



Indonesia earthquake kills 38, Tsunami warning lifted

P8

P9

Government cuts export duty on petrol to zero



P12

Sreeleela Resumes Shooting For Kartik Aaryan's Musical



80 YEARS OF FREEDOM

'ARMED NAXALS GONE, DIMAGI NAXALS REMAIN'

PM Modi said armed Naxalism was defeated but warned of 'dimagi naxals' in public life, while unveiling seven pillars—from manufacturing and agriculture to technology, defence and green energy.

NEW DELHI

The aspirations of Gen Z and the power of 'Yuva Shakti' were at the heart of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day speech on Saturday, close on the heels of the massive student strikes post NEET paper leaks that snatched one of his ministers.

From a seven-point 'Saptdhara' reform framework to a caution against a new threat called "dimaagi naxal", the PM used his address from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort in New Delhi to highlight both the opportunities and challenges faced by the country as it hurtles towards the goal of a 'Viksit

Bharat' by 2047.

Delivering his 13th consecutive Independence Day speech, becoming the second PM after Jawaharlal Nehru to achieve the milestone, Modi reiterated his 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' push, spotlighting civil defence reforms, expansion of semi-conductor manufacturing and new targets for nuclear power generation as core areas.

Another strongest message was on women's representation in policymaking. Amid the impasse over the women's quota bill, Modi appealed to the opposition to set aside differences and ensure 33% reservation for women in Parliament and assemblies.



Jobs mission, AI varsity, tech hubs

DKS LAYS OUT KARNATAKA ROADMAP ON I-DAY

BENGALURU

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday announced a series of welfare and industrial initiatives ranging from filling 72,000 government vacancies to establishing India's first public AI University aimed at propelling Karnataka toward a \$3 trillion economy by 2047.

Speaking after hoisting the national flag at the Field Marshal Manekshaw Parade Ground here, Shivakumar outlined his government's strategic vision under the motto "Yuva Karnataka, Nava Bharat."

Under the newly launched "Chief Minister's Jobs Mission," Shivakumar pledged that recruitment notifications for 72,000 key vacant posts across various government departments would be issued within the next six months.

The state will also launch the 'Yuva Udyoga Setu' platform to connect job seekers with private sector employers, alongside the 'Udyoga Nidhi' scheme, which provides an incentive of Rs 2,500 per month per job for two years to businesses generating employment in the state's 10 most backward districts.

Highlighting digital empowerment, the CM announced the 'AI Akshara Abhiyana' and 'Coding Gurukul' initiatives to integrate AI and coding education into the school curriculum from Class VI onwards. Bengaluru will host India's first public AI University, with certificate courses slated to commence by January 2027.

To boost rural representation in higher education, the state introduced 'Vidyarthi Sahayashasta', reserving 7.5 per cent of seats within the existing 15 per cent rural quota for students from rural government schools applying for professional courses like engineering and medicine.

To decentralise growth, five Global Technology Centres (GTCs) will be set up under the LEAP programme in Kalaburagi, Belagavi, Hubballi-Dharwad, Mangaluru and Mysuru. An Advanced Manufacturing Cluster with an investment commitment of Rs 20,000 crore is also slated for Doddaballapura.

For farmers, the government rolled out the 'CM Raitha Chaitanya Yojane' for drone and satellite-based crop monitoring, alongside 'Raitha Mitra', which offers a 50 per cent rental subsidy on agricultural equipment for smallholders owning up to three acres.



PLANS TO REALISE THE DREAM

Education & Technology
AI in schools: Launching the 'AI Akshara Abhiyana' and 'Coding Gurukul' programs to introduce Artificial Intelligence and coding starting from Class 6.

Public AI university: Establishing India's first government-owned AI university in Bengaluru, with certificate courses planned to start by January 2027.

Rural quota support: Introducing 'Vidyarthi Sahayashasta' to reserve 7.5% of professional course seats within the rural quota for students from govt schools.

Jobs & governance
Employment drive: Commencing the Chief Minister Employment Sankalpa to fill 72,000 vacant government jobs, targeting one lakh new jobs over two years.

Police restructuring: Formalizing plans to split the Bengaluru police commissionerate into five distinct commissionerates to improve urban safety and administrative efficiency.

Infrastructure & urban plans: Advancing the Bengaluru Business Corridor, developing major lakes and tree parks, and setting up a dedicated Praja Seva department for public grievances.

Guv recalls contribution of freedom fighters



Bengaluru: Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot on Saturday said Independence Day is meant to remember the sacrifices, courage and contribution of the freedom fighters.

He was addressing a gathering at Lok Bhavan after hoisting the tricolour and paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and BR Ambedkar on the occasion of 80th Independence Day. He said, "Independence Day is an occasion to remember the indomitable courage, sacrifice and contribution of the great leaders and countless freedom fighters who dedicated their lives to securing freedom."

TAKEAWAYS FROM MODI's I-DAY SPEECH

YOUTH OUTREACH

A major theme of PM Modi's speech, which lasted for around 75 minutes, was the country's youth, as he announced a slew of initiatives to win over Gen Z.

■ **AI skill training for youth:** A nationwide artificial intelligence skilling programme targeting 1 crore (10 million) young citizens over the next year to boost future employability.

■ **Free online coaching:** Free digital coaching support for students and aspirants preparing for various competitive examinations to ease financial burdens on families.

'DIMAAGI' NAXALS

While highlighting India's challenges, Modi warned of a new enemy - 'dimaagi naxals' (naxal mentality). The prime minister stressed that while the Naxals who took up arms have been eliminated, there were "dimaagi naxals" who were embedded in the corridors of power. "These ideological Naxals must be identified and isolated," he added.

'SAPTDHARA' VISION

PM Modi also unveiled a seven-point 'Saptdhara' roadmap as a new framework for building a 'Viksit Bharat', drawing a parallel with the ancient reference to the 'Sapta Sindhu', or seven rivers

■ **Manufacturing power:** To make India a trusted global hub for manufacturing, from components to finished products.

■ **Agriculture and food:** To take desi products like millets, spices and fruits to global markets while urging farmers to make India a global food powerhouse.

■ **Technology & Innovation:** Modi identified AI, quantum technology, space, and robotics as areas where India must build capability and become an innovation hub, rather than merely a global markets.

■ **Gati Shakti:** Fast connectivity across cities through high-speed rail and modern highways was the need of the hour, PM Modi flagged in his I-Day speech.

■ **Defence Power:** Self-reliance in defence was another clear priority, PM Modi said, coming weeks after India marked the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor. The Prime Minister called for becoming a global supplier of next-gen defence technologies, with focus on drones, hypersonic technology and cybersecurity.

■ **Energy security:** PM Modi asserted that India aimed to start five nuclear reactors in the next decade, citing the need to strengthen energy security. "Our goal is to achieve 100 gigawatts of nuclear power capacity," he said.

■ **Soft Power:** Lastly, he called for leveraging yoga, Ayurveda, and India's rich culture to boost the country's global and diplomatic influence.

Push for Women's Reservation Bill

With the government's backchannel talks with the opposition over the women's reservation bill, which it has linked to delimitation, coming a cropper, Modi used his Red Fort address to appeal for consensus. He urged parties to rise above politics and facilitate the implementation of the proposed 33% reservation for women in Parliament. "Take the credit yourselves, but give our mothers and sisters their due rights," he said.

Weaponisation of sea routes, fuel

Modi said some countries were weaponising resources and strategic sea routes. Citing the turbulent period during the Iran war, he said self-reliance and diversification helped ensure India did not face fuel crunch. "The world is busy weaponising whatever it possesses - petrol, diesel, fertilisers. Even territory is being weaponised... Every nation has shifted towards a mindset of looking after its own interests."

SPORTS TALENT HUNT

Reiterating India's ambition to host the 2036 Olympics, The Prime Minister used the occasion to announce a nationwide hunt to identify young sporting talent aged between 5-15 years. "They will get special training to become world-class athletes," the Prime Minister said. He highlighted that India hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games would be a stepping stone for the country to realise its Olympic dream.

'Vande Mataram' sung in full at Cong HQ despite leaders' orders

New Delhi: 'Vande Mataram' was sung in full during Independence Day celebrations at the Congress headquarters 'Indira Bhavan' here on Saturday in discordance with the party's stand and despite top leaders' like Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi instructions.

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Improper protocol? RaGa, Kharge skip I-Day event

New Delhi: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, skipped the 80th Independence Day celebrations at the Red Fort on Saturday for the second consecutive year, as PM Modi led the national ceremony. According to sources, they skipped the event due to improper protocols.

'BJP-RSS fuel hatred, Cong opens Mohabbat Ki Dukaan'

New Delhi: Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday accused the BJP-RSS of spreading hatred, dividing people and disturbing peace in the country, and said the Congress, which is "opening 'mohabbat ki dukaan'", wants to maintain peace and unity in society. He was speaking after unfurling the tricolour at the Congress HQ here.

Omar: PoK would have joined J&K if...

Srinagar: J&K CM Omar Abdullah said the people of Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) would have risen to merge with J&K if the Centre had not abrogated its special status and stripped the region of its statehood. He said the situation in PoK has vindicated the decision of Kashmir people, who fought against invading tribal raiders from Pakistan in 1947.

DEADLY TREMOR KILLS 47 IN INDONESIA

JAKARTA: A 6.9-magnitude earthquake struck western Sumatra late on Saturday, according to the US Geological Survey, marking the second major tremor to hit Indonesia within a single day.

The epicentre was located near Pematangsiantar, around 126 kilometres (78 miles) southeast of Medan, the capital of North Sumatra. The earthquake struck at a depth of 183 km. No tsunami warning was issued following the tremor.

Dozens of aftershocks shook the island throughout the day, the strongest measuring a magnitude of 6.1.

Later on Saturday, a 6.9-magnitude earthquake also struck Indonesia's western Sumatra island, thousands of kilometres away in the vast country, according to USGS. There were no initial reports of damage or casualties from that quake.

3 'poachers' killed in Hanur encounter, CM orders magisterial probe

CHAMARAJANAGAR

Three alleged poachers were killed in an exchange of fire with forest personnel in the Datti forest area under the Shagya range here on Saturday, prompting Chief Minister D K Shivakumar to order a magisterial inquiry into the incident.

The incident occurred around 5.10 am in the dense forest area falling under the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary when forest personnel, acting on information about hunting, encountered four men, Forest Minister Ramalinga Reddy said.

"The Chief Minister directed that a magisterial inquiry be conducted to ascertain the facts from both sides. We need to find out what actually happened and whether the firing was deliberate or carried out in self-defence," Reddy said.

According to Reddy, two forest teams entered the area after receiving information that the hunters had gone hunting and followed a torchlight before intercepting them. The men allegedly had two country-made pistols and four bags containing deer meat, Reddy said.

Shivakumar said several articles have been seized and that the facts would emerge after the magisterial inquiry.

Youth India's demographic dividend: Bhagwat

NAGPUR

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday said the country's youth constitute a major demographic dividend and could immensely benefit the nation if guided and utilised properly, but may become a burden on society if their potential is not harnessed effectively.

Addressing his second interaction with Gen Z in 10 days, Bhagwat said the present generation of youth would become old in about three decades and therefore, should think beyond their own interests and remain mindful of the requirements of future generations.

"The youth are a demographic dividend. We will benefit greatly if they are handled properly; otherwise, there will be a burden on society," he said. Bhagwat stressed that employment should not be viewed only in terms of conventional jobs, adding that people engaged in labour and other forms of work must also be given due dignity and respect.

He urged the youth to understand that Bharat has its own distinct identity and circumstances and should not blindly follow the development models of countries such as the US, Australia, China, New Zealand and Canada.

"We are Bharat and it has its pride, dignity and supreme honour. We need to decide for ourselves the kind of development we want and the yardsticks by which progress should be measured," he said.

The RSS chief said Bharat has a responsibility to present the world with a balanced vision for the future and develop a thought process suited to its own conditions.

"The world, due to its imperfect vision, is stumbling. It is our obligation as part of Bharat to show the world the future path through our vision and balance it. We need to prepare for it," he said.

Pride, politics, and patriotism: Zameer Ahmed fires back at BJP

Karnataka Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan defended his ministerial responsibilities, criticizing opposition BJP politics over Independence Day celebrations

BENGALURU

Karnataka Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan strongly defended his decision regarding district responsibilities, accusing the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party of playing petty politics over Independence Day celebrations. Speaking after hoisting the national flag in Chamarajpet, Khan emphasized his core identity, stating proudly that he considers himself a Hindustani first, a Kannadiga second, and a Muslim last.

The clarification came in response to criticism from political rivals regarding his sta-

tus as in-charge minister. Khan explained that he voluntarily requested Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and former leadership to relieve him of his duties in Vijayanagar district due to heavy workload and time constraints. He noted that he had previously served as in-charge for 3 years and felt that newcomer ministers deserved the opportunity to hoist the flag and lead local development initiatives. According to Khan, he personally recommended that Minister Basavanthappa be given charge of the district so new leaders could gain valuable administrative experience.



Addressing attacks from saffron party members, the minister dismissed allegations of undermining national symbols. He asserted that the op-

position has no right to lecture anyone on patriotism, questioning the historical role of certain ideological groups during the freedom struggle.

Political observers point out that administrative reshuffles and ceremonial flag-hoisting duties often trigger friction between ruling and opposition parties across various states. While rival leaders frequently scrutinize ministerial assignments and workload justifications, senior cabinet members continue to defend their internal party decisions and public service records as part of ongoing regional political discourse.

Freedom parade, concert light up Bengaluru

BENGALURU

The city of Bengaluru is hosting a grand cultural festival named 'Freedom Habba' right in front of the iconic Vidhana Soudha. This massive public event marks the celebration of the country's 80th Independence Day. Organizers planned the special program to run continuously for 10 hours, lasting from 12 noon until 10 o'clock at night, drawing large crowds of citizens and families.

The festive day began with vibrant cultural programs performed by school children from noon until 3 in the afternoon. Young students showcased their incredible talents through music and dance, adding wonderful color and joy to the Independence Day celebrations.

Following the children's performances, a spectacular

Bengaluru's 'Freedom Habba' festival outside Vidhana Soudha celebrated India's 80th Independence Day with children's performances, a diverse parade, and 'Sangeetha Rasa Sanje' musical night

Freedom Parade took place on Ambedkar Road, located right between the Vidhana Soudha and the High Court. The impressive march started from the IPO Circle and moved smoothly toward Thimmaiah Circle. This major parade featured fifteen distinct cultural groups from various districts across the state, alongside ten leading traditional art troupes representing different states of the

country. Spectators lined the streets to witness the rich diversity of traditional arts and music on display.

As evening approached, the celebrations transitioned into a grand musical night titled 'Sangeetha Rasa Sanje' starting at five-thirty. This energetic segment features amazing music and dance programs scheduled to run until late at night. More than twenty famous and beloved artists, including well-known singers like M.D. Pallavi, Sanjit Hegde, and Raghu Dixit, took the stage to entertain the enthusiastic audience with soulful live singing. The wonderful festival has brought citizens together in a true spirit of patriotism and joy, making this Independence Day a deeply memorable experience for everyone attending the grand celebrations in the heart of the capital city.

QUICK READ

Man tries suicide at Bengaluru's Majestic bus stand

Bengaluru

A young man from Bihar attempted suicide at the busy Majestic BTMC bus stand on Independence Day morning. Witnesses reported that he shouted distressed remarks before onlookers recorded the incident on mobile phones. Upparpete police officers rushed quickly to the scene, took him into custody, and transferred him to a nearby hospital for medical care. Preliminary investigations indicate he suffered from severe mental depression, potentially due to unemployment or personal struggles. Authorities have registered a formal case and are continuing their detailed inquiry into the tragic situation.

