

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ Saturday, 01 November, 2025 UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

Belgian court clears Choksi's extradition

New Delhi: A Belgian court on Friday upheld the arrest of fugitive diamondaire Mehul Choksi by Belgian police on India's request and approved his extradition to face trial in Rs 13,000 crore bank fraud case. This significant development comes after Choksi's arrest in Antwerp in April this year. Choksi, uncle of another high-profile fugitive Nirav Modi who is in jail in UK, can appeal the order in a higher court in the next 15 days. However, officials in India expressed satisfaction over the development saying that Belgian court's order marked an important step towards his return to India. Declared a flight risk, Choksi was denied bail and has been lodged in an Antwerp prison. With his arrest upheld, he is likely to stay in prison until the Belgian judiciary decides India's case for him being sent back. Earlier in Aug, at least two Belgian courts rejected Choksi's bail plea after the Indian law enforcement argued that Choksi was a habitual absconder and was likely to flee to another country if granted bail. The CBI gave Belgian prosecutors with details of his involvement in economic offences in India and his escape from US and Antigua in the past besides the two open warrants against him.

HC: 'Functional sight' enough for government job

New Delhi: Delhi HC has said "seeing" is not limited to physical sight, but extends to the ability to understand, reports Abhinav Garg. "The function of sight... is in fact largely performed by the brain... power of cognition and understanding vests in the brain, not solely the eye, which acts only as a recorder and transmitter," it said. "If a blind candidate, with the aid of assistive devices, is able to perceive what is necessary to discharge the functions of the JE (Law) post, they must be regarded as possessing the functional attribute of sight," HC said Thursday, partly allowing a plea by three candidates.

PM on Mahagathbandhan's manifesto; claims agenda

The leaders of 'Jungle Raj' are constantly misleading you, luring you

Accusing the Mahagathbandhan of corruption, Prime Minister Narendra Modi



NEW DELHI: Accusing the Mahagathbandhan of corruption, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on launched a scathing attack on the opposition alliance in Bihar, claiming it had released a "ratelist" instead of a manifesto. Addressing a rally in Chhapra, PM Modi said, "The leaders of 'Jungle Raj' are constantly misleading you, luring you. RJD's declaration, Congress's manifesto is not a manifesto. They have revealed their rate list. The real motive behind their every declaration is extortion, ransom, loot, corruption, all this..." PM Modi Targets RJD-Congress Over Rahul Gandhi's Chhath 'Nautanki'

Remark, Calls Out Jungle Raj The prime minister also targeted the Congress, accusing its leaders of disrespecting the people of Bihar. He referred to a 2022 incident when former Punjab chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi had urged people not to allow "bhaiyas" from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar to enter the state — a remark made in the presence of Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. "Friends, I want to remind you — those with

the lantern (RJD), the hand (Congress), and their INDIA alliance partners, how they have insulted Bihar," PM Modi said, as quoted by ANI. Recalling the 1998 Champa Biswas case, PM Modi said the incident exposed the lawlessness during the RJD's rule. He alleged that the then government had turned the chief minister's office into a hub for "mafia" activities. "In Bihar in 1998, what happened to the wife of a Dalit IAS officer will

make today's youth shudder if they learn about it. The wife of the Dalit IAS officer had written a letter to the governor revealing that RJD goons had raped her for several days and had not spared other women in the family either, torturing them as well. During the RJD government, even the chief minister's office had turned into an office of mafias," he said. As Bihar heads into a high-stakes election, the NDA — which includes the BJP, JD(U), LJP (Ram Vilas), Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular), and Rashtriya Lok Morcha — will face the Mahagathbandhan, led by the RJD and comprising Congress, CPI-ML, CPI, CPM, and Mukesh Sahani's VIP. The state will vote in two phases on November 6 and 11, with the results to be declared on November 14. But while this son of yours is busy ensuring that Chhath gets the honour that is its due, the Congress-RJD people.

No eligible student in UP will be deprived of scholarship: Yogi



Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday inaugurated the "Run for Unity" in Lucknow, marking the 150th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. On this occasion, he paid floral tribute to the Iron Man of India. He said, "The true homage to Sardar Patel, who dedicated his life to the nation unity and integrity, lies in living by his ideals." The Chief Minister said, "The life, dedication and sacrifice of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel continue to inspire every Indian." On National Unity Day, he urged people to rise above

the barriers of caste, language, religion and region to further strengthen India unity and integrity. Yogi Adityanath noted that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi a new tradition has been established since 2014 to honor the great architects of India unity. He highlighted that the "Run for Unity" is being organized at over 600 locations across the country to instill patriotism and solidarity among the youth. Quoting the Indian saying "Shivo Bhootva Shivam Yajet"—meaning one should emulate the ideals of those they revere, the Chief Minister emphasized.

We can't direct President not to act on governot-referred bills: SC

Delhi: Supreme Court on Friday spurned the Tamil Nadu govt's plea for a direction to the President not to take decision on two bills — one to establish Kalaingar University and the other amending the TN Physical Education and Sports University Act — which according to the state were "unconstitutionally" referred to her by the governor disregarding the advice of council of ministers, reports Dhananjay



Mahapatra. "We cannot pass an order preventing the President from taking a decision," said a bench of CJI B R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran when senior advocate P Wilson

pleaded that the governor had acted in violation of the constitutional mandate to act in aid and advice of the council of ministers. Adjourning hearing on two writ petitions filed by TN challenging the governor's decision, the bench said, "You would have to wait at most for four weeks to get a clear picture." A five-judge bench led by the CJI had on Sept 11 reserved verdict on President's Reference.

India gets six-month exemption from US sanctions on Chabahar port

NEW DELHI: The ministry of external affairs on Thursday confirmed that US has granted India a six-month exemption from American sanctions on the Chabahar port. This is a major diplomatic win amid negotiations between India and the US over finalising a trade deal. "We have been granted exemption for 6 months period on American sanctions that were applicable on the port," Randhir Jaiswal, MEA spokesperson said. "We continue to remain engaged with the US side on finalising the trade deal. Both sides are continuing to hold discussions. For any further update, I would refer you to the Ministry of Commerce," he added during the press briefing. Last year, India signed a 10-year contract with Iran in which India Ports Global Ltd (IPGL) promised \$370 million



of investments in the port. During Trump's first term as US president, the American administration in 2018 also allowed Indian companies to develop the port. That exemption was issued amid US-imposed unilateral sanctions on Iran. Jaiswal, during the weekly press briefing, also added that India is analysing implications of US sanctions on Russian oil companies. "We are studying the implications of the recent US sanctions on Russian oil companies.

Our decisions naturally take into account the evolving dynamics of the global market," he said. "Our position on the larger question of energy sourcing is well-known. In this endeavour, we are guided by the imperative to secure affordable energy from diverse sources to meet the energy security needs of our 1.4 billion people," Jaiswal added. Chabahar port plays a crucial role in India's regional connectivity strategy by providing access to Afghanistan and Central Asia-Eastern Russia.

Trans rights reduced to dead letters': SC, appoints panel to frame job

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan expressed its anguish over the "lethargic" attitude



NEW DELHI: It was 11 years ago that Supreme Court recognised transgender people as the 'third gender' and upheld their funda-

mental right to equality and dignity. Observing that discrimination still continued, however, the court on Friday appointed a

committee headed by a retired Delhi HC judge to frame a comprehensive equal opportunity policy for the community in the arenas of

employment and education. It also directed setting up of a transgender protection cell and a dedicated nationwide toll-free helpline number. A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan expressed its anguish over the "lethargic" attitude of the Centre and states to protect the communi-

ty's rights. It said the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 — which sought to prevent social exclusion, discrimination, unemployment and lack of educational and medical facilities faced by transgender persons — remained in law books and was never implemented in true spirit.

'India won't be buying Russian oil': Trump doubles down on claim

Trump repeated his stance on India's energy imports, saying, "India won't be buying Russian oil anymore"



US President Donald Trump on Friday reiterated his claim that "India won't be buying Russian oil," a claim that has since been refuted by New Delhi. Speaking at a joint press briefing with Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the White House, Trump repeated his stance on India's energy imports, saying, "India won't be buying Russian oil anymore." While Trump has advocated using tariffs to curb Russia's war in

Ukraine, provided Nato countries stop importing Russian oil, he appeared to make an exception for Hungary. "Hungary is sort of stuck because they have one pipeline that's been there for years and years, and they're inland. I spoke with the very great leader of Hungary, and they are, you know, it's very hard for them to get oil. I understand it," he said.

First Tejas-Mk1A from Nashik completes maiden flight

NASHIK: The first Tejas-Mk1A fighter aircraft produced at defence PSU HAL Nashik complex completed its maiden flight here on Friday. The aircraft was rolled out after defence minister Rajnath Singh formally inaugurated the LCA and HTT-40 assembly complexes here. The formal induction of Tejas-Mk1A into the IAF, however, will depend on the successful completion of ongoing weapon.

India, US ink new defence framework for 10 years

India and the US inked on Friday an expansive new defence framework to strengthen their strategic partnership over the next 10 years. This comes amid indications that a trade deal is also in the works to douse the raging tariff tensions between the two countries. The 'Framework for the US-India Major Defence Partnership', inked during a meeting between defence minister Rajnath Singh and his American counterpart Pete Hegseth on the



sidelines of the Asean meet in Kuala Lumpur, supplants and builds on the one inked in June 2015. Rajnath Singh, Pete Hegseth Sign 10-Year India-US Defence

Pact To Strengthen. Indo-Pacific Security The 2025 framework aims to further transform the defence partnership by providing "a unified vision and policy direc-

tion" to deepen cooperation in all domains, including defence-industrial collaboration, military interoperability across land, air, sea, space and cyberspace, as well as maritime domain awareness, over the next 10 years. India, US sign landmark 10-year defence framework in Malaysia Officials told that the intent is to "recalibrate" the partnership in line with "a renewed consensus to effectively address the emerging security.

In reversal of colonial times, IAF instructors to train UK's RAF fighter pilots

LONDON: In a historic reversal of colonial times, two top guns from the Indian Air Force will soon be training Royal Air Force fighter pilots in the UK. The two IAF instructors will train



RAF aircrew officers

who are completing flying training at No. 4 Flying Training School in RAF Valley on the island of Anglesey, off the northwest coast of Wales. A senior RAF source told : "The start date remains to be

confirmed; however it will not be before Oct 2026. UK familiarisation and training may take up to a year or less, depending on experience." It is understood that their salaries will be

paid by India, while the UK ministry of defence will provide accommodation. The school is where the UK's next generation of fighter pilots get trained on the BAE Hawk TMk2.

