is the central proposition of the Global Impact Forum II (GIF II), which will bring together political leaders, diplomats, investors, start-ups and cultural representatives in Mumbai on September 5-6, just days before India hosts the BRICS Summit in New Delhi.

The Forum, themed "Civilizational Legacy", is being organised by AP Globale in partnership with the Maharashtra government and is seeking to carve out a distinct role from the official BRICS Summit by focusing on the link between culture, soft power and commerce.

South African Consul General G. Labane said Maharashtra's ambition of becoming a USD one-trillion economy offered substantial scope for India-South Africa collaboration in financial services, fintech, infrastructure and construction.

Mumbai's position as

India's financial capital, with the National Stock Exchange and Bombay Stock Exchange, coupled with its rapid infrastructure expansion, made the state an attractive destination for international business, he said.

But Labane acknowledged a key challenge facing India-South Africa ties: strong political relations have not yet translated into equally strong trade and investment flows.

He said India and the Southern African Customs union (SACU) had revived negotiations on a proposed trade pact after almost a decade, describing the development as an opportunity to accelerate economic engagement.

India's recent decision to allow citrus imports from South Africa was another positive step, he said, but cautioned that tariffs of around 20-35 per cent could make South African produce uncompetitive.

"The relationship does not require an introduction.

It requires acceleration," Labane said, stressing the need to convert historic goodwill into supply chains, investment and commercial opportunities.

He said President Cyril Ramaphosa was expected to visit India for the BRICS Summit accompanied by more than 100 South African business leaders, while ministers handling trade and tourism were also expected to participate in the wider engagement.

AP Globale Director Janvi Pawar said GIF II was not intended to replicate the inter-governmental negotiations of the official BRICS Summit. "The world doesn't need another room for negotiation. It needs a space for understanding," she said. The Forum will bring academics, policymakers, entrepreneurs, investors and cultural figures together to examine how history and culture influence consumer behaviour, market entry, workforce practices and business relationships. The organisers are us-

ing country-specific themes to explore common ground between India and BRICS partners, including medicine and martial arts with China, cinema, classical music and literature with Russia, and dance, beauty and sport with Brazil.

India-South Africa discussions will focus on shared links including wildlife conservation, tribal traditions and freedom struggles.

Venture Catalysts, the investment partner, will showcase six early-stage and six growth-stage start-ups before investors, family offices, government representatives and business leaders. The start-ups are being selected from sectors such as sustainability, electric mobility, logistics, deep technology and rural finance, with the objective of taking Indian innovation to global markets.

The organisers, however, have not set a specific investment target for GIF II. They said family offices would decide whether indi-

vidual investment figures could be disclosed, while the objective was to ensure that startups secured either funding or commercial opportunities.

The Forum's organisers pointed to the Rs 539-crore biopolymer MoU secured during the inaugural edition as evidence of its potential to convert dialogue into economic outcomes.

Labane said the South African philosophy of "Ubuntu" — the idea that people and communities are interconnected — captured the approach behind the Forum: greater understanding can create trust, and trust can make business relationships easier.

With India seeking to strengthen its leadership of the Global South and Mumbai preparing to host an international gathering immediately before the BRICS Summit, GIF II faces a larger test — whether the language of civilisational partnership can be converted into measurable investments, trade and jobs.

Canara Vidya Jyoti Scholarship Distributed to Meritorious Girl Students

Aryan Age Correspondence

Mumbai: Canara Bank, Circle Office Mumbai, distributed Canara Vidya Jyoti Scholarships to meritorious girl students belonging to the SC/ST communities in the leadership of CGMRanjeet kumar and chief Guest Mr. Rajesh T Pali IRS Deputy Commissioner of Income Tax, as part of the Bank's continued commitment towards promoting education and empowering deserving students. The scholarship programme aims to provide financial support to meritorious girl students and encourage them to pursue higher education without financial constraints. This year Mumbai Circle are extending scholarships to 64 Branches 384 Students Total Scholarships amount 15.36Lakh and Total 80 Students attended the Canara Vidya Jyoti scholarship programme along with 30 Teachers and parents 100 school bags with water bottle were distributed. The initiative reflects Canara



Bank's commitment to inclusive growth, educational empowerment and social responsibility.

The scholarship was presented to deserving students in recognition of their academic excellence and dedication towards education. The programme also highlighted the importance of providing equal opportunities to students from socially and economically disadvantaged sections of society. Speaking on the occasion, the Circle Office representatives appreciated the efforts and achievements of the students and encouraged them to continue their pursuit of

excellence. They emphasized that education is one of the most powerful tools for social and economic transformation. Canara Bank has consistently undertaken various initiatives to support education and empower the youth.

The Canara Vidya Jyoti Scholarship is one such initiative aimed at encouraging meritorious girl students and enabling them to build a brighter and more secure future. The students and their parents expressed their gratitude to Canara Bank and the Mumbai Circle Office for extending this valuable support and encouragement.

Piyush Goyal-led 70-member Business Delegation visits Singapore; Trade, investment talks on agenda

New Delhi: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is on a visit to Singapore with the aim to step up high-level engagement with the Southeast Asian nation under the India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) framework.