Terror suspect planned multi country attacks

Bengaluru

Hebbagodi police arrested a terror suspect, Asafu Malik, who plotted attacks in India and against the Pakistan army. Working as a security guard, the West Bengal native contacted TTP member Imran Saidar and sent funds to terrorist groups. Investigators discovered he applied for an Afghan visa to secure combat training before failing to travel. Police tracked him via social media for a month, seizing his phone for forensic analysis. Authorities' uncovered audio and video evidence detailing plots targeting regions linked to perceived atrocities against Muslims worldwide.



KSRTC demands ₹5000 crore Shakti scheme dues

Bengaluru

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation has urged the government to clear pending dues exceeding five thousand crore rupees for the Shakti Yojana. Managing Director Shivakumar K.B. stated that unpaid reimbursements spanning three years have created a severe financial crisis. The free travel scheme for women has accumulated massive liabilities across four transport corporations. Officials warn that delayed payments hinder staff provident fund and gratuity disbursements. Consequently, management requested immediate fund releases to ensure uninterrupted public bus services throughout the state.

WHERE HAVE I BEEN SILENT, ASKS SIDDARAMAIAH

Former Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah clarified his low-key presence, defending his public engagement, cabinet diversity, and ongoing political involvement

BENGALURU

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah hit back at speculation regarding his low-key public presence, clarifying that he has not gone silent but is choosing to speak less. Speaking to reporters after paying tribute at the Sangolli Rayanna statue near Majestic, the senior Congress leader stated that since he is no longer holding the Chief Minister's office, he no longer carries the direct administrative

burden of running the state. Addressing questions about his recent public positioning, Siddaramaiah maintained that he remains actively involved in public life. He noted his recent participation in the legislative assembly sessions and various public engagements. When questioned about opposition criticism regarding cabinet composition and the absence of female representation, he countered by questioning the moral standing of the Bharatiya Janata Party, pointing out that minority and backward communities faced gaps during their governance. He added that he has strongly advocated for women to be given proper representation within the party framework.

The former Chief Minister also touched upon community



movements, confirming his participation in an upcoming program organized by the Backward Classes Federation to mark its milestone anniversary. Political analysts continue to monitor shifting dynamics within the state leadership as prominent figures navigate new legislative roles, party alignments, and policy discussions across Karnataka.

ARC Cancer Hospital launches screening drive

BENGALURU

Local healthcare providers are stepping up to change how people think about serious illnesses. Recently, ARC Cancer Hospital rolled out a brand-new screening program tailored specifically for adults over the age of forty. Leaders behind the effort want to turn early checks into a normal habit rather than something people avoid out of panic.

Rolling out on Independence Day with a focus on breaking free from worry, the campaign offers a mix of expert medical chats, lab work, scans, and personal risk checks. Doctors designed the system so that each person's roadmap depends entirely on their age, daily habits, and past family health records.

Hospital leaders noted that money troubles and a lack of clear information often stop middle-class and rural families from getting checked. Besides cost, old-fashioned social stigma and pure dread keep many folks away until a problem gets too big to ignore. Hospital co-founder Dr. Srihari R Shapur explained that catching a tumor early means treatments can be much gentler and far



more successful.

Under the new plan, women can receive breast exams and mammograms, while men can get checked for prostate concerns. The program also looks closely at family trees. Anyone with a heavy history of illness might be offered genetic testing to spot inherited risks for various cancers, including breast and colon conditions.

Chairman Dr. Dinesh Mavinahalli pointed out that modern genetic tests have become much cheaper over time. He also stressed that living a clean lifestyle is wonderful, but it does not

Personalized assessments and genetic screening

Hospital leaders emphasized that the program uses a risk-based model guided by individual age, lifestyle, and medical history. Speaking at the launch, Co-founder Dr. Srihari R. Shapur noted that early detection drastically reduces intensive treatment requirements and improves patient outcomes. The initiative also incorporates family medical history to evaluate hereditary risks, offering genetic counseling and testing for specific conditions when clinically necessary.

completely shield anyone from disease. Routine checkups remain essential because many early-stage problems show no warning signs at all.

Doctors are urging the public to stop waiting for

PACKAGE FEATURES FOR MEN AND WOMEN

- Women's Package:** Includes clinical breast exams, age-appropriate breast imaging, and Pap smears.
- Men's Package:** Focuses on lab tests, select tumor markers, and oral or head-and-neck assessments.
- Preventive Advocacy:** Chairman Dr. Dinesh Mavinahalli highlighted the importance of HPV vaccinations and urged greater government outreach in rural villages.

Clash over RSS registration and public spaces

BENGALURU

A fresh political storm has erupted in Karnataka over a new government rule. The state government has introduced a law that makes prior permission mandatory for any public event or program. This move is widely seen as a direct way to halt public activities and gatherings held by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, commonly known as the RSS. The new rule has quickly ignited a fierce war of words between the ruling Congress party and the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party.

Cabinet Minister Priyank Kharge strongly defended the decision. He pointed out that the RSS has never been formally registered as an organization. Because of this, he argued, the group must follow the same laws and rules as everyone else in the state.

BJP National Organizing Secretary BL Santosh quickly fired back at the government. He firmly stated that the RSS does not need to register with the government to carry out its social and cultural work.

Hearing this, Priyank Kharge hit back even harder. He made it clear that the organization has avoided registra-

The confrontation

- The Policy Move:** The state introduced regulations requiring statutory permission for utilizing public properties and government premises.
- The Core Debate:** Opposition leaders defended the RSS's unregistered status, stating it functions on public trust.
- The Ministerial Response:** State authorities retorted that an unregistered entity operates outside standard legal frameworks.

tion in the past and will not register in the future either. Kharge stressed that no group can operate above the law of the land, regardless of its background or influence. Political experts believe this clash is only the beginning. The new rule creates a tough challenge for the RSS, which relies heavily on public grounds and open spaces for its daily shakhas and meetings. Observers expect the tension between the state government and opposition leaders to grow stronger in the coming days as both sides refuse to back down.

JAIL CRACKDOWN

Inside Parappana Agrahara: VIP cells collapsing

BENGALURU

A massive security crackdown has hit Parappana Agrahara Central Jail following a surprise inspection by Prisons Department DGP Alok Kumar. The high-level intervention came after prison authorities discovered a mobile phone hidden inside the barracks of undertrial prisoner Prajwal Revanna. The shocking find triggered intense panic among officials, leading the DGP to issue a stern warning to the jail staff and implement immediate, sweeping security changes across the facility.

Following the DGP's visit,

High profile prisoners face strict rules

The sudden security overhaul has directly impacted other high-profile inmates as well, including actor Darshan and co-accused Pavithra Gowda, who are linked to the Renukaswamy murder case. Jail authorities have restructured living arrangements and heightened electronic surveillance to curb any further security lapses. Pavithra Gowda, previously housed with only two inmates, was shifted to a large barrack accommodating 16 prisoners. Meanwhile, security around actor Darshan's cell has been significantly scaled up with new CCTV cameras monitoring his daily movements.

authorities acted swiftly to strip Prajwal of any special privileges he may have enjoyed. He was immediately

removed from his previous quarters and shifted to a crowded barracks housing 22 other inmates, where guards

have placed him under round-the-clock intensive surveillance to prevent any further security breaches.

The fallout from the investigation also heavily impacted other high-profile inmates, including Kannada actor Darshan and co-accused Pavithra Gowda, who are currently implicated in the high-profile Renukaswamy murder case. Jail officials completely overhauled Pavithra Gowda's living arrangements. Previously kept in a quiet barracks with only two other inmates, she has now been moved to a much larger and more populated holding area containing

16 prisoners.

Meanwhile, security around actor Darshan has been dramatically intensified. Prison authorities have deployed additional security personnel directly outside his barracks and installed advanced closed-circuit television cameras to monitor his every single movement. Officials are now continuously tracking all prison activities through a central control room. Extra precautions have also been extended to other linked individuals, such as Pradush, a key witness in the murder case who was earlier relocated for his own safety.

Security changes implemented

- Cell Transfers:** Prajwal Revanna was shifted from a restricted cell to a shared barrack housing 22 inmates.
- Enhanced Surveillance:** Continuous round-the-clock monitoring through newly installed CCTV cameras around key cells
- Witness Protection:** Pradush, a pardoned witness in the high-profile murder trial, was previously relocated for safety.

Quick Read

Farmers Learn Organic Farming at Koppal Fair

CH NEWS, Koppal
Koppal launched the 10th Sasya Sante and Horticulture Campaign on Saturday, marking Independence Day and Dr. M.H. Mari Gowda's birthday. The event runs until August 20, offering farmers plants, expert advice and department services under one roof. Minister Shivraj S. Thandagi inaugurated the fair and view ed fruit, spice, ornamental and vegetable plants. Special varieties, including Miyazaki mango and coconut hybrids, are available at discounted prices. More than five lakh vegetable seedlings are also offered. Farmers can learn about organic farming, drip irrigation, rainwater harvesting, soil testing, mushroom cultivation, beekeeping and crop insurance. Experts are also providing guidance.

₹9.39 crore crop insurance fraud suspected in Kalghatagi

CH NEWS, DHARWAD
A major crop insurance fraud worth more than ₹9 crore has been reported in Tabakadahonnalli Gram Panchayat of Kalghatagi taluk, raising serious concerns about the scheme. During 2025-26, 12,271 farmers applied for insurance, while 5,241 received compensation for crop losses. Investigators suspect that some claims were based on false information, including showing crops where none existed or reporting different crops. The Agriculture Department found an alleged fraud of ₹9.39 crore and filed a complaint against 10 people. The complaint names nine local farmers and Srinivas Insurance Company of Bengaluru. The case has been handed to cybercrime police, who are checking crop records, photographs and videos linked to the claims. District officials said similar cases may exist elsewhere and stressed that guilty persons should face action. The investigation will determine whether the claims were fraudulent and whether others were involved.

Koppal govt announces 45 major development projects

Minister announced home delivery of caste certificates, monthly grievance meetings, and completion of 72,186 government recruitments within six months

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

The Karnataka government has taken up 45 major projects aimed at improving development and expanding public services. Backward Classes Welfare, Kannada and Culture Minister and Koppal District In-charge Minister Shivraj Thangadagi said on Saturday.

Speaking after hoisting the national flag at the District Stadium during the 80th Independence Day celebrations, Thangadagi said schemes such as Raitha Mitra, Gramanu bhav, Yuva Udyoga Setu, Public Service Department, Land Guarantee and Karnataka Mobility Grid Mission would support farmers, youth and disadvantaged communities. He said 10,000 Bharat Jodo Yuva Sanghs would be formed across the state to encourage sports, culture, scientific thinking and social harmony. Koppal district is expected to have 215 such groups.

The minister said 12.34 lakh of the district's 15.19 lakh caste certificates had already been delivered to beneficiaries' homes. He also announced monthly Prajaseva Andolana meetings to address public grievances. Recruitment to 72,186 vacant government posts is expected to be completed within six months, bringing hope to thousands of job seekers.

He said free bus passes would now be available to all school and college students, including boys, from primary education through postgraduate studies. Around 18,000 students in Koppal have already benefited. For 2026-27, ₹330.37 crore has been allocated to the district under the Kalyan Karnataka Regional Development Scheme.

Thangadagi urged citizens to remember freedom fighters and work for an equal society without caste or religious discrimination. Police, Home Guards, NCC, Scouts and other teams joined the parade, while students performed patriotic programmes. Meritorious students and athletes were honoured during the celebration, which concluded with a renewed call for unity and development.



K'taka guarantee schemes shine on Independence Day

Karnataka Minister Shivraj Thangadagi said the state's guarantee schemes are helping poor families and could serve as a model for other states.

He was speaking after hoisting the national flag at the district stadium during the 80th Independence Day celebration. He said the govt had completed three years and called it a meaningful journey of people-focused governance. The five guarantees, Gruha Lakshmi, Shakti, Annabhagya, Yuvanidhi and Gruha Jyothi, have supported millions of families. In Koppal, 3.12 lakh women are registered under Gruha Lakshmi, while Shakti has helped women travel free.

Workshop promotes sustainable groundwater management in Koppal

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

A one-day training workshop on watershed mapping, groundwater issues and water management was held successfully at the VTU Postgraduate Centre, Talakal.

The programme was organised by the Central Ground Water Board under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

The Tier-III workshop aimed to turn findings from National Aquifer Mapping studies into useful information for field-level work. It also focused on creating awareness about conserving groundwater and using artificial recharge methods. Regional Director G. Krishnamurthy, who chaired the programme, stressed the need to use limited groundwater carefully amid population growth, drinking water needs and climate change.

Experts said sustainable groundwater management requires cooperation between government departments and active public participation. Deputy Director of the VTU Postgraduate Centre Dr. Y.H. Basavarajappa, Gadag Tontadarya Engineering College Civil Department Head K. Lokesh, Talakal Government Engineering College Civil Department Head Prof. Basavaraja Hunsyala and Senior Geologist V. Basavanth attended the event.

Technical sessions covered the Central Ground Water Board's work in Karnataka and National Aquifer Mapping studies in Koppal district. Experts also discussed technologies for collecting industrial wastewater, soil, sludge and air samples, along with environmental protection. Assistant Hydrogeologist Dr. Damara Anjaneyulu and programme coordinator Suresha Lamani explained the use of remote sensing and GIS technology in preparing and assessing groundwater maps.

The workshop concluded with an open discussion on local groundwater problems, challenges and possible solutions.



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Jarkiholi Says three women capable of cabinet berth

BELAGAVI

Three women legislators are in the race for the vacant ministerial post, and a decision is expected after the Assembly session, District In-charge Minister Satish Jarkiholi said on Saturday.

He said the party would support whichever candidate is chosen.

Speaking to reporters after the Independence Day flag hoisting, Jarkiholi said Lakshmi Hebbalkar, Umashree and Gayathri Shanthegowda are being considered for the position. He said all three are capable, but the delay was due to uncertainty over whom to select. Until then, the Chief Minister will handle the vacant responsibility, he added.

Jarkiholi said discussions on the ministerial appointment are continuing and rejected speculation about former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah taking a firm stand on portfolio allocation. He said the vacant post would be filled after the session. On Minister Zameer Ahmed's decision regarding flag hoisting, he said the minister had mentioned the BBMP election issue in his letter and should explain it himself. He also criticised the BJP for raising the matter politically.

On Belagavi civic issues, Jarkiholi said the long-pending demand for a resolution declaring Belagavi an integral

Jarkiholi said portfolio talks continue, the vacant post will be filled after the session, and criticised BJP's politicisation of Zameer Ahmed's flag-hoisting decision

part of Karnataka should be addressed. He said several meetings and suggestions had already been given to the corporation and urged the media to highlight the delay.

Jarkiholi also spoke about drought and water concerns. He said he would inspect Yaragatti, Saundatti and Ramdurg taluks, where preliminary reports indicate crop damage across 29,000 hectares. He said the report would be sent to the Centre for further action.

Regarding the proposed water project involving Maharashtra, he said five TMC of surplus water would not create problems and discussions with Maharashtra officials were planned. He also said the proposal to increase the distance between sugar factories from 15 to 25 kilometres should be considered by the Cabinet.

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Gadag reports 80% crop damage amid drought

CH NEWS, GADAG

Nearly 80% of crops in Gadag district have reportedly been damaged because of poor rainfall, with the district receiving 32% less rain than normal.

Higher Education and District In-charge Minister Basavaraja Rayardi said the preliminary crop loss has been estimated at ₹218 crore.

Speaking to reporters at the Gadag District Stadium, Rayardi said the district had an important place in India's freedom struggle. He recalled that Independence Day celebrates the end of British rule and the beginning of democratic governance. He said people should continue to rise above differences of caste, religion and political affiliation.