AI cabin crew robbed at Gurgaon hotel by intruders

NEW DELHI: In a shocker, intruders allegedly barged into a hotel in Gurgaon sector 42 where 4-5 cabin crew of Air India were staying on Wednesday (Oct 15) night. They were allegedly threatened

to remain silent as they were robbed. Air India says immediately after the same was reported to the airline, the staffers were shifted to another hotel. An AI spokesperson said: "We are deeply con-

cerned by an unfortunate incident of intrusion and theft at a Gurugram hotel where some of our crew colleagues were staying during a training programme. Crew safety is a top priority at Air India.

IIM-A has topped the salary metric for the third straight year

Delhi: Seven of the world's top 10 B-schools in terms of weighted salary (average alumni pay three years post-graduation, adjusted across industries) are from India-up from six last year with IIM-Ahmedabad - (\$181,239) leading the pack, followed by IIM-Bangalore (\$173,707) and IIMCalcutta (\$164,383). IIM-A has topped the salary metric for the third straight year. However, in overall rankings, Indian B-schools remain far from the benchmark set over a decade ago when multiple IIMs regularly featured in the global top 20 of the Financial Times Masters in Management (FT MIM) list. The number of Indian schools in the top 100 dropped from 14 in 2024 to 11 in the latest 2025 edition. IIM-Bangalore, at 28th and tied with the University of Mannheim, Germany, re-entered the top 30 for the first time since 2021. The 2025 tally of 11 institutions matches 2023 and is the second best in the past decade.



Grade two through eighteen public schools will implement a daily literacy and numeracy block

Delhi: Nipun Sankalp, a program that will introduce a daily period on literacy and numeracy, baseline tests for classes II to VIII, and peer-learning methods like buddy pairs to ensure all children acquire basic reading, writing, and math skills, is set to roll out in Delhi govt schools. This will cause a major shift in the classroom environment. Baseline tests in Hindi, English, and Mathematics will be administered till September 19th, in accordance with new

criteria released by the Directorate of Education (DOE). Instructors will grade the exams and electronically submit the results, with logistical support provided by DIET trainees to the schools. Which pupils require supplementary instruction will be decided by the results. Every school is required to include a set foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) session in the schedule once the examinations are finished. Classes II-V will have whole-class activities.

A passenger in a drunken Toto vehicle overturned after grabbing the steering wheel of the vehicle – a young man seriously injured

Bureau Report: Pradeep Kumar Pandey Ghazipur

A Toto lost control and overturned near the Mahadeva main gate intersection on National Highway 31 in the local Kotwali area at around 4 p.m. on Friday evening, seriously injuring a man. According to eyewitnesses, Premchand (about 45 years old), a resident of Mathiya, was staggering along the road in an intoxicated state. He stopped a Toto coming from behind in the middle of the road and sat next to the driver. After traveling a short distance, Premchand suddenly



grabbed the steering wheel and turned the Toto, causing it to lose balance and overturn on the roadside. In the accident, Premchand was crushed under the Toto and was seriously injured. People present at the scene immediately straightened the Toto, pulled the injured man

out, and rushed him to the Community Health Center, Muhammadabad, where he is undergoing treatment. According to locals, if the driver and others had not been vigilant, the accident could have been even more serious. Police have learned of the incident and have launched an investigation.

Class IX students' Vigyan Pratibha test

Delhi: As a way to recognize and reward exceptional ninth graders in the city, the Mukhyamantri Vigyan Pratibha Pariksha will be held by the Directorate of Education (DoE). The purpose of the annual test is to pique students' interest in research-oriented professions by assessing their conceptu-

al knowledge, analytical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Along with merit awards, the top 1,000 rank holders will each receive a one-time scholarship of 5,000. Students in the ninth grade at NDMC, DCB, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, or any other publicly or privately fund-

ed school are eligible to take the exam. Class VIII qualifying requirements for students belonging to restricted categories (SC/ST/PH) are 55%, while students in the General and OBC categories need to secure 60%. A minimum of 15% of the seats are set aside for students from Scheduled Castes.

Unacceptable amount of driving in DU elections

Delhi: The high court in Delhi condemned the DUSU election campaign's heavy reliance on motorized vehicles, calling it "unacceptable" for causing traffic jams and making pedestrians' lives more difficult. Additionally, the bench was unhappy with what it called Delhi University's "inadequate actions" against campaigners and their allies who used unlicensed vehicles to canvas. At the hearing, counsel Prashant Manchanda brought attention to the "blatant use of muscle and money power" leading up to the September 18 polls, including canvassing through lux-



ury automobiles. The bench, which consisted of chief judge DK Upadhyay and justice Tushar Rao Gedela, was hearing the case.

The petition demanded that the university and the Delhi Police punish candidates severely for

failing to attend. Rupal Mohinder, the lawyer for DU, stated during the court that the administration had issued show-cause notices to those who had violated the order and was "taking all necessary precautions" to keep the peace.

SC calls Punjab's NRI quota a 'fraud' on medical education

Delhi: The Supreme Court called Punjab's medical colleges' extension of the non-resident Indian (NRI) quota a "fraud" that excludes meritorious candidates. Bench dismissed petitions challenging a Punjab and Haryana high court ruling that invalidated the Punjab government's proposal to widen the NRI quota criteria to include distant relatives. We must end NRI quotas today! The bench, which included Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said the NRI quota was being used to circumvent merit-based admissions. The bench called such a broad interpretation of NRI eligibility.

Returning fourth-year students at 72% under NEP 2020's FYUP can opt out

Delhi: Nearly 72% of eligible students have opted to continue with the fourth year of Delhi University's Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP) under NEP 2020, according to Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh. Up to the start of the new academic session on August 1, the university has allowed students to choose not to complete the fourth year. Out of more than 72,000 pupils, 20,221 have chosen not to



continue, leaving more than 50,000. The fact that students are willing to opt out of the third year demonstrates their value, which is quite encouraging, Singh told the media. All institutions affiliated with Delhi University will begin

the fourth year on August 1. As part of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the FYUP provides several ways out: a certificate after the first year, a diploma after the second, and a degree after the third.

Byju's loses \$533 million loan fraud case in US court

Delhi: U.S. bankruptcy court rules Riju Ravindran, Byju's parent business Think & Learn, and hedge fund Camshaft Capital guilty of \$533 million fraud and "breach of fiduciary duty." The beleaguered edtech business Byju's Alpha has been found to have engaged in several fraudulent financial transfers and conversions, according to a ruling issued by the Delaware Bankruptcy Court. Byju brother Riju Ravindran was found to have breached his fiduciary duty as director of Byju's Alpha, according to the court. The court's clear recogni-

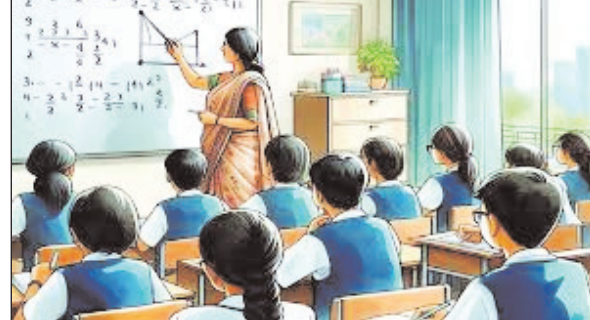


tion that Riju Ravindran, Camshaft, and Byju's engaged in a worldwide fraud including the theft of \$533 million is something we are grateful for. In a statement, the lenders hailed this as a major victory in their fight to reclaim the stolen assets that properly belong to them. Byju successfully obtained a \$1.2 billion five-year term loan from Glas Trust through the establishment of his

Alpha special purpose financial organization. Having defaulted on its loans, Byju's Alpha was placed under trusteeship in March 2023. A group of 37 banks and other lending organizations gave Byju \$1.2 billion. Byju's Alpha's limited partnership interest in Camshaft Capital was transferred to William Morton's hedge fund, Camshaft Capital Fund.

A group of educators is against UGC's plan to hold admissions twice a year

Delhi: A group representing educators has spoken out against the University Grants Commission's plan to hold undergraduate and graduate admissions twice a year. The idea was criticized as "impractical and destabilising" in a lengthy letter sent to the UGC chairperson by the Indian National Teachers' Congress (INTEC). "No serious consultation was held with universities or colleges," the letter adds. "What looks like flexibility on paper will, in practice, deeply disrupt the academic framework of higher education institutions," according to it. A single admission cycle is already a significant challenge for many institutions.



"The teachers' union voiced concerns that having admissions twice a year would disrupt class schedules, make evaluations more difficult, and put too much administrative work on teachers and staff all year long"

Classes did not begin in July as usual due to the Common University Entrance Test's implementation, which notably pushed back the start of the academic year to September or October. Professor Pankaj Garg, chair of the INTEC, stated that adding a second cycle will further

complicate existing delays and disrupt the entire academic year. The teachers' union voiced concerns that having admissions twice a year would disrupt class schedules, make evaluations more difficult, and put too much administrative work on teachers and staff all year long.

Tech and sports: IIT will support SAI

Delhi: A partnership has been formed between the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) and the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) National Centre of Sports Science Research (NCSSR) to improve cooperation in the fields of sports sciences, cutting-edge technology, and indigenous innovation. Union sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya stated, "This partnership reflects the ministry's commitment to integrating science and technology with sports to empower Indian athletes to compete at the highest international levels." "Our institute has significant competence in biomechanics, sensors, assistive technologies and AI and hope to create an impact in sports science and technology," stated Rangan Banerjee, head of IIT Delhi. The partnership is anticipated to pave the way for top-notch research in the fields of sports science and engineering, encourage initiatives driven by innovation to boost athletes' performance, facilitate the exchange of information, and make a substantial impact on the prevention of injuries and the overall health of athletes.

The District Judge and DM inspected the Central Jail and District Jail, Naini

The District Judge spoke with the inmates and inquired about the arrangements

Prayagraj

District Judge Satya Prakash Tripathi and District Magistrate Manish Kumar Verma inspected the Central Jail and District Jail, Naini on Friday and issued necessary guidelines. DCP Yamunanagar Vivek Kumar, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Mr. Dinesh Kumar Gautam, Chief Judicial Magistrate Trisha Mishra, Jailer



of Central Jail and District Jail, Senior Jail Superintendent Vijay Vikram Singh, Senior Jail Superintendent of District Jail, Mrs. Amita Dubey, and other officials were present. During the inspection, the District Judge and

District Magistrate inspected the hospital and kitchen in the Central Jail and reviewed the necessary arrangements there. The District Judge and District Magistrate inspected the kitchen for the daily meals and snacks provided to the

prisoners, observing the food preparation arrangements according to the menu chart. They assessed the quality of the food by inquiring about the types of food available in the canteen, including the number of prisoners served, and in what quanti-

ties. They also inquired from the medical officer about the facilities available in the hospital. The District Judge spoke with the undertrial prisoners, inquiring about the legal services they were receiving, their history tickets, and the relevant criminal cases. They inquired about the prisoners' illnesses, food, and sanitation. The Honorable District Judge provided guidelines for planting trees within the prison premises, and provided necessary instructions regarding gardening, cleanliness, food quality, meditation, and yoga.

