

# AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

## Smart meters have emerged as a new pillar of consumer convenience in Uttar Pradesh

Lucknow

Driven by the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the Uttar Pradesh government is committed to ensuring transparent, reliable and modern electricity services for every household. As part of this effort, the smart meter initiative has been placed at the forefront of power

reforms. Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) is rapidly expanding installations across districts, to deploy over 39.78 million smart meters statewide. Smart meters, built on secure, transparent and consumer-friendly technology, function like traditional electronic meters but with significant advancements.



They record consumption digitally and enable online reading and billing, eliminating human intervention and ensuring complete

accuracy. This technology has transformed consumer convenience, strengthened transparency and enhanced energy man-

agement across the state. The Yogi government push for smart meters continues to set new benchmarks in delivering world-class electricity services. Key benefits of smart meters for consumers 1. Transparent and Accurate Billing Real-time readings eliminate estimation or error, ensuring fully

accurate billing. 2. Prevention of Electricity Theft Automatic transmission of data to the server deters tampering and reduces power theft. 3. Access to All Services from Home Consumers can view consumption, access bills, and make payments online without visiting electricity offices.

## A Unity March organized on the occasion of Sardar Patel Jayanti in Jaunpur



Lucknow

Urban Development and Energy Minister and In-charge Minister of Jaunpur district A.K. Sharma, participated today in the Unity March public meeting organized in Jaunpur on the occasion of National Unity Day. On this occasion, he reiterated his resolve to spread the message of national unity, integrity and collective harmony to every citizen. Addressing the gathering held at Gopalpur in Madiyahu, Minister Sharma elaborated on the life, personality and contributions of the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He said that Sardar Patel was not only a

strong pillar of the freedom movement but also one of the most decisive personalities who safeguarded the nation integrity after independence. Sharing his memories, Minister Sharma said that during his tenure as the District Magistrate of Kheda in Gujarat, he witnessed firsthand the deep respect and reverence people there held for Sardar Patel. He said that in Kheda, every household, every family and every elder carries an unwavering faith and sense of inspiration for Sardar Patel. This respect signifies that Sardar Patel life and struggle are not confined to history but still reside in the soul of the people.

## Nitish becomes Chief Minister of Bihar for the 10th time

Patna

In the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Chief Ministers of several BJP-ruled states, Nitish Kumar was sworn in as Chief Minister for the 10th time at the historic Gandhi Maidan in Patna on Thursday. Governor Arif Mohammad Khan administered the oath of office and secrecy. Along with Nitish Kumar, Samrat Chaudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, both from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) quota, also took the oath of office and secrecy. Among the ministers sworn in, Shreyasi Singh, who won the Jamui assembly seat, is among the BJP's young faces. Rama Nishad, who won the Arai assembly seat this time, has also been included in the



cabinet. Both of them are taking the oath of office for the first time. **The Nitish Kumar cabinet includes:** Samrat Chaudhary, Vijay Kumar Sinha, Vijay Chaudhary, Vijay Prasad Yadav, Shravan Kumar, Mangal Pandey, Dr. Dilip Jaiswal, Ashok Chaudhary, Lesy Singh, Madan Sahni, Nitin Naveen, Ramkripal Yadav, Santosh Kumar Suman, Sunil Kumar, Mohammad Jama Khan, Sanjay Singh Tiger, Arun Shankar Prasad, Surendra

Mehta, Narayan Prasad, Rama Nishad, Lakhendra Kumar Roshan, Shreyasi Singh, Pramod Kumar, Sanjay Kumar, Sanjay Kumar Singh, and Deepak Prakash. The Nitish Kumar cabinet, which is both experienced and young, includes leaders like Mangal Pandey, Nitin Naveen, Ashok Chaudhary, and Shravan Kumar, who have previously held various portfolios. On the other hand, young faces like Shreyasi Singh, Deepak Prakash, Lakhendra Kumar Roshan, and

Rama Nishad are also included. Maithili Thakur, MP and singer Manoj Tiwari, and Bhojpur star Pawan Singh enthralled the crowd with their performances at the swearing-in ceremony. The new list clearly demonstrates an effort to provide representation to all major sections and regions. Adequate cabinet positions have been provided to leaders from Dalit, extremely backward, backward, women, and minority communities. The inclusion of women leaders like Shreyasi Singh, Rama Nishad, and Lesy Singh demonstrates the NDA's commitment to women's empowerment. Furthermore, the inclusion of minority leaders like Mohammad Jama Khan underscores the BJP-JDU government's efforts to maintain.

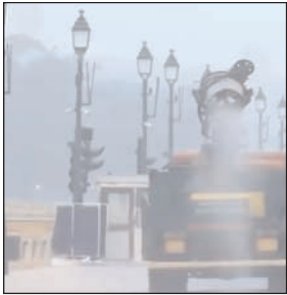


Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unique style was on display. He first took Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's hand and moved toward the front of the stage. He then bowed five times to greet the public. He approached all the ministers taking oath on the stage, cheering them, and then turned to the public and waved his gamchha.

## Delhi-NCR: Air becomes more toxic, AQI crosses 400

New Delhi

Air pollution levels in Delhi-NCR have steadily reached dangerous levels. Thick, toxic smog enveloped many areas this morning. Several areas in Delhi-NCR, including the capital, Noida, and Ghaziabad, recorded an AQI above 400 this morning.



According to the Central Pollution Control Board, the AQI in Anand Vihar,

Delhi, was 416, Ashok Vihar 443, Aya Nagar 332, Bawana 437, Burari 418, DTU 432, Dwarka 414, ITO 399, and Jahangirpuri 451. Thick, toxic smog lingered around the India Gate area in the morning. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, the AQI here was recorded at 400, which falls in

the "very poor" category. Regarding the rising pollution in Delhi, a woman said, "The pollution is so intense that it's difficult to breathe. We have to wear masks, and the AQI is also very high." We are avoiding going out.' A layer of toxic smog engulfed the Moti Bagh area of Delhi in the morning.

## Court grants Rahul relief; stay on trial court proceedings extended till December 4

New Delhi

The Supreme Court has continued the relief granted to Congress MP and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, in the case in which he is accused of making derogatory remarks against the Army during the 2022 "Bharat Jodo Yatra." On Thursday, the court extended the interim stay on the trial court's

proceedings until December 4. A two-judge bench, Justice M.M. Sundaresh and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, made this decision. The reason for the postponement of the hearing was stated to be a stay order. Rahul challenged the Allahabad High Court's order. This case relates to Rahul Gandhi's petition challenging the Allahabad High Court's May 29 order.

## Governor should not delay bills passed by the Assembly: Supreme Court

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday delivered its verdict on a presidential reference questioning whether a constitutional court can set a time limit for governors and the President to approve bills passed by state legislatures. A Constitution Bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai, Justice Surya Kant, Justice Vikram Nath, Justice PS Narasimha, and Justice AS Chandurkar heard argu-



ments for 10 days and reserved its verdict on September 11. The court cannot set a timeline for assent to bills. The Supreme Court clarified that the judiciary cannot set a time limit for the President and Governors to approve bills passed by state legislatures. The

Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice BR Gavai, delivered its opinion on 14 constitutional questions referred to it by the President under Article 143, stating that the issue involved the discretion of constitutional functionaries and the dignity

of the federal structure. The court acknowledged that the role of the President and Governor in the legislative process is a "constitutional duty," but that judicial intervention cannot impose a time limit on it. The court also underlined that excessive delays undermine the very essence of democratic governance, and therefore, these positions are expected to deliver decisions within a reasonable time.

## China is providing ships and submarines to Pakistan, the Navy is monitoring every activity

New Delhi

Vice Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan said that the Indian Navy is aware that China is providing submarines and ships to Pakistan and that the Navy is closely monitoring every development to ensure maritime security and protect the country's interests. Addressing an event in the capital, Delhi, the Vice Chief of Naval Staff said, "We are aware that China is providing submarines and ships to Pakistan. We are closely monitoring everything." He added

that the Indian Navy is working to strengthen the country's defense system, especially its anti-submarine warfare capabilities. Vice Admiral Vatsayan said, "We are fully aware that China is providing submarines to Pakistan and the process of inducting their submarines will begin soon. But we are also monitoring every situation in the entire region. We are preparing for whatever we have to do and counter. We also know what capabilities we need for anti-submarine warfare.

## Delhi riots: Delhi Police shows Sharjeel Imam's videos in Supreme Court

New Delhi

During the hearing of the case related to the 2020 Northeast Delhi riots, the Delhi Police showed the Supreme Court several videos in which Sharjeel Imam is allegedly seen giving inflammatory speeches against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). The police claimed that these speeches vitiated the atmosphere and incited people. Sharjeel Imam is accused of giving speeches during the protests against the CAA and NRC that, according to the govern-



ment, affected law and order. Imam has denied these allegations and maintains that he was merely advocating for peaceful protests. Ongoing Trend of Anti-National Activities During the hear-

ing of this case, the Delhi Police told the court that a worrying trend is being observed in the country: professionals such as doctors and engineers are deviating from their professions and engaging in

'anti-national activities'. Calling this an emerging problem, the police said that such cases need to be taken seriously. Opposition to the rejection of the accused's bail pleas Earlier, on October 30, the Delhi Police sought the rejection of the bail pleas of those accused in the 2020 Delhi riots. In this regard, the police filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court, claiming that an attempt was made to spread the riots across India and to attract international attention. The plan was to incite violence during Trump's visit.

## Illegal Bangladeshis continue to cross the border and return amid SIR operations Kolkata

The Border Security Force (BSF), responsible for guarding India's borders, has said that the number of illegal Bangladeshi nationals attempting to cross the India-Bangladesh border in South Bengal has risen sharply in recent weeks. According to a senior BSF official, this increase appears to be linked to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) campaign of the electoral rolls. According to BSF officials, the number of undocumented nationals trying to return to their country from the unfenced areas of North 24 Parganas and Malda districts has increased manifold.

## Letter from 175 personalities including former Supreme Court judge

Hyderabad

175 prominent figures, including former Supreme Court judge B. Sudarshan Reddy, have written an open letter regarding the Bihar elections, the Election Commission, and the Special Intensive Review (SIR) of voter lists. These eminent figures have called the Bihar election results fraudulent and urged the opposition not to accept the results. The open letter stated, "We, the citizens of this country,



demand completely transparent, accountable, free, and fair elections. We consider the Bihar election results fraudulent and demand the opposition not to accept the results." The figures further stated that the current SIR system serves the wishes of a government that wants

to retain power by any means. In the name of change, an arbitrary election process is conducted. As spectators, analysts, and commentators, we have witnessed how this altered system impacts democracy and undermines the principles of transparent, free, and fair elections.



## Briefs

LUCKNOW

**Woman Jailed for False SC/ST Case**

A Lucknow court sentenced a woman, Rinki, to three and a half years in prison for falsely accusing her live-in partner of rape and violating the SC/ST Act. The judge stated the couple had lived together for five years, and she filed the case in retaliation after he married another woman. The court emphasized that such misuse of the law to implicate innocent people must be met with strict punishment to deter false cases.

JAUNPUR

**Man Throws Infant Daughter in River**

A man, Ashok Kumar Vishwakarma, was arrested in Kerakat for throwing his one-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Ruby, into the Gomti River. Reportedly distressed over having a third daughter, he took the child under the pretext of a walk and drowned her. Fishermen witnessed the act but failed to rescue her due to strong currents. The police are searching for the body, and the accused's wife confirmed he was troubled by the lack of a son.

LALITPUR

**Traders Demand Parking Fine Moratorium**

The All India Industry Trade Mandal, Lalitpur, has submitted a memorandum to the District Magistrate requesting a temporary halt on no-parking fines until footpath construction and white edge-line markings are completed on the main road. They argue that the recent roadwork has eliminated footpaths, forcing pedestrians onto the road and making it impossible for customers to stop vehicles briefly without receiving fines, adversely affecting businesses.