The minister said district in-charge ministers have a responsibility to coordinate departments, address public concerns and ensure government programmes reach people effectively. He added that elected representatives in Gadag have valuable experience, their suggestions would be considered while planning development works.

Rayardi said drought conditions were reviewed in seven taluks covering four Assembly constituencies after Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar sought an assessment. Except Nargund, most areas have received inadequate rainfall, while drought conditions were also noticed in Nargund despite heavy rain in June. Officials submitted a detailed crop damage report in Bengaluru on August 11. The minister said rural employment demand has increased because of the drought. Workers will soon receive employment under the expanded guarantee programme, with up to 125 days allowed. He said each district needs substantial financial support and urged the Centre to provide assistance. The state alone may struggle to manage the crisis, he added.



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32% Rainfall deficit across Gadag district	
■ 80%	Crops reportedly damaged in district
■ ₹218 crore	Preliminary estimated crop-loss value
■ 7 taluks	Drought situation reviewed across district
■ 125 days	Employment permitted under new Guarantee Act
₹500 crore+	Estimated grant requirement per district

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CH NEWS, KUSHTAGI

Gadag sportsperson Malathi Inamati, a South Asian Games gold medalist in para throw ball, said people with congenital disabilities or disabilities caused by accidents have opportunities to take part in sports.

However, she said a lack of information prevents talented students and citizens from finding the right platforms and developing their skills.

Speaking as chief guest at the 80th Independence Day celebration held at Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam English Medium School in Hirebannigola

on Saturday, Inamati said life's difficulties should not stop anyone from pursuing success. She recalled her difficult journey after an accident and said determination can open new paths during hard times. She urged younger generation to remember freedom fighters.

School vice president Chandrakala Krishnamurthy said Independence Day should not be limited to August 15, but should remind people of the lives and sacrifices of those who served the nation. Founder Rehmanasab Doddamani said the occasion should inspire children and adults with patriotism and help young people understand the spirit of sacrifice behind the country's freedom and its values today.

School president Imambi Dodamani hoisted the national flag and presided over the programme.

Students presented patriotic speeches, dances and cultural performances. School administrator Sania Doddamani, headmistress Manjula PB and retired bank officer Devappa were among those present. The programme highlighted national pride and the need to give every talented person a fair chance.

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Savadi announces big push for district development

CH NEWS, KARWAR

District In-charge Minister Lakshmana Savadi said the government will implement 10 ambitious programmes within 100 days to speed up development, improve governance and support farmers, youth and infrastructure across the state.

Speaking after hoisting the national flag at the Independence Day ceremony in Karwar, he said projects including Farmer Mitra, Gramanubhav, Yuva Udyog Setu, Drug Free Karnataka, Public Service Department, Land Guarantee and Karnataka Mobility Grid Mission would be taken up. He



said steps were being taken to fill vacant government posts quickly and ensure transparency in recruitment examinations. He added that guarantee schemes had improved household finances, with major assistance reaching families in

Uttara Kannada through Shakti, Anna Bhagya, Gruha Lakshmi, Gruha Jyothi and Yuva Nidhi schemes.

With rainfall 16% below normal, the district has arranged 72 private borewells for drinking water and taken steps to protect livestock from fodder shortages. Each Assembly constituency has received Rs.1 crore for drinking water needs. Under employment schemes, 1.85 lakh man-days have been created and 10,072 workers employed. About 12,000 works are underway, focusing on drought prevention, flood control, landslide prevention, afforestation and school development.

A 300-bed super-specialty hospital has been sanctioned, with Rs.100 crore released initially. MRI and CT scan machines have been installed, while cancer care facilities are planned. Savadi urged people to preserve the unity that won independence, rise above caste, religion and language differences, and help build a healthy, prosperous and equal society. Police, forest staff, Home Guards and students joined the parade, while meritorious employees and students were honoured during the celebrations. Cultural programmes also added patriotic spirit.

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Karwar celebrates 80th Independence Day with unity

Karwar marked the 80th Independence Day with flag hoisting ceremonies at the Information and Public Relations Department and Mini Vidhana Soudha on Saturday. Assistant Director B. Shivakumar and staff attended the department programme. At Mini Vidhana Soudha, KSMCA Chairman and MLA Satish K. Sail hoisted the flag. District Collector K. Lakshmi-

priya, Deputy Collector Sajid Mulla and officials joined the event. A digital information board displaying government schemes was inaugurated at the premises by District In-charge Minister Lakshmana Savadi. The celebrations highlighted patriotism, public service and awareness of govt programmes, bringing officials and staff together in a spirit of national pride.

Minister Nagendra criticises cleaning of Kharge speech venue

BALLARI

Planning and Statistics Minister B. Nagendra said he would give a strong response to allegations made against him by former minister B. Sriramulu.

Speaking at a press conference in Ballari on Saturday, Nagendra said the issue should first be discussed in the Assembly.

Nagendra said the allegations were politically motivated and that his case was already before the court. He noted that everyone has the legal right to present arguments before the judiciary.



QUICK READ

Police arrest man
Growing Ganja
in garden

Shivamogga
Anandapur police arrested Basavaraj for allegedly growing ganja illegally in a garden at Gauthampur village in Sagar taluk. Acting on a tip-off, police raided the garden behind his house and seized 16.400 kg of fresh ganja worth an estimated Rs 2.10 lakh. Another accused, Kumar, allegedly fled the spot and police are searching for him. A case has been registered against both accused at Anandapur police station. Meanwhile, Sagar Town police arrested Hafeez Ur Rehman, 27, for allegedly selling MDMA near the S.N. Nagar market. Police seized MDMA worth around Rs 20,000 and registered a case under the NDPS Act.

Canara Bank gives
scholarships to girls
in Chitradurga

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA
Canara Bank's Chitradurga branch distributed scholarships and certificates to schoolgirls under its Canara Vidya Jyoti 2026 scheme. The programme was held on Saturday at Hireguntanur village in Chitradurga taluk. Girls from backward communities studying in primary and high schools received financial support to continue their education. Bank officials said the initiative aims to encourage girls from disadvantaged families to pursue studies and build better futures. Head teachers T. Dhananjaya of M. Raghavendra High School and N.R. Bhavani of the primary school attended the programme along with students. The scholarship distribution encouraged families to support girls' education and helped promote equal opportunities.

Dalits, minorities still
face exploitation:
Shyamraj Birti

Udupi
Social activist Shyamraj Birti said that despite India gaining independence from British rule, sections of society, particularly Dalits and minorities, continue to face exploitation and discrimination. Speaking at an Independence Day programme in Udupi on Saturday, Birti said political freedom had been achieved decades ago, but social and economic equality remained incomplete. He stressed the need to address continuing discrimination and ensure that the benefits of development reached all sections of society. Birti said the sacrifices made during the freedom struggle should be remembered not only through celebrations but also by protecting the democratic and constitutional values for which generations fought.

Shravana Saturday draws 40,000 devotees to Anjanadri

GANGAVATHI
Around 40,000 devotees visited the Anjanadri Anjaneya temple at Chikkarampur in Gangavathi taluk on Saturday, leading to heavy crowds and prolonged traffic congestion on the Huligi-Anegundi route. The first Saturday of the Shravana month, combined with August 15 being a public holiday, attracted a large number of devotees from Koppal and neighbouring districts. The rush began in the morning and continued until evening, putting considerable pressure on the temple staff and local arrangements.



Ballari marks Independence Day with development focus

Nagendra highlighted Gandhi's Ballari and Sandur visits, the district's reform history, and said five state guarantee schemes benefited thousands of families

CH NEWS, BALLARI

District In-charge Minister B. Nagendra said Ballari's contribution to India's freedom struggle remains unforgettable. Speaking at the 80th Independence Day celebration at BMCRC ground on Saturday, he recalled the sacrifices made by local people and leaders against British rule. He said Ballari played an important role in Karnataka's freedom movement and urged citizens to protect national unity and integrity. Nagendra recalled Mahatma Gandhi's visits to Ballari and Sandur and highlighted the district's history of social reform. He said the state's five guarantee schemes had reached thousands of families. Under Shakti, women made 8.02 crore free bus journeys



by July 31, with Rs.323.29 crore spent. Annabhagya provides 10 kg of foodgrains monthly to 10,35,434 beneficiaries, while Gruha Lakshmi support has reached 2,85,403 women. Due to weak monsoon rains, only 67,000 hectares, or 42 percent of the district's sowing target, had been covered. Ballari, Sandur, Kampli and Kurugodu were declared drought-affected. The minister

said drinking water and agriculture would receive priority, while private borewells and fodder support were being arranged. Employment guarantee works would also help prevent rural migration. KMERC projects Rs.2,000 crore included hospitals, schools, roads, housing and watershed works. Plans for an Apparel Jeans Park, skill development and tourism were mentioned. Programme fea-

At a Glance
■ 8.02 crore: Free bus journeys under Shakti
■ ₹323.29 crore: Shakti scheme expenditure till July 31
■ 10,35,434: Annabhagya beneficiaries receiving monthly foodgrains
■ 2,85,403: Women receiving Gruha Lakshmi assistance
■ 67,000 hectares: Area covered under district sowing
■ ₹2,000 crore: KMERC projects planned for development

tured a parade and performances. Nagendra inaugurated 46 garbage collection vehicles and urged citizens to work for progress.

MLA Gaviyappa praises children's dance performance

HOSAPETE

Vijayanagara MLA H R Gaviyappa praised the energetic dance performance by young children during the 80th Independence Day celebrations held at the District Stadium in Hosapete on Saturday. The children's performance attracted the attention of the audience and added colour to the Independence Day programme. Their presentation, marked by enthusiasm and patriotic spirit, received appreciation from dignitaries and spectators gathered at the stadium. MLA Gaviyappa appreciated the children for their confidence, discipline and talent.

Minister vows probe into deadly forest firing

CH NEWS, CHAMARAJANAGAR

Three people were killed in an alleged firing involving forest department personnel in the Holedatti forest area of the Kaveri Wildlife Sanctuary in Chamarajanagar district, while another person was injured and is undergoing treatment. The deceased were identified as Anthonyswamy, Peter and Kumar, residents of Tomiyar Palya village in Hanur taluk. According to forest officials, patrol staff received information about suspected illegal hunting in the Shagya beat and reached the area, where a firing incident reportedly followed. After news of the deaths spread, anger grew among residents. Some villagers entered the DRFO office at Shagya and damaged furniture, prompting concern over the situation. Locals disputed the forest department's account and claimed the deceased were farmers who had not gone into the forest for hunting. They alleged that the men were shot in the name of a counterattack, although they had not attacked the personnel. The villagers demanded an impartial investigation by a retired judge and action against anyone found responsible. Minister C. Puttarangashetty said he had spoken to officials and was told that the three men were killed after suspected poachers al-

Puttarangashetty cited officials' account of retaliatory firing, while relatives disputed it, identifying victims as farmers and demanding justice and accountability

legedly attacked forest staff with guns, leading to retaliatory firing. He said he would verify the details and take appropriate action. The statement has not ended the dispute, as relatives continue to reject the official version. They said the three men were farmers, and one of the deceased had a wife and three young children. The families have demanded justice and accountability. Protests followed in Hanur as villagers from Tomiyar Palya, Martalli and nearby areas gathered in large numbers and blocked the road. Protesters carried posters accusing forest officials of killing innocent people in the name of an encounter. Hanur MLA M.R. Manjunatha visited the protest and said efforts would be made to ensure that those responsible face action. Former MLA R. Narendra also met protesters and said the government should support the victims' families and consider assistance, including government jobs for eligible heirs. More than 200 police personnel were deployed as tension remained high around the forest office.

'Freedom means opportunity to live responsibly'

HARAPANAHALLI

Freedom should be understood as an opportunity to live with responsibility and contribute positively to society, Harapanahalli MLA M P Latha Mallikarjun said while addressing an Independence Day programme in Harapanahalli on Saturday. Speaking during the 80th Independence Day celebrations, she said the country's freedom was achieved through the sacrifices and struggles of countless freedom fighters. Remembering their contribution should inspire citizens to fulfil their responsibilities towards the nation and society.

SOUTH INDIA BADMINTON TOURNAMENT IN RAICHUR SEPTEMBER 5

RAICHUR

A South India-level badminton tournament will be held in Raichur from September 5 to provide greater opportunities for talented players, particularly those from rural areas, former minister Kumar Bangarappa said. Speaking in Raichur, Bangarappa said the tournament would bring together badminton players from across southern states and provide them with a competitive platform to showcase their skills. The event is expected to attract players, coaches, officials and sports enthusiasts from different parts of South India. He emphasised the importance of encouraging athletes from rural areas, where many talented youngsters lack access to adequate training facilities and major competitions. Events such as the proposed tournament, he said, could help identify emerging players and provide them with valuable exposure. Bangarappa said sports de-

velopment should extend beyond major cities and benefit athletes from smaller towns and villages as well. Providing regular competitions, training opportunities and better infrastructure would encourage more youngsters to take up badminton and other sports. The tournament will also provide participating players an opportunity to gain experience by competing against athletes from different regions. Such exposure, he said, can help players improve their skills, confidence and competitive ability. He highlighted the need for continued support from government departments, sports associations, coaches and other stakeholders to strengthen the sporting ecosystem. Rural athletes, in particular, should be encouraged and provided opportunities to compete at district, state and national levels. The South India badminton tournament is expected to in-

clude competitions across different categories, with further details regarding venues, schedules and participation to be announced by the organisers. Raichur hosting a major regional badminton tournament is also expected to boost interest in sports among local youngsters. It could encourage schools, colleges and sports clubs to increase participation and identify promising talent. Bangarappa said such sporting events could contribute to building discipline, teamwork, fitness and leadership qualities among young people. He called for collective efforts to create a stronger sporting culture and ensure that talented athletes receive opportunities to progress. The tournament, beginning September 5, is expected to serve as an important platform for badminton development in Raichur and across the wider region.

PASE knowledge city celebrates 80th Independence Day

MANGALURU

The 80th Independence Day was celebrated with patriotic fervour at PASE Knowledge City, a group of educational institutions managed by the P A Educational Trust in Mangaluru. The celebrations brought together members of the management, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents. The national flag was hoisted during the programme, followed by tributes to the freedom fighters whose sacrifices paved the way for India's independence. Students actively participated in the celebrations and pre-

sented patriotic songs, cultural programmes and other performances. The programmes created an atmosphere of national pride and enthusiasm across the campus, with students showcasing their talents while reflecting on the significance of Independence Day. Speakers at the event highlighted the importance of education in shaping responsible citizens and urged students to play an active role in the development of the country. They stressed that young people should combine academic excellence with strong values, discipline and a sense of social responsibility. The gathering also focused

on the importance of preserving national unity, integrity and communal harmony. Students were briefed about the history of India's freedom struggle and the contributions of the leaders and ordinary citizens who fought for independence. Participants were encouraged to understand the responsibilities that come with freedom and contribute positively to society. Speakers said Independence Day should not be viewed merely as a day of celebration, but also as an occasion to remember the past, assess the country's progress and renew the commitment to building a better future.



QUICK READ



Amritsar airport promises world class travel experience

AMRITSAR
Amritsar Airport celebrated India's 80th Independence Day with great enthusiasm. Airport Director Anirudh Kumar Sharma addressed the gathering, emphasizing the commitment to providing safe and seamless travel. He highlighted new hub-and-spoke operations, modern baggage systems, free Wi-Fi, and a unique fly library for passengers. Sharma noted that Amritsar serves as a vital spiritual gateway for global tourists and NRIs. He praised the dedicated staff and urged everyone to contribute toward a developed India. The event concluded with patriotic slogans, celebrating national unity, technological growth, and excellent passenger service standards.