Archives Exhibition and Cultural Program Successfully Concluded on the Birth Anniversary of the Iron Man, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. On Friday, to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna, Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, celebrated as National Unity Day, a folk song and archive exhibition was successfully organized in the auditorium of Allahabad Degree College, under the joint auspices of the Regional Archives, Culture Department, Prayagraj, and the Department of Medieval and Modern History, Allahabad Degree College, Prayagraj. The program was inaugurated by Prof. Atul Kumar Singh, Principal, Allahabad Degree College, Prayagraj, by cutting the ribbon in the presence of professors from various departments. He then lit a lamp and offered floral tributes to the portrait of the Iron Man. Following this, the guests visited the archives and photo exhibition, and were delighted and appreciative of the documents. All guests were welcomed by Ghulam Sarwar, Manuscript Officer, Prayagraj. Rakesh Kumar Verma, Technical Assistant, described Sardar Patel as the supreme patriot. He inspired today's new generation to follow him and walk on the path shown by him. Praising the program, the Principal said that such programs are necessary to encourage children and the general public. He also said that it was only due to the efforts of Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel that the merger of 562 princely states of the country into India became possible.



The history of this entire incident has been preserved in the archives. Prof. Neena Shukla, Head of the Department of Medieval and Modern History, said that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel lived a life of sacrifice and was always ready for a united India. Praising the archives, she said that it is a place where historians can add a new chapter to their research subject and create a new book. In this program organized to mark the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai, courtesy of the Culture Department, Uttar Pradesh, popular folk artist Shiv Balak Patel and his fellow artists gave a beautiful rendition of folk songs based on patriotism and the life of the Iron Man. The program was greatly appreciated by the students. The entire audience was mesmerized and applauded the artists several times, boosting their morale. The program was conducted by Dr. Harendra Narayan Singh, and the vote of thanks was given by Professor Neena Shukla. On this occasion, Daya Nand Singh Chauhan, former Consolidation Officer, Harishchandra Dubey, Ashwini Patel, Dr. Yogesh Yadav.

The Iron Man of India was honored in Kaushambi

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

A large crowd gathered for the Run for Unity. Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar and District Magistrate Amit Pal delivered a patriotic message during the Run for Unity. Kaushambi. On the 150th birth anniversary of the Iron Man, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the land of Kaushambi was filled with the colors of unity, integrity, and patriotism. Organized under the leadership of the Kaushambi Police, the Run for Unity program unleashed a new wave of enthusiasm and energy throughout the district. The program began at the Superintendent of Police's office premises, where District Magistrate Dr. Amit Pal, Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar, Additional Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar Singh, Circle Officer Chail Abhishek Singh, Inspector-in-Charge Veer Pratap Singh Chauhan, along with a large number of officers, police personnel, NCC cadets, school students, social organizations, and citizens participated. The approximately one and a half kilometer-long race not only filled the streets with slogans of unity, but also reflected patriotism and discipline on every face. When the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police flagged off the race amidst patriotic tunes from the police band, the

message at every step was: India's strength lies in its unity. A team of women constables ran at the front carrying the tricolor, followed by schoolgirls, trainee constables, and young, energetic police personnel. The women power of the Kaushambi Police, by leading the event, proved that women's empowerment and national unity are moving in the same direction. Addressing the gathering at the conclusion of the event, Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar said, "The Iron Man Sardar Patel united India, and today we are carrying forward that legacy through our actions and unity. Every soldier of the Kaushambi Police is committed to protecting the integrity of this country." Following this, the National Unity Day oath was administered at the Reserve Police Lines under the chairmanship of Additional Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar Singh. All police personnel garlanded Sardar Patel's portrait and reaffirmed their commitment to the nation's unity, integrity, and security. Runs for Unity were also organized in all 14 police stations of the district, with students from local schools, social workers, and public representatives participating. The run resonated as a symbol of unity in each police station area.

Unseasonal rains shattered the dreams of the sons of the soil, destroying the rice crop

Kaushambi

A sudden two-day disaster in the month of Kartik has devoured the green fields and dashed the hopes of farmers. This two-day disaster has taken away the smiles of farmers. The paddy crop has been completely destroyed, in some places the sesame crop has also been destroyed, the hard work of the farmers is going in vain, despite this the administration has not yet conducted a survey of the loss of the farmers. Due to unseasonal rain, the standing and harvested crops in the Yamuna river area of ??Manjhanpur tehsil have suffered 65 to 70



percent damage. The paddy crop has suffered heavy damage in the rural areas of West Sharira, Teva, Kumhiyawa, Sarsawa, Chanderai, Gauspur, Tikri, Jazouli, Osa, Saini Kanwar, Kesariya, Ganpa, Ghulampur, Sitapur, Habbu Nagar, Parasakhi, Shahjadpur, Kashiya, Kakoda Chak, Naipurwa, Sevкупur, Kaini, Tejwapur, Chhattapur, Malakiya

Nara, Uddhin, Bairampur etc. of the area including the entire district. Natural disaster has robbed farmers of their happiness. The paddy crop has been completely destroyed. Flooded fields threaten to rot the harvested crop, while standing crops have been uprooted. Affected farmers have demanded the administration conduct a survey and provide compensa-

tion. The rains have not only damaged the Kharif crop but also threaten the Rabi sowing season. Waterlogging and swampy fields have halted the sowing process, causing farmers to worry. The unseasonal rains have disrupted the sowing of both the wheat crop and the gram crop. This unseasonal rain is also affecting the mustard and potato crops. Vegetable crops have also been severely affected, worrying thousands of farmers. Farmers who had already prepared for fertilizer, seeds, and labor are now hoping for compensation and government relief.

Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary was celebrated as Unity Day



Uttaraon

The 150th birth anniversary of Iron Man Bharat Ratna Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a symbol of national unity, integrity and harmony, was celebrated as Unity Day on 31st October at TRS Public School located in Barethi of Uttaraon police station area. During this, Run of Unity parade was organized by the students of the school. On this occasion, the students of the

school gave the message of unity by taking out a Yatra rally. On this occasion, the director of the school, Nirmala Singh, paid tribute to Iron Man Bharat Ratna Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel by offering flowers at his statue. And took a pledge to follow the path shown by him. And the patron of TRS school, Shri Ram Singh told that this school has also received the award for the best school in the Olympiad.

Samajwadi Party District Office, Kansapur, celebrated the birth anniversary of Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

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Gopiganj Bhadohi The District Samajwadi Party, Kansapur, Gyanpur, celebrated the birth anniversary of Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the socialist great leader and philosopher Acharya Narendra Dev, and pledged to strengthen the Samajwadi Party. Addressing the festival, Samajwadi MLA Zahid



Beg said that Bharat Ratna, freedom fighter, Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,

was the architect of a new India and the embodiment of unity. Sardar Patel creat-

ed a united India by merging 565 fragmented princely states after independence.

Acharya Narendra Dev, a man of extraordinary talent and personality, was drawn to the freedom movement by his passion for liberating the country. India's economic condition and the plight of poverty transformed him into a socialist. Acharya Narendra Dev had said that the only path to human liberation lies through socialism. On the occasion of his birth anniversary, we pay our heartfelt tributes to him

and pledge to strengthen the Samajwadi Party through his personality and work. District Chief Minister Hriday Narayan Prajapati, former minister Ramkishore Bind, District Vice President Kallan Yadav, Rajendra Dubey, Sarita Bid, Manoj Yadav, Gama Prasad Yadav, Pramod Pal, Kariya Pal, Shivkumar Yadav, District Media Incharge Dharmendra Kumar Mishra Pappu, etc.

They appealed to the youth to play an active role in nation-building and always be ready to maintain the unity

"Run for Unity" organized on National Unity Day - Tribute paid to Iron Man Sardar Patel

Bureau Report by Pradeep Kumar Pandey Ghazipur

On October 31, 2025, the birth anniversary of the country's first Deputy Prime Minister and Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, National Unity Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm and dignity at the local level, as it was across the country,



under the Kotwali police station of the district, Kotwali Muhammadabad. On this occasion, all the officers and employees posted at

the local police station, recruit constables from the Ghazipur Police Line, and students from local schools participated enthusiastically. The

program began with the laying of a wreath at the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel located in the police station premises. The officers present took an oath to strengthen the unity, integrity, and brotherhood of the country. Following this, a "Run for Unity" (Unity Run) was organized, in which school children along with police personnel participated

enthusiastically. The purpose of the race was to spread the message of unity, harmony, and patriotism in society. Participants completed the race with great enthusiasm, chanting the slogan "Ek Bharat - Shreshtha Bharat." On this occasion, the station in-charge and other police officers said that we should always remember Sardar Patel's indomitable courage,

organizational strength, and contribution to the unity of the country. They appealed to the youth to play an active role in nation-building and always be ready to maintain the unity and integrity of the country. The program concluded with the national anthem. The entire atmosphere was filled with the message of patriotism and unity.

The birth anniversary of Saint Modan Sen Maharaj was celebrated under the leadership of Vinod Prasad Modanwal

Gopiganj, Bhadohi

Under the leadership of Vinod Modanwal, Acting District President of the Shri Kanyakubj Vaishya Halwai Modanwal Samaj, Gopiganj, the birth anniversary of revered Shri Modan Sen Maharaj was celebrated with great pomp on Akshaya Navami, Kartik Shukla Paksha, at the establishment of Bablu Prasad, Vice President of the Modanwal Samaj. Acting District President Vinod Modanwal welcomed the community by applying tilak to Modan Sen Maharaj's picture and garlanding it. Finally, General Secretary Omprakash Modanwal advised that on November 8th, all members of the community, under the leadership of the Acting District President, should come to Chitrangan Lang in Gyanpur,

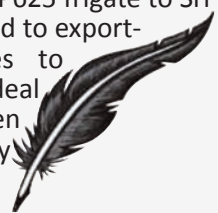


the land of knowledge, in large numbers and make the event a success. On this occasion, Bhadohi acting district president Vinod Modanwal, Manoj Modanwal district general secretary, city general secretary Omprakash Modanwal, Kamal Modanwal, vice president Santosh Modanwal (former councilor), patron Govind Modanwal, Ramesh Modanwal, Ram Asare Modanwal, Bachchi Modanwal, Dilip Modanwal, Shivshankar Modanwal, Bhola Modanwal, Buntay Modanwal, Sadanand Modanwal, Lavkush Modanwal, Mahesh Modanwal, etc. were present.