VARANASI

**Massive Cough Syrup Haul from Gym**

Rohaniya police uncovered a massive stash of banned cough syrup, valued between ₹1-1.5 crore, hidden in a secret warehouse beneath a gym. Acting on a tip-off, a police team raided the location and sealed the warehouse. The Drug Department and the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) have joined the investigation to trace the supply network. An SIT has been formed to probe the case, with initial reports suggesting the warehouse owner is linked to a local woman head.

VARANASI

**Trio Arrested for ₹50 Crore Stock Fraud**

Sarnath police arrested three members of an inter-state gang from Maharashtra for allegedly duping investors of nearly ₹50 crore. The accused, including the gang's kingpin Rajendra Prasad Jaiswar, lured victims by promising triple returns on stock market investments through a fake company. Police have seized mobile phones, laptops, and documents. The gang initially paid small returns to gain trust before swindling large sums. Investigations are ongoing to uncover the entire network.

**CONTROVERSY | Minister sparks with remarks targeting mosques, madrasas and Muslims**

# Shutdown all mosques and madarsas : Raghuraj Singh

ALIGARH

A fresh controversy erupted in Uttar Pradesh after Minister of State Raghuraj Singh made a series of provocative statements in Aligarh, alleging without presenting any official data that individuals arrested in recent terror cases were connected to mosques or madrasas. He further stated that "educated Muslims become bigger terrorists," an assertion that legal experts and community leaders called unverified, inflammatory, and potentially damaging to social harmony.

Responding to questions on the Delhi blast investigation, Singh claimed that minority institutions should be shut down. He referenced Osama bin Laden's education to generalise about an entire community, a comparison critics described as misleading and factually incorrect. Singh went



on to accuse Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) of supporting institutions under investigation, after Al-Falah University received a sports tournament invitation. No official agency, however, has linked AMU to extremist activity.

The comments drew quiet but notable concern among academics, who emphasised that AMU has produced judges, scientists, civil servants, and scholars over more than a century. Minority leaders pointed out that sweeping accusations

**Calls for shutting madrasas and probing AMU trigger debate on political targeting of minorities**

against educational institutions risk alienating students and citizens who contribute significantly to India's academic and professional landscape.

Singh further claimed that "minority educational institu-

tions are unnecessary," asserting they commit excesses under special status. Civil society groups countered that such institutions operate under constitutional protections designed to preserve cultural and linguistic diversity.

He also targeted former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, demanding capital punishment for alleged support to terrorism. Legal experts noted that such conclusions are the domain of courts, not

politicians.

Singh criticised New York's newly elected mayor as well, accusing him of promoting religious conversion—again without citing any evidence.

This is not the first time the minister has made provocative remarks. He previously stated that madrasas are "training centres for terrorists" and vowed to shut them down "if given a chance." He also demanded a nationwide burqa ban, claiming it aids infiltrators an argument disputed by security analysts, who say that attire-based profiling has no proven counterterrorism value.

A two-time minister and former BJP district president, Singh comes from a political family in Gabhana. His repeated remarks continue to spark debate about rhetoric targeting minorities at a time when community relations require careful, evidence-based dialogue.

## Mother and son attempt suicide near minister's residence



LUCKNOW

In one of the most sensitive zones of the state capital, a woman and her son from Mathura attempted suicide near the tourism minister's residence in Gautampalli on Wednesday. The two, identified as Munesh Singh (56) and Baljeet Singh (38), collapsed on the road near BD Tiraha after reportedly consuming a poisonous substance. Local residents alerted Gautampalli police, who moved them to the Civil Hospital, where doctors declared both stable and out of danger.

According to police, an empty Sulphas pouch was

**Pair from Mathura claimed no action on land-grab complaint; found unconscious near BD Tiraha**

found next to them. Preliminary questioning revealed that the pair had travelled from Barsana's Radha Rani Township to seek intervention from the chief minister. They alleged that their purchased plot and house were occupied illegally, and despite repeated complaints in Mathura, no action was taken, leaving them distressed.

## Money power and state machinery driving polls : Mayawati

LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) national president and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati conducted a detailed review of party units in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar and Jharkhand. She assessed organisational progress and sought updates on previous directives aimed at strengthening the party and expanding its outreach across all communities.

Mayawati said that conditions for Bahujan communities in western and southern states remain as challenging as those in northern regions, including Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. She stated that millions from poor, Dalit, tribal, OBC and Muslim communities continue to face

**Calls government's approach a direct threat to reservation and democratic fairness**

limited social, educational and economic opportunities due to inadequate representation in governance.

On reservation, Mayawati alleged that a collective political attack has weakened the constitutional rights of margi-

nalised groups. She claimed that reservation has been reduced "to a formality," with even backlog vacancies not being filled. According to her, major political parties share a similar approach on issues concerning marginalised communities. She further said that "winning elections by any means" has become a trend in the country, making it essential for the BSP to prepare accordingly. Mayawati warned party members to take the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists seriously, stressing that lapses could disenfranchise large numbers of voters. During the Maharashtra unit's review, party representatives reported that government policies have adversely affected poor and farming families, along with SC, ST and OBC communities.

## ABVP celebrates rani Lakshmi Bai's birth anniversary

HAMIRPUR



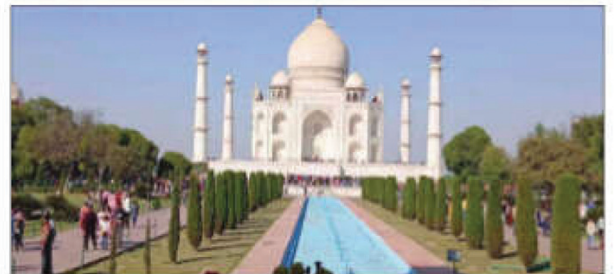
The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) celebrated Veerangana Rani Lakshmi Bai's birth anniversary as Shakti Stree Diwas in Hamirpur. The organization held a Deepotsav (festival of lights) and Rangoli event at the statue of the Rani of Jhansi.

ABVP emphasized that Rani Lakshmi Bai was a heroic figure who significantly elevated the respect and honor of women globally by sacrificing everything for the nation.

## Global judicial delegates to descend on Taj Mahal

AGRA

A total of 126 distinguished guests from 40 countries will visit the Taj Mahal on Thursday as part of the World Heritage Week events. The delegation includes former presidents, former prime ministers and chief justices who are in India to attend the 26th International Conference of Chief Justices of the World, organised by the City Montessori School Society in New Delhi from November 19 to 24. Authorities in Agra have begun extensive preparations for security, traffic management and medical arrangements. According to officials, the delegates will leave New Delhi at 10 a.m. in four luxury buses and are expected to reach Agra later in the day. A formal communication regarding protocol and

**Trump Jr. to be of elite group of 126 global guests**

safety measures has been sent to the Agra District Magistrate.

Alongside the delegation, Donald John Trump Jr., son of former U.S. President Donald Trump, will also visit the monument on Thursday. He is scheduled to arrive at Kheria Airport

around 1:30 p.m. aboard a special aircraft. From there, he will follow a designated VVIP route to Shilpgram parking and enter the Taj Mahal through the eastern gate using a golf cart. This will be his first visit to Agra, although his family toured the monument in 2020 before the Covid-19 pandemic.

World Heritage Week activities in Agra begin today, with free entry to the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri.

## Court convicts man for murdering his minor son

FIROZABAD

A Firozabad district court has sentenced Sunil, accused of killing his four-year-old son by poisoning, to life imprisonment. Along with the sentence, the court imposed a fine of ₹55,000, with an additional 18 months of imprisonment if the fine is not paid. The case dates back to April 2022.

The child's maternal grandfather, Lakshmishankar, had filed a complaint at Makhanpur police station on April 19, 2022. He stated that his daughter had been married to Sunil Kumar of Agra's Shahdara Chungi area for over a decade and that Sunil was addicted to substances, frequently assaulting his wife and children. He often claimed that the boys were not his and threatened to kill them.

After repeated disputes, the

**Court also imposes a fine of ₹55,000 with additional imprisonment for non-payment**

two sons were taken to their maternal home. Days later, Sunil returned, took the family back, and the disturbances resumed. On the night of April 18, 2022, Sunil slept on the terrace with the children and reportedly left around 3 a.m. The next morning, four-year-old David was found dead. Following investigation, the police filed a chargesheet.

## Vidyut Sakhis power rural revenue drive

LUCKNOW

Under the guidance of the Deputy Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh has seen strong progress in empowering rural women through livelihood-enhancing initiatives. The Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) has enabled thousands of women associated with self-help groups to become financially independent through the Vidyut Sakhi programme.

Since the programme began in 2020, Vidyut Sakhis have collected more than ₹2,400 crore in electricity bill payments for distribution companies. Through this work, they have earned over ₹33.05 crore in commission, strengthening incomes across rural households.

From January to October

**Women's self-help group members earn ₹33.05 crore as commission under the programme**

2025, Barabanki's Rajshree Shukla secured the top position in the state by collecting over ₹7 crore from 28,567 bills, earning a commission of ₹7.54 lakh. In second place, Soni Dwivedi from Jagdishpur block in Amethi collected more than ₹6.8 crore through 18,416 bills, earning ₹7.22 lakh.

## Hajj committee announces exam for SHI on Nov 29

LUCKNOW

The Haj Committee of India is accelerating the selection process for State Haj Inspectors (SHI) for deployment in Saudi Arabia during Hajj-2026. The Computer Based Test (CBT) for the post is scheduled for November 29, 2025. The online exam, which can be taken from a secure location using a camera-equipped device, will be preceded by a mock test on November 27.

The CBT is worth 150 marks and consists of 50 multiple-choice questions; there is no negative marking. Haj Executive Officer S.P. Tiwari stated that all necessary guidelines are available on the Haj Committee's website.

## Kanpur Bar Association delegation visits UP Assembly



LUCKNOW

A delegation from the Sales Tax Bar Association, Kanpur, led by President S.P. Singh and General Secretary Avneesh Mishra, met Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly Speaker Satish Mahana on Wednesday. The purpose of the visit was to gain a closer understanding of Assembly functioning, parliamentary traditions, and operational procedures of democratic institutions.

Welcoming the delegation, the Speaker highlighted the significance of the legislative system. He stated that legislators remain closest to the public, making them more accountable and often subjects of criticism. He noted that unlike other institutions with limited public interface, the legislature works directly among citizens, and negative perceptions toward it are unhealthy for democracy.

## Narora plant takes responsibility for all TB patients in Bulandshahr

LUCKNOW

Bulandshahr has become the first district in Uttar Pradesh where a single institution has committed to supporting all tuberculosis patients by providing nutritional assistance. On Wednesday, an MoU was signed between the Narora Atomic Power Plant and the Health Department. District Magistrate Shruti was present during the signing.

State Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Shailendra Bhatnagar appreciated the initiative, noting that similar participation from more institutions would significantly

**City is treating 7,953 tuberculosis patients under focused TB-Free India campaign**

help TB patients across the state and strengthen efforts toward TB elimination. He said proper nutrition plays a critical role in improving recovery and reducing TB-related deaths. Officials shared progress under the TB-Free India campaign. Between December 7, 2024 and November 15, 2025, screening was conducted for 2.45 crore high-risk individuals.

## ODOP crafts take global spotlight at Jamboree

LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh's craftsmanship and cultural heritage will take centre stage at the 19th National Jamboree of Bharat Scouts and Guides, set to be held in Lucknow from November 23 to 29. After nearly six decades, the state is hosting this major event, which will bring together thousands of national and international participants. A dedicated ODOP pavilion will feature the state's distinctive crafts, giving artisans an opportunity to present their work to global delegates.