BJP seeks action over defamatory posters in Trichy

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI
Local BJP leaders in Tiruchirappalli have demanded strict police action following the appearance of defamatory posters targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi. District president K.K. Ondimuthu submitted a formal complaint to the city police commissioner, reporting that offensive materials were pasted near the party office and across various areas. The complaint alleges that these fabricated messages aim to ruin the Prime Minister's reputation and disturb public harmony. Police are currently investigating the incident, reviewing locations, and working to identify the culprits behind this politically motivated act.

BJP protests 'insult to sanctity of I-Day' in Thrissur

THRISSUR
Kerala Youth Welfare Minister OJ Janeesh strongly criticized a BJP protest held during the 80th Independence Day celebrations. BJP workers staged a parallel march in Thrissur to sing the full version of Vande Mataram, sparking a heated political row. Minister Janeesh condemned the demonstration, calling it an insult to the sanctity of the national festival and claiming the party lacked a role in freedom celebrations. Meanwhile, BJP leaders defended their actions, stating the protest opposed those refusing to sing the complete anthem. Authorities continue monitoring political tensions across the state.

Pande plays PM's warning on ideological mindsets

NEW DELHI
Congress leader Manoj Pande launched a sharp attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of avoiding critical domestic concerns during his 80th Independence Day address at the Red Fort. Speaking to reporters, Pande stated that citizens expected a comprehensive 12 year report card outlining government efforts regarding job creation, agricultural welfare, youth development, and soaring inflation rates. Instead, he claimed the leadership re-

SONIA, KHARGE FACE VANDE MATARAM HEAT

A video from Cong I-Day event triggers row with gestures by Sonia and Kharge being interpreted by critics as a signal to stop Vande Mataram; Cong junks charges

NEW DELHI

A political storm erupted after senior Congress leaders were seen talking while the national song played during Independence Day celebrations. The BJP strongly criticized the opposition party, accusing its top leadership of showing utter disrespect toward 'Vande Mataram' and demanding a formal public apology. The controversy began after video footage from the Congress headquarters showed party president Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi conversing and calling an aide while the national song was being rendered. BJP MP Sudhanshu Trivedi lashed out at the opposition, pointing out that this historic Independence Day marked the full, uncut rendition of the song. He argued that the behavior of leaders like Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, and Mallikarjun Kharge proved they have still not accepted the full version of the song, raising questions about their patriotism. BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari also criticized the leadership, claiming their actions reflected deep annoyance during the national trib-



Political war of words

During the event at the opposition headquarters, key figures like Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi appeared occupied in conversation. Ruling party spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi slammed the behavior, calling it shameful. He emphasized that the song holds deep historic value because early freedom fighters honored it before the national anthem was chosen. "They were casually talking and passing remarks while our sacred song played," Trivedi told reporters. "This shows they still do not accept the full version of the song." Another spokesperson added harsh words, questioning their true allegiance to the nation and the freedom struggle.

ute. The ruling party warned that failure to issue an apology would expose the opposition's lack of true allegiance to the nation and its historic freedom struggle. In response, Congress MP Jairam Ramesh quickly de-

fended the party leaders. He clarified that there was absolutely no attempt to interrupt or stop the song. He explained that Kharge had been standing for a long time, prompting Sonia Gandhi to ask an aide to bring a chair for him.

Cong clears the air

Facing heavy backlash, opposition MP Jairam Ramesh quickly stepped forward to defend his party chiefs. He explained that there was never any attempt to stop the music. Instead, he stated that leaders were simply asking staff to bring a chair for the Congress President who had been standing for a long time. As the debate continues to heat up across television channels and social media platforms, citizens watch closely to see if the political tension will ease or grow further over the coming days.

The heated exchange added political tension to the national holiday. While the ruling party maintained that the incident highlighted disrespect toward national symbols, the opposition dismissed the claims as baseless criticism. Both sides looked horns over the optics of the event as the nation marked its 80th Independence Day with various political developments and high-profile celebrations across the country.

Kanimozhi recalls father's fight for CM's right to hoist tricolour

CHENNAI

DMK MP Kanimozhi marked India's 80th Independence Day by remembering her father and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M Karunanidhi. She recalled his historic struggle to secure the right of elected state chief ministers to hoist the national flag, emphasizing his lifelong dedication to strengthening federalism and protecting state dignity. Sharing a special message on social media, Kanimozhi noted that India won freedom after countless sacrifices. She explained that in earlier years, governors held the sole right to unfurl the tricolour in state capitals during national celebrations. Through sustained campaigning, Karunanidhi successfully established that elected chief ministers should hoist the flag, reinforcing democratic values and state autonomy.



Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu celebrated the historic anniversary with grand events across the region. Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay led the state-level celebrations at Fort St. George in Chennai. Arriving amid tight security, he received a ceremonial guard of honor before hoisting the national flag from the ramparts as the national anthem played. Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Vijay paid heartfelt tributes to the brave freedom fighters who gave their lives for the nation. He strongly reiterated his government's commitment to defending Tamil Nadu's rights and interests while delivering honest, transparent, and corruption-free governance. He also stressed the importance of social justice, equality, and removing barriers based on caste, religion, language, or race. Across the state, citizens and leaders united in a shared spir-

Kalaigmar for a cause

- > **Historical context:** State governors traditionally unfurled the Tricolour at official Independence Day state functions.
- > **Karunanidhi's campaign:** M Karunanidhi (Kalaigmar) led a firm political and democratic campaign to change this protocol.
- > **Core achievement:** The effort successfully established and secured the sovereign right of democratically elected Chief Ministers to hoist the national flag in their respective states.

it of patriotism, honoring the sacrifices of past heroes and reaffirming their pledge to build a progressive, inclusive, and self-reliant nation for future generations.

'There is no controversy': Gehlot on Vande Mataram row at Cong event

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader and former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has dismissed claims of any dispute regarding the national song during recent Independence Day celebrations. Speaking to media persons, Gehlot made it clear that there was no controversy at all at the

party headquarters. When asked about the details, he noted that party leadership or senior leader Jairam Ramesh would explain the official stand. The clarification followed strong criticism from Bharatiya Janata Party leader Amit Malviya. Taking to social media, Malviya alleged that senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi

tried to halt the full rendition of Vande Mataram during the national event. According to the BJP leader, Sonia Gandhi appeared upset after the opening stanzas and signaled for the music to stop, while Rahul Gandhi also indicated the same. However, organizers reportedly informed them that the complete song must be performed.

Break down hatred, caste divides: Ramdev

HARIDWAR

Yoga Guru Baba Ramdev hoisted the national flag at Patanjali Yogpeeth in Haridwar to mark India's 80th Independence Day. Addressing reporters after the ceremony, he made a passionate appeal to citizens to break down all walls of hatred rooted in caste, community, or religion, and called for a collective pledge to dismantle the legacy of the 'divide and rule' mindset. Highlighting the true essence of freedom, Ramdev stated that the nation belongs equally to its 145 crore citizens rather than any single political party or ruling establishment. He emphasized that true independence means prioritizing the country's self-respect and building a strong, self-reliant system across education, healthcare, and the economy. While acknowledging India's rapid growth across various sectors, he urged the youth and citizens to focus on constructive nation-building rather than falling prey to hostility or division. Addressing political dynamics, Ramdev remarked that political leaders should engage in healthy democratic discussions rather than treating each other as

'Focus on progress, unity'

Baba Ramdev noted that India is making remarkable progress across agriculture, industry, and the economy. He stressed that true independence means building independent systems in education, healthcare, and finance while prioritizing national self-respect. However, he expressed deep concern over rising hostility. He stated that people from various communities and backgrounds often act with unnecessary malice toward one another. "We must break down all these walls of hatred," Ramdev told reporters, calling for a collective pledge to stop dividing the nation.

bitter enemies. He noted that power rests with the collective will of the country and advised both the ruling alliance and the opposition to foster mutual respect and goodwill.

'Safeguarding sovereignty a shared duty'

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Director General of Police Deepam Seth hoisted the national flag at the Police Headquarters in Dehradun, marking the celebrations of India's 80th Independence Day. During the event, he administered an oath of national unity to all attendees and highlighted that safeguarding the country's sovereignty is a shared duty. Addressing the gathering, DGP Seth paid rich tributes to freedom fighters and immortal martyrs whose supreme sacrifices secured a free nation. He emphasized that protecting the unity, integrity, constitutional values, and democratic framework of India is the collective responsibility of every citizen, noting that police personnel have always stood at the forefront of this mission.

The DGP praised the exceptional professionalism and competence of the Uttarakhand Police. He pointed out key operational successes, including managing secure arrangements during the Prime Minister's roadshow, executing the high-profile Nyaya Sanhita exhibition, and ensuring the smooth safety and traffic regulation for millions of devotees during major events like the Char Dham Yatra and Kanwar Mela. He also lauded the force's accomplishments in cybercrime management, passport verification awards, and disaster rescue models displayed during critical operations. Highlighting personnel welfare, Seth shared that over 950 officers and staff members received timely promotions over the past year to boost motivation. He extended deep appreciation to all



Collective responsibility of everyone to protect the unity and integrity of the nation, the Constitution and democratic values. In fulfilling this responsibility, police personnel have always remained at the forefront.

- Deepam Seth, Uttarakhand DGP

frontline workers, traffic personnel, wireless operators, and cyber experts, describing them as the real strength of the state police. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of prestigious commendation discs and certificates to selected police personnel for their distinguished service.

PM MODI NERVOUS AND SHAKY: KEJRIWAL

NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal launched a sharp attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, describing his Independence Day address as nervous and lacking confidence. Kejriwal posted a video clip on social media featuring a segment of the Prime Minister's speech at the Red Fort. In the shared footage, the Prime Minister highlighted the growth of the nation's bioeconomy sector since 2014. According to the former Delhi Chief Minister, the delivery and overall demeanor of the Prime Minister during this moment reflected uncertainty and hesitation. At the same time, opposition leaders voiced strong criticism regarding the Prime Minister's call for women's quotas in legislative assemblies and the Lok Sabha. Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh dismissed the pitch as insincere, pointing out that the historic Women's Reservation Bill was passed unanimously back in September 2023. He blamed the central administration for delaying its implementation, noting

that it prevented female representation in the 2024 general elections and was only notified recently in April 2026. Ramesh added that foundation work for female quotas actually began decades ago under constitutional amendments introduced in 1993. Nationalist Congress Party leader Supriya Sule also weighed in on the discussion. Speaking to journalists in Mumbai, Sule reminded the public that opposition parties fully supported the legislation when it came up for voting, ensuring its smooth passage through both houses of Parliament with unified backing. Political tensions frequently rise during national celebrations as rival factions analyze leaders' speeches and policy timelines. While the ruling administration promotes its long-term development goals and inclusive governance agendas, opposition figures continue to question the timing, execution, and true motives behind major policy announcements. These ongoing debates highlight the deep political divisions as parties prepare for upcoming electoral battles across various states.





FROM BORDERS TO COASTS: A NATION UNITED

One billion dreams, one unbroken spirit. Celebrating 80 years of freedom

Delhi will play greater role in India's journey towards Viksit Bharat: CM

NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta hoisted the national flag at Chhatrasal Stadium during the state-level celebrations for the 80th Independence Day.

Addressing the public, she declared that the national capital will play a vital role in India's journey toward becoming a fully developed nation by 2047. She emphasized that Delhi's continuous progress is directly tied to the overall pride and prestige of the entire country.

Highlighting the special significance of the capital, the Chief Minister noted that Delhi embodies the nation's democratic spirit and rich cultural diversity. She stressed that her administration is fully committed to building a clean, modern, and self-reliant Delhi that creates robust opportunities for both women and youth.

Supporting these remarks, NDMC Vice Chairman Kuljeet Singh Chahal stated that the Chief Minister clearly outlined a forward-looking roadmap for a developed capital. He noted that these initiatives align seamlessly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's national vision, ensuring that the younger generation stands as the primary beneficiary of a progressive and empowered nation.

Delhi Minister Kapil Mish-



ra also congratulated citizens on the historic occasion, praising the government's ongoing achievements and its clear roadmap for the future. Meanwhile, Minister Ashish Sood confirmed that the local administration is moving rapidly to implement policies in line with the Prime Minister's guidance and the newly announced 'Saptadhara' framework.

The grand event concluded with vibrant cultural programs, musical displays by schoolchildren, and renewed pledges from leaders and citizens.

Everyone united in a shared commitment to uphold national integrity, reject internal distractions, and drive forward with discipline, hard work, and deep devotion to build a stronger and fully prosperous future for the entire country.

'Youth should avoid distractions and focus on nation-building'

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta delivered a powerful Independence Day message, urging the youth to avoid distractions and focus on nation-building. Echoing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent warnings, Gupta cautioned citizens about the rise of "intellectual Naxals" who threaten the country from within. She described India as currently facing a complex "2.5-front war," fighting external enemies while battling internal forces that insult national pride and our armed forces. Beyond these warnings, Gupta outlined an ambitious future for the national capital. She promised to transform Delhi into an "Active, Attentive, and Attractive" city through better governance and transparency. Her plan includes launching new school courses, installing smart classrooms, and building modern labs. The Chief Minister encouraged young people to look past social media trends, instead using their creativity for innovation, start-ups, and public service to help India grow stronger and more united every single day.

Joshi calls for contribution for developed India



NEW DELHI

Union leaders and regional heads celebrated the 80th Independence Day with great enthusiasm across the country. Leaders hoisted the national flag at their official residences and public venues, paying heartfelt tributes to the brave freedom fighters who secured India's freedom through immense sacrifices.

Union Minister of Education Prahlad Joshi hoisted the tricolor at his New Delhi residence. In a message shared on social media, he stated that the national flag embodies courage and sacrifice.

He urged every citizen to contribute toward building a stronger, prosperous, and developed nation. Joining him in the capital, Union Minister Giriraj Singh also unfurled the flag at his home. Singh emphasized that the historic day serves as a moment to strengthen our collective resolve for nation-building while remembering past struggles.

Meanwhile, in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan hoisted the national flag at the Central Stadium. Addressing the public, he took a firm pledge to build a progressive, safe, and modern society rooted in compassion and unity. He noted that the youth represent the true wealth of the country, possessing the vision needed to lead future generations forward.

During his address, the Chief Minister also remembered victims of recent natural disasters.

He assured the public that the government stands firmly with affected families and focuses on implementing advanced scientific disaster-mitigation systems.

A unified Patna: Festive politics or peace?

PATNA

India celebrated its 80th Independence Day with great joy and deep pride across the nation. People from all walks of life came together to honor freedom fighters and remember their huge sacrifices. The special day focused on youth power under the core theme of 'Yuva Shakti for Viksit Bharat at 2047'.

In Patna, political leaders marked the national festival with special events. Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad Yadav joined party workers at the local office to celebrate the day. Meanwhile, Jan Shakti Janata Dal national president Tej Pratap Yadav hoisted the tricolor in the city. He shared warm wishes with citizens, encouraging harmony across every community.

Earlier, Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary hoisted the national flag at Gandhi Maidan. He noted that the glorious festival reminds everyone of the painful struggles and ultimate martyrdom of freedom fighters. He stated that this historic day inspires deep patriotism and unity among countrymen, helping build a strong and united nation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation from the historic Red Fort for the 13th consecutive year. He paid heartfelt tribute to brave souls who fought against colonial rule. He emphasized that the dreams of past heroes

continue to guide the country toward becoming a developed nation. Powered by over one billion citizens, the country is rapidly growing across all major sectors.

Across towns and villages, schools, offices, and homes hosted flag-hoisting ceremonies. Citizens gathered to sing the national anthem and share

sweets. The youth played a major role in local events, showing great enthusiasm for the future. People renewed their promise to work hard for national growth and prosperity. This special anniversary brought a fresh wave of hope and determination to every corner of the country.