Editorial

India's naval advancements will fuel its Indian Ocean ambitions

As India approaches its 75th Republic Day, the nation has achieved a significant milestone in strengthening its naval capabilities. In an exceptional move reflecting strategic foresight, Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently commissioned three advanced naval platforms in a single day: a destroyer, a frigate, and a submarine. However, in a fast-changing security environment in the Indo-Pacific, the developments in naval capabilities must be measured in a relative context—capabilities of arch rivals and a swiftly evolving security domain, that is. Now, five points need to be underscored in this context. The commissioning of advanced naval platforms highlights India's aspiration to establish itself as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Over the years, India's maritime security strategy has significantly evolved. The 2015 Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) vision reflects India's dedication to fostering regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. This vision is supported by initiatives such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indian Ocean Island Countries (IOIC), which emphasise coastal connectivity and sustainable development. PM Modi's address at the 2018 Shangri-La Dialogue further reinforced India's strategic perspective for the Indo-Pacific. The SAGAR vision has gained traction through frameworks such as the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and the Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), aiming to tackle regional security issues and counter China's expanding influence. While China's People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) has grown to become the world's largest by fleet size, it still lacks the operational capabilities and combat experience of the United States. India's navy, although the smallest of its armed forces, has consistently demonstrated efficiency and timely acquisitions. Compared to the Indian Air Force, which faces critical squadron shortages, the navy pragmatically acknowledges domestic limitations in engine development. It relies on foreign collaborations to fill gaps, ensuring progress. However, I'll turn to that later. To establish itself as a net security provider, the Indian Navy must sustain the momentum it has recently achieved in naval defence exports. Although this initiative began in earnest only in 2011, it gained significant traction after 2016. India has transitioned from being a cautious supplier of naval equipment, primarily targeting countries such as Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines, to a more prominent player in defence exports. For many years, India's exports to nations such as Seychelles, the Maldives, Mauritius, and Sri Lanka were limited to refurbished ex-navy and coast guard vessels. However, this trend has undergone a remarkable transformation in recent years. Naval ships, as of 2024, account for over 61 per cent of India's total defence exports. This shift highlights India's growing capability to manufacture advanced platforms and its determination to emerge as a dependable supplier of defence equipment to neighbouring countries. This development is a critical component of India's regional and maritime strategy, especially given China's rapid ascent in modernising PLAN and expanding its influence in the Indian Ocean by providing naval assets to smaller nations. China has already established itself as the leading defence exporter to both Pakistan and Bangladesh. It delivered two Ming-class submarines to Bangladesh in 2017, gifted a P625 frigate to Sri Lanka in 2019, and committed to exporting Yuan-class submarines to Thailand. Although the Thai deal encountered difficulties when Germany refused to supply key propulsion components.



The growing cottage industry of deregulation enthusiasts focuses too much



Total subsidies as a percentage of GDP have now gone back to their pre-pandemic levels. The most important change in expenditure since the pandemic has been in its composition. Of the Union government's total expenditure, the share of capital expenditure has increased. Its share rose from 12.5 per cent of total expenditure in 2019-20 to 22.2 per cent in 2023-24. In 2019-20, capital expenditure was 1.67 per cent of GDP. It rose to 3.21 per cent.

In 2023-24, before moderating to 3.14 per cent in 2024-25 (revised estimates). It is again budgeted to be 3.14 per cent of GDP in 2025-26. At the same time, there was a reduction in capital expenditure by public enterprises in these years. If we consider the combined capital expenditure by the Union government and its public enterprises from the pre-pandemic years, there has been a decline. Between 2017-18 and 2019-20, the combined capital expenditure was 4.94 per cent of GDP, while it has been only 4.32 per cent of GDP between 2022-23 and 2024-25. This probably shows the limitations of implementation capacity that a capital expenditure strategy tends to run into. So, in the last decade, the government has tried a variety of fiscal tactics—from increasing expenditure by “creatively” easing the Budget constraints, to giving generous corporate tax cuts, to introducing new welfare schemes, to increasing on-budget capital expenditure. The cut in the person-

al income tax is the latest in this series of measures. If this does not work, there are other arrows in the fiscal quiver—cut in GST, for instance. The fiscal policy landscape in India is such that there are always some instruments at the government's disposal, especially because it borrows domestically for the most part, that too, through financial institutions it controls. All this tells us something about the government's explanation of how the economy works and what the challenges are. The government probably does not see deeper problems in the political economy. Now that it has made so many fiscal policy interventions, perhaps it should consider whether these can truly address the growth pangs of the Indian economy. The fundamental challenge for the Indian economy for over a decade has been the lack of revival of private investment and the lackadaisical performance of merchandise exports. While the latter performed well for about six quarters in the post-pandemic period, this was due to temporary opportunities created at that time—the

exports are now back to low growth. Similarly, there have been a few quarters of better private investment activity in recent years, but we are not yet in a period of revival. On the other hand, some high-productivity services sectors continue to be the silver lining. The IT services exports have continued to grow and export services such as business and management consultancy as well as public relations have doubled from the pre-pandemic years. The FM's Budget speech and Economic Survey 2024-25 hinted at actions beyond fiscal policy—deregulation and tax code simplification. Depending on what reforms will follow, these can be steps in the right direction. However, two points are worth considering.

First, mere deregulation is not enough—a well-functioning market requires a suitable regulatory role.

The growing cottage industry of deregulation enthusiasts focuses too much on removing regulations that it deems unnecessary, without offering a full vision of what regulation is needed in a given sector. In the absence

of a proper framework, one step toward deregulation is often followed by another step toward an unnecessary regulation. Second, there is a need for a broader and deeper introspection on how the government wields power in the economy. Many aspects of the larger institutional environment need careful attention: the centralisation of discretionary power, the top-down mandates issued in areas such as digital transformation, the way tax administration determines the additional demands from individuals and businesses, the checks and balances on various enforcement authorities, the transparency and reasoning of economic policymaking, and the consequences of supporting “national champions” on other investors' incentives.

The Modi government's main move in the Union has been to cut personal income tax. As finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her speech, it is meant to boost demand in the economy. However, the government doesn't expect a higher-than-usual increase in other non-debt receipts and has budgeted a decline in the deficit. The budgeted capital expenditure is the same as the revised estimates for 2024-25. The tax cut should be seen in the context of other fiscal policy moves the Modi government has made in the last decade to boost growth. Since 2016, the Indian economy has struggled to sustain rapid growth. From 2016 to 2019, it was in a relentless slowdown, with GDP growth falling to 3.9 per

cent in 2019-20. The GDP then fell sharply in 2020-21 due to the pandemic. After this sharp decline, high GDP growth numbers created a false sense of complacency, but the compound annual growth rate between 2019-20 and 2024-25 is only 4.8 per cent. The latest GDP estimates suggest that the economy is slowing down again—with growth clocking at 5.4 per cent in the July-September quarter of 2024. Even if we set aside the critiques of GDP estimation in India, growth remains a topic of concern in policy conversations. The government's response to an economic challenge depends on what it considers to be the root cause. The Modi government's actions over the past decade suggest that it seeks to address India's economic growth pangs through fiscal policy. Consequently, fiscal policy has done much of the heavy lifting in the government's growth strategy over the past decade. In the economic slowdown from 2016-17 to 2019-20, the government sought to maintain its expenditure. To do so without increasing the reported fiscal deficit, from 2017-18 to 2019-20, it transformed a significant part of its on-budget expenditure into off-budget expenditure done by public enterprises. It also sharply raised cesses and surcharges on petroleum products, which are not shared with the states. These unusual tactics allowed the government to spend more, and expenditure continued to outpace GDP growth.

The expression used by British imperialists to describe the perceived expansion of Russian influence

Suman Singh

Circa 1900: Rudyard Kipling wrote Kim, placing the eponymous hero at the centre of the Great Game of espionage between the British Empire and Russia in the 19th century. The book is set after the Second Anglo-Afghan War, which ended in 1881, but before the Third, likely in the period 1893–98. Kim, short for Kimball O'Hara, is an impoverished Irish orphan who lives on the streets of Lahore and works for Mahbub Ali, a Pashtun horse trader. He later befriends an aged Tibetan lama, accompanies him on his journey along the Grand Trunk Road, learns about the Great Game, and is eventually recruited by Mahbub Ali, who works for the British Secret Service in their quest to extend influence in both Afghanistan and Tibet. Whether or not the Great Game—the expression used by British imperialists to

describe the perceived expansion of Russian influence in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Tibet—actually existed, the fact remains that surveys were undertaken, expeditions mounted, spymasters recruited, and novels written, even as soldiers lost their lives. Taking a cue from Viceroy George Curzon, all pro-establishment papers—from the Civil and Military Gazette of Lahore to The Pioneer of Lucknow, The Statesman of Calcutta (now Kolkata), and The Times of India of Bombay (now Mumbai)—concurred that Tsarist Russia posed a real threat to the jewel in Britain's crown. A hundred and twenty years later, historians remain sceptical of Curzon's assertions. Is the hue and cry about the Deep State similar to the Great Game? Whether or not it exists, whether it operates in all countries, and whether the 'deep state'.

Investors line-up for Excitel's \$200-million equity deal

Extension of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for solar energy value chain, increased allocation towards PM Suryaghar Muft Bijlee Yojana, and greater thrust to distribution and transmission infrastructure are likely to be the key features of the upcoming Budget, as far as the energy sector is concerned. Sources said these proposals figured not only in the budget wish lists of the industry, but also in the respective recommendations from the ministries of power and renewable energy to the finance ministry, ahead of the Budget. “Given the success of PM Suryaghar scheme with almost 600,000 installations in just nine months since its launch, one could probably see additional allocation to target more households,” said Ashwin Jacob, partner at Deloitte India. “As far as evacuation of power from offshore wind projects is concerned, we would want to see the VGF or budgetary support to continue or get enhanced,” he added. “We hope to see a decisive increase in funding to accelerate the green energy transition. Priorities must include scaling renewable energy by addressing grid and transmission challenges, advancing Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) for grid stability and reliable power, doubling energy efficiency and digitalizing the energy sector through AI, smart meters, and data-driven solutions. Streamlining rooftop solar programs with simplified approvals, financing, and monitoring is equally vital,” said Saurabh Kumar, Vice President – India, Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP). Sharat Goyal, CEO of Impact Infracap also expects the government to remove restrictions on state wise caps on roof top capacity for net-metering for industrial establishments. “Further, adoption of batteries to substitute use of diesel generators for back-up power should receive incentives and policy support

given their role in reducing dependence on imports,” he said. While the government is increasingly working towards enhancing the country's RE capacity, the distribution and transmission infrastructure for its evacuation still needs to be strengthened. With the peak demand for power growing at a rate of 8-9% annually, the industry is looking forward to strengthening of climate resilient infrastructure augmentation. “One can expect new allocations towards augmentation of power distribution infrastructure, especially in high density/ urban load centres, in view of the sharp rise in peak demand over the last few years,” said Anujesh Dwivedi, Partner at Deloitte India. He noted that there may be some allocation towards supporting the preparatory work especially on the listing of power utilities, or some incentive mechanism for promoting initiatives on private sector participation or listing of utilities at the state level because they are increasingly being seen as the much needed structural reforms the sector needs. The industry is optimistic of a wider coverage of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme by including smart metering in infrastructure definition.