The Jamboree is expected to serve as a significant platform for showcasing traditional products such as Banarasi and silk saris, Chandauli's zari-zardozi, Lucknow's Chikankari, Agra's Petha, Ghazipur's jute

wall hangings, and Jaunpur's woolen carpets. By highlighting these crafts, the event aims to expand market opportunities and increase visibility for local artisans. Officials involved in the event said that the

**Heritage, cuisine, crafts, and youth participation to highlight state on a global platform**

Jamboree's international participation will help attendees understand the craftsmanship, skills, and traditions behind these products. According to Assistant Regional Organization Commissioner Jai Prakash Daksh, delegates will get a close look at the working process of artisans,

enhancing appreciation of their labour and artistic techniques.

Leader Trainer Scout Amitabh Pathak stated that the platform would help create stronger demand for ODOP items by connecting artisans with diverse visitors, including those from various Asia-Pacific countries. Alongside craft exhibitions, the Jamboree will offer a broad glimpse of Uttar Pradesh's food culture. Traditional dishes such as puri-kachori, jalebi, chaat, Banarasi paan, and regional sweets will introduce participants to the state's culinary diversity.



## The robbery was solved within 24 hours and all five notorious criminals were arrested in an encounter

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Tilhapur, Kaushambi.** Ever since the command of Kaushambi district fell into the hands of Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar, a sharp, determined officer who is considered a fearsome figure for criminals, no criminal can even think of crossing the district's borders. In this robbery of a goldsmith, the SP's strategy was so meticulous, swift, and effective that the criminals had no way to escape. Immediately after the incident, the SP entered into action mode. On 19-11-2025, at Binnai turn, goldsmith Anshu Soni, a resident of Bhagwatiganj, was robbed of a bag full of gold and silver jewelry at gunpoint by criminals riding a Bolero. Upon receiving information about the incident, SP Rajesh Kumar first sealed all the district's borders, then consolidated the SOG, surveillance, and police stations into a single command and personally monitored the criminals' activities, tracking them minute-by-minute. It was the SP's sharp understanding and quick decision-making that prevented the gang from crossing the border for 24 hours. The SP's master planning and search operation took away the criminals' peace of mind.



Following the SP's high-alert order, CCTV footage, technical surveillance, deployment of informants, vehicle blockades, and sealing of the border created a cordon across the district, preventing the criminals from finding a way to Chitrakoot. The SP's planning led to the criminals' capture. An informant reported that a suspicious Bolero car was roaming around Jugrajpur village. Following the SP's precise instructions, Sarai Akil Inspector-in-Charge Veer Pratap Singh, Pipri Station Head Siddharth Singh, SOG, surveillance team, and Tilhapur outpost in-charge Dilip Singh arrived at the scene in a flash. The criminals began to flee upon seeing the police, but were then surrounded by police from all sides near Damin Talari pond. Upon seeing the police, the three criminals in the Bolero vehicle opened fire and fled in different directions. However, the police bravely returned

fire, hitting all three criminals in the leg. Two were arrested in the Bolero. The police arrested all five criminals within minutes. This action is the result of the Kaushambi police's precise training, excellent teamwork, and the sharp leadership of SP Rajesh Kumar. During interrogation, all the criminals admitted that they were the ones who robbed the goldsmith in Sarai Akil. They also admitted that due to the SP's strict checking, they were unable to cross the border. Inset The team cracked down and achieved a major recovery. Tilhapur Kaushambi: The stolen goods were recovered from the criminals. The entire goods and bag, the Bolero vehicle, 3 illegal pistols, 6 live cartridges, 7 empty shells, and ₹2,230 in cash were recovered. The injured were sent to the district hospital. The field unit was called to the scene and evidence was preserved.

## Officials of the National Goldsmith Political Participation Forum met with the Superintendent of Police



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Kaushambi Goldsmith Anshu Soni,** son of Shiv Murat Soni, a resident of Bhagwatiganj in the Sarai Akil police station area, was closing his shop and heading home on November 19th at 5:00 pm. On the way, miscreants in a Bolero vehicle stopped him, assaulted him, and snatched a bag containing gold and silver at gunpoint. The bag contained approximately 4 kg of silver and 25 grams of gold. Following the robbery, the businessman reported the matter to the police station, but 24 hours have passed since the incident. The stolen gold and silver have not been recovered. Several officials, including the District President of the National Goldsmith Political

Participation Forum, Awadhesh Soni and Ashish, along with the victim's family, met with the Superintendent of Police and demanded the recovery of the stolen gold and silver and the arrest of the robbers. He said that while inflation is troubling traders, the incidents of robbery have further exacerbated their problems. He said that from the district to the country and the state, incidents of robbery should be stopped and strict action should be taken against the robbers. He demanded that the robbers who carried out the robbery be taken to the extent possible, the Superintendent of Police assured. It is said that the incident will be revealed soon and the robbery accused will be arrested.

## Phulpur MP arrives for statue unveiling in Tharwai



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

A person's personality is their true identity: MP Praveen Patel. On Wednesday, Phulpur MP Praveen Patel, the chief guest, unveiled the statue of the late Ram Kailash Mishra in Jagdishpur Pure Chanda (Chak Thakur Ram) village, located in the Tharwai/Tharwai area. On this occasion, the MP paid tribute by garlanding the statue and praised the personality and thoughts of the late Ram Kailash. According to information, the late Ram Kailash Mishra was the student president of Ishwar Sharan Degree College, Prayagraj, in 1975 and died at the young

age of 32. The event was organized by Ramashraay Mishra, who expressed his gratitude and thanked everyone who attended. On this occasion, a large number of respected local people including Sandeep Dubey, Prem Naresh Shukla, Maksudhan Pandey, Bholanath Dwivedi, Ramesh Chandra Pandey, Kamlesh Dwivedi, Santosh Mishra, Lallu Shukla, Ramnath Dwivedi, K.D. Mishra, B.D. Shukla, Kamlesh Shukla, Vijay Mishra, Vinay Pandey were present in the program of unveiling the death anniversary statue. The program was conducted by Dhananjay Shashwat and Deepu Dubey.

## Educational Tour for School Children: Enthusiasm Echoed Children Learned the Importance of Historical Sites

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Tharwai/Children** from Ismailganj Second Primary School, Soraon Block, Prayagraj District, were taken on a one-day educational excursion to Varanasi, where they visited the Buddhist Stupa, Jain Temple, Museum, Zoo, and other sites. Principal Seema Singh explained that the Buddhist Stupa is the most famous and historic site in Varanasi. It



is the place where Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon and is home to several important Buddhist monu-

ments. The children were also taken to Sarnath's Buddhist monuments, the Dhamek Stupa, the

Chaukhandi Stupa, the Ashoka Pillar, and the museum, highlighting their significance in detail. The children were taken to several historical sites in Varanasi, including the Ashoka Pillar, the museum, and the Jain Temple. The children enthusiastically observed a variety of animals and birds and learned new things about them. Teachers also provided information on the animals' behavior, diet, and envi-

ronmental significance. Headmistress Seema Singh said this is a commendable initiative to encourage enthusiasm and a spirit of learning among children. Previously, the children were taken to the Lucknow Zoo, where they saw a variety of animals and birds. Teachers Divya Tripathi, Iffat Jahan, and Manju, among others, were present on this educational tour, and the children displayed a sense of enthusiasm.

## Husband and wife digitally arrested for three days, duped of 12 lakh rupees

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Prayagraj.** Cyber fraudsters digitally arrested Rakesh Sinha and his wife by tricking them over the phone. By keeping them on video call for three consecutive days, the fraudsters defrauded them of 12.20 lakh rupees. Calls posing as TRAI and Mumbai Police officials. The victim told police that on the evening of November 14th, he received a call from an unknown number. The caller identified himself as a TRAI representative and said that several numbers linked to his Aadhaar were being sent objectionable messages. The call was then allegedly

connected to Mumbai Police Headquarters. One person identified himself as Sub-Inspector Vijay Khanna of Colaba Police Station, while the other identified himself as Additional Police Commissioner Nayak. Threatened with arrest warrants and money laundering charges. The fraudsters informed the two men that an arrest warrant was pending against them and that their names had appeared in a money laundering case. Claiming to be senior citizens, they pressured them not to leave their homes and cooperate with the "investigation." Thus, they were placed under mental

duress and placed under complete digital arrest. Fake court order canceled by sending a fake court order. On November 16th, the fraudsters sent a fake court order to their mobile phones in the name of the Supreme Court. On November 17th, citing the same order, they had all their FDs canceled and then deposited ₹12.20 lakh via RTGS into an account in Jalgaon, Maharashtra, according to the Cyber Police Station. Information has been received. They have also expedited the process of freezing the account used in the fraud by obtaining bank documents.

## A moving car caught fire on the Prayagraj-Kanpur Highway

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Prayagraj.** A major accident was averted on Thursday on the Prayagraj-Kanpur Highway when a moving car suddenly caught fire. Within seconds, the smoke emanating from the car turned into flames, engulfing the car in flames. All the occupants of the car, acting swiftly, jumped out to safety. The incident occurred near the Mariadih turn in the Bamrauli area of the Puramufti police station area, terrifying bystanders. According to eyewitnesses, the car was traveling at a normal speed on the highway when smoke suddenly began to billow from its hood. The driver stopped the car to assess the situation, but flames began to rise along with the smoke. The fire quickly spread throughout the



car. Somehow, the car occupants opened the doors, jumped out, and stood at a safe distance on the roadside. Meanwhile, a passerby captured a video of the burning car and shared it on social media, which is rapidly going viral. The video shows several people standing on the side of the highway, recording the burning car with their mobile phones. Almost the entire car was engulfed in flames, while bystanders were seen filming instead of helping. A fire brigade team arrived at the scene upon receiving

information about the incident, but by then the car had been almost completely engulfed in flames. Police stated that preliminary investigations suggest a short circuit may have caused the fire, although the exact cause will only be clear after a technical investigation. No one was injured in the incident, but the fire in a moving car has become a topic of discussion. Police have spoken with the car owner and initiated further action. Traffic on the highway was briefly disrupted, but later returned to normal.

## Inauguration Ceremony of the “Assistant Fashion Designer” Training Program 2025

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Meja.** 20 November 2025 — Promoting skill development under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the “Assistant Fashion Designer” Training Program – 2025 was launched for women and young girls from rural areas by Aparajita Mahila Samaj (AMS) in collaboration with CRISP Bhopal. Under this program, a total of 20 women and young girls will receive training. This initiative is an important step toward providing rural women opportunities for self-employment, self-reliance, and economic empowerment. The inauguration ceremony was graced by the chief guest, Shrimati Krishna Chattopadhyay, President, Aparajita Mahila Samaj, along with other esteemed members and the MUNPL CSR team, who jointly



inaugurated the program. During the event, CRISP representatives shared detailed information about the training structure, modules, and skill-based curriculum. Shrimati Krishna Chattopadhyay said, “Skill-based training empowers rural women to become self-reliant while strengthening local employment opportunities. Skills like

fashion designing provide new livelihood avenues and help women become socially and economically empowered.” She informed that the three-month training will provide both practical and theoretical knowledge related to cutting-stitching, designing, embroidery, market linkages, and entrepreneurship development. The partici-

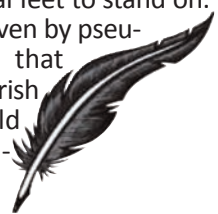
pants present at the inauguration expressed that such vocational training will open new employment opportunities for them and enable them to contribute positively to their families and society. This program is a significant initiative towards realizing the vision of ‘Skilled India – Prosperous India’ in rural regions.