AKSHARDHAM TEMPLE MARKS 80TH I-DAY



NEW DELHI

The 80th Independence Day was marked with deep devotion and national pride at Swaminarayan Akshardham in New Delhi. A special program held inside the temple premises paid tribute to brave martyrs who gave their lives for India's freedom. Devotees and saints gathered to pray for the country's unity, peace, and ongoing progress.

During the event, senior BAPS saint Gnaneshwar Swami shared inspiring history about the freedom movement.

He recalled that during the historic Dandi March, Mahatma Gandhi shared his dream of complete independence with Shastriji Ma-

haraj. Following those instructions, Yogiji Maharaj prayed for India's freedom for eighteen long years by chanting 25 rosaries daily. This powerful story highlights how deep spiritual practice and true patriotism worked together for the welfare of the nation.

Swami emphasized that the true strength of India rests firmly on its unity. He noted that during this current era of national growth, every citizen must put the country first. He encouraged people to fulfill their daily duties with honesty.

He specifically urged the younger generation to protect national integrity and preserve rich cultural values.

Blessings poured in from Guruhari Mahant Swami

Maharaj, who called on everyone to walk the path of harmony and community service. He prayed for constant peace, prosperity, and global well-being for India. He reminded the gathering to always honor the supreme sacrifices made by freedom fighters.

All the devotees and saints present at the grand celebration took a solemn pledge.

They promised to dedicate themselves to national service and unity. The vibrant temple atmosphere remained filled with high patriotic spirit, spiritual warmth, and a shared vision for a stronger future. Citizens left with renewed hope, ready to contribute toward a brighter and more prosperous tomorrow for the entire nation.

India seen as strong global nation: Shinde

THANE

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde stated that the world now looks at India as a strong country rather than just a market. Speaking at the Collector's Office in Thane during the 80th Independence Day celebrations, he hoisted the national flag and shared key local goals.

Shinde announced that the state government aims to make Mumbai and the entire state of Maharashtra completely free of slums. He



promised that authorities will spare no effort to achieve this mission. He also highlighted major urban infrastructure updates, noting that the Thane Metro project is essential for local

commuters. Furthermore, he confirmed that Rs.302 crore has been granted for sewage systems, and a new civil hospital will open this year.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis hoisted the tricolor at the Bombay High Court building. Across the nation, leaders marked the historic anniversary with inspiring addresses. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led celebrations at the Red Fort, presenting a grand vision for national growth.

ENRICHING FUTURE

Will Ranchi's Tiranga Yatra spark recruitment reform?

RANCHI

Thousands of student protesters in Ranchi took out a vibrant Tiranga Yatra to mark the 80th Independence Day. Carrying the national flag, young job aspirants marched peacefully from Jaipal Singh Munda Stadium to Albert Ekka Chowk, raising loud slogans of patriotism.

The march marked the 22nd day of an ongoing statewide agitation. Students have been demonstrating against alleged irregularities and corruption in recruitment examinations conducted by the state public service and staff selection commissions. Protesters are demanding greater transparency, strict action against wrongdoers, and an indepen-

dent inquiry to protect their academic futures.

Several student leaders participating in the movement have been on indefinite hunger strikes. Some participants, whose health deteriorated during the prolonged fast, joined the patriotic rally from wheelchairs or hospital beds. Leader Devendra Nath Mahto alleged that heavy police deployment at Sadar Hospital restricted him from joining the flag-hoisting march in person.

Despite heavy tensions and recent clashes during earlier demonstrations, the Independence Day march remained largely focused on national pride. Participants emphasized that true freedom includes justice, equal opportunity, and transparency for every citizen.



Voices from the ground

Devendra Nath Mahto: Questioned why police heavily guarded his hospital room when he only wanted to peacefully hoist the national flag.

Umme Habiba: Expressed strong resolve to join the march despite poor health, calling it pure devotion to the motherland.

Ravinder Paswan: Stated that students kept administrative demands aside for the day to focus entirely on honoring India's freedom.

Gujarat leading the way in blending heritage with modern progress: CM

AMRELI

Gujarat celebrated the 80th Independence Day with great enthusiasm and patriotic pride in Amreli. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel hoisted the national flag and saluted the tricolor at the state-level event.

He proudly stated that Gujarat is leading the way in blending heritage with modern progress under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

During his address, the Chief Minister emphasized that the mantra of 'Nation

First' guides all state policies. He noted that the growth journey of the past two and a half decades has brought unprecedented milestones. The state has successfully combined ancient spirituality with modern sectors like green energy, artificial intelligence, and semiconductors. Four regional conferences have already attracted massive investments, boosting manufacturing and traditional industries across local districts.

Special welfare announcements marked the festive occasion. The state increased



financial support for nutritious snacks provided at local Anganwadis to benefit millions of young children. Furthermore, the annual family income limit for overseas education loans was raised to help more students pursue higher studies abroad.

QUICK READ

Pakistan nuclear deterrence faces growing scrutiny

Washington

Pakistan's nuclear deterrence strategy is facing scrutiny as the country expands its conventional military capabilities. The report said Islamabad's "full-spectrum deterrence" doctrine has exposed limits, as nuclear weapons cannot prevent every crisis or military escalation. It cited the May 2025 Operation Sindoor period as highlighting these limitations. Recent public displays in Pakistan have focused on conventional military achievements, with nuclear weapons and missiles largely absent. The report said the military gains greater political benefit from conventional successes and pointed to increased defence spending and a new Army Rocket Force Command.

Russia North Korea cooperation deepens across sectors

Pyongyang

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russia and North Korea are actively cooperating across all sectors while working together to promote regional security and stability, according to North Korea's KCNA. In a message to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un marking Liberation Day, Putin said bilateral ties had developed into a comprehensive strategic partnership. He added that both countries would pursue constructive cooperation on important bilateral and international issues. Putin recently thanked Pyongyang for sending North Korean soldiers to support Russia's operations in the Kursk region. North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui also recently visited Russia for talks with Russian officials, highlighting the strengthening partnership between Moscow and Pyongyang.

Thumbay Group enters 30th year of UAE operations

AJMAN

Thumbay Group, founded in 1997 by Dr Thumbay Moideen, has entered its 30th year of operations in the United Arab Emirates, marking nearly three decades of growth from a medical education venture into a diversified academic healthcare group headquartered in Dubai.

The journey began with the establishment of Gulf Medical College in 1998 after Dr Moideen was invited by the ruling family of Ajman to establish a private medical college.

The institution later evolved into Gulf Medical University (GMU), which now has seven colleges, more than 50 accredited programmes and around 5,000 students from over 111 nationalities.

GMU also has academic and research partner-

Indonesia earthquake kills 38, Tsunami warning lifted

Authorities issued a tsunami warning, advising residents in vulnerable coastal regions to evacuate to higher ground immediately.

JAKARTA

A powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck off the coast of Indonesia early Saturday, killing at least 38 people, injuring more than a dozen others and damaging or collapsing buildings and homes, authorities said.

The earthquake triggered panic across parts of the country, which is frequently affected by powerful seismic activity. Several buildings and houses were toppled by the strong tremors, while residents rushed outdoors seeking safety.

Authorities initially issued a tsunami warning and advised people living along vulnerable coastal areas to move to higher ground. The warning was later lifted after Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agen-



cy reported that monitoring showed no significant changes in sea levels that could threaten coastal communities.

The initial earthquake was followed by several aftershocks, adding to concerns among residents and emergency responders. Rescue and relief teams began assessing damage and searching affected areas for people who may

have been trapped beneath collapsed structures.

East Manggarai in East Nusa Tenggara province was among the areas affected by the earthquake. Images from the region showed residents clearing rubble from damaged homes as authorities continued their response.

The powerful tremor caused widespread fear in communities near the epicentre, with people gathering in open areas as a precaution against further building collapses and aftershocks.

Indonesia is located along the Pacific Ring of Fire, a zone where several tectonic plates meet and which experiences frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Officials continued to assess the extent of damage and casualties following the disaster. Authorities also urged residents to remain cautious because aftershocks could continue even after the main earthquake. Emergency agencies were coordinating rescue and relief operations in affected areas, while officials monitored seismic activity and local conditions. Further details on casualties and damage were expected as assessment teams reached more locations.

Luigi Mangione admits shooting United Healthcare CEO

NEW YORK

Luigi Mangione admitted in a New York courtroom that he shot UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson in Manhattan, ending his long-standing denial of involvement in the killing.

Mangione made the admission while pleading guilty to federal stalking charges connected to Thompson's killing. Speaking slowly and deliberately before the court, he acknowledged that he had shot Thompson and knew that his actions were illegal.

Putin hails India's remarkable success on Independence Day

MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday praised India's "remarkable success" in economic, social, scientific and technological fields, saying the country is rightfully enjoying high esteem on the global stage.

In his Independence Day greetings to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Putin highlighted the growing India-Russia partnership and described bilateral relations as a special and privileged strategic partnership.

Putin said Moscow and New Delhi were cooperating across several areas and working effectively through multilateral platforms, including the United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and BRICS. He expressed confidence that continued cooperation would further strengthen ties and contribute to international security and stability.

Russian Ambassador to India Denis Alipov also conveyed his greetings on India's 80th Independence Day and praised the country's development journey. He assured that Russia's

India fills us with awe: Australian PM Anthony Albanese

CANBERRA

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Saturday extended his greetings to India on its 80th Independence Day, praising the country's achievements and describing it as the world's largest democracy and fastest-growing major economy.

In a statement, Albanese said India's journey to freedom had been difficult but was driven by determination, belief and a strong desire for independence. He said India had made remarkable progress during the eight decades since independence.

The Australian Prime Minister also highlighted the contribution of the Indian-Australian community to strengthening relations between the two countries. He said the community was celebrating India's heritage while also looking towards a promising future.

Albanese noted that the relationship between Australia and India had grown through strong economic and strategic partnerships and the contribution of Australians of Indian heritage. He described the Indian-Australian community as an important bridge between the two nations.

Recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Australia last month, Albanese said the bilateral relationship had become increasingly important. He said the warm reception received by Modi during his visit reflected the depth of ties between the two countries.

Albanese said Australia was looking forward to expanding cooperation with India in new and emerging areas, with sup-

As the world's largest democracy and fastest growing major economy, India fills us with awe at the scale of its achievements and the vastness of its potential.

- Anthony Albanese, Australian Prime Minister

ALBANESE PRAISES INDIAN-AUSTRALIAN TIES

Australian PM Anthony Albanese highlighted the Indian-Australian community as a vital bridge strengthening economic and strategic relations. Following PM Modi's recent visit, Australia looks forward to expanding bilateral cooperation in emerging fields.

port from the Indian-Australian community.

He joined the Indian community in celebrating the country's history, culture, diversity and achievements, while expressing confidence in the potential of the shared future between Australia and India.

During his Australia visit last month, Modi had also said the outcomes of the trip had strengthened the bilateral partnership and opened new avenues for cooperation across various sectors.

The two leaders have repeatedly highlighted the importance of expanding economic, strategic and people-to-people ties between India and Australia, with both countries seeking to build greater cooperation in emerging areas.

At least 20 killed in Nigeria community clashes

JOS

At least 20 people were killed in clashes between Kambari and Fulani communities in central Nigeria, a lawmaker and other sources said on Saturday.

The violence broke out on Friday evening, according to a resident who spoke to AFP. The clashes reportedly involved members of the two communities in the region, resulting in multiple deaths and heightened concerns over further violence.

Jafar Muhammad, a lawmaker representing the Borgu Federal Constituency, confirmed that at least 20 people had been killed in the clashes. He called for the immediate deployment of security forces to prevent the situation from escalating and protect residents in affected communities. The latest violence has raised concerns about security in central Nigeria, where clashes involving communities have periodically resulted in deaths, displacement and property damage.

PUBLIC NOTICE
DOCUMENT MISSING
Notice is hereby given by my client Smt. Gowri Devi W/o N. M. Hegde, Bengaluru - 560032, has lost the Original Sale Deed dated 19.11.2004, executed by The Ministry of Communications Employees Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd., Bangalore in favour of Smt. Gowri Devi W/o N. M. Hegde, Registered as Document No. YAN-1-16326/2004-05, Book-1, Stored in CD No. YAND92, Senior Sub-Registrar, Yalahanka, Bengaluru, in respect of Site No. 1657, Kathia No. 1112, situated at Sreerampura, Jakkur, Sampigehalli and Venkateshpura Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bengaluru North named as Dr. Shivaram Karanth Nagar. The above described Original Sale Deed was lost in Residency Road. In this regard a lost complaint was lodged in Bengaluru City Police vide Lost report No. 2368090/2026 dated 15.08.2026. If anybody is in possession of the original Sale Deed relating to the said property, they are requested to hand over the same to the below mentioned Address within "SEVEN DAYS" from the Date of this Publication.
Address for Service:
DINESH M BHAT, BAL, LLB
Vidhisha Legal, #38, "NIKUNJ", Aprameya Vrinda Layout, Uttarahalli Main Road, Sunkal Playa, Kengeri, Bengaluru - 560 060.
Mob No. : +91 9980063907.
Date: 15.08.2026 Place: Bengaluru

RAILWAY LINKS EXPAND

India, Nepal seek stronger connectivity and energy partnership

KATHMANDU

India's Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava on Saturday highlighted the expanding partnership between the two countries, with stronger connectivity, energy cooperation and infrastructure development emerging as key areas of bilateral engagement.

In his message on India's 80th Independence Day, Srivastava said the construction of roads, bridges and railway links was improving connectivity between India and Nepal. He said railway connectivity between the Indian



railway network and Biratnagar would make customs, trade and transit arrangements more efficient.

The ambassador also high-

lighted the launch of cross-border digital payments, saying the facility would make it easier for Nepali citizens working in India

Srivastava highlights strong India-Nepal ties

- **Growing Cooperation:** Bilateral ties expand in commerce, energy, and education.
- **Heritage Reconstruction:** India aided post-quake rebuilding of cultural heritage projects.
- **Leadership Transition:** PM Modi congratulated Nepal's new leadership after elections.

to send remittances to their families in Nepal.

Energy cooperation is an-

other major area of partnership. Srivastava said electricity transmission lines and related projects were contributing to sustainable development in both countries. He noted that Indian companies were also involved in developing several hydropower projects in Nepal.

He said stronger connectivity and bilateral cooperation were opening opportunities in emerging sectors such as startups, aviation, information technology and renewable energy. India and Nepal are also working to expand cooperation in space and sports, particularly cricket.

According to Srivastava, bilateral cooperation continues to grow in commerce, investment, energy, education, disaster response and risk reduction. Recalling India's assistance following the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, he said India supported the reconstruction of 12 cultural heritage projects. Their virtual inauguration and handover during Nepal Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal's visit to New Delhi in June reflected India's continued commitment to development cooperation, he said. Saturday to mark India's Independence Day.



Quick Read

Milky Mist flags key business risks ahead IPO

New Delhi

Milky Mist Dairy Food has warned investors about risks related to insurance coverage, food safety, technology disruptions and retaining key management personnel, according to its red herring prospectus. The company said its insurance covered about 95.9 per cent of assets worth Rs 2,546 crore as of March 31, 2026. It also cautioned that food-borne illnesses, allergen issues and product-quality incidents could hurt sales and reputation. Milky Mist highlighted risks from cyberattacks, system failures and supply-chain disruptions. It also noted limited listed-company experience among most directors. The company's Rs 1,553-crore IPO closed August 13, with shares expected to list on August 18.

Patanjali foods q1 profit jumps 86 percent

New Delhi

Patanjali Foods Ltd reported an 86 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 335.73 crore for the quarter ended June 2026, compared with Rs 180.35 crore in the same period last year. The company's total income increased to Rs 11,341.89 crore during the April-June quarter from Rs 8,779 crore a year earlier, according to a regulatory filing. The edible oil business generated Rs 8,504 crore in revenue, while the FMCG segment contributed Rs 2,937.74 crore.