“This would direct more financing for a sector which seeks to bring down India's transmission and distribution losses to 12% and improve recovery for state utilities,” Goyal said. Goyal also noted that power transmission despite significant potential has not seen any notable monetisation events which could address the latent investor demand. “Government should announce a time-bound privatisation programme for assets owned by PGCIL,” he said. The sector also sees the PLI scheme for solar value chain to continue with possible reduction in the duty structures for solar equipment. Jacob highlighted that there.

This is the kind of thing that almost leads one to believe in the workings of a hidden hand

Abhimanyu Sharma

To stand in this house is to be reminded of what is most beautiful about religious faith: its ability to give solace and to inspire, its aspiration to these great and lovely heights, in which strength and delicacy are so perfectly conjoined. In addition, to be asked to speak here on this day, the fourth anniversary of the notorious fatwa of the late Imam Khomeini, is a particular honour. When I was an undergraduate at this college, between 1965 and 1968, the years of flower-power and student

power, I would have found the notion of delivering an address in King's Chapel pretty far-out, as we used to say; and yet, such are the journeys of one's life that here I stand. I am grateful to the Chapel and the college for extending this invitation, which I take as a gesture of solidarity and support, support not merely for one individual but, much more importantly, for the high moral principles of human rights and human freedoms that the Khomeini edict seeks so brutally to attack. For just as King's Chapel may be taken as

a symbol of what is best about religion, so the fatwa has become a symbol of what is worst. It feels all the more appropriate to be speaking here because it was while in my final year of reading history at Cambridge that I came across the story of the so-called satanic verses or temptation of the Prophet Muhammad, and of his rejection of that temptation. That year, I had chosen as one of my special subjects a paper on Muhammad, the rise of Islam, and the caliphate. So few students chose this option that

the lectures were cancelled. The other students switched to different special subjects. However, I was anxious to continue, and Arthur Hibbert, one of the King's history dons, agreed to supervise me. So as it happened I was, I think, the only student in Cambridge who took the paper. The next year, I'm told, it was not offered again. This is the kind of thing that almost leads one to believe in the workings of a hidden hand. The story of the 'satanic verses' can be found, among other places, in the canonical writings.

Delhi has extended its electric vehicle policy until November

Delhi : Delhi government has decided to extend the deadline for its Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy by four months, bringing it to November 15. This decision was made since a draft of the policy is currently being reviewed and is awaiting clearance. According to Pankaj Singh, the minister of transport, the document is currently undergoing revisions and will likely be finalized in at least four months. For the time being, we have prolonged the present policy until November 15 and may do so again if needed, he stated. In order to make sure that everyone may enjoy a cleaner, more sustainable transportation system, we are talking to professionals and looking into all possible possibilities. An increase in EV registrations and a general uptick in interest have been observed recently. The present electric vehicle policy has been extended multiple



Delhi government plans to revamp the DTC

Delhi : To ensure that residents of the nation's capital have access to first-rate public transportation, the Delhi government has begun a massive renovation of the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC). A press release states that this effort would soon deploy smart travel cards, restructure bus routes, modernize interstate bus terminals (ISBTs), and

revamp bus queue shelters (BQs) to be more pleasant and high-tech. During a high-level review meeting of the Transport Department on , Chief Minister Rekha Gupta stated that the goal of providing Delhi with first-rate public transportation will soon come to fruition under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

rickshaws and e-carts can receive a 25% purchase incentive up to 5,500.

times since its inception in 2020 and its expiration in August 2023. At present, e-

New Delhi Solar Energy Policy: Subsidy Tripling

Delhi : The Delhi Solar Energy Policy, 2023 was revised by the Delhi government, which meant that families may receive a subsidy of up to 10,000 per kW for rooftop solar systems that did not exceed 3 kW, with a cap of 30,000 per consumer. A new capital subsidy for resident welfare associations and group housing societies was also introduced by the amendment. Solar systems for shared facilities, such as electric vehicle charging infrastructure, can now be purchased for up to 500 kW for these companies for 2,000 per kW. Another model that was improved by the regulation was the RESCO



model, which is a financing structure where developers own and finance solar installations. Removing the requirement for upfront investment and streamlining the billing process through distribution companies, the revised model proposes that consumers pay the

ESCO developer through their regular electricity bills. With application data obtained from either the Delhi Solar Portal or the National Rooftop Solar Portal of the PM Suryaghar Muft Bijli Yojana, users will have their subsidies sent straight into their bank .

Athal canteens in Delhi will offer meals for 5 per plate by December

Delhi : The government of Delhi is getting ready to open 100 Athal Canteens around the city. These canteens will provide meals for around Rs 5 each plate. The initiative's target population consists of daily wage workers and the urban poor, and it

intends to supply them with affordable and healthy food at 100 sites, primarily in areas surrounding large construction projects and clusters of slums. The government is aiming to finish a number of projects by December, the birthdate of former

prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee—in whose honour the canteens are named according to senior officials. The establishment of these canteens throughout the nation's capital was funded by chief minister and minister of finance Rekha Gupta.

Dr. Bhupesh Chahar appointed State Member of the Nature Welfare Council

Dr Bhupesh Chahar has been appointed State Member of the Nature Welfare Council. On this occasion, he visited the Council's headquarters in Delhi, where he held a cordial meeting with the Council's Vice Chairman. During the meeting, important topics such as environmental protection, tree planting, and the Green India Campaign were discussed in detail. Present on the occasion were Sudhir Sharma, State Director of the Plantation Board, Bhuvnesh Rawat, a dedicated BJP worker, Lavekesh Solanki from the Kisan Union Youth Cell, Agra, and



social worker Sharma (Kasganj). On this occasion, Dr. Bhupesh Chahar said, "It is my resolve to increase public awareness about the environment and to continuously strive for the creation

of a Green India. A clean environment is the foundation of a healthy society, and every citizen should consider tree planting their duty." At the end of the program, Dr. Chahar received bless-

ings from revered Gurudev Vishal Pandit (Meerut). Describing this new responsibility as "a new chapter in social service," he said that true national service lies in protecting both religion and the environment. On this occasion, Ramkumar Sharma, National President of the All India Hindu Seva Dal Youth Wing, said, "It is a matter of pride for us that a dedicated social worker like Dr. Bhupesh Chahar has been given this responsibility. Only when the environment, along with life, remains pure and clean, will the true purpose of serving Sanatan culture and Mother Cow be fulfilled."

Delhi's hotels and restaurants no longer need police NOCs

Delhi : Hotels, restaurants, discotheques, amusement parks, and auditoriums in the Capital will no longer need permission or NOCs from the Delhi Police. Recent order by L-G V K Saxena removed Delhi Police sanction power in such instances. The Delhi Police's Licensing Branch would now exclusively issue guns and explosives licenses, the directive added. L-G Saxena issued an order rescinding the sanction granted to the Commissioner of



Police, Delhi, for issuing regulations under Section 28 (1) of the Delhi Police Act, 1978, covering the seven activities listed in Para 1. These include hotels, pools, restaurants, discotheques, video game parlours, amusement parks, and auditoriums. L-G ordered the

Commissioner of Police to issue notification "repealing the said regulations with immediate effect". The order added, "The repeal notification shall be given wide publicity by Delhi Police and the Home Department." The decision stated that the Centre in pursuit of "minimum government and maximum governance" had reduced various licensing regimes in states and Union Territories (UTs) and urged simplified licensing procedures.

In order to alleviate waterlogging, MCD sets up 79 pumping stations

Delhi: The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) ramped up its monsoon readiness by launching 465 mobile pumps with different capacities and setting up 79 permanent pumping stations around the city to reduce the risk of flooding. In order to respond quickly during periods of severe rains, additional portable pumps were strategically put in sensitive regions across all 12 zones, according to MCD standing committee chairperson Satya Sharma. Her remarks followed criticism from the opposition, who said that MCD had failed to adequately prepare for the flooding that had resulted on the roads' potholes. If the Indraprastha Vikas Party's Mukesh Goel wants to make



sure that inner roads are safe from potential flooding on main highways, he needs to get the PWD on board. Sharma further said that control centers were set up in each zone so that field operations could be coordinated and public complaints could be handled instantly. "Response teams, comprising junior engineers and support staff, were stationed round the clock,"

Govt allocates 12,952 crore for public transport system

The BJP government, led by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, presented its maiden budget on , March 25. Gupta presented 1 lakh crore budget for 2025-26, a 31.56% increase from last year. In the budget for the financial year 2025-26, the government has allocated 12,952 crore to improve Delhi's public transport system. It has allocated 1,000 crore to improve the connectivity of Delhi with the NCR region.

A Mehndi Decoration Competition was held in Mathura district

The Bharat Scouts and Guides Unit organized a Mehndi Decoration Competition at Mathura Amarnath Girls Degree College. Opening the program, Principal Dr Anil Vajpayee stated that one of the objectives of Scouts and Guides is to promote beauty and harmony in personal life and society, and that this competition will move students towards a beautiful and harmonious society. The mehndi



applied by the female Scouts and Guides volunteers on the hands of their fellow female students was a sight to behold. The college's Scout Guides Chief, President's Award winner Sarika Bhatia, stated that the college's Scout Guides Unit continuously organizes various programs to develop the all-round personality of the female students. Student Kavita won

first place in the competition, while Muskan and Bhumi won second, and Ramsha won third. Rangers Vrinda, Priya, Priyanka, and Shivani played a commendable role in the event. The chief judges were Dr. Meeta Tiwari and Shaima Mustafa. A total of 34 female students participated in the competition. The event was coordinated by Dr Pankaj and Shivani.

It is possible to return to the drawing board with Master Plan 2041

Delhi: Would it be necessary to start over with the Delhi 2041 Master Plan draft Master Plan 2041 is back in the spotlight after being put on the back burner for over two years after the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) submitted the draft to the Centre for notification and



implementation. The govern-

ment of Delhi met behind closed doors to pore over the document's sections, which lay out the groundwork for the city's future infrastructure and urban planning. DDA briefed chief minister Rekha Gupta, cabinet members, and high-ranking officials in the Delhi government on the draft

in great detail. The Delhi secretariat is expected to have more discussions over the paper, but according to sources, the officers were requested to provide comments on various parts of the plan. "Depending on the nature of inputs received from various departments, we may

Sooraj Pancholi denies quitting films

Bollywood actor Sooraj Pancholi, son of actors Aditya Pancholi and Zarina Wahab, made his acting comeback after four years with *Kesari Veer*, which was released in May earlier this year but failed at the box office. Since then, the actor has not announced any new projects, leading to rumours that he had quit acting. However, the 34-year-old actor has now responded to the speculation.

