

# '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,

sportlighting civil defence reforms, expansion of semiconductor 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."

### Modi pushes India from arms buyer to arms builder

PM Modi on Saturday staked India's claim on hypersonics, drones and counter-drone systems as the next frontier of military self-reliance, telling the country from the ramparts of the Red Fort that it must stop buying its way to security and start selling next-generation defence technology to the world. "There is no alternative to being self-reliant in defence," he said. "When countries around the world are increasingly thinking about their own interests, Bharat cannot simply remain a market for the world." Naming "Raksha Shakti" as one of seven streams of power that will carry the country to the government's vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047, Modi made a blunt case for bearing the costs of indigenisation. Foreign equipment may be cheaper and quicker to acquire, he conceded, but it builds nothing at home, he said.

### In a historic first, Vande Mataram echoes from ramparts of Red Fort

For the first time in the Independence Day celebrations at Red Fort, 'Vande Mataram' was rendered in full at the historic venue. The presentation was part of the celebrations marking 150 years of the national song, which has remained closely linked with India's freedom struggle and patriotic history.

### '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 magistrate 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.

## 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.

physical symptoms to appear before seeing a specialist. By making these tests affordable and easy to understand, the hospital hopes to give every ordinary family a fighting chance at lifelong health.

## 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

# 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.

## Veena Murthy Vijay receives Sangeet Natak Akademi award

Eminent Kuchipudi exponent Veena Murthy Vijay was conferred the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (Akademi Puraskar) for 2024 in recognition of her distinguished contributions and excellence in Kuchipudi dance.

The award was presented to her by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, at a ceremony held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on Thursday, August 13, 2026.

A distinguished practitioner and exponent of Kuchipudi, Veena Murthy Vijay has made significant contributions to the preservation, promotion, and enrichment of the classical dance tradition. Her sustained dedication, artistic ex-



cellence, and contributions to the propagation of Kuchipudi

have earned her national recognition.

## 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.

**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



Massive Torchlight Procession Held in Bidar

**CH NEWS,** Bidar

As part of the Independence Day celebrations, the Hindu Jagarana Vedike organised a massive torchlight procession in Bidar on the occasion of Akhand Bharat Sankalpa Day. The procession was aimed at promoting patriotism and national spirit, remembering the sacrifices of freedom fighters, and creating awareness about national pride among the youth. A large number of participants took part in the procession, carrying torches and raising patriotic slogans. The organisers said the event was intended to instil a sense of patriotism and responsibility towards the nation among the younger generation.

80th Independence Day Celebrations Held in Raichur

**CH NEWS,** Raichur

The 80th Independence Day celebrations were held with patriotic fervour at the Mahatma Gandhi District Stadium in Raichur city. The programme was jointly organised by the Raichur District Administration, Zilla Panchayat and Municipal Corporation. District In-charge Minister Dr. Ajay Dharmsingh hoisted the national flag and led the district-level Independence Day celebrations. Officials, public representatives, students and members of the public participated in the programme

Yatnal praises Modi, seeks action against Zameer

**VIJAYAPURA**

BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policies for farmers while strongly criticising Karnataka Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan and Home Minister Priyank Kharge.

Yatnal said the Union government was protecting farmers from rising global fertiliser prices by keeping urea and DAP affordable through subsidies. He described Modi as a pro-farmer leader and said farmers should remain the government's priority.

Yatnal said international urea prices had risen sharply, but farmers in India were getting a bag for about ₹300. He also pointed out that although the global price of DAP had reached around ₹5,000, Indian farmers were paying about ₹1,350. He said such subsidies were important because they reduced the burden on farmers and helped keep agricultural costs under control. At the same time, he criticised problems related to fertiliser availability and distribution.

Yatnal demanded action against Zameer Ahmed Khan over his reported absence from the Independence Day flag-hoisting programme in Vijayanagara. He said ministers must respect national symbols, official programmes and govern

Kharge hits back at BJP, B.L. Santosh over RSS, public events

Kharge said the proposed legislation targets no organisation, while the Home Department remains responsible for regulating events held in public places

KALABURAGI

Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge on Saturday launched a sharp attack on the BJP and BJP leader B.L. Santosh over the proposed legislation regulating programmes in public places and Santosh's remarks on the registration of the RSS.

Speaking to reporters in Kalaburagi, Kharge said the proposed legislation was not targeted at any particular organisation and that the Home Department has the responsibility of regulating events conducted in public places. "The bill does not mention the name of any organisation.

If someone wants to conduct a programme in a public place, permission has to be obtained. The Supreme Court has also issued directions regarding the use of public places. Why is the BJP so worried about this?" he questioned.

Suspected Terrorists Were Under Surveillance

Reacting to the arrest of suspected terrorists in Kalaburagi, Davanagere and Bengaluru, Kharge said the police had been closely monitoring the suspects before taking action. "They were under close surveillance. Our police monitored them and arrested them. For security rea-

sons, I cannot reveal certain details. We are also working in accordance with the guidelines and coordination mechanisms of the Centre," he said.

■ Kharge Challenges B.L. Santosh

Responding to B.L. Santosh's statement that the RSS does not require registration,

Kharge said Santosh should first understand history before making such claims. "Santosh does not know history. He has claimed that RSS workers protected the Kharge family when they came from Bidar. I ask him to stop making such statements and tell us what role the RSS played in the freedom struggle. Can he name five RSS leaders who participated in the freedom movement?" Kharge asked. Kharge said he was not afraid of the RSS and questioned why he should fear the organisation. "I am not afraid of the RSS. Why should I be afraid of them? Do they have 'Priyank phobia'?" he said.

■ 'Army, Patel and Nehru Protected Our Family'

Kharge also rejected claims that RSS workers had protected his family during the integration of Hyderabad State with India. "It was the Indian Army that protected our family. Operation Polo was

launched following Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's decision. The role of the Army, Patel and Nehru cannot be erased," he said. Referring to the legacy of Sardar Patel in Kalaburagi, Kharge questioned the BJP and RSS over their claims regarding Patel's contribution. "Is there a statue of an RSS leader at SVP Chowk? Why is the presence of Sardar Patel being removed there?" he asked. Kharge also took a personal swipe at Santosh, accusing him of making statements on WhatsApp without properly understanding historical facts.

■ 'I Will Continue to Ask Questions'

On the RSS's argument that it cannot be banned because it is not a registered organisation, Kharge said there was no question of banning an organisation merely on the basis of its registration status. "If you say that you are not registered, then there is no question of banning you on that ground. You call yourselves a cultural organisation. But if questions are raised about your activities, you should answer them," he said. Kharge said he would continue to question organisations and individuals on matters concerning the Constitution, law and public interest. "I am not afraid of anyone. If someone tries to intimidate me, that will not stop me from asking questions," he said.

MLA Beldale backs Zameer over assembly issue

BIDAR

Bidar South BJP MLA Shailendra Beldale defended Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan over his handling of a recent issue involving the Assembly and Secretariat. Beldale said political leaders must act responsibly when dealing with institutions of constitutional importance.

Speaking to reporters, Beldale said not every legislator gets