Goyal will be in Singapore from August 19-21 accompanied by a delegation of around 70 senior Indian business leaders representing sectors including technology and artificial intelligence, manufacturing, infrastructure, financial services, healthcare, agriculture, logistics, maritime services and professional services.

The delegation is expected to hold business-to-business, government-to-business and institutional meetings in Singapore.

Discussions will centre on investment opportunities, market access, technology partnerships and skill development, with visits to Centres of Excellence and skilling institutions also planned, according to a statement by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

The key engagement during Goyal's visit will be the fourth India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable on August 20.

The meeting, which is the principal ministerial platform for advancing the



two countries' Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, will be held alongside the fourth India-Singapore Business Roundtable.

Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Railways, Information and Broadcasting, and Electronics.

And Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw will also participate in the ministerial roundtable.

The Indian ministers are scheduled to meet their Singaporean counterparts and other senior government leaders.

Goyal will also call on Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong at the Istana.

The minister is scheduled to hold separate government-to-business meet-

ings with representatives of global finance and technology groups, infrastructure and healthcare companies, investment firms and business organisations. A Family Office Roundtable is also part of the programme.

Goyal will also participate in an India-Singapore Business Forum organised by FICCI at the INSEAD Asia Campus. He is expected to speak on India's role in the changing global growth landscape and the opportunities available to businesses in Asia and beyond.

As part of efforts to expand agricultural trade, Goyal will jointly visit an APEDA-Fair Price initiative.

At City Square Mall with Singapore Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Trade and Industry Gan Siow Huang.

The initiative seeks to increase the visibility of Indian agricultural and food products in Singapore's retail market.

The minister will conclude the visit with a keynote address at the ICAI ASEAN Conference 2026 at Marina Bay Sands.

Singapore has emerged as a major economic and investment partner for India. It was India's largest source of foreign direct investment in FY 2025-26, with inflows of USD 19.8 billion.

Total FDI from Singapore stood at USD 194.68 billion between April 2000 and March 2026, accounting for nearly 24.7pc of India's cumulative FDI inflows. Bilateral trade has also expanded significantly since the India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement came into effect. Trade increased from USD 6.7 billion in FY 2004-05 to USD 36.1 billion in FY 2025-26.

Singapore is also India's largest trading partner within ASEAN and remains an important source of foreign portfolio investment and external commercial borrowings.

The visit comes as both countries seek to deepen co-operation in areas such as advanced manufacturing, digital technologies, investment, skills, sustainability and the green economy.

SEBI will take stringent action against manipulation of new closing auction session: Tuhin Kanta Pandey

New Delhi : Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey warned that the regulator would take swift and stringent action against anyone attempting to manipulate the stock market's new Closing Auction Session (CAS).

Speaking on the sidelines of the FICCI Capital Markets Conference in Mumbai, Pandey said the new mechanism gives the regulator stronger tools to identify potential manipulation than

the earlier system based on volume-weighted average price (VWAP). "If people do manipulation in CAS, then we will take strict action and do it immediately," Pandey said. The SEBI chairman also defended the new closing-price mechanism, saying it was introduced to enhance transparency in the market. He cautioned market participants against deliberately misusing the system or attempting to undermine confidence in it. Pandey said the regulator's

surveillance capabilities under CAS are comparatively stronger, making it easier to identify unusual or manipulative activity than under the previous VWAP-based method. The CAS was introduced by stock exchanges earlier this month as a separate 20-minute trading session to determine the closing price of securities. During the session, buy and sell orders are accumulated and matched at a price that allows the maximum possible volume to be executed.

Jassper Shipping to invest US\$50 million to expand project logistics operations

Hyderabad: Jassper Shipping on Tuesday announced plans to invest US\$50 million over the next three years to strengthen its project logistics, breakbulk, bulk cargo and industrial supply chain operations amid growing infrastructure and industrial activity in India.

The growth capital will be infused by the company's promoters in a phased manner and deployed towards expanding project logistics infrastructure, strengthening bulk and breakbulk cargo handling capabilities, enhancing technology-led logistics planning and scaling operations across key industrial and port-led logistics corridors, the Hyderabad-based company said in a release here.

The first phase of the in-



vestment programme will involve an infusion of US\$10 million to expand the company's B2B project logistics business, with a focus on sectors including power, steel, petrochemicals, heavy engineering, manufacturing and large infrastructure projects.

The investment will also

support specialised transportation capabilities, port-to-plant logistics, vessel chartering and integrated multimodal freight solutions for oversized and critical cargo, the company said. Jassper Shipping CEO and Head of Business Development (Subcontinent, Middle East & Southeast Asia)

Pushpank Kaushik said the planned investment reflected the company's long-term commitment to strengthening capabilities across project cargo, breakbulk logistics, vessel chartering and integrated industrial supply chains. The investment would also focus on infrastructure, capacity, technology and execution capabilities to enable customers to move complex cargo efficiently and safely, Kaushik added. The investment programme is expected to further strengthen Jassper Shipping's presence across India and the Gulf, enabling it to scale cross-border project logistics, industrial cargo movement and specialised freight solutions for EPC companies, manufacturers and infrastructure developers.