On Wednesday, Sooraj took to Instagram and wrote, "There are a few articles out there stating that I have quit films... Let me clarify. That is not at all true!" He captioned his note with a heart, folded hands, and clapboard emoji.

Earlier, Sooraj recalled the time when he was jailed in the Jiah Khan suicide case, and revealed that he was kept in the same prison cell in Mumbai as that of terrorist Ajmal Kasab.

Sooraj told Hindi Rush that the entire episode of him being in jail is "hazy" for him as he was only 21 at that time and did not know how to react. "I was sent to Arthur Road Jail,

There are a few articles out there stating that I have quit films 🎬

Let me clarify 🙏

That is not at all true!

and put in the anda cell (solitary confinement). I was kept separate, all alone. I was in the same cell where they had put Kasab. They treated me like I'd done a bomb blast," he shared.

He went on to say that he was not even given a pillow and he slept on the newspapers that carried headlines

about his case.

"They treated me terribly, like I had committed some horrible crime. I am not even exaggerating. It was four or five years later that I understood what exactly I had been through. When it was happening, it all felt like a dream," he stated.

Actor addresses rumours of quitting acting, clarifying on Instagram that he has not left films despite recent setbacks



Grief over tragic suicide

RajKumar Rao expresses grief over Chhattisgarh woman's tragic suicide, condemns dowry harassment and urges society to end such practices

Bollywood actor RajKumar Rao expressed his grief and anger over the tragic death of a 23-year-old woman from Chhattisgarh, who died by suicide 10 months after her wedding, alleging harassment by her husband and in-laws.

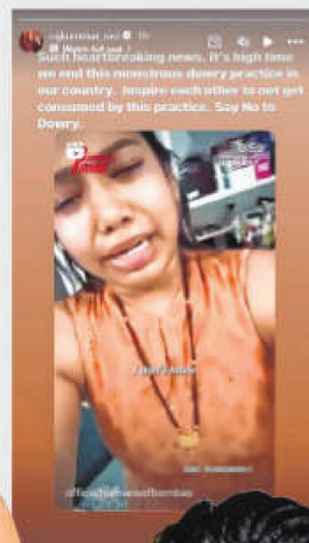
The woman, identified as Manisha Goswami from Raipur, reportedly recorded a video before taking the extreme step, accusing her husband Ashutosh Goswami, his brother, and her in-laws of subjecting her to continuous physical and mental abuse since her marriage in January.

Reacting to the shocking incident, RajKumar took to his Instagram story on Tuesday and re-shared the now-viral post.

Along with it, he wrote, "Such heartbreaking news. It's high time we end this monstrous dowry practice in our country. Inspire each other to not get consumed by this practice. Say No to Dowry."

The actor's message comes amid growing outrage over the case. Netizens have expressed their frustration over the persistent issue of dowry-related harassment and domestic abuse in India.

Manisha, in her heartbreaking post, revealed the struggles she faced in her marriage. "I'm the eldest among my siblings, and my father is the sole breadwinner. I'm exhausted by the constant torment from my in-laws," she said. She added that she felt she had "no option left" and was "tired of life," claiming that her husband had physically assaulted her twice "without any reason" and that her mother-in-law had supported him.



Kelsey Grammer welcomes eighth child

Veteran actor Kelsey Grammer, best known for his role in popular series *Frasier* & several *X-Men* films,

has become a father again at the age of 70.

Grammer shared the news during an appearance on the *Pod Meets World* podcast on Monday, revealing that he and his wife, Kayte Walsh, recently welcomed a baby boy named Christopher.

"We just had our fourth one, it just became eight kids. It was like three days ago.

Christopher has just joined the family. Pretty cool. Yeah, isn't that lovely?" Grammer said.

Christopher is the couple's fourth child together.

Grammer also has four older children from previous relationships, including two with ex-wife Camille Grammer.

The actor was on the podcast to discuss his recent book, *Karen: A Brother Remembers*.

Grammer will next appear in Marvel Studios' much-awaited superhero ensemble movie *Avengers: Doomsday*, in which he will reprise his *X-Men* movies role of Hank McCoy aka Beast.



Samir Zaidi (centre) addressing the audience at the New York Indian Film Festival, where *Two Sinners* received powerful reactions.

Two Sinners makes waves

Mumbai-based filmmaker and visual artist Samir Zaidi's debut short film, *Two Sinners*, continues to make waves internationally with consecutive festival selections. Presented by acclaimed filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj, who also serves as Executive Producer, *Two Sinners* explores themes of justice, patriarchy, agency, and moral conflict through a grounded Indian lens.

The film has been selected for the BAFTA-qualifying Aesthetica Short

Film Festival in York, UK, this November. As India's only live-action entry, it will make its European premiere, marking a significant milestone in its global journey.

Two Sinners premiered at the New York Indian Film Festival in June, followed by selections at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne, the Chicago South Asian Film Festival, and the Oscar-qualifying Tasveer Film Festival in Seattle. Set in an Indian forest, the film follows Azhar, portrayed by BAFTA Breakthrough Talent Shardul Bhardwaj, as he confronts the man responsible for his sister's assault, exploring cycles of violence and moral

ambiguity. Zaidi said, "To have the film recognised at Aesthetica as India's only live-action entry feels deeply special... stories rooted in our realities can connect globally." Vishal Bhardwaj praised Samir's "unique voice and vision," while producers Shivam Gupta and co-producers Vipin Sharma, Probir Umesh Sabnis, and Sohail Anjum highlighted the film's fearless storytelling.

ambiguity:

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Halloween fever hits Sunny Leone

Actress Sunny Leone is all set to embrace the spooky spirit of Halloween with unmatched excitement this year. The *Jism 2* actress, who never misses a chance to celebrate the festival in style, shared why this year's Halloween feels extra special for her.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Sunny shared a post of her where she expressed her deep love for Halloween, calling it one of her favourite holidays of the year-alongside Christmas and Thanksgiving. She revealed that she enjoys throwing Halloween parties even more than any other celebration.

The actress shared that she has been

busy decorating her home all week and is preparing DIY decorations, including headstones and a playful "naughty" cross, to add a fun spooky touch to her setup. Sharing the clip, Leone wrote, "Halloween is coming and I am beyond excited this year for a very very scary occasion where the monsters, ghosts and ghouls come out to play!! Lol."

In the post Sunny Leone said, "So can I tell you guys how much I love Halloween? Like, it's one of my favourite holidays of the year and I love it so much. I would rather have a Halloween party, the other one is Christmas and Thanksgiving, than any other party of the year. And I love it so much, I've been decorating all week.

And tonight is DIY. I make some headstones and a very, very naughty cross. I can't wait for Halloween, guys, I'm so excited. My children finally want a scary Halloween. I have been waiting so long, years and years, and now I get to have a little fun and



Ibrahim embraces father's legacy

Actor Ibrahim Ali Khan opens up about comparisons with father Saif Ali Khan ahead of his Bollywood debut with *Diler*

Bollywood newcomer Ibrahim Ali Khan acknowledges the inevitable comparisons with his father, veteran actor Saif Ali Khan, as he prepares for his film debut with *Diler*. For years, Ibrahim has been told how strikingly he resembles his father, a compliment that has also influenced his own sense of identity.

"For years, I've been told I look just like my father... When you're constantly fed something like that, that becomes a standard for you. You want to be more and more like him," Ibrahim admitted in a recent interview.

Saif Ali Khan's career, marked by versatility and evolution, is widely regarded as a benchmark in Indian cinema. From films like *Om Kara* (2006), *Being Cyrus*, *Love Aaj Kal*, *Kur-*

baan, *Aarakshan*, to his career-defining performance in *Sacred Games*, Saif has continually reinvented himself, earning a reputation as a refined and charismatic performer.

Ibrahim, who deeply admires his father, sees Saif's journey as both inspiration and reassurance. "I think my dad is an amazing actor... He took quite a few films to find his feet and become the versatile performer he is now," Ibrahim said.

As he gears up for *Diler*, Ibrahim seems poised to chart his own path in Bollywood while carrying forward the legacy of his father.



In a joint venture, Ambani and Adani will sell transportation fuel

Delhi : In a joint statement, Adani Total Gas Ltd and Jio-bp, an arm of Reliance Industries Ltd, announced their partnership to sell auto fuel at select outlets. Certain ATGL outlets will offer Jio-bp's gasoline and diesel, while Jio-bp outlets will incorporate ATGL's compressed natural gas (CNG) dispensers. "This partnership will enable us to leverage each other's infrastructure, thus enhancing customer experience and offerings," said Suresh P. Manglani, executive director and CEO of Adani Total Gas. After Reliance bought a 26% interest in an Adani Power project in Madhya Pradesh, the two opposing billionaires teamed together again. "We are united by a shared vision to offer our customers a superior selection of high-quality fuels," stated Jio-bp chairman Sarthak



Behuria. "The partnership between RIL and the Adani Group is anticipated to be extremely complementary, providing substantial operational advantage via their combined physical presence," stated Nirav Karkera, head of research at Fisdrom. A more holistic consumer experience is the goal of the relationship, which is why both companies are offering complementary items.

Both parties stand to benefit from this partnership, which is especially noteworthy in an industry where state-run corporations predominate.

Centre will borrow 8L cr, 54% of the objective

The government plans to borrow Rs 8 lakh crore, 54% of its Rs 14.8 lakh crore FY26 borrowing, in the first half. It didn't front-load the borrowing program to avoid raising rates while the RBI pumped record liquidity into the system. Since the market reported little demand for 30-year and longer bonds, the government announced it would borrow less in FY26. Thus, front-loading of the borrowing program has been avoided due to government (fiscal consolidation without compromising quality of expenditure).

JioHotstar Reaches 300 Million Subscribers, Closer to Netflix

Delhi: JioHotstar, a worldwide OTT player from India, is closing in on Netflix's subscriber dominance. JioCinema and Disney+Hotstar now have 300 million users, up from 50 million in February 2025 after the 2025 TATA IPL. The 2025 Indian Premier League season greatly impacted JioHotstar's client base. It rose from 50 million subscribers in February to 280 million by May and 300 million currently. Digital viewership overtook television for the first time, causing tremendous development. Digital reach was 652 million versus 537 million TV viewers. The final IPL 2025 match



received 237 million digital viewers and 189 million TV viewers. Along with user growth, the platform broke revenue records.

Jiostar, the parent company of JioHotstar, announced that the 2025 IPL had the largest advertising and subscrip-

tion revenue. Historically, league rights were auctioned for 23,575 crore for TV and 20,500 crore for digital over 5 years, indicating great value. The IPL's peak internet viewership was 55.2 million and TV viewing time was 514 billion minutes.