## Editorial

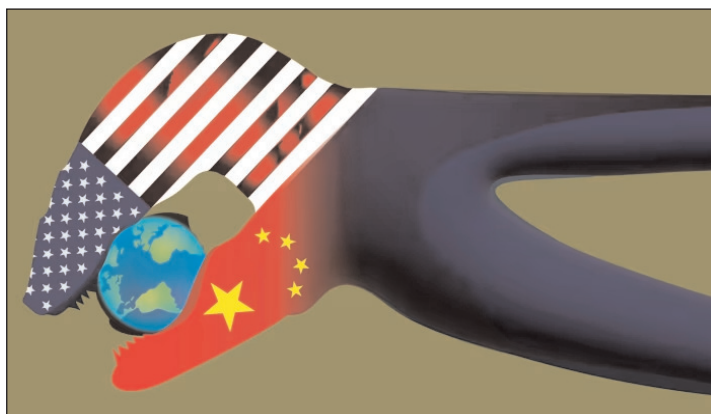
### Halal certification is turning into a scam. It's creating a Muslim-only economy

**Halal** is the latest Islamic fad. The internet is buzzing with content on Halal living, Halal dating, and even Halal sex. Halal certification is a booming global industry created by New Islam. A religion that has so far been proudly political is becoming brazenly commercial too. And why not, when catchphrases like "Islam is the complete way of life"—making detailed prescriptions for politics, economy, and every imaginable aspect of life—go unchallenged? In an ongoing Supreme Court case, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that while nobody had any objection to Halal certification for meat, nowadays even cement, iron rods, and bottled water were being certified as Halal. Since such certification comes at a cost—charged by private agencies in the Halal certification business—even customers who have no interest in such labels are being made to pay higher prices for the commodities thus certified. Halal certification preys on the naïveté of the newly prosperous Muslim masses. The Indian economy has been steadily growing, and Muslims have shared in this prosperity as much as anyone else. But this upward mobility has to be matched by enhanced self-esteem and social respectability, which, for a Muslim, still comes through overt piety and demonstrative religiosity. The Halal industry sows such fervour and reaps a good harvest from it. In the process, not entirely unwittingly, it also fosters a narrow and rigid religious attitude among Muslims—one that leads, inevitably, to radicalisation. The growth of the Indian economy has placed unprecedented purchasing power in Muslim hands too. And though the Halal certification business is aimed at tapping into the vast and growing Muslim market, it is bound to have some insidious and unforeseen consequences. For one, it will result in economic separatism, creating a Muslim-only parallel economy. In effect, it will lead to the systemic economic boycott of other communities. Stray calls to boycott Muslim street vendors, which keep circulating on social media, are a red herring compared to the harm the Halal market is insinuating into the political economy. Its normalisation and mainstreaming will have far-reaching consequences for inter-community relations—even greater than what Muslim Personal Law or vote bank politics have had so far. If a non-Muslim were to buy and sell in the Halal market, he would have to comply with the terms prescribed by Sharia, as interpreted by the agents of Halal certification. In such a market, they would be second-class citizens. Dhimmis. We would have the economic version of an Islamic state. Having suffered from the Two-Nation Theory, are we now sleepwalking into a Two-Economy reality? The path is nearly charted as a parallel economy develops around Islamic banking, Halal stocks, Halal mutual funds, Halal investments, and Halal travels. This trend will eventually lead to demands for the Halal certification of India itself as a country fit for Muslims. Then for the Constitution as a document that doesn't conflict with Sharia. And, as has already been happening informally, Halal certification for political parties—determining whether it is right for a Muslim to vote for some of them. One wonders, why should the religious lens be used to look at everything from iron rods and cement to electric wires and batteries? How will someone who looks at iron and cement through an Islamic filter see people of other religions? An outlook like this, even if genuinely Islamic, would have no place in the modern world. But as I will show in the latter part of this article, this isn't even Islamic. It has no precedence in history or theological feet to stand on. It's pop Islam—faux piety, driven by pseudo-Islamic power theology that seeks to paint the world in garish green. It divides the world between Islamic and non-Islamic and posits .



## Deep State similar to the Great Game? Whether or not it exists, it operates in all countries

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' of one country is connected with others through the dark web or entrenched corporate interests remains unclear, as the discourse is more ideological than empirical. Sometimes, those who claim to be part of the deep state ascribe to themselves a larger-than-life role in state affairs—for example, AS Dulat and Asad Durrani in their 2018 book *The Spy Chronicles: RAW, ISI and the Illusion of Peace*. Their claim to be arbiters of one of the most tense and difficult relationships in the region has been widely critiqued by reviewers. The term first gained wide currency in the context of Türkiye as *derin devlet*, which literally translates to "deep state" in English. In Türkiye, it refers to a non-elected military elite dominating elected governments, especially when they attempt to dismantle the secular foundations of the Republic, established by Mustafa Kemal Pasha after the abolition of the caliphate in 1923. In Pakistan, "deep state" refers to a government controlled by powerful military leaders, as documented by Stephen Cohen in *The Idea of Pakistan* and Ishtiaq Ahmed in *Pakistan: The Garrison State*. Elected governments in Pakistan have rarely exercised real control over defense and foreign policy. In the US, Democrats and Republicans accuse each other of control-



ling the 'deep state.' Democrats claim the pro-Republican arms lobby and military-industrial complex constitute the deep state, while Republicans argue that Ivy League universities promote 'wokeism' and diversity, equity, and inclusion narratives that, according to Donald Trump, undermine America's greatness. Trump has accused the deep state within the Democratic regime of election interference, citing the Freedom Medal awarded to George Soros as evidence. However, skeptics argue that if the deep state were so powerful, how could Daksh Patel dismantle it simply by firing 'interns and associates' whose tenure is co-terminus with that of President Biden? Ultimately, the deep state serves as a convenient scapegoat for anything that goes wrong or for political parties losing popular support. If Republicans and Democrats are battling it out in Washington, India faces a similar scenario, with Left liberals and Right nationalists accusing each other of leveraging the 'deep state' to gain or retain power. Publications like *The Caravan* and

*Organiser Weekly* lead these respective narratives. Left liberals claim the RSS is India's deep state, while Right nationalists accuse the Ford Foundation and George Soros' Open Society Foundations of attempting to discredit the democratically elected Modi government. Left liberals find support in the speeches of Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, while Right nationalists, led by Vice President Dhankhar, minister Kiren Rijiju, and BJP spokespersons like Sambit Patra, vehemently counter these claims. In a pre-budget article for *The Indian Express*, economist Surjit Bhalla, a former member of the PM's Economic Advisory Council, alleged that India's deep state comprises "major industrialists, senior IAS babus, and their friendly influencers in the media", slowing down economic growth. This claim was firmly repudiated, point by point, by Vivek Kaul in *Newslandry*, who questioned the logic behind such allegations. Kaul argued that neither the IAS, corporates, nor the media benefit from economic deceleration. Instead, he

pointed out that the real cause of economic slowdown is the compulsion of all political parties—BJP, Congress, and AAP—to allocate budgetary resources to freebies rather than long-term investments in social and physical infrastructure, which are crucial for sustained economic growth. Journalist Josy Joseph, in his book *The Silent Coup: A History of India's Deep State*, argues that the deep state is actually led by the IPS. He claims that in the name of combating terrorism in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and the Northeast, as well as 'Left-wing extremism' (LWE) in Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, and Andhra Pradesh, the triumvirate of the NIA, CBI, and ED have consolidated unchecked power, with neither the legislature nor the judiciary exercising adequate oversight. He documents human rights violations of individuals caught in the crosshairs of state action. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Steve Coll offers another perspective, alleging that India's deep state mainly comprises serving and retired IFS officials. However, if the IAS, IPS, and IFS were truly dominant, why would they have allowed the creation of the Department of Military Affairs under the Chief of Defence Staff, effectively relegating the Defence Secretary (an IAS officer) to a largely ceremonial role? A completely contrarian view is presented by Sandhya Ravishankar, news editor at Profit. She argues that global NGOs and foreign funding

agencies have attempted to damage India's international reputation by supporting anti-CAA protests and farmers' agitations against the farm laws. Quoting the French publication *Médiapart*, she alleges that the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) received \$47 million from the US Deep State to produce investigative reports targeting governments opposed by Washington—a charge firmly denied by the US Embassy in New Delhi. She lists organisations such as the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (led by Maja Daruwala, daughter of the legendary Sam Manekshaw), the Indian Police Foundation (chaired by celebrated police officer Prakash Singh), the Centre for Policy Research (affiliated with Yamini Aiyar and Pratap Bhanu Mehta), and the National Foundation of India as key actors producing reports that allegedly undermine India's prestige on the global stage. She describes this phenomenon as the 'weaponisation of soft power.' **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.

## New allocations towards augmentation of power distribution

**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 con-

cerned, 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.

## Tax cuts won't fix low growth. Govt must look beyond fiscal policy

**The Modi** government's main move in the Union Budget 2025 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 showdown, 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. These tactics also allowed the government to introduce new cash transfer schemes such as PM KISAN and increase allocations to existing schemes. In 2019, in an effort to stimulate investment, the government announced major tax breaks for corporates, especially in manufacturing. At the time, corporate tax collection had been growing rapidly while other taxes were struggling to deliver the budgeted increase. The tax cut led to a sharp reduction in the corporate tax to GDP ratio in the subsequent years. As the pandemic hit, fiscal policy became even more central. The pandemic allowed the government to suspend its concern for deficits and bring the off-budget expenditure to the Budget in 2020-21. For a few years, revenue expenditure as a percentage of GDP was higher than its pre-pandemic levels. Among other things, this allowed the government to increase subsidies and cash transfers, and introduce production-linked incentives for manufacturing in India. 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.

## Why Syrians Are Between A Rock And A Hard Place

**The** replacement of the much-reviled Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria by a so-called "rebel force" that is actually just an Islamist offshoot of al-Qaeda and ISIS—which, remember, was headquartered in the Syrian city of Raqqa from 2014 to 2017—once again underlines how the turbulent history of that region is painted in countless shades of grey. As if the ongoing war between Israel and the equally Islamist Hamas left you in any doubt about that, of course. The Assads had ruled Syria with a mix of fear and murderous brutality for over 50 years. But that family, their Ba'ath Party and that general cohort were not religious fanatics. In fact,

they professed the sort of secular socialism which evolved into the crony socialism-cum-authoritarianism seen in many countries ruled by similarly inclined people and parties. Even India and the Congress Party of the mid-1970s were not unlike Syria during that same period. The difference, of course, is that the Emergency in India marked the apogee and also the end of authoritarianism. India never degenerated into a single-party rule—which appears to be the main cause of the rise of the Islamist factions all over West Asia today. Ironically, authoritarian secularism (and in Syria's case, also minority rule by the Shia Alawite tribe of the Assads) has

led to the ascent of doctrinaire Sunni Islam and power being captured by its adherents. As the news channels broke the news of the fall of Assad's government in Syria, I saw London's Oxford Street become an impromptu victory procession of cars with young men honking, shouting and hanging out of windows brandishing their homeland's distinctive opposition flag. It continued for well over an hour without any of London's uniformed finest visible. Maybe the Metropolitan Police were just relieved it was not yet another fraught pro-Gaza demonstration. But having lived in Syria during the regime of this just-ousted socialist dic-

tator's father, I had mixed feelings. How would those fashionably puffer-jacket-clad Syrians cheering in London fare under the country's new rulers whose roots are in the Salafijihadist school although they profess to have "moved" to a more accommodating position? Do Syrians not know what's happening in Afghanistan, whose Taliban rulers mouthed similar lines and then recanted? When my father was India's ambassador to Syria, the then President Hafez al-Assad ordered the Hama massacre in 1982, triggered by a long-brewing uprising in that city 200km north of Damascus by the Muslim Brotherhood.