Patanjali Foods operates across edible oils, FMCG and wind power generation, selling brands including Patanjali, Ruchi Gold, Nutrela and Dant Kanti.

Government cuts export duty on petrol to zero

To monitor domestic fuel availability and ensure adequate consumer supplies, the government reviews petroleum export duties fortnightly.

NEW DELHI

The government has reduced the export duty on petrol to nil and cut the levy on exports of diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) as part of its latest fortnightly review of fuel duties.

Under the revised rates, the export duty on diesel has been reduced to ₹24 per litre, while the levy on ATF exports has been cut to ₹19.50 per litre. Petrol will now attract no export duty.

The government has been conducting fortnightly reviews of export duties on petroleum products to monitor domestic fuel availability and ensure adequate supplies for consumers.

The latest changes apply to exports of the specified fuels and are aimed at maintaining an appropriate balance between domestic availability and external shipments.

There has been no change in the excise duty rates ap-

Government reduces fuel export duties

The government periodically reviews export duties on petrol, diesel, and ATF to manage domestic supplies. This reduction gives refiners more flexibility while local consumption excise rates remain unchanged and officials monitor ongoing market conditions.



GOVERNMENT CUTS EXPORT DUTY ON FUEL
Reduced Levies: Diesel export duty lowered to ₹24 and ATF to ₹19.50 per litre.
Petrol Relief: Export duty on petrol completely removed.
Domestic Stability: Regular fortnightly reviews ensure sufficient domestic fuel availability and supply.
Excise Unchanged: No modifications made to excise duty rates for domestic consumption.

plicable to petrol and diesel meant for domestic consumption. Therefore, the latest decision does not alter the existing excise structure on fuels sold within the country.

The government's periodic review of fuel export duties comes amid continued monitoring of domestic demand, supplies and international market conditions. Changes in export levies are intended to regulate overseas shipments when required while ensuring sufficient availability in the domestic market.

Petrol, diesel and ATF are among the key petroleum products whose export duties are reviewed periodical-

ly. The government has used the mechanism to respond to changing supply conditions and safeguard domestic requirements.

The reduction in export duties is expected to provide greater flexibility to refiners and exporters while the government continues to monitor domestic fuel availability.

Officials are expected to continue reviewing the duty structure at regular intervals based on domestic consumption requirements and prevailing market conditions. The latest decision maintains the existing excise duty rates for petrol and diesel used for domestic consumption.

Maharashtra FDA cracks down on Blinkit, Swiggy, Zepto

MUMBAI

Maharashtra's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has intensified its crackdown on food safety violations, suspending permits of 12 warehouses operated by quick-commerce companies Eternal's Blinkit, Swiggy's Instamart and Zepto after inspections found unhygienic conditions.

The action follows an aggressive campaign led by Maharashtra food safety chief Tukaram Mundhe, who has ordered inspections across the state's food and grocery sector. The latest crackdown targeted the rapidly expanding quick-commerce industry, where groceries and other products are delivered within minutes.

According to the state FDA, officials inspected 86 establishments and issued 60 improvement notices. Per-

Recent crackdowns focused on the fast-growing quick-commerce sector, which promises rapid delivery of groceries and products within minutes.

SUMMARY
■ State food safety chief in news for aggressive crackdown
■ Dozens of outlets shut in Mumbai, other cities in Maharashtra
■ After Domino's, state targets \$13 billion quick commerce sector

mits were suspended for five Blinkit warehouses operated by Eternal, five Zepto facilities and two Swiggy Instamart warehouses.

Inspectors reportedly found cockroach infestations, dirty and rusted storage racks, rotten vegetables, rodent droppings and other unhygienic conditions at several facilities. At a Zepto warehouse in Nashik, delivery personnel were found entering storage areas in street footwear, which officials said could increase the risk of cross-contamination.

The crackdown has drawn attention to India's quick-commerce sector, estimated at around \$13 billion and backed by substantial

foreign investment. Blinkit, Zepto and Swiggy each operate large networks of delivery outlets across the country.

The FDA had earlier taken action against several popular food outlets in Mumbai. This week, four Domino's outlets were shut over alleged hygiene violations, highlighting the department's wider campaign to enforce food safety standards.

The inspections have prompted strong reactions on social media, with consumers expressing concern over the conditions shown in photographs released by the FDA. A Reuters photographer visiting one inspected Blinkit facility found cleaning and pest-control work under way.

Mundhe warned that authorities would take tougher action against businesses that compromise public health. "We will not tolerate any playing with public health," he said, stressing that food storage and preparation facilities must maintain required hygiene standards.

Swiggy and Eternal declined to comment, while Zepto did not respond to Reuters queries.

India's next generation of innovators is already here: Adani

AHMEDABAD

Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani on Saturday said India's next generation of builders and innovators is already emerging across the country and needs support, opportunities and platforms to realise its potential.

Adani made the remarks while announcing the completion of the first edition of the 'Vande Bharatam' initiative, which attracted more than 26,000 entries from across India. He said the initiative offered a powerful reminder of the country's capabilities on Independence Day.

He said the participants represented the depth of talent available across India and described them all as winners whose journeys had only begun. Participants also highlighted the platform's role in helping them connect with investors and mentors.

Adani said the country's young entrepreneurs and in-



26,000+ applications. Every state represented. Young founders, women entrepreneurs, rural innovators and remarkable problem-solvers from Tier 2 and 3 Bharat.

—Gautam Adani, Adani Group Chairman

novators should be identified, supported and given platforms to develop their ideas. He expressed confidence that many of them could contribute significantly to India's future growth and development.

Reflecting on Independence Day, the industrialist said the occasion was not only a celebration but also a day of gratitude. He said India's journey of transforma-

tion had involved sacrifice, patience and perseverance.

"There are times when the most important thing you can do is stay true to what you know, what you value and what you believe in," Adani said, stressing the importance of remaining committed to values and convictions during challenging periods.

He said major transformation could not happen without sacrifice or patience and that these lessons remained relevant as India pursued its development ambitions.

Adani concluded his Independence Day message by celebrating the country's young talent and expressing optimism about India's future. He said the depth of talent showcased through Vande Bharatam demonstrated the potential of the next generation to build and innovate.

He extended Independence Day greetings to citizens and concluded his message with "Jai Hind."

India's EV sales surge over 16-fold: PM Modi

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday highlighted the rapid growth of electric mobility in India, saying electric vehicle sales rose to 25 lakh units in 2025-26 from 1.5 lakh in 2009-10.

Addressing the nation from the Red Fort on the 80th Independence Day, Modi said the sharp increase in EV adoption reflected India's progress in new-age mobility and the emergence of opportunities for the country's youth.

According to the Prime Minister, electric vehicle sales increased by more than 16 times over the period, representing a rise of around 1,566 per cent. He cited the growth as an example of how emerging sectors were expanding rapidly in India.

Modi also highlighted the growth of the country's bio-economy. He said its turnover had increased from around Rs 60,000 crore before 2014 to nearly Rs 20 lakh crore currently. He attributed the expansion to supportive government policies and the potential of India's young population.

The Prime Minister also pointed to developments in the aviation sector, saying the construction of new airports, expansion of routes and creation of jobs were

FCNR(B) deposits mobilise \$52.3 billion: SBI

NEW DELHI

India has mobilised \$52.3 billion through Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank), or FCNR(B), deposits, with total mobilisation expected to reach \$65-70 billion by the end of the scheme, according to an SBI Research report released on Saturday.

The report said the mobilisation has been strong despite the scheme being curtailed by one month. Including overseas foreign currency bonds (OFCBs) and external commercial borrowings (ECBs), total dollar mobilisation could reach \$80-85 billion.

The Reserve Bank of India recently announced an early closure of its swap facility for FCNR(B) deposits after witnessing strong demand and substantial foreign exchange inflows. The facility will now be available only for deposits mobilised until August 31, 2026.

According to SBI Research, the facility has attracted steady inflows since June 8. The RBI had already recouped around \$31 billion of foreign currency assets as of August 7, equivalent to nearly 55 per cent of the amount mobilised.

India to host BRICS ICT track in Pune

NEW DELHI

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) will host a five-day BRICS Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Track in Pune from August 17 to 21 to strengthen cooperation among member countries in digital technologies and communication systems.

The programme is being organised as part of India's BRICS Chairship for 2026 and will focus on developing secure, inclusive, sustainable and resilient digital ecosystems. Communications ministers, senior government officials and ICT experts from BRICS member countries are expected to participate.

BRICS currently comprises Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates. The ICT Track will provide a platform for member countries to exchange views and develop cooperation in emerging digital sectors.

The programme will feature three key events focusing on connectivity, cybersecurity, digital skills and innovation. Delegates will discuss ways to develop ICT ecosystems that provide universal, meaningful, affordable and resilient connectivity.

Another priority will be the development of trusted, secure and human-centric

digital environments. Participants will also deliberate on digital skills, capacity building and measures to strengthen digital readiness among member countries.

Innovation, startups and entrepreneurship in ICT will form another major area of discussion, including cooperation in artificial intelligence and next-generation communication technologies.

India will host the Digital BRICS Forum and Expo on August 20 in Pune. The event will provide a platform to discuss emerging digital technologies and showcase cooperation in building resilient ICT ecosystems.

Ministers from BRICS countries are expected to deliberate on priorities includ-

ing sustainable and resilient ICT systems, cybersecurity, trustworthy technologies, digital skilling and capacity development.

The initiative comes as BRICS countries seek to expand digital cooperation and address challenges arising from rapid technological development. India's chairship programme aims to encourage practical collaboration in emerging technologies while promoting secure and inclusive digital growth.

The five-day ICT Track is expected to conclude with greater emphasis on cooperation in digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, innovation and technology-led development among BRICS members.

REVENUE PROJECTIONS SOAR

Anthropic IPO valuation hinges on \$200

NEW YORK

Anthropic's potential initial public offering (IPO) valuation is increasingly being shaped by the artificial intelligence company's projections for rapid revenue growth, with sources saying it expects revenue of around \$190 billion to \$200 billion in 2028.

According to people familiar with the company's financials, the forecast is significantly higher than Anthropic's recently disclosed revenue run rate of more than \$47 billion. The projection highlights the scale of growth investors may be asked to support as the company prepares for what could become one of the largest technology IPOs.

Bankers and investors are reportedly using enterprise-value-to-revenue multiples based on future forecasts to assess Anthropic's potential valuation. Such revenue-based valuations are common for high-growth software companies that have yet to establish mature profit levels.

However, looking two years ahead is less common and reflects the extraordinary

SUMMARY
■ Anthropic projects roughly \$190 billion to \$200 billion 2028 revenue, sources say
■ Bankers and investors use enterprise value-to-revenue multiples based on forecasts, sources say
■ Cloudflare, Palantir and SpaceX are reference points ahead of Anthropic analyst day.

pace of Anthropic's expansion and the difficulty of valuing an AI company that continues to spend heavily on computing infrastructure, model training and hiring.

Public companies including Cloudflare, Palantir and SpaceX are being considered as potential valuation benchmarks ahead of Anthropic's analyst day, according to sources. Palantir is valued at about 53 times its expected 2026 revenue, while SpaceX and Cloudflare trade at around 41.6 times expected revenue, according to LSEG data.

Anthropic's revenue run rate reportedly stood at around \$9 billion at the end of 2025 before rising above \$47 billion by May 2026. The company has also projected second-quarter 2026 revenue of at least \$10.9 billion and is on track for its first quarterly operating profit.

The company's rapid growth is encouraging investors to focus less on current earnings and more on its potential future scale and margins. Anthropic continues to incur substantial costs for GPUs, computing capacity, training, inference and personnel, but investors expect those expenses to represent a smaller proportion of revenue as the business expands.

The approach carries significant uncertainty, as the valuation depends on Anthropic achieving extraordinary growth while improving efficiency. Analysts and investors are also questioning whether AI companies can generate sufficient productivity gains to justify valuations at such high levels.

Anthropic has not publicly commented on the reported 2028 revenue projection.



Qatar Challenges AFC Over Infantino

DOHA

A rift within Asian football has emerged over FIFA President Gianni Infantino's leadership, with Qatar challenging the Asian Football Confederation's decision to join UEFA and CONCACAF in calling for him to step down.

Qatar Football Association President Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, who is also an AFC Executive Committee and FIFA Council member, wrote to AFC President Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa questioning whether the confederation had the authority to speak collectively for its 47 member associations.

Al-Thani said neither he nor the QFA had been consulted before the AFC joined UEFA and CONCACAF in an open statement criticising Infantino's conduct and his failed at-

Qatar has challenged the AFC's decision to back calls against Gianni Infantino, exposing divisions within Asian football as the FIFA president seeks reelection amid pressure over his leadership and future.



tempt to attract private investment into FIFA competitions, including the World Cup. He said no advance notice was

given, no draft was circulated and no opportunity was provided to comment before the statement was issued publicly in the AFC's name. The dispute highlights deep divisions within Asian football as Infantino seeks re-election next year. The challenge from Qatar is particularly significant because six Arab football associations, including Qatar and 2030 World Cup co-host Morocco, recent-

Qatar Accuses AFC of Ignoring Its Voice Amid Infantino Backlash:

- Qatar says AFC did not consult QFA.
- Al-Thani questions AFC's collective authority.
- UEFA, AFC and CONCACAF criticised Infantino.
- Six Arab associations recently backed Infantino.
- AFC declined to comment on the letter.

ly backed Infantino.

Four of those signatories; Al-Thani, Egypt's Hany Abo Rida, Morocco's Fouzi Lekjaa and Mauritania's Ahmed Yahya; are also FIFA Council members.

The six associations praised Infantino's efforts to expand opportunities globally and strengthen football's role in bringing communities together.

The AFC declined to comment on Al-Thani's letter. His intervention now raises questions over whether the confederation can maintain a unified position on Infantino's future as the leadership battle intensifies.

Athletics' Jacob Wilson listed as day-to-day with bruised hand

WEST SACRAMENTO

Athletics shortstop Jacob Wilson is listed as day-to-day after X-rays on his injured left hand came back negative following 8-3 victory over the Texas Rangers in West Sacramento, Calif.

Wilson was hit by a 95 mph pitch from Rangers right-hander Kumar Rocker in the bottom of the first inning. The pitch struck him on the hand, leaving the 24-year-old shortstop in visible pain. Despite the discomfort, Wilson chose to remain in the game and eventually scored when Carlos Cortes delivered a three-run double.

Wilson returned to the field for the top of the second inning, but the Athletics decided not to risk further aggravation of the injury. When his spot in the batting order came up in the bottom half of the inning, Alikia Williams pinch-hit for him. The team subsequently described Wilson's injury as a contusion.

Following the game, Wilson was dealing with swelling around his pinkie, according to MLB.com. However, the negative X-rays provided some relief for the Athletics, indicating that there was no apparent fracture. The club will continue to monitor the injury before determining when Wilson can return to the lineup.

Wilson has been an important contributor for the Athletics this season. He is batting .269 with seven home runs and 37 RBIs across 79 games. His defensive consistency has also been particularly notable. By completing two innings in the field, Wilson extended his major league record for consecutive errorless games by a shortstop to 114. The achievement highlights his reliability defensively despite the physical setbacks he has experienced this season.



The Los Angeles native has already spent time on the 10-day injured list twice this year, missing games because of left shoulder and right thumb injuries. Friday's hand injury therefore represents another concern for an Athletics team hoping to keep one of its key young players healthy. Wilson entered the 2025 season with considerable expectations after making the American League All-Star team as a rookie.

Arsenal Trio Available For Shield

BUDAPEST

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said Declan Rice, Bukayo Saka and Martin Zubimendi are available for Sunday's Community Shield against Manchester City after returning to training following extended breaks at Wembley this weekend.