Bank loan growth drops for eighth straight month in February, RBI data reveals

Delhi: Central bank statistics revealed that personal and credit card loans fell for the eighth straight month in February due to Reserve Bank of India tougher policies. Last month, banks' credit rose 12% year-over-year, slower than 16.6% a year earlier,

excluding HDFC Bank's merger. Housing Development Finance Corp, Loans rose 11% in February, compared to 20.5% a year earlier, including the merger. In January, loan growth fell to 12.5% excluding the merger and 11.4% including it. Retail

demand for unsecured loans drove strong loan growth for several years in the banking sector. However, in late 2023, the RBI tightened capital requirements for personal, credit card, and non-banking finance company loans. In its Mumbai headquarters.

JSW to acquire Dulux Paints for 9,000 crore

Delhi : JSW Paints will buy 75% of Dulux-owner Akzo Nobel's India operations for Rs 9,407 crore (\$1.1 billion), the sector's biggest purchase amid rising competition. JSW Paints, founded by steel tycoon Sajjan Jindal in 2019, will become the fourth largest participant in the sector, controlled by Asian Paints, Berger Paints, and Kansai Nerolac. Aditya Birla Group launched Birla Opus in 2024. According to Indian takeover legislation, JSW Paints would openly offer Rs 3,929 crore to Akzo Nobel India's public stockholders for a 25% stake. Public shareholders would



receive Rs 3,418 per share in the open offer, while JSW Paints will pay the Dutch firm Rs 2,762.

Based on the open offer response, JSW Paints would buy enough shares from the Dutch company to maintain 75% ownership in

Akzo Nobel India. JSW Paints, part of the \$23-billion JSW Group, will market Akzo Nobel India after the purchase, with the Dutch corporation perhaps remaining a public shareholder.

Birla Co. recovers Rs 2 crore in stolen digital gold

Delhi : Hackers breached the ABCD mobile app run by Aditya Birla Capital and stole digital gold valued at approximately Rs 1.95 crore from 435 user accounts, according to Delhi. On June 9, the scam was exposed after multiple consumers contacted the company's call center to express their dissatisfaction with the theft of their digital gold. Concerned about this, the company's technical staff launched an internal investigation and filed a first information report. According to our sources, the affected accounts now have their balances returned by the company.

The BSE was fined 25L for the unfair distribution of corporate information



Delhi : According to Delhi, the 45-page SEBI order confirmed that the BSE's system design allowed paying clients and the internal listing compliance monitoring (LCM) staff to view business announcements ahead of schedule. Prior to the information being made public on its website, this occurred. Because there were no measures in place to ensure that all stakeholders had equal and contemporaneous access to the data, the regulator deemed this to be a breach of norms. To keep information

comply with the rules. Additionally, the regulator brought attention to the fact that BSE neglected to establish a really basic syndication (RSS) feed, which would have mitigated the possibility of unequal access to corporate filings. Inspections revealed gaps, but BSE just created a time gap to fix the problem, according to SEBI. The regulator also pointed out significant problems with BSE's oversight of client code updates, which are permitted only for legitimate mistakes.

NHAI to blacklist FASTags 'kept in hand', seeks details from toll operators

Delhi: Drivers who don't fix their FASTags on the windshield of their vehicles will face permanent blacklisting of tags, a measure taken in view of the malpractice of people handing out "loose or unfixed tags" for payment of highway-user fee, which leads to congestion at toll plaza lanes and sometimes altercations with toll collectors. The NHAI company dealing with toll collection and management of highways, IHMCL, has asked federations of toll collectors, highway builders and operators to report such cases for quick action. "Tags-in-hand" have been categorised as "loose tags". Despite repeated advisories against the practice there have been several cases of people handing out FASTag at toll gates for deduction



Total bids for three initial public offerings (IPOs) reached 22.5 billion rupees

Delhi : Nearly 22,500 crore rupees were raised in three separate initial public offerings (IPOs) that concluded. The combined target amount for all three was 2,562 crore rupees. According to data from the exchanges and merchant bankers, the 119 crore rupee IPO of Globe Civil Projects was subscribed 86 times, the 853 crore rupee IPO of Ellenbarrie Industrial Gases was subscribed 22 times, and the 1,590 crore rupee IPO of Mumbai-based real estate giant Kalpataru was subscribed 2.3 times.

of user fee. In letters addressed to these federations, IHMCL said, "This leads to lane-level congestion due to manual handling and viola-

tion issues, misuse in closed-loop tolling operations, generation of false chargeback demands and overall disruption.

GST compensation fund likely to have 95k cr surplus

Delhi: They requested anonymity and stated the GST Council may determine how to use this extra compensation cess. Cess funds are used for a specified purpose and are levied in addition to taxes. These insiders claimed the GST Council, the top indirect



tax decision-making body, will meet before or after the Monsoon session of

Parliament, depending on member availability. They said the Council meeting is overdue and coming soon. Last December 21, the 55th GST Council met in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. They stated the Council will discuss tax rate rationalization, compliance

ease, and cess reform during its 56th meeting. The council may replace the GST compensation cess on sin goods and luxury commodities like cigarettes and cars with two specific-purpose levies to fund health and clean energy projects.

1 in 5 Indians with over Rs 5 crore worth plans to relocate overseas



However, Kotak's private banking division targets individuals worth over Rs 300 crore. Many UHNIs buy abroad property for migration and permanent residency. "Ultra-HNIs are diversifying their portfolios and embracing domestic and global assets, setting the stage for a sig-

nificant increase. Alternative assets and equities are becoming more popular in domestic and international markets. Nearly a third of India's Ultra-HNIs own worldwide assets. With two in three ultra-HNIs planning structured wealth transition, succession planning is crucial.

JB Chemicals' promoter KKR will sell 10% of the company for 2,6k crore rupees

Delhi: In a series of block agreements, the promoter of JB Chemicals — Tatu Investment Holdings, a subsidiary of global private equity giant KKR — is selling around 1.6 crore shares, or 10.2% of the firm, for approximately Rs 2,575 crore (\$300 million). According to the deal's term sheet, the minimum price at which the shares can be sold is Rs 1,625—a 5%

reduction to JB Chem's closing price of Rs 1,709 on Wednesday on the NSE. Shareholding reports on the BSE indicate that as of December 31, 2024, KKR owned 53.7% of the pharmaceutical company situated in the city. Midway through 2020, at a share price of Rs 745, the PE giant had taken over the pharmaceutical manufacturer.

Briefs

MUMBAI

BCCI may take trophy issue to ICC



The BCCI is hopeful that the Asia Cup winners Trophy will reach its headquarters in Mumbai "within a day or two" but if the impasse continues, the Indian Board will take the matter to the ICC on November 4. India defeated arch-rivals Pakistan by five wickets in the final in Dubai to win the Asia Cup, but declined to accept the trophy from Mohsin Naqvi, who serves as ACC and PCB chairman. More than a month after the triumph, the BCCI still awaits the official handover of the silverware. "Yes, we are a little bit unhappy with the way the trophy has not been being given to us even after a month," BCCI joint secretary **Devajit Saikia** told PTI Video. "We are pursuing this matter, about 10 days ago also we wrote a letter to the chairman of ACC, but there is no change in their stand."

PARIS

Sinner enters Paris Masters quarterfinals



Jannik Sinner beat Francisco Cerundolo 7-5, 6-1 in the third round of the Paris Masters on Thursday to extend his indoor winning streak to 23 matches and maintain his chances of reclaiming the No. 1 ranking. The four-time Grand Slam champion needs to win the tournament to take the top spot from Carlos Alcaraz. Sinner's quarterfinal opponent on Friday will be Ben Shelton. The fifth-seeded American beat 12th-seeded Andrey Rublev 7-6 (6), 6-3 to secure his place in the eight-man, season-ending ATP Finals in Turin, Italy. Sinner is chasing a fifth title of the year and 23rd overall. He won an ATP 500 tournament in Vienna last Sunday despite having cramps.

PUNE

Shaurya wins Poona Club Open in playoff



Shaurya Bhattacharya, who trailed by two shots after round three

English Daily
AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH
Title Code
UPENG04488
Prayagraj
Printer, Publisher &
Owner Swami Shree
Yogi Satyam for
Yog Satsanga Samiti
Printed at
PARASHAKTI OFFSET
118A/2A Chaukhandi
Kydganj, Prayagraj-211003
Uttar Pradesh
Published from
Kriyayoga Asharam
& Anusandhan Sansthan
Jhansi, Prayagraj-211019
Editor:
SWAMI SHREE YOGI SATYAM
All disputes of news and
publication against the
AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH
are the subject matter of
Allahabad Jurisdiction.
Email ID:
akhandbharatsandesh16@gmail.com
Mob. 9415235084, 9565333009

T20I SERIES | Marsh leads chase with fiery 46 as Australia romp home by four wickets; Abhishek and Rana were the only India batters to reach double digits

Hazlewood dismantles India

MELBOURNE

Josh Hazlewood clinically dismantled a famed Indian top-order with a probing spell to kill the contest as Australia cantered to a four-wicket victory in the second T20 International here on Friday.

In front of a 82,438 strong crowd, India suffered one of its most embarrassing defeats with as many as nine batters failing to reach double digits in a total of 125 in 18.4 overs.

Only Abhishek Sharma, in the form of his life, stood tall amid ruins with a combative 37-ball-68. With Harshit Rana (35 off 33 balls) he added 56 to take the total past 100-run mark after pacer Hazlewood (3/13) left them reeling at 49 for 5.

Hazlewood bowled an incredible 15 dot balls in his four-over spell to break the backbone of Indian batting and killed the contest within 20 minutes of start.

In reply, skipper Mitchell Marsh blasted his way to 46 off 26 balls with hosts completing the chase in only 13.2 overs losing six wickets. Most batters fell primarily due to attempting audacious shots.

The only silver lining apart from Abhishek's innings was Varun Chakravarthi's spell (2/23 in 4 overs) and Jasprit Bumrah's (2/26 in 4 overs) pinpoint yorker to dismiss Matthew Short.

Most of the Indian batters found it tough to hit through the line due to extra bounce and the lengths that Australian pacers, especially Hazlewood hit during his spell which he finished in one go.

While technique of a few batters lay exposed, the Indian team management wouldn't take the results to



Australia's Josh Hazlewood (C) appeals for the wicket of India's Shubman Gill (R) during their T20I on Friday.

AP

heart as the T20 World Cup will be played in Indian conditions where most of the deliveries will not rise above knee roll.

There will be minimal seam movement and wickets offering a bit of grip will help Varun Chakravarthi, Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel way more. But with three matches left in the series, Indian batters could take a leaf out of Abhishek's book after he burnished his credentials as world's numero uno T20 batter with some breathtaking strokes.