## Khadi Mahotsav to kick off on November 21, exhibition runs until November 30



### Lucknow

The ten-day Khadi Mahotsav 2025 will be held at Central Sanskrit University, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow, aiming to promote local entrepreneurship, open new markets for traditional arts and khadi-based industries and boost rural self-reliance. Scheduled from November 21 to November 30 the festival will celebrate the rich heritage of khadi, village industries, handicrafts and local art, providing them a prominent platform for wider recognition. The event will be inaugurated by Rakesh Sachan, Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Khadi and Village Industries, Sericulture, Handloom and

Textiles. More than 160 entrepreneurs and units from different districts of the state will display and sell their products. The exhibition will feature carved wooden furniture from Saharanpur, carpets from Bhadohi, gamchas and sadri from Amroha, durries and towels from Sitapur, Banarasi silk sarees, amla products from Pratapgarh, royal honey from Lucknow, clay craft, Bikaneri papad, leather goods, traditional jackets, garments and a wide range of indigenous products. During the Mahotsav, selected entrepreneurs and beneficiaries will also be honoured. State-level outstanding units will receive awards and 05 beneficiaries will be provided dona-making machines, 05

will receive popcorn machines, 05 honey boxes, 04 will receive electric-operated potters wheels, and 01 beneficiary will receive a pugmill. This initiative aims to provide better resources, modern equipment and growth opportunities for rural enterprises in the state. Aligned with the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Khadi Mahotsav 2025 is not only a platform to encourage rural industries but also an important step towards promoting indigenous products, empowering artisans and reinforcing the local economy. The event will pave the way for innovation, business expansion and new opportunities for entrepreneurs across the state.

## A.K. Sharma held a review meeting with officials of the Urban Development Department

### Lucknow

Urban Development and Energy Minister A.K Sharma held a review meeting with officials of the Urban Development Department at Circuit House, Varanasi. The meeting included detailed discussions on ongoing sanitation work, drinking water supply, drainage systems and the progress of various urban projects of the Municipal Corporation. The Minister said that Varanasi is a global religious and cultural city: therefore, its civic system must be ideal and exemplary. Emphasizing sanitation, the Minister instructed that cleanliness standards in every ward must meet the highest benchmarks.

He said that special attention should be given to roadside waste collection, door-to-door collection, regular cleaning of drains, waste disposal and the condition of garbage collection points. He also emphasized running special campaigns to increase public awareness about cleanliness. While reviewing drinking water supply, he directed officials to regularly monitor leakage repair, pipeline maintenance, cleaning of overhead tanks and the functioning of tube wells. He stressed that there should be



no disruption in drinking water supply. Regarding drainage, the Minister said that all drains must be thoroughly cleaned, pumping stations repaired, clogged lines identified and permanent solutions developed for waterlogging-prone areas. He directed that waterlogging must not occur under any circumstances and if any complaint arises, officials must immediately reach the spot and resolve it. Speaking on public welfare works A.K Sharma issued a stern warning that any negligence or indifference in resolving public issues will not be tolerated. He said transparency, accountability and timeliness are essential in departmental functioning. All officials must remain active in the field to ensure improvement in urban services. The Additional Municipal Commissioner, Assistant Municipal Commissioner and other concerned officials were present on this occasion.

## YOUNG NUMISMATIST FROM BHU SELECTED FOR PRESTIGIOUS INSA AWARD

### aranasi

In a significant recognition of excellence in scientific research, Dr. Amit Kumar Upadhyay, Senior Assistant Professor at the Centre of Advanced Study, Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology, Faculty of Arts, has been selected for the prestigious INSA Historian Scientist Young Associate Award for 2025. The much coveted award is presented to a scholar under the age of 40 years for exceptional contribution to scientific research. Dr. Upadhyay is widely regarded for his pioneering work of computational numismatics in India, introducing artificial intelligence, digital image processing and machine learning into the study of ancient coinage. His research has addressed longstanding challenges such as fragmented coin catalogues, manual limitations of traditional methods and difficulties in identifying ancient forgeries. In addition to computational work, Dr. Upadhyay has significantly advanced scientific numismatics through the use of modern spectroscopic techniques. His investigations into early Indian Punch-Marked Coins (600–200 BCE) have revealed crucial insights into alloying technologies, economic conditions reflected in declining silver content and the technological evolution of minting practices. His recent publications and communicated papers in high-impact journals have drawn attention to the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in numismatic research, combining archaeology, materials science, physics and computational analysis. The award carries a monthly fellowship of ₹10,000 for one year along with a one-time international travel grant to support participation in global scientific conferences. The Indian National Science Academy (INSA) President, Prof. Ashutosh Sharma, who commended Dr. Upadhyay exceptional potential and his leadership in emerging research domains. Dr. Upadhyay presented his research at INSA under the theme “Future Prospects of Numismatic Research: Emerging Trends and Methodologies,” where he highlighted the global developments in automated coin analysis and the need for comprehensive digital corpora of Indian coins.



## Brothers and sisters who delivered speeches on the birth anniversaries of Rani Lakshmibai and revered Bhaurao Deoras were awarded

### Akhand Bharat Sandesh

#### Prayagraj

Acharya Ujjwal delivered a special lecture on the birth anniversaries of the brave Rani Lakshmibai and revered Bhaurao Deoras at Saraswati Vidya Mandir Inter College, Sarvodaya Nagar, on Wednesday. He introduced the brothers and sisters to the history of Rani Lakshmibai's valor and courage and her heroic struggle against the British. Among the brothers and sisters who shared their views on the birth anniversary, Riddhika Verma, a Class V student, received first place, Utkarsh



Srivastava, a Class VI student, received third place, and Bhaskar Shukla, a Class VIII student, received second place. The school's brothers and sisters presented songs and their own poems about Rani Lakshmibai's bravery. The brothers and sisters who participated in Thursday's program were honored with certificates

and awards from the Indian Cultural Council and the Vidvat Parishad. The guest of this program, Satish Kumar Gupta, President of Bharatiya Sanskritik Parishad and member of Vidvat Parishad, awarded the brothers and sisters and threw light on the dedicated contribution of the great hero revered Bhaurao Deoras ji, who gave

the shape of a famous banyan tree by sowing the seeds of education and culture, in the independence of India and cultural education. The Principal of the college, Suresh Chandra Tiwari, informed the brothers and sisters about the history of Rani Lakshmibai who fought bravely against the British with valor and courage to attain freedom and attained martyrdom. The program was conducted by Managing Acharya Vijay Abhinandan Mishra and the Principal expressed his gratitude. All the brothers and sisters and Acharyas and Acharyas were present on this occasion.

## Violent Clash Between Two Groups in Chaman Nagariya: Police Team Attacked, Six Detained

### Etah

A dispute between two groups in Chaman Nagariya village, located on Mainpuri Road under Aliganj police station area, escalated sharply on Tuesday morning. The incident occurred around 8 a.m. when Dial-112 received a call reporting a physical altercation. Acting promptly, PRV-5586 reached the location. Upon arrival, Constable Pankaj and driver Premal attempted to pacify both sides. However, the situation worsened as the agitated individuals became more aggressive. Members from both groups began pelting stones and bricks at each other houses, causing damage to windows, doors and several motorcycles. As the



police team tried to control the situation, the mob turned violent and attacked the officers. PRV driver Premal and Constable Pankaj sustained injuries and the PRV vehicle was also damaged in the assault. The team immediately informed the police station. Following the alert, the Circle Officer of Aliganj, along with Aliganj police and reinforcements from neighbouring stations, rushed to the spot. The police managed to bring the situation under control and restore

order. Six individuals involved in the violence have been identified and detained. According to the Aliganj Station House Officer, cases have been registered against the accused and legal proceedings are underway. The injured police personnel have been sent to the Aliganj Community Health Centre for treatment. Police have urged residents to maintain peace. Additional force has been deployed in the area, and the situation is currently under control.

## Innovation in education is strengthening the path of a Viksit Uttar Pradesh

### Lucknow

With the goal of establishing Uttar Pradesh as a developed state by the year 2047, a state-level conference titled “Innovation in Education, the Foundation of Progress- Viksit Uttar Pradesh @2047” was organized on Thursday at Yojana Bhawan. The conference included deep discussions on the future of Uttar Pradesh education system, capacity building for teachers, the use of new technologies, improving foundational learning outcomes and the role of UP in the vision of Viskit Bharat 2047. It was also highlighted that recent reforms in the state education system are now showing solid impact on the ground, whether through smart classrooms, e-learning resources or digital



facilities for teacher training. Additional Chief Secretary Parthasarathi Sen Sharma said that to fulfill the dream of a developed Uttar Pradesh, education must be reorganized on the basis of transparency, quality, equal opportunity and innovation. He said that teacher training, global-level teaching methods and improving core learning outcomes are the main pillars of the education reform journey. Director General of School Education Monika Rani said that this is an era where technological interven-

tions, digital content, skill-based teaching and international exposure have become essential elements of the education system. She said that if this pace of innovation continues, UP will become the country leading education model in the coming years. Advisor to the UP Chief Minister Awanish Awasthi and Education Advisor Prof.D.P Singh said in one voice that the youth power of Uttar Pradesh is the core energy of Viksit Bharat 2047 and without quality education this goal cannot be achieved.

## Core Committee meeting chaired by Urban Development & Energy Minister A.K Sharma concludes at Inspection House

### Lucknow

A core committee meeting was held today at the Inspection House, Gyanpur under the chairmanship of Urban Development and Energy Minister and in charge Minister of Bhadohi district A.K Sharma. The key issues of the district were reviewed during the meeting.

Minister Sharma stated that the government is committed to carrying forward public welfare works in a timely, high-quality and transparent manner. Officials from various departments including district administration, urban development, energy, public works, health, rural development, social welfare, drinking water, irrigation and others presented details of their current status, progress and challenges. Discussing all major points, Minister Sharma directed that schemes directly related to public



convenience and regional development should be completed on a priority basis and at an accelerated pace. He further said that any unnecessary delay or negligence in development works will not be tolerated. He instructed officials to ensure regular monitoring of on-ground progress, field visits and prompt resolution of issues through public engagement.

The In-charge Minister held focused discussions on the progress of various initiatives of the Energy Department, drinking water supply, road construction, urban amenities, electricity distribution, healthcare services, social security, and welfare schemes. He said that the government's priority is to pro-

vide better facilities to the general public, therefore, every department must adopt a result-oriented working approach. He instructed officials to promptly address obstacles in ongoing projects and strengthen inter-departmental coordination to ensure timely completion of all works. The meeting was attended by District Panchayat Chairman Aniruddha Tripathi, MLA from Aurai Dinanath Bhaskar, former MLA Ravindra Tripathi, District President Deepak Mishra, District Magistrate Shailesh Kumar, Superintendent of Police Dr. Abhimanyu Mangalik, Chief Medical Officer, Additional District Magistrate and other key officials.

## Vidya Bharati National Science Festival 2025: Remarkable Achievement for the Purvottar Kshetra

### Assam

The 23rd National Science Festival, organised by Vidya Bharati Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Sansthan, was held from 13 to 16 November at Balram Brazbhushan

Saraswati Shishu Mandir Higher Secondary School, Meerut. According to Mukuteswar Goswami, Prachar Pramukh of Shishu Shiksha Samiti Assam, who briefed the media at the Prashant Path office on Zoo Road, Guwahati, a total of 20 students from the Purvottar Kshetra participated in this national-level science event. Among them, Prachurya Sharma, a student of Shankardev Shishu Vidya Niketan, Beltola, secured the First Prize for his project titled “Model Based on Control of Water Pollution.” His achievement brought pride to the Purvottar Kshetra, Shishu Shiksha Samiti Assam and the Vidya Niketan. The team was guided by Tapan Sharma, Kshetriya Vigyan Pramukh and Bhaskar Das, Prantya Vigyan Pramukh. Vidya Bharati Purvottar Kshetra Sangathan Mantri Dr. Pawan Tiwari, General Secretary Dr. Jagadindra Roy Choudhury, Shishu Shiksha Samiti Assam President Kulendra Kumar Bhagawati and General Secretary Jagannath Rajbongshi congratulated the winning student and extended their best wishes for his bright future.





## Jaideep Ahlawat's dark new turn

Actor Jaideep Ahlawat enters *The Family Man* Season 3 as a chilling new antagonist, raising the stakes for Srikant Tiwari's toughest mission yet

**A**ctor Jaideep Ahlawat is set to enter *The Family Man* Season 3 as Rukma, a cold and complex rival to Manoj Bajpayee's Srikant Tiwari. The news has heightened anticipation for the upcoming season of the hit spy franchise, which premieres globally on Prime Video on November 21.

Ahlawat revealed that his journey into the series began with a phone call from creators Raj and DK. "DK sir called me saying they're trying to make this season even bigger than the first two. The story was extremely interesting, and it was an instant 'yes' for me," he said, adding that working alongside Manoj Bajpayee made the decision even easier.

Speaking about his character, Ahlawat said Rukma evolved far beyond what he first imagined. Raj and DK had a clear vision for the unsettling figure, who appears detached and almost inhuman but carries deeper layers. "Srikant can be labelled the socially accepted *Family Man*, whereas Rukma is quite the opposite. He is an unacceptable *Family Man*," he explained.

Season 3 takes the story to the Northeast, raising the stakes with tougher terrain, heightened tension, and returning favourites like Sharib Hashmi and Priyamani. With Rukma's entry, the new chapter promises one of the franchise's most gripping confrontations yet.

## Kriti praises Dhanush's craft

Kriti praises Dhanush's talent and collaborative spirit, sharing how their on-screen chemistry created memorable moments in *Tere Ishk Mein*

**B**ollywood actress Kriti Sanon has opened up about working with star Dhanush in the upcoming film *Tere Ishk Mein* and said that she has always been an admirer of his craft. Kriti opened up about her dynamic working experience with Dhanush, revealing the strong creative bond that shaped many of the film's unforgettable moments.

She said: "I think Dhanush is an incredible actor, I have always been an admirer of his talent and his craft. I feel he has a very strong hold on his craft. He's very nuanced; he also directed a lot of films, and comes from a lot of experience and understanding of scenes and how it will translate on the screen."

Kriti added: He really brings out a lot of layers in his character and I was very excited to work with him. I knew I'm going to have an actor who I can really feed off from, that is exactly what happened. And we had not met before, and even Shankar and Mukti in the film at one point had not met before, so that worked out!"

Talking further about their on-screen dynamic and the process of creating powerful performances, Kriti said: "We have some really intense scenes, a lot of really long scenes that can, you know, translate when both of us feed off each other. He's really collaborative as an actor and really helpful." "I think together we have created some magical moments and felt it when the scene happened. Both of us would look at each other and we were like, 'That was a good scene!' I have really enjoyed working with him and I hope we do a lot more work in the future." *Tere Ishk Mein* will be released in cinemas on November 28 in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

## Sonu Sood steps in heroically

Actor Sonu Sood pledges to fund education of 10-month-old orphaned son in Bhojpur, offering hope amid family tragedy

**I**n a heartbreaking incident in Bihar's Bhojpur district, actor Sonu Sood has once again emerged as a real-life hero, extending hope to a family struck by violence. Nikki Devi, a mother from Dullamchak village, was tragically shot dead during poll-related unrest on November 6, leaving behind her 10-month-old son.

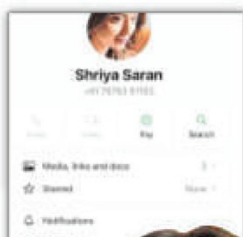
The child's father, Rohit Rai, overwhelmed by grief, expressed his despair and helplessness, stating that he could not imagine securing his son's future alone.

Moved by the story, Sonu Sood pledged through the Sood Charity Foundation to support the child's education from kindergarten through post-

graduate studies. The case was brought to Sood's attention by Ashutosh Kumar, national president of the Bhumi-har-Brahmin Ekta Manch Foundation, via a video call.

Kumar later shared online that Sood had been deeply touched and emotionally committed to taking full responsibility for the child's education, offering the grieving family a sense of relief and security amid their tragedy.

As authorities investigate the incident and the family seeks justice, Sonu Sood's timely intervention ensures that the child's future is protected. Once again, Sood demonstrates that true heroism lies not just on screen, but in compassion, courage, and the resolve to help those in desperate need.



## Fake WhatsApp profile alert

Actress Shriya Saran warns fans about a WhatsApp impersonator using her photos and number, urging them to stop contacting industry professionals

**A**ctress Shriya Saran has warned her fans that someone is impersonating her on WhatsApp using the number 7676361162, sharing her photos and contacting industry people while pretending to be her, even claiming that she is eager to work with them. The actress described the behavior as "weird" and asked

the impersonator to stop "wasting time."

Taking to her Instagram handle on Wednesday, Shriya shared the fake profile of the impersonator and wrote: "Whoever this idiot is, please stop writing to people and wasting time! Unfortunately, this is weird. I feel bad for wasting people's time. This is not me! Not my number!"

She also mentioned a silver lining, noting that the impersonator was contacting people she admired. Shriya added, "On a lighter note, the only good thing is, this crappy person is reaching out to people I admire and would love to work with!" "Very strange! Why would you waste your time to do this? Go get a life, not be someone's impersonator," concluded Shriya.



## Pankaj Tripathi turns producer

National Award-winning actor Pankaj Tripathi turns producer with *Perfect Family*, a dramedy exploring therapy stigma, premiering November 27 on YouTube

**N**ational Award-winning actor Pankaj Tripathi is turning producer with *Perfect Family*, an eight-episode dramedy that will launch directly on YouTube under a structured pay model. Produced by Ajay Rai of JAR Pictures and Mohit Chhabra, and created by Palak Bhambri, the show will premiere on November 27 on the JAR Series YouTube channel, a press release said.

According to makers, *Perfect Family* is positioned as a significant experiment in India's evolving digital ecosystem. While the first two episodes will remain permanently free to watch, viewers can access the remaining episodes through a one-time payment of Rs 59.

Directed by Sachin Pathak, the series features Gulshan Devaiah, Neha Dhupia, Manoj Pahwa, Seema Pahwa, Girija Oak and others. The dramedy revolves around a seemingly typical but "not-so-perfect" family compelled to attend therapy after an incident involving their young daughter, exploring the stigma around therapy in India through humour.

Tripathi said turning producer for the first time with a project that challenges traditional release formats felt "refreshing and essential".

"*Perfect Family* is incredibly close to my heart, not just for its story but also for the bold distribution path we're choosing. Platforms like YouTube have evolved into strong spaces for premium long-format content. Sachin has approached a sensitive topic with such empathy that families everywhere will see a part of themselves in this show," he added.

Rai said JAR Pictures has always aimed to push the boundaries of storytelling and distribution. "The YouTube pay model unlocks an entirely new frontier for Indian creators. With a cast of this calibre and Pankaj stepping into production for the first time, *Perfect Family* felt like the right project to help define this new space," he said.



## Rasha to make Telugu debut with AB4

**A**ctor Rasha Thadani is set to make her Telugu cinema debut with Ajay Bhupathi's upcoming film, tentatively titled *AB4*. Rasha is the daughter of Bollywood star Raveena Tandon and film distributor Anil Thadani. She made her acting debut in January with Abhishek Kapoor's directorial *Azaad*. The 20-year-old actor shared the news with a post on her In-

stagram handle on Tuesday.

The film will feature Rasha alongside Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni, who is making his acting debut with the film.

Presented by Ashwin Dutt, the film is backed by Gemini Kiran under the banner of Chandamama Kathalu Pictures.

Rasha said she is excited to start her "new journey" and thanked the film's team for taking her on board.

"New beginnings, endless gratitude! *Mee andari prematho*, I'm stepping into Telugu cinema," she wrote.

Besides *AB4*, Rasha will also feature in *Laikey Laikaa* alongside *Munjya* fame Abhay Verma. Saurabh Gupta is directing the film.





## PAK VS INDIA & AFGHANISTAN: Pakistan's defence minister Khwaja Asif accuses India of fueling Afghan proxy war, says ready for two-front war

# PAKISTAN READY FOR 'FINAL ROUND'

ISLAMABAD

Growing tensions between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India have intensified following a fresh round of sharp statements from Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif. The exchange comes after a series of violent incidents this year, including a devastating car explosion in New Delhi on November 10 that killed 15 people — the second major attack in India after the earlier strike in Pahalgam.

Asif, who has increasingly adopted a confrontational tone, recently declared that Pakistan is prepared to face simultaneous threats.

His remarks come amid heightened tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Last month, heavy cross-

border clashes between Pakistani forces and the Taliban left multiple casualties on both sides. A ceasefire was reached on October 19 after Turkey and Qatar intervened to defuse the crisis.

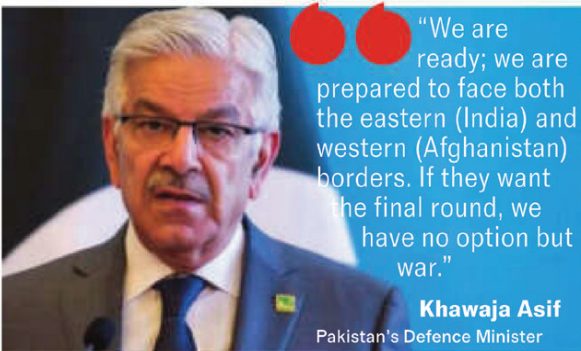
The conflict began after Islamabad demanded that the Taliban crack down on militants allegedly operating from Afghan soil. Pakistan later carried out airstrikes inside Afghanistan, prompting fierce Taliban retaliation and further bloodshed. The Taliban denied Pakistan's allegations, insisting that Afghan territory "is not being used to attack Pakistan" and that the Islamic Emirate "does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries."

Against this backdrop, Asif has accused India of fuelling instability from behind the

scenes. Pakistani media quoted him as saying that India was influencing the Taliban's decisions and pushing Afghanistan into a proxy war against Pakistan. Speaking to Geo News, he said, "I have my doubts that the ceasefire will hold, because the decisions of the Taliban are being sponsored by Delhi. Right now, Kabul is fighting a proxy war for Delhi."

### PoK leader claims role in Red Fort blast

Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated sharply after former Pakistan-occupied Kashmir "prime minister" Chaudhary Anwarul Haq openly claimed Islamabad's hand in the November 10 Red Fort car bombing that killed 15 people. Addressing the PoK Assembly, Haq boasted that Pakistan had "struck Delhi" in retaliation for alleged Indian actions in Balochistan remarks New Delhi is expected to take seriously as cross-border hostilities rise. Islamabad has not officially endorsed the claim, but Defence Minister Khawaja Asif warned that Pakistan "cannot rule out all-out war," placing security forces on full alert. Meanwhile, investigators have linked the Hyundai i20 used in the blast—and the terror cell behind it—to the Jaish-e-Mohammed.



**Khawaja Asif**  
Pakistan's Defence Minister

## 25 killed, 73 injured in massive Russian strikes on Ternopil

KYIV

At least 25 people were killed, including three children, and 73 others were injured after Russian forces carried out heavy shelling on the western Ukrainian city of Ternopil, Ukraine's Ministry of Internal Affairs stated on Wednesday.

According to the ministry, at least 45 units of equipment, including robotic systems, were deployed to work through the rubble searching for survivors.

"Ternopil. 25 killed as a result of the Russian shelling of the city. Among the dead are 3 children. 73 people were injured. Emergency response units of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine and the National Police of Ukraine are working at the scene. 45 units of equipment have been

### Zelenskyy says Russia launched more than 470 attack drones and 48 missiles of various types

deployed, including robotic ones," the Ministry of Internal Affairs said in a post on X.

The shelling took place overnight on Wednesday, with residential areas being hit, sparking fires in nine-storey apartment buildings and causing severe destruction.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy confirmed that Russia launched more than 470 attack drones and 48 missiles of various types—one ballistic and the rest cruise missiles—during widespread overnight strikes across multiple regions. He

said Ternopil was among the hardest hit, with "significant destruction" reported.

"Across many of our regions, work is underway to address the aftermath of Russia's attack. It is confirmed that Russia launched more than 470 attack drones and 48 missiles of various types against Ukraine overnight - one ballistic and the rest cruise missiles. In Ternopil, residential nine-storey buildings were hit, causing fires. Unfortunately, there is significant destruction, and there may be people trapped under the rubble. All necessary emergency services are on the ground, trying to save every life," Zelenskyy said in a post on X.

"Every brazen attack against ordinary life indicates that the pressure on Russia (to stop the war) is insufficient," Zelenskyy wrote on the messaging app Telegram.

## Trump designates Saudi Arabia a major non-NATO ally



WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday designated Saudi Arabia a major non-NATO ally. He also dismissed US intelligence findings that Mohammed bin Salman likely had some culpability in the 2018 killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi. He brushed aside questions about Saudi Arabia's human rights record and praised the prince for his statesmanship. The crown prince for his part announced Saudi Arabia was increasing its planned investments in the US to \$1 trillion, up from \$600 billion. Trump had previewed his decision to sell F-35s on Sunday but formalised it on Tuesday.

The White House rolled out plenty of pomp for the Saudi royal on Tuesday, dispatching fighter jets that the two leaders watched from an honor guard on horseback and preparing to give a lavish dinner in the East Room.

"We have a extremely respected man in the Oval Office today," Trump said at the top of meeting, calling the prince "a friend of mine for a very long time." Trump also castigated his predecessor, former President Joe Biden, for greeting Prince Mohammed with a fist bump during his 2022 visit to Saudi Arabia.

Trump is tightening his embrace of the 40-year-old crown prince, who he said is an indispensable player in shaping the Middle East in

the decades to come. Trump in his defense of the crown prince derided Khashoggi as "extremely controversial" and said "a lot of people didn't like that gentleman." Prince Mohammed denies involvement in the killing of Khashoggi, who was a Saudi citizen and Virginia resident.

"Whether you like him or didn't like him, things happen," Trump said of the international incident when asked about it by a reporter during an Oval Office appearance with Prince Mohammed. "But (Prince Mohammed) knew nothing about it. And we can leave it at that. You don't have to embarrass our guest by asking a question like that."

But US intelligence officials determined that the Saudi crown prince likely approved the killing by Saudi agents of US-based journalist inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, according to US findings declassified in 2021 at the start of the Biden administration. Trump officials, during his first administration, refused to release the report.

Prince Mohammed said Saudi Arabia "did all the right steps" to investigate Khashoggi's death. "It's painful and it's a huge mistake," he said.

Trump, who said the two leaders have become "good friends," even commended the Saudi leader for strides made by the kingdom on human rights without providing any specific detail. "What's he done is incredible in terms of human rights and everything else," Trump said.

## US House votes 427-1 to force release of Jeffrey Epstein files

WASHINGTON DC

The US House of Representatives has overwhelmingly voted 427-1 to force the Department of Justice to publicly release files related to its long-running investigation into Jeffrey Epstein, the convicted sex offender who died in federal custody in 2019. The bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

The vote followed heated exchanges between lawmakers, who accused each other of politicising the issue. Speaker Mike Johnson backed the measure but criticised Democrats for

bringing it forward now, calling it "a show vote," while also insisting that former President Donald Trump "had nothing to hide."

Republican sponsor Thomas Massie urged Trump to instruct the DOJ to release the documents immediately, while Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene warned that some material might still remain sealed under the guise of an ongoing investigation.

Speaking at the White House alongside Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Trump again denied any link to Epstein. "I have nothing to do with

## Indian murder suspect caught at US-Canada border

NEW YORK

A 22-year-old Indian national wanted for murder in his home country has been arrested by US border authorities after attempting to enter Canada illegally.

US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials detained Vishat Kumar on November 16 at the Peace Bridge border crossing in Buffalo, New York, after Canadian authorities denied him entry.

During a secondary inspection, CBP officers discovered that Kumar—who had unlawfully entered the US earlier in 2024 and skipped his asylum interview—was using a false name and date of birth.

Biometric checks revealed his real identity and confirmed that he was the subject of an Interpol Red Notice for murder charges in India.

Kumar was handed over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement Removal Operations (ICE/ERO) and is currently being held at the Federal Detention Facility in Batavia, New York, pending removal proceedings. Further investigation revealed that Kumar was wanted in India for murder, as indicated by the Interpol Red Notice.

### Wazed slams Interim Govt

BANGLADESH

Sajeeb Wazed, son of ousted Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has sharply criticised the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government, calling it an unelected regime with "zero popular support." Speaking to ANI from the US, Wazed said a leader with legitimacy would not avoid elections for over a year and a half. He claimed Yunus' National Citizen Party polls at just 2 per cent, showing virtually no backing. Wazed also accused the interim government of shifting Bangladesh's foreign policy closer to China, distancing itself from the balanced approach pursued earlier.

## Volcano erupts in Indonesia, spews ash 13km into sky

JAKARTA

A volcano on Indonesia's main island of Java erupted on Wednesday, throwing ash and gas kilometres into the sky and forcing officials to raise the alert status to its highest level.

Mount Semeru in eastern Java, about 310 kilometres west of the tourist hotspot of Bali, erupted at 2:13 pm local time (0713 GMT), spewing what are known as pyroclastic flows, Indonesian geological agency head Muhammad Wafid said.

"The public is advised not to engage in activities within an 8-kilometre (5-mile) radius of the crater or peak of Mount Semeru due to the risk of being struck by ejected



rocks," he said in a statement. The national disaster agency said the plume of

ash had risen as far as 13 kilometres (eight miles) into the air.

### INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

# CPC's persistence in pushing forward rigorous self-reform



### Guest Column

QIN JIE

Since its founding in 1921, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has not only established the New China, but profoundly transformed the country. It successfully found two key answers to the question of how to escape the historical cycle of government's rise and fall. The first is letting the people supervise the government, and the second is carrying out the Party's self-reform.

### Why self-reform is must

First, this is determined by the founding mission and nature of the CPC, which is to pursue happiness for the Chinese people and realize rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Since the Party has no special interests of its own, the state founded under its leadership is called the People's Republic of China, its government the people's government, and its officials the people's servants. Being the Chinese people's party, CPC shares the same goals and stakes as the Chinese people. Meanwhile, the CPC is the vanguard of the Chinese people. Its mandate comes from the people and must be exercised in their interests. Its members being role models among the people inspires and drives the Party to keep high demand on itself and advance steadily. Therefore, to fulfill its mission, the Party has adopted a full range of intra-Party regulations, and exercised strict internal management.

Second, it hinges on the necessity to keep the Party healthy from misconduct and corruption, the enemies of development. Robert Klitgaard, an American scholar on anti-corruption research put forward his famous "corruption formula" in the 1980s: C=M+D-A, i.e., corruption equals monopoly plus discretion minus accountability. Consequently, corruption plagues human society by undermining governance and law,

weakening trust in public institutions, and eroding democratic process. Confronted with various challenges, including misconduct and corruption, the CPC realizes that it is necessary to take resolute measures to safeguard its integrity and progressive nature. It also realizes that the battle against misconduct and corruption is long, complex and arduous: Pointless formalities, bureaucracy, hedonism, and extravagance persist in various localities and departments; corruption is keeps evolving; privilege-seeking practices cause problems. As a result, the CPC keeps improving its conduct, and regards this as significant bearing on winning or losing people's support and on the very survival of the Party.

### Key measures

First, based on the premise that Party disciplines should be stricter than laws, a top-down anti-corruption campaign was launched in 2012. The Party Central Committee issued the "Eight-Point Decision on Improving Party and Government Conduct and Building Closer Ties with the People" (hereinafter referred as the "Decision"). The "Decision" established rules and demands for the Party leadership generally in eight regards: 1) Investigation and inspection tours, 2) meetings and conferences, 3) official documents, 4) visits abroad, 5) security and guard work, 6) media reports, 7) publication, and 8) frugality and cleanliness. These measures aimed primarily to put an end to undesirable practices by the Party leaders, such as excessive banqueting and extravagant spending. It later expanded into a Party-wide initiative for all members to adopt its principles to improve conduct. By practicing frugality, solid research, more efficient meetings, reduced guards and traffic controls, etc., the "Decision" aims to tear down barriers between the leadership and ordinary citizens.

President Xi took the lead in following such demands. Over a stretch of several years, he conducted in-depth research on all 14 concentrated contiguous poverty-stricken areas in China. He inspected the local farmlands, shared simple meals with local villagers, and asked them for advice on poverty reduction. During his visit to Guangdong province, he insisted on not imposing traffic controls that could

disturb the public. In his inspection trip to Hebei province, he stayed in a 16-square-meter room. And he often bought New Year's gifts for villagers out of his own pocket.

Second, given the intrinsic link between misconduct and corruption, a battle against corruption was launched on an unprecedented scale to "offend a few thousand rather than fail 1.4 billion". Supervision has been on the "key few" in power. Crony capitalism and nepotism is strictly prohibited in civil service departments and state-owned enterprises, "revolving doors" are not allowed between government offices or public sectors and the private sectors, and cordial and clean relationship between government and business becomes a fundamental guideline for civil servants. Coordinated measures have been taken to see that officials do not have the audacity, opportunity, or desire to be corrupt, and a combination of practices have been used to "take out tigers", "swat flies" and "hunt down foxes". In the process, President Xi has emphasized the importance of anti-corruption institutional building.

The Code of Conduct for Intraparty Political Life under New Circumstances was issued, the Supervision Law was promulgated, etc., the contents of which have been included in the education of Party members. President Xi has emphasized that "power must be kept in the cage of systemic checks" and "transparency is the best precaution against corruption."

### Achievements

Starting from the small entry points of daily activities of the top Party leaders, the "Decision" has deepened and strengthened connection of the Party with the people. President Xi's urge to live up to people's expectations and work selflessly transformed the CPC through self-discipline and reinforced the Party members' identity as servants of the people. The "Decision" effectively addressed the maladies in working style, improved the official conduct and political culture, and established credibility. The problem of lax and weak self-governance in Party organizations has been addressed at the root, and a political atmosphere of integrity within the Party has been fos-

UNITED NATIONS

India has sharply criticised the stalled United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform process, describing the 17-year-long International Negotiations (IGN) as a "theatre of the absurd" and urging the adoption of a negotiating text to break the deadlock. Speaking at a General Assembly meeting on Tuesday, India's Deputy Permanent Representative Yojna Patel said member states remain "trapped in an endless cycle of statements and discussions that lead nowhere," calling for "inspection and soul searching" to understand why no progress has been achieved.

Patel reiterated India's demand for the immediate start of text-based negotiations with "transparent milestones and timelines," arguing that only a concrete framework can restore credibility to the reform effort.

She expressed hope that the newly appointed IGN co-chairs — Kuwait's Tareq M.A.M. AlBanai and the Netherlands' Lise Gregoire-van Haaren — would guide the process toward tangible outcomes during the current session.

A major obstacle, she said, is the small bloc known as United for Consensus (UfC), led by Italy and including Pakistan, which continues to block the adoption of a negotiating text to prevent the addition of new permanent members.



## Briefs

RAJKOT

South Africa  
A humble  
India A

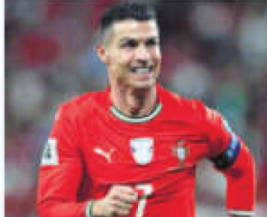
Teen batting sensation **Lhuan-dre Pretorius** stole the show with a scintillating hundred as South Africa A came up with an all-round performance to earn a consolatory 73-run win over India A in the third unofficial ODI here on Wednesday. The big victory helped the visitors avoid a series whitewash after India won the first two matches. Besides Pretorius (123 off 98 balls), his opening partner Rivaldo Moonsamy also struck a fine century (107 off 130 balls) while sharing 241 runs to help South Africa post a formidable 325 for six in the allotted 50 overs. In reply, India A were all out for 252 in 49.1 overs. India A never got a partnership going and barring Ayush Badoni's run-a-ball 66 and Ishan Kishan's 67-ball 53, none of the home team batters could make a mark in the stiff chase of 326.