The trio have joined the squad and could feature despite missing Arsenal's pre-season programme. Arteta said they trained on Saturday and would train again before the match, with their involvement dependent on their physical condition.

Saka managed an Achilles issue late last season, while Rice revealed during the World Cup that he had been dealing with hamstring-related neural pain since December before suffering a knee problem. Arteta said the rest period had benefited both players ahead of the new campaign.

The Arsenal manager also expressed optimism over captain Martin Odegaard, who endured an injury-hit campaign last season. The Norwegian made only 16 Premier League starts because of recurring

knee, muscle and shoulder problems.

Arteta believes greater consistency from Saka and Odegaard could provide a significant boost to Arsenal. He said he could see a strong desire from both players to return to their best level.

The manager also gave an update on defender Jurrien Timber, who is recovering from a groin injury that ruled him out of the World Cup. Arteta said the Dutchman was progressing well and had returned to the pitch, with Arsenal gradually increasing his workload.

Jay Shah, Virat Kohli lead Indian sporting fraternity's Independence Day wishes

NEW DELHI

India is celebrating its 80th Independence Day on August 15, 2026, with members of the country's sporting fraternity taking to social media to extend their wishes and reflect on the values of freedom, unity, sacrifice and national pride.

Leading the wishes were ICC Chairman Jay Shah and former India captain Virat Kohli, who shared messages highlighting the values that continue to unite the country. The year also marks 150 years of 'Vande Mataram', which played a significant role in India's freedom movement and continues to hold a special place in the country's national consciousness.

"The true strength of a nation lies not only in its victories, but in the values that unite its people. Wishing everyone a proud and Happy Independence Day," ICC Chairman Jay Shah wrote.

Virat Kohli also shared a post on Instagram that read, "Happy Independence Day. Celebrating the freedom that unites us, the diversity that defines us, and the dreams that drive us forward. May we continue building an India that inspires generations. Jai Hind."

India's cricketing legends also joined the celebrations. "Happy Independence Day!" wrote both former India legend Sachin Tendulkar and Indian T20I captain Shreyas Iyer. Olympic



gold medalist Abhinav Bindra used the occasion to highlight the importance of sport and ensuring every child gets the opportunity to play.

"I'll never forget standing there and watching the tricolour rise. This Independence Day, my hope is that every child in India has the right and opportunity to play. Because play is joy. Play is freedom. And every child deserves both," wrote India's Olympic gold winning legend Abhinav Bindra.

Former India cricketer VVS Laxman called for people to honour the sacrifices behind India's freedom and contribute towards building a stronger nation. "Happy Independence Day. Let us celebrate the spirit of freedom, honour the sacrifices of those who gave us our independence, and continue to contribute towards building a stronger, more united and progressive India. Jai Hind!" posted VVS Laxman.

Perez, Fiorini Set Race-Walk Records

BIRMINGHAM

Spain's Maria Perez and Italy's Sofia Fiorini produced record-breaking performances at the European Athletics Championships on Saturday, winning gold in the women's half-marathon and marathon race walks respectively.

Perez clocked one hour, 30 minutes and six seconds to establish the inaugural world record in the newly introduced women's half-marathon race walk. Her performance comfortably surpassed the 1:30:30 standard set by World Athletics for the distance.

The Spaniard returned to the top of the European podium after winning the 20-km race in 2018. The half-marathon distance officially replaced the 20-km event from January 1 as part of changes to race-walking competition.

Perez, a four-time world champion and world record holder over 35 km, finished ahead of Italy's Alexandrina Mihai, who claimed silver. Ukraine's Lyudmila Olyanov-



RACE WALK RECORDS

ka took bronze. Fiorini was equally dominant in the marathon race walk, crossing the line in three hours, 15 minutes and 11 seconds to set the inaugural world record. The Italian's winning time was more than 10 minutes faster than her previous personal best.

The 3:17:00 standard established by World Athletics was comfortably beaten as Fiorini pulled away from her rivals with less than 10 km remaining. She eventually lapped most of the field during her

commanding performance.

Poland's Katarzyna Zdziebło, who stayed close to Fiorini for much of the race, finished more than four-and-a-half minutes behind to take silver. Spain's Raquel Gonzalez secured bronze. Fiorini had finished second at the World Athletics race walking team championships in Brazil in April, clocking 3:25:42. Her Birmingham performance represented a remarkable improvement and placed her among the event's leading figures.

Ferran Torres Joins PSG Until 2031

PARIS

Paris St Germain have completed the signing of Spain forward Ferran Torres from Barcelona, with the World Cup winner agreeing to a contract that will keep him at the French club until 2031.

The transfer, announced by both clubs on Saturday, strengthens PSG's attacking options as the Parisian side continues to strengthen its squad ahead of another demanding season in France and Europe. Financial details were not officially disclosed, although media reports put the fee at €50 million for the 26-year-old.

Torres said he was delighted to begin a new chapter with a club as ambitious as PSG. He thanked president Nasser Al-Khelaifi, football advisor Luis Campos and coach Luis

Ferran Torres has joined Paris St Germain from Barcelona, signing until 2031 as the French club strengthens its attacking options.



Enrique for giving him the opportunity to join the team. The move brings Torres back together with Enrique, who previously coached him while managing Spain. Their reunion could help the forward settle quickly into PSG's system.

Torres arrives in Paris after an impressive campaign with Barcelona, scoring 21 goals and providing three assists in 49 appearances across all com-

petitions as the Catalan club retained the LaLiga title.

He joined Barcelona in 2022 following a spell at Premier League club Manchester City. Torres developed at Valencia before establishing himself in Spain's national setup.

The forward has scored 25 goals in 65 appearances for Spain. His move gives him an opportunity to compete at the highest level while working again with Enrique.

'Pressure will follow him, but he has been up to the task': Steven Croft

NEW DELHI

Lancashire coach Steven Croft spoke on rising English star Rocky Flintoff, son of legendary former England cricketer Andrew Flintoff. Croft admitted that the 18-year-old would be burdened with the pressure of being the son of such an iconic cricketer, but emphasised that he has done well so far.

Rocky scored his maiden first senior century on Tuesday against Somerset in the One-Day Cup for Lancashire before his team's tournament came to a close with the defeat to Durham in the knockout stage. The teenager made 22 as Durham won the quarterfinal by 162 runs.

Speaking on his short and impressive journey, Croft highlighted that the pressure would be there on Rocky due to his surname. "Naturally, pressure will follow him, unfortunately, because of his surname, but he has been up to the task so far," Croft told BBC Sport. "The way he

has carried himself in this competition has been brilliant." Rocky was a vital member for Lancashire in their One-Day Cup, with his 65-ball ton against Somerset being the stand-out of his season apart from an unbeaten 61 against Warwickshire. "That first hundred for him [against Somerset] is massive," Croft said on his hundred. "To get his first one... I won't say out of the way... but now he knows he can do it at this level. The next for him is to do it at first-class level. He is a very fast learner."

There is a hype to get Rocky 'fast-tracked' into the international set-up with David 'Bumble' Lloyd advocating for it. Lloyd, a former England and Lancashire cricketer and ex-coach of the two sides, hailed the youngster, saying "He's got everything. I think he's an international cricketer." "England have been pretty good in recent years in identifying talent and stretching and pushing them forward, and I think they can do that with Flintoff," Lloyd added.



Ferran Torres Completes PSG Move

PARIS

FIFA World Cup winner Ferran Torres has completed a profile move to Paris Saint-Germain, signing a contract with the French champions until 2031 and taking the No. 9 shirt.

The 26-year-old Spain forward arrives at PSG after a spell with Barcelona, where he established himself as an attacking player. His transfer follows the biggest moment of his career so far: scoring the winning goal in extra time of the 2026 FIFA World Cup final against Argentina and being named Player of the Match. Born in Foios, Spain, Torres began his football journey in futsal before entering Valencia's academy at seven. He made history in December 2017 by becoming the first player born in the 21st century to appear in La Liga.

After three seasons at Valencia, where he made 97 appearances and won the Copa del Rey, Torres

Ferran Torres joins Paris Saint-Germain until 2031 after starring for Spain at the 2026 World Cup, adding a decorated career at Valencia, Manchester City and Barcelona to strengthen PSG's attack.



joined Manchester City in 2020. Under Pep Guardiola, he made 43 appearances, scored 16 goals and won the Premier League and League Cup.

He moved to Barcelona during the 2021/22 season and went on to make 207 appearances, scoring 65 goals. He won three La Liga titles, one Copa del Rey and two Spanish Super

Torres Joins PSG Until 2031, Takes No. 9 Shirt:

- Torres signs with PSG until 2031.
- The Spain forward takes the No. 9 shirt.
- He scored Spain's World Cup-winning goal against Argentina.
- Torres previously played for Valencia, Manchester City and Barcelona.
- He won three La Liga titles with Barcelona.

Short breaks Thorpe record as Australia sweeps 400m freestyle golds at Pan Pacific

SYDNEY

Australians completed a freestyle sweep at the Pan Pacific Championships after Sam Short clocked a career-best time to win the men's 400 metres title in a championship-record time, while compatriot Lani Pallister claimed gold in the women's race.

Short, who also won the 800m freestyle on the opening night of the meet on Wednesday, led from the start at the William Woollett Aquatics Center in California and clocked 3:40.52 to finish ahead of China's Zhang Zhanshuo (3:42.42) and American Aaron Shackell (3:43.44).

His time eclipsed Ian Thorpe's championship record of 3:41.83, set in Sydney in 1999, and also bettered the U.S. Open record of 3:43.33 set by Rex Maurer in 2025. "I thought I was going 3:39. I had so much left for the end, but personal best can't complain and to beat

Thorpe's record ... It's about time it went," Short said.

"He's one of my heroes growing up. I've watched every single one of his races." The victory followed Short's 400m freestyle title at last month's Commonwealth Games.

In the women's 400m freestyle, Pallister held off American Katie Ledecky to secure her gold medal after clocking 3:58.42. Ledecky took silver in 4:00.15, while New Zealand's Erika Fairweather claimed bronze in 4:02.35. The 24-year-old Pallister, who won four gold medals and a silver at the Commonwealth Games, built a lead of more than two seconds by halfway and resisted a late charge from Ledecky to post a personal best.

"I did the first 50 and after having two really good 200s at the start of the week, I knew I had easy speed. And I think it got me on the back end," Pallister said.

Warner, O'Keeffe back Konstas, McSweeney for Australia Test recall

NEW DELHI

With some of Australian batters' troubles continuing in the first Test match against Bangladesh, former Aussie cricketers chalked up their long-term contenders to solve the batting jigsaw, putting their weight behind the return of the likes of Sam Konstas, Nathan McSweeney and Matt Renshaw in the Test side. Australia's 20 Test odyssey till next year is off to an underwhelming start after their batters failed to find the mojo, with the struggles continuing for Jake Weatherald, Cameron Green and Marnus Labuschagne.

Weatherald's five-match Test career has been off to a shaky start with just one fifty, and the troubles were compounded for him when he was dismissed for a duck and 23 in the two innings of the first Test against Bangladesh. Labuschagne's wait for a Test century continued since he last got to a three-figure mark during the



2023 Ashes, and Green has not set the stage alight since his unbeaten 174 in Wellington in February 2024.

Taking note of the Aussie batting performance and providing long-term contenders, former cricketers David Warner, Kerry O'Keeffe and Brendon Julian have called for the return of the likes of Konstas, McSweeney and Renshaw, while also picking Victorian duo Campbell Kellaway and Ollie Peake as ones to keep a tab on for the future. Warner insisted that Konstas' debut

against India was an impressive one, while Julian believed the Border-Gavaskar series outing at SCG should have got him a ticket for the series in Sri Lanka last year in February.

"He's got the base. He (has) scored runs," Warner said on Kayo Sport. "That series there (against India), he wanted to do something a little bit different. That's fine. But now (he has to) go back to batting, go back to the way that he knows how to play the game and score runs and score big runs.

Atletico Madrid sign Argentina defender Cristian Romero from Tottenham

MADRID

Atletico Madrid have completed the signing of Argentina defender Cristian Gabriel 'Cuti' Romero from Tottenham Hotspur, with the 28-year-old centre-back signing a contract until June 30, 2031.

Romero joins Atletico after five seasons with Tottenham, where he established himself as a key figure in the club's defence and helped Spurs win the 2024/25 UEFA Europa League.

The Argentine defender was named the best player of both the competition and the final as Tottenham secured their first European title in 31 years. A right-footed central defender known for his physicality, anticipation, aggressive tackling and leadership, Romero brings considerable experience to Atletico's backline.



Born in Cordoba on April 27, 1998, Romero began his professional career with Club Atletico Belgrano, making his first-team debut in August 2016. He moved to Europe in 2018 to join Genoa before signing for Juventus in 2019.

During his time under contract with Juventus, Romero spent the 2019/20 season on loan at Genoa and the following campaign at Atalanta. He was named Serie A's best defender during his season with Atalanta.

Romero then moved to Tottenham on loan for the 2021/22 season, with the Premier League club making his transfer permanent at the end of the campaign. He made 156 appearances for Tottenham, scoring 13 goals and providing seven assists across five seasons.

At international level, Romero has won 58 caps for Argentina since making his debut in June 2021. He has been an important member of the Albiceleste squad that won the 2021 and 2024 Copa America titles and the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

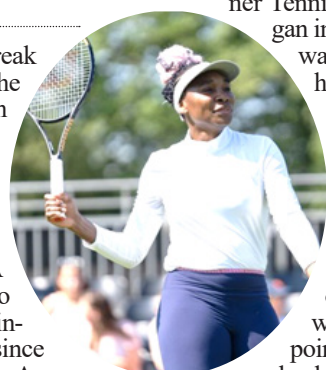
Romero was also part of Argentina's campaign at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, where they finished runners-up. Tottenham, meanwhile, paid tribute to Romero in a farewell message, describing him as "a warrior on the pitch" and highlighting his role in the club's Europa League triumph and his captaincy during the 2025/26 campaign.

Venus Williams' singles losing streak reaches 13 matches after Cincinnati defeat

OHIO

Venus Williams' singles losing streak has stretched to 13 matches after the seven-time Grand Slam champion suffered a 6-2, 6-2 defeat to Colombian qualifier Emiliana Arango in the first round of the Cincinnati Open.

The 46-year-old American was given a wildcard entry for the WTA 1000 event but was still unable to end her streak of not winning a singles match, which had continued since July 2025. The 25-year-old qualifier Arango managed to beat Williams in one hour and five minutes on the grandstand court at the Lind-



ner Tennis Center. Williams' afternoon began in a difficult manner since her serve was broken in the first game, and she had trouble getting back into the match against a player who constantly applied pressure.

Arango converted four out of her five break-point chances and secured 71 per cent of the points after her first serve, while Williams was unable to convert her one break opportunity and only won 41 per cent of her first-serve points. According to Arango, securing a lead early on had the effect of calming her nerves and enabled her to keep control of the contest.

Harmanpreet Targets Hockey World Cup Glory

NEW DELHI

India men's hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh has set his sights on ending the country's 51-year wait for the FIH Hockey World Cup title, saying the team is determined to convert its recent Olympic success into a sustained challenge for the biggest prize.

India last won the men's Hockey World Cup in 1975, and Harmanpreet believes the current squad has the experience, confidence and belief required to compete for the trophy. The captain pointed to India's back-to-back Olympic medals at Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 as a major source of motivation.

Harmanpreet said the World Cup represents a significant opportunity for the team, particularly with several senior players bringing experience into the cam-



paign. He stressed that the squad's hard work and preparation have strengthened its belief that it can produce a strong tournament.

India, however, will enter the competition as underdogs, a status Harmanpreet believes could help the players approach the challenge without excessive pressure.