Abhishek played some outrageous shots on the off-side: slashes, check drives and lofted strokes, to race to a 23-ball half-century in his maiden appearance at the iconic venue while others made a beeline towards the dugout. His knock comprised

Scoreboard

India: S Gill c Marsh b Hazlewood 5, A Sharma lbw b Ellis 68, S Samson lbw b Ellis 2, S Yadav c Inglis b Hazlewood 1, T Varmma c Inglis b Hazlewood 0, A Patel run out (David/Inglis) 7, H Rana c David b Bartlett 35, S Dube c Inglis b Bartlett 4, K Yadav c sub (Abbott) b Stoinis 0, V Chakravarthi (not out) 0, J Bumrah run out (Ellis) 0
Extras: (B-1, W-2) 3
Total: 125—all out (in 18.4 overs) **FoW:** 1-20, 2-23, 3-32, 4-32, 5-49, 6-105, 7-109, 8-110, 9-125
Bowling: Hazlewood 4-0-13-

3, Bartlett 4-0-39-2, Ellis 3.4-0-21-2, Stoinis 4-0-24-1, Owen 1-0-13-0, Kuhnemann 2-0-14-0.

Australia: M Marsh c Abhishek b Kuldeep 46, T Head c Tilak b Varun 28, J Inglis lbw b Kuldeep 20, T David c & b Varun 1, M Owen c Samson b Bumrah 14, M Stoinis (not out) 6, M Short b Bumrah 0, X Bartlett (not out) 0
Extras: (B-4, LB-1, NB-1, W-5) 11
Total: 126-6 (in 13.2 overs) **FoW:** 1-51, 2-87, 3-90, 4-112, 5-124, 6-124
Bowling: J Bumrah 4-0-26-2, H Rana 2-0-27-0, V Chakravarthi 4-0-23-2, K Yadav 3.2-0-45-2.

of eight fours and two sixes.

What worked for Abhishek was his ability to use the crease and ride the bounce at the same time but in the back-10, he was left

frustrated with the lower middle-order batters who could not rotate the strike. He didn't get strike for close to five overs as Rana faced bulk of the deliveries and

India, Australia players wear black armbands

Melbourne: Players of the Indian and Australian teams on Friday wore black armbands during the second T20I here to honour the 17-year-old Australian cricketer Ben Austin, who died after being hit in the neck during training.

Austin was struck in the neck and head area by a ball while training for his club at Ferntree Gully on Tuesday.

later Shivam Dube and Kuldeep Yadav also consumed many balls. Abhishek hooked Xavier Bartlett for a six and prior to that a boundary as the total reached 125.

Indian batters surprised by extra bounce: Abhishek

Australian bowlers were disciplined in home conditions

MELBOURNE

young opener Abhishek Sharma admitted that India's batting unit was caught slightly off guard by the extra bounce and disciplined bowling in Australian conditions after a testing T20I match here on Friday.

Playing his maiden international series in Australia, Abhishek said the visitors had anticipated pace and bounce but were still surprised by how effectively the home bowlers exploited the conditions during the second match of the series.

The left-handed opener emerged top-scorer for the visitors with a fighting 68-run knock but Australia romped home by four wickets.

"The challenge is that a lot of players, including me, are on their first tour here. We knew about the extra bounce and pace, but still the way they bowled, surprised us," Abhishek said at the post-match press conference.

"They were very disciplined with their line and length, and credit goes to them."

The left-hander, who opened the innings, said the team's aggressive top-order plan had to be adjusted once wickets began to fall early.

"Our plan was to dominate up front, but it was a little unexpected for us. When wickets are falling in front of you, no matter who the batter is, you have to play for the team. The wicket was difficult, it wasn't easy to hit shots," he said.



India's Abhishek Sharma bats against Australia in Melbourne on Friday.

AP

The challenge is that a lot of players, including me, are on their first tour here. We knew about the extra bounce and pace, but still the way they bowled, surprised us

Abhishek Sharma,
Indian batter

Abhishek praised his lower-order partner Harshit Rana for showing composure and adaptability under pressure. They added 56 runs for the sixth wicket.

"I knew Harshit could bat - he hits sixes off me a lot in the nets. He told me, 'let's play a little normal', and that helped. The right-left combination worked well, and that's why he went up the order ahead of Shivam Dube."

Reflecting on his fearless approach with the bat, the 24-year-old said it is because of confidence instilled in him by the team management.

"When I play, I try to bring the bowler under pressure. This approach has its ups and downs, but my captain and coach have always supported me. They are clear that I should play my natural game, and when they say that, it gives me confidence."

‘Aus were not sharp enough’

Skipper Healy all praise for Rodrigues’ performance

NAVI MUMBAI

Australia skipper Alyssa Healy felt her team wasn't sharp enough on the big day and expressed her disappointment at the team's stunning defeat to India in the ICC Women's World Cup semifinal on Thursday.

Healy seemed distraught and made it known at the post-match presser.

"I think just disappointed with the loss. We were not sharp enough in all three departments in the semifinal and the game slipped away. Not taking anything away from the great performance from India but there's an element of having let ourselves down," she added.

The Australian opener was forthright in her assessment of the mistakes the WC favourites made in the five-wicket loss.

"We did really well to get a score like that after winning the toss and batting first. We could have been a bit better and done more. But we're playing on tracks where these kind of scores can be chased and teams are doing more often these days. I think it's amazing from the context of



Australia's captain Alyssa Healy drops a catch of Jemimah Rodrigues.

PTI

the game. We feel we had a bit more to do and we didn't capitalize much on the opportunities," she added.

"It feels a bit un-Australian to be not so clinical as we normally are considering how well we have played at this World Cup."

Healy revealed the dropped catches definitely had a huge bearing on the final outcome of the game.

"It definitely changed the course of the match but not semifinal pressure. Maybe concentration lapses, not sure, but nevertheless we put them down and that cost us."

Elaborating on her disappointment, Healy stated that it

seemed like an anti-climax to be where they are now given how well they have been playing lately.

"We are playing some unbelievable cricket and that is why it doesn't feel quite right sitting here. Not getting through to Sunday's fixture despite different contributions from so many players is disappointing. There are some huge positives and the next four-year cycle heading to the next World Cup is going to be really exciting and will potentially see some really good opportunities for the youngsters. This is going to improve the Australian team. We were not able to get the job done tonight which is disappointing," the Australia opener added.

Healy was all praise for Jemimah Rodrigues' brilliant effort with the bat but confessed that they let her off the hook with their poor fielding.

"I think we were still in it with 4-5 overs to go. Funny things happen in the games of cricket when things get tight like that and things can unfold. She played really well tonight and we gave her opportunities which didn't help us and her mental resilience was exemplary."

India had immense self belief: Jemimah

India No 3 felt her previous chasing experiences against Australia helped

NAVI MUMBAI

India's star of the semifinal Jemimah Rodrigues stated she and the team felt they had it in them to chase down the record target set by Australia in the last-four clash of the Women's World Cup at the DY Patil Stadium, on Thursday.

Jemimah scored unbeaten 127 from 134 balls as India nailed a record chase of 339 to set up a summit clash with South Africa. She felt the fact that India had chased down some big targets against New Zealand earlier certainly gave them confidence.

"I think when we had this target, the team's mindset was that against New Zealand we were able to score 341 in 49 overs. Against Australia in Vizag, we scored 333, so we felt we have done it against this team and we can do it and also the way Australia started they were about 30 runs short with the way they were going. DY Patil is also a track where any score is chaseable, so my thought process was that I just had to be there to get those runs," she added.

Talking about the mental aspect during the incredible



India's Jemimah Rodrigues plays a shot against Australia at the DY Patil Stadium on Thursday.

PTI

chase against Australia, Jemimah delved into her spiritual side.

"I was praying and I was talking to myself and I had lost a lot of my energy because of the tiredness. It was a tricky phase for me whether I should go now or wait and take it deep. I was praying and I feel I have a personal rela-

tionship with God and he always carries me."

Jemimah explained that irrespective of the team, India's approach wouldn't have changed in the semifinal.

"I feel whichever team would have come up in the semifinal, our team would have come up with the same reply. We want to play the

team and play the moment, we want to play the match and win the match. We would play with the same passion and same aggression to win the match for India," she added.

The 25-year-old Mumbaier revealed that her experience in chases against Australia came to her advantage on the D-Day.

"I have been part of chases against Australia and almost three against them. In the earlier games, going well, we got into run a ball situations and we lost it from there. Those moments taught me a lot and I just wanted to be there and finish it off."

The previous day we had a group discussion and we talked about what all we could do better in this World Cup. I felt I want to be there till the end and finish the game because I know if I'm there I can build partnerships," the India No 3 stated.

"This just feels like a dream actually and everything was just a set up. The last month wasn't the easiest and I feel it was set up for this moment."

Jemimah refused to rate this innings and stated she wanted to win the game for the country and nothing else mattered.

India A Match

Pant disappoints with 17; Mhatre scores fighting 65

BENGALURU

Two cavalier shimmies, two well-timed fours and a nothing shot summarised Rishabh Pant's 29-minute 17, which aptly reflected in India A's 234 all out against South Africa A on the second day of the four-day match here on Friday.

After bowling out SA 'A' for 309, overnight 299/9, in the first session, India succumbed to their own waywardness and the relentless-

ness of off-spinner Prenelan Subrayen (5/61), to concede an innings lead of 75.

Teenager Ayush Mhatre (65, 76 balls) was the lone India A batter who displayed some resolve on the day.

In their second innings, the tourists were 30 for no loss, extending the lead to 105 runs. Jordan Hermann (12) and Lesego Senokwane (9) were batting at stumps, reinforcing the hold the Proteas had on the opposition on the day.

But as it was expected,

Pant's comeback innings offered an interesting sub-text to the day's proceedings.

Pant did an excellent job behind the wicket on his return to competitive cricket after three months but he failed to replicate it in front of the wicket.

The left-hander started the innings with an almighty heave against pacer Tshupo Moraki that connected with thin air rather than the ball, and soon opened the account with a four over mid-on off Subrayen in the sixth ball he

faced. Later, he pulled Moraki behind the square for a four, showing signs of settling in. But a moment of indecision ended his tenure. Pant caught in two minds whether to or leave the ball, and eventually lobbed the delivery to Zubayr Hamza at gully.

Mhatre looked million-dollar during his half-century. The Mumbai youngster oozed confidence and class all through his innings, a straight drive off Cele and a cover drive off Subrayen

underlined his batting's strong technical foundations.

Mhatre's brilliance helped India go for lunch at 71 for no loss but all the hard work was undone in the second session when they lost five wickets for 92 runs to be placed at 163 for five at tea.

Mhatre himself was one of the batters to depart in that session of madness, falling to the 32-year-old Subrayen, who wheeled away for 22 unchanged overs across three sessions for a creditable fifer.



India A's Ayush Mhatre plays a shot against South Africa A in Bengaluru on Friday.

PTI