SYDNEY

Five Indians  
in Australian  
Open 2nd rd

Five Indian shuttlers, including Lakshya Sen and **HS Prannoy**, dished out impressive performances to reach the men's singles second round at the USD 475,000 Australian Open Super 500 event here on Wednesday. Lakshya, a 2021 World Championships bronze-medallist, outplayed Chinese Taipei's Su Li Yang 21-17 21-13, while Prannoy, a runner-up here in 2023, recovered from a poor opening game to beat world No 85 Yohanis Saut Marcellyno 6-21 21-12 21-17 in 57 minutes in the first round match. Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya will next face either Chi Yu Jen or Wang Tzu Wei. The 33-year-old Prannoy will meet eighth seed Alwi Farhan of Indonesia.

WASHINGTON

Ronaldo  
attends White  
House dinner

Soccer superstar **Cristiano Ronaldo** was at the White House as President Donald Trump hosted a glitzy dinner to honor Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince

## 2ND TEST | Gill not exactly fit but will try his best to prove his match-readiness

GUWAHATI

Shubman Gill has travelled to Guwahati with the rest of the India squad for the second Test against South Africa, but the neck injury that is on the mend is unlikely to fully heal before the game begins here on Saturday.

However, it is understood that the skipper will try his best to prove his fitness during training sessions on Thursday and Friday. The squad has landed in the city.

If sources in the Indian team are to be believed, the 26-year-old Gill is far from being 100 per cent fit, with the pain in the nape of his neck still lingering although its intensity has reduced considerably.

"Shubman has been responding well to the medical treatment provided and will travel to Guwahati with the team on 19th November, 2025," read a statement from BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia.

"He will continue to be monitored by the BCCI medical team and a decision on his participation in the 2nd Test will be taken accordingly," he added, continuing the suspense on the batting star's availability.

While he might be clinically fit, the rigours of five-day cricket could aggravate the issue and result in a longer lay-off.

With the series on line and off-spinner Simon Harmer posing a significant threat after the Kolkata Test, a competent right-hander who can take on spin is a necessity.

The current coaching staff and selection committee don't have a lot of faith in the likes of Sarfaraz Khan, Karun Nair or Abhimanyu Easwaran, even though all three handle spin well.

Their simple logic is: even though both Sai Sudharsan and Devdutt Padikkal are left-handers, bringing in someone from outside would signal a massive lack of trust in the youngsters' ability to handle



Shubman has been responding well to the medical treatment provided and will travel to Guwahati with the team on 19th November, 2025

Devajit Saikia

BCCI secretary

pressure.

However, Sudharsan has looked far from convincing, and there is a school of thought that Dhruv Jurel, with his tighter technique, might be a better fit at No. 3.

In this backdrop, Gill, known to train even on optional days, might just want to be fit enough to bat, as even a half-fit skipper is seen as

more effective than Sudharsan, Easwaran or Sarfaraz. Also, as a new captain still earning his stripes in the dressing room, missing a Test at this nascent stage of his leadership is the last thing he would want.

## A tricky call

There is another aspect to the story. Gill probably needs at least 10 days to fully recover and then complete his rehabilitation to be match-ready. But if he plays the Test match, the logical step for selectors would be to rest him from the ODI series starting November 30 in Ranchi.

With little at stake in the series, he could easily take a break and return for the T20s against South Africa.

But with his ODI deputy Shreyas Iyer far from fit after his on-field injury, the last thing Gill wants is a third captaincy contender in KL Rahul or Axar Patel, even if it means only in a stop-gap role.

HARDIK, BUMRAH LIKELY  
TO SKIP SA ODIS

PTI

GUWAHATI

With next year's T20 World Cup taking precedence, all-rounder Hardik Pandya, currently recuperating from a quadriceps injury, is unlikely to feature in the upcoming ODI series against South Africa starting November 30, and is expected to focus solely on the shortest format for now.

In keeping with workload management for front-line pacers, spearhead Jasprit Bumrah is also likely to be rested from the three-match ODI series, which carries little significance in the build-up to the T20 showpiece.

Hardik sustained quad-

riceps injury during the Asia Cup T20 in Dubai last September and incidentally missed the final against Pakistan.

"Hardik is recovering well from his quadriceps injury at the moment. He is at the Centre of Excellence doing his RTP (Return To Play) routines. As of now, returning from quadriceps injury, he needs to build up his workload and straightaway playing 50 overs will be risky. Till the T20 World Cup, the BCCI medical team and Hardik would focus on T20Is," a BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity. It is understood that Hardik will first prove his match fitness for Baroda.

Rohit's brief reign  
at the top ends

Mitchell became the second New Zealander to hold No 1 spot in ODIs

DUBAI

Indian star **Rohit Sharma** dropped down to second place after a brief reign at the top with New Zealander Daryl Mitchell dislodging him in the ICC ODI batters' rankings issued on Wednesday.

Mitchell became the second New Zealander to hold the No.1 spot for ODI batters on the back of an excellent century against the West Indies.

He scored his seventh ODI century during the opening game in the series against the Caribbean side, and that proved enough for the in-form right-hander to overtake Rohit at the top and claim the premier position for the first time in his career.

Mitchell currently has 782 rating points, one more than Rohit, whose reign at the top spot lasted around three weeks.

It means Mitchell is now just the second player from New Zealand to hold the top ranking for ODI batters, joining Kiwi great Glenn Turner who previously held the spot back in 1979.

Fellow New Zealanders Martin Crowe, Andrew Jones, Roger Twose, Nathan Astle, Kane Williamson, Martin Gupitll, and Ross Taylor all spent time inside the

top five of the ODI batter rankings during their illustrious careers, but only Turner and now Mitchell have ever held the No.1 spot.

Ibrahim Zadran of Afghanistan also dropped down one place to third while Shubman Gill (4th), Virat Kohli (5th) and Shreyas Iyer (8th) are in top-10.

There were also big gains for a host of Pakistan players following their ODI series against Sri Lanka, with Mohammad Rizwan (up five places to equal 22nd) and

## On Top

Mitchell currently has 782 rating points, one more than Rohit, whose reign at the top spot lasted around three weeks.

three-match rubber against their Asian rival, with spinner Abrar Ahmed (up 11 places to ninth) and pacer Haris Rauf (up five spots to 23rd) being the big winners on the latest rankings for ODI bowlers that are still led by Afghanistan tweaker Rashid Khan.

Thakur says white-ball games  
keep players mentally fresh

Mumbai captain gave a thumbs up to the scheduling of the current season of the prestigious Ranji Trophy

MUMBAI

India all-rounder and Mumbai captain **Shardul Thakur** on Wednesday said that playing a few white-ball matches between red-ball fixtures during the domestic season helps players stay mentally fresh.

Thakur also gave a thumbs up to the current scheduling of the Ranji Trophy, which is being held in two phases for the second consecutive season. He had earlier criticised the packed itinerary of the premier domestic competition, which offered only three-day gaps between matches.

"There would always be mixed views on it, but personally I am okay with it.... to play ten games in a row is tough on the body," Thakur told the media after Mumbai crushed Pondicherry by an innings and 122 runs here at the Wankhede Stadium on Wednesday. "We have also seen how the schedule is in the UK when the ECB plays. They have seven or eight first-



Shardul Thakur. PTI File Photo

There would always be mixed views on it, but personally I am okay with it.... to play ten games in a row is tough on the body

Shardul Thakur, Mumbai captain

class games in a row and then again they keep playing after break. They put some white-ball games in between, so that keeps everyone mentally fresh."

"Otherwise, you are just playing one format for three months and then suddenly, white-ball cricket and then red-ball cricket is lost. So, it's

good that we are playing five games and we have a bit of a break.

Then we play white-ball tournament, and then again move to red-ball cricket. So that way everyone stays in touch. The games stay on top of both the games mentally."

Thakur noted the break is welcoming.

Mumbai complete winning  
formalities in quick time

Jammu & Kashmir wrapped things up in style against Hyderabad

MUMBAI

Shardul Thakur-led Mumbai wrapped up their Ranji Trophy Elite Group D match against Puducherry in a little over half an hour beating the visitors by an innings and 222 runs on the final day to top the group, here on Wednesday.

Beginning the day at 231/6, Puducherry were only delaying the inevitable and the Mumbai bowlers ensured they finished the proceedings without further ado.

Following on after conceding a mammoth 498-run first innings lead to their formidable opponents, Puducherry added just 45 runs in 8.3 overs for the loss of four wickets on the fourth morning to be all out for 276.

**Tushar Deshpande** scalped two wickets while captain Shardul Thakur and Ayush Mhatre got one each as Mumbai completed the formalities in quick time.

Both Deshpande and Thakur ended the match with five wickets apiece while Siddhesh Lad and Akash



Tushar Deshpande. PTI File Photo

Anand scored centuries in Mumbai's huge first innings total of 630 for 5 declared.

Mumbai collected seven points from their third win while Puducherry got none.

Mumbai topped Group D with 24 points ahead of Jammu and Kashmir (20 points) after playing five

matches each.

## J&amp;K thump Hyderabad

In Jammu, Abid Mushtaq spun J&K to an incredible win as Hyderabad were bowled out for 190 while chasing 472. It was Jammu & Kashmir's third win. The wrecker-in-chief was the left-arm spinner Abid Mushtaq, who finished

## Brief Scores:

**In Mumbai:** 630/5 decl in 147 overs beat Puducherry 132 and 276 all out in 53.3 overs (Aman Khan 86; Shardul Thakur 2/24, Tushar Deshpande 3/32).

**In Jammu:** Jammu and Kashmir 170 & 422 all out in 100.5 overs beat Hyderabad 121 and 190 all out in 57.5 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 47; Abid Mushtaq 7/68).

with figures of 7 for 68. It was his ninth five-wicket haul in first-class cricket.

The match also ended in quick time on the fourth morning with Hyderabad losing their remaining three second innings wickets in 5.2 overs while adding just 21 runs. They had resumed the day at 169 for 7.

Mushtaq scalped all the three wickets to add to his earlier four in the Hyderabad second innings.

## high time

## Harmanpreet Kaur expected to triple brand portfolio

NEW DELHI

A barrier-breaking World Cup triumph has led to brands showing unprecedented interest in women cricketers, including captain **Harmanpreet Kaur**, whose endorsement portfolio is expected to triple in the coming months.

Harmanpreet, who famously caught Nadine de Klerk to complete India's victory over South Africa in the final, was associated with

more than eight brands before the World Cup. That is already changing, said her manager Noopur Kashyap.

"Harman was involved in over 8-10 brand endorsements before the World Cup. But post World Cup, Harmanpreet is expected to triple the value and number. Brands from non-sporting traditional sports sector have approached and are willing to explore opportunities with her and indicating a broader acceptance," Kashyap told PTI.

The 2017 final appearance was a shot in the arm for women's cricket in India but the title win eight years later has taken the sport's popularity and brand interest to another level, said Kashyap.

"As an athlete business manager I have observed that there has been a marked increase in the interest and investment in women's cricket, especially after winning the World Cup.

"The change is evident in the surge of brand endorsements, demand and

acknowledgment. Earlier, the diversification in the sponsorship categories was limited and now we see a huge change of mindset." Brands had a tendency to focus on physical appearance of female cricketers but that is also gradually changing, she said.

"Many brands are aligning their messaging with themes of equality, empowerment, and inspiration.

"The narrative is shifting, and brands are beginning to recognise the value of show-

casing female cricketers as strong, capable, and accomplished athletes in their own right," she said.

"By doing so, they are not only changing the narrative around female athletes but also contributing to a more inclusive and supportive sports culture," Kashyap added. Harmanpreet has had a rather hectic time off the field since the World Cup hopping one city to another for media and engagements.



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