He said the team wants to use the opportunity to show its capabilities and bring the trophy home, while acknowledging that the journey will be difficult.

The captain also underlined the importance of unity, saying individual performances will matter less than achieving results collectively. According to Harmanpreet, the squad has developed strong trust, with experienced players and younger members contributing to a positive mindset. While winning the title remains the ultimate ambition, Harmanpreet identified defensive organisation as a crucial foundation for India's campaign. A disciplined defensive structure, he believes, can help the team create more opportunities at the attacking end.

With Olympic momentum behind them, India will look to challenge for a first World Cup title since 1975.

Cleverly named Brentford women captain

LONDON

Rhian Cleverly has been appointed captain of Brentford Women for the 2026-27 season, taking on the leadership role just weeks after joining the Bees from third-tier club Rugby Borough. The 31-year-old centre-back will lead the side under head coach Caryl Williams, with Maddie Phillips named vice-captain. Lucy Potter and Makeba Black will also form part of the team's leadership group.

Cleverly joined Brentford in July and said she was surprised but deeply honoured to receive the captaincy so early in her time at the club. She believes communication will be central to her leadership approach while also recognising the importance of

listening to teammates.

The defender said she was impressed by the culture she encountered from her first day at Brentford and wants to build on the foundations established by players who have been involved with the project for longer.

Cleverly also praised Phillips for helping her settle into the club and said their different experiences and strengths could complement each other. She stressed the importance of allowing every player to remain authentic while contributing to a positive leadership culture.

Her appointment has also received strong backing from Williams, who praised the defender's early impact both on and off the pitch.

The coach highlighted Cleverly's experience in the women's game at

Cleverly on leadership:

She wants team-mates to be themselves while combining different experiences, strengths and perspectives to create a balanced leadership group.

"It's just a massive privilege, to be honest. I wasn't expecting it."

- Rhian Cleverly

"Rhian brings with her a wealth of experience throughout the women's game both domestically and internationally."

- Caryl Williams



New-look Dolphins offense finds stride

MARYLAND

The Miami Dolphins showed exactly why coaches and players typically don't care about final scores or wins and losses in the preseason.

Though the host Washington Commanders won the game 20-7, the biggest moments of the game may have come on the first drive of the night. Playing their starters and treating the first drive very much like a regular-season game, the Dolphins drove 93 yards for a touchdown on their first march with their new quarterback.

Malik Willis, who joined Miami after excelling as the backup in Green Bay, went 4-for-5 for 43 yards on his only drive of the game, which ended with a

1-yard touchdown run by De'Von Achane -- on his seventh carry of the drive.

While the Commanders kept their starters out of the game, the battle for Washington's No. 3 running back spot took center stage, and both rookies angling for the job made big opening statements. Sixth-round pick Kaytron Allen out of Penn State ran for 85 yards and a touchdown on 23 carries while undrafted Robert Henry Jr. from UTSA posted 75 yards on 12 carries with another score.

The guy Willis is replacing in Miami, Tua Tagovailoa, had an underwhelming debut with Atlanta, throwing for just 22 yards and fumbling a snap across two drives that totaled 19 yards in a loss to visiting Denver.

“Yash Explains Why He Chose Raavan’s Role”



Actor Yash reflected on his early career struggles and explained why playing Raavan was important in the upcoming film Ramayana

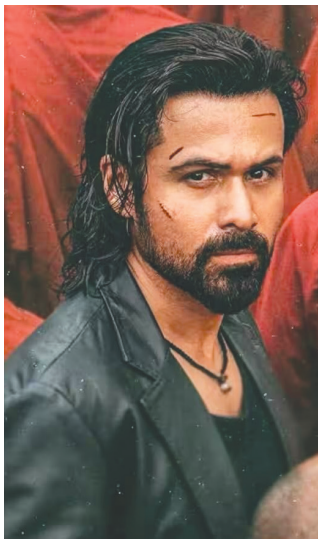
Rocking Star Yash, who gained nationwide fame through the KGF series, is preparing for the release of two major films, Toxic and Ramayana. In a recent interview, the actor spoke about his television days, his confidence, and his decision to play Raavan instead of Lord Ram.

Yash recalled that while working in television, he received seven film offers. However, he asked all the filmmakers to share scripts before accepting any project. At that time, some people questioned why a television actor wanted to read scripts first. Responding confidently, Yash said that asking for a script was not wrong and added that losing those offers did not matter to him.

The actor also spoke about his success after KGF. When asked about becoming one of India’s highest-paid actors, Yash replied with confidence, saying that his earnings were even higher than reported figures.

Yash is co-producing Ramayana, which stars Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Ram and Sai Pallavi as Sita. Explaining his choice of playing Raavan, Yash said that the goodness of Ram can only be shown when Raavan appears powerful and difficult to defeat. He added that Raavan’s strength makes Lord Ram’s victory more meaningful. Toxic will release on August 26, 2026, while Ramayana is scheduled for a Diwali release on November 8, 2026.

“Awarapan 3” Hint Excites Emraan Hashmi Fans



Emraan Hashmi has sparked excitement among fans by hinting that a third Awarapan film could be made soon. The actor made the comment while visiting a Mumbai theatre with co-star Disha Patani during promotions for Awarapan 2.

Emraan, who returned as Shivam Pandit nearly two decades after the original film, interacted with audiences during the interval. He thanked fans for supporting the franchise and said the film belonged to them.

He told the audience that the makers had returned because of the fans and had added more action and emotions to the story. He also asked viewers to wait for the second half, saying it would be better.

The biggest cheer came when Emraan hinted at a possible third film. He said he hoped audiences enjoyed the complete movie and added that Awarapan 3 could arrive soon. Directed by Nitin Kakkar and produced by Vishesh Bhatt, Awarapan 2 also stars Shabana Azmi and Suvinder Vicky. The 2007 original, directed by Mohit Suri, later gained a strong fan following despite its initial box-office performance.

Sampath Nandi Announces “Shanarthi” With New Faces



Director Sampath Nandi’s production house has announced its next film, Shanarthi, featuring Akhil Raj and Naga Durga in lead roles.

Sampath Nandi, who recently began his journey as a producer, has announced Shanarthi under his production banner Sampath Nandi Teamworks. The film will be directed by Raj Ganesh Upunooti, a protégé of Sampath Nandi, marking his directorial debut.

The project is being produced in association with producer KV Sridhar Reddy of Sri Dhanalakshmi Productions and will be presented by Aditya Movies.

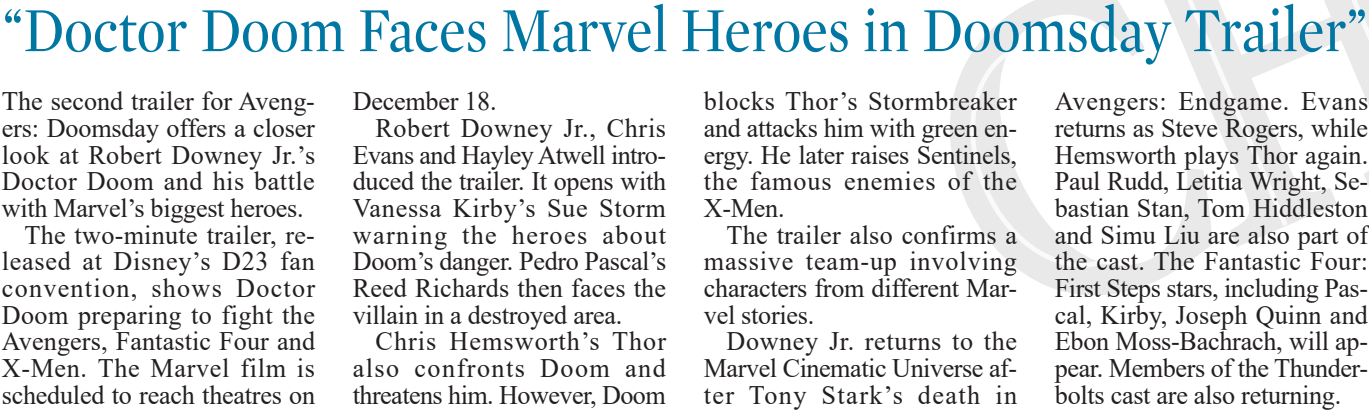
Akhil Raj, who gained attention with the Telugu film Raju Weds Rambai, will play the male lead. Naga Durga, known for her presence in Telangana folk songs, will make her acting debut with the film. She has also signed several upcoming projects.

The title Shanarthi comes from the Telangana region and is traditionally used as a greeting. The makers have released a title poster featuring two hands holding each other. One hand is covered in turmeric yellow, while the other is painted red, symbolising tradition, connection and togetherness.

Both hands have sacred threads around their wrists, while the red hand features traditional red bangles. The tagline, “A Tale of Culture,” hints at the film’s cultural theme. The film has officially gone on floors at Rama Naidu Studios in Hyderabad. Shooting is expected to begin soon.

Music for Shanarthi will be composed by Suresh Bobbili. Sampath Nandi’s association with the project has created interest among Telugu cinema audiences.

“Doctor Doom Faces Marvel Heroes in Doomsday Trailer”



The second trailer for Avengers: Doomsday offers a closer look at Robert Downey Jr.’s Doctor Doom and his battle with Marvel’s biggest heroes.

The two-minute trailer, released at Disney’s D23 fan convention, shows Doctor Doom preparing to fight the Avengers, Fantastic Four and X-Men. The Marvel film is scheduled to reach theatres on December 18.

Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans and Hayley Atwell introduced the trailer. It opens with Vanessa Kirby’s Sue Storm warning the heroes about Doom’s danger. Pedro Pascal’s Reed Richards then faces the villain in a destroyed area.

Chris Hemsworth’s Thor also confronts Doom and threatens him. However, Doom blocks Thor’s Stormbreaker and attacks him with green energy. He later raises Sentinels, the famous enemies of the X-Men.

The trailer also confirms a massive team-up involving characters from different Marvel stories.

Downey Jr. returns to the Marvel Cinematic Universe after Tony Stark’s death in Avengers: Endgame. Evans returns as Steve Rogers, while Hemsworth plays Thor again. Paul Rudd, Letitia Wright, Sebastian Stan, Tom Hiddleston and Simu Liu are also part of the cast. The Fantastic Four: First Steps stars, including Pascal, Kirby, Joseph Quinn and Ebon Moss-Bachrach, will appear. Members of the Thunderbolts cast are also returning.

Sreeleela Resumes Shooting For Kartik Aaryan’s Musical



Sreeleela has reportedly resumed shooting for Kartik Aaryan’s upcoming romantic musical, bringing her Bollywood debut project back on track after delays.

Actress Sreeleela has returned to the Mumbai sets of filmmaker Anurag Basu’s upcoming romantic musical, according to a report. The film, which faced several delays because of scheduling issues, is now moving ahead with its latest shooting schedule.

The project is being made on a large scale and is expected to be an emotional love story with music playing an important role. Kartik Aaryan has already completed most of his portions and was previously reported to be “more or less” finished with his work.

The film was earlier rumored to be Aashiqui 3. It is now reportedly titled Tu Meri Zindagi Hai. However, the project is said to be an original love story and will not be connected to the Aashiqui franchise.

Music composer Pritam is creating the music for the film, which was earlier planned for a 2026 release.

The project marks Sreeleela’s entry into Hindi cinema. She has established herself in South Indian films through movies such as Dhamaka, Bhagavanth Kesari and Guntur Kaaram. She also appeared in a special song in Pushpa 2 and recently starred alongside Pawan Kalyan in Ustaad Bhagat Singh. Sreeleela also has Om Chapter 1: Udhiram – The Blood Wood in her upcoming projects.

Kartik was last seen in Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri with Ananya Panday. He will next appear in Naagzilla and Bhool Bhulaiyaa 4.

The makers of Khalifa have unveiled the eighth character poster from the much-awaited film. Actor Anand Manmadhan has been introduced as Rahim. Prithviraj Sukumaran shared the poster on social media and confirmed the character’s place in the film.

The film is scheduled to release in cinemas on August 20, 2026.

Prithviraj plays the lead character Aamir Ali in Khalifa. The cast also includes Mohini as Noorjahan, Kyraa Vasudevan as Vyshanavi, Master Nafash as Rushin, Shammi Thilakan as Raghavan and Shine Varghese as Sudhip.

The shooting of the film was completed in June this year. The team also travelled to Dubai earlier to film important sequences.

Prithviraj had earlier introduced Khalifa through a glimpse video released on his birthday last year. The video presented Aamir Ali as a powerful character connected to a family history involving gold smuggling.

The story appears to involve a major gold smuggling network operating across the Middle East, London, Nepal and Kerala. The glimpse showed an elderly man being questioned by customs official Panicker. Their conversation revealed Aamir’s connection with Ahmed Ali, with Aamir identified as Ahmed Ali’s grandson.

The video also featured several action scenes, including fights and chase sequences, suggesting an intense revenge story.

The film is expected to combine action, family history and revenge. With the latest character reveal, anticipation among Malayalam cinema audiences is growing ahead of its August 20 release.

“Raaka” Shoot Delayed After Rashmika Mandanna Injury



Rashmika Mandanna’s recovery from a hip injury has reportedly affected Raaka, starring Allu Arjun and directed by Atlee. According to source, the film’s shoot has been delayed by nearly 45 days because the actress has physically demanding scenes.

The team is supporting Rashmika during her recovery, with Atlee choosing not to rush her back to the sets. She may return by the end of September or the first week of October, depending on her health. The delay has changed the film’s shooting plans. The makers are prioritising Rashmika’s recovery.

“Health needs to come first,” is the approach being followed by the team as the actress recovers.

Raaka is a science-fiction film in which Allu Arjun will reportedly appear in multiple roles. The makers earlier released his first look on his birthday. He was shown with Kohl-lined eyes, a receding hairline and a thick grey beard, while a clawed hand covered part of his face.

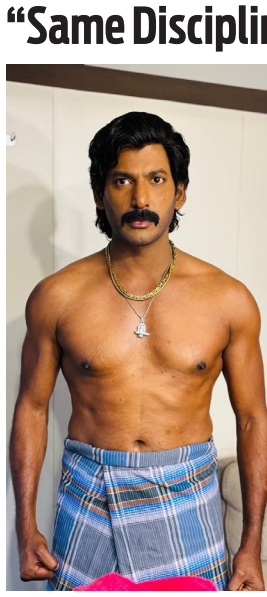
The film also features Deepika Padukone, Janhvi Kapoor and Mrunal Thakur.

Meanwhile, Rashmika has several projects lined up. She is working on Mysaa, directed by debutant Rawindra Pulle. The film is set against the Gond tribal community and features her in an action role.

She is also part of Ranabaali, a period action film starring Vijay Deverakonda and Arnold Vosloo. Directed by Rahul Sankrityan, the film is expected to release this year.

Rashmika’s recovery is now important in planning Raaka’s schedule. The cast and crew are ready to adjust schedules until she is fully fit.

“Same Discipline, Dedication And Passion,” Says Vishal



Actor Vishal completes 22 years in Tamil cinema while beginning a new chapter as director with his recently released film Magudam. Vishal has completed 22 years in Tamil cinema, marking the milestone at an important stage of his career. The actor is now taking on a new responsibility with Magudam, which marks his directorial debut.

Sharing a note on social media, Vishal reflected on his long journey in the film industry. “22 YEARS IN CINEMA. The journey continues — with the same discipline, dedication and passion for the craft,” he wrote. Vishal entered Tamil cinema more than two decades ago and has appeared in commercial entertainers, action films and character-driven stories. With Magudam, he has moved behind the camera while continuing to lead the film as an actor.

The film features Vishal in dual roles and combines action, drama and commercial elements. It has received mixed reactions following its theatrical release. Some audiences have appreciated Vishal’s screen presence and the action sequences, while others have raised concerns about the screenplay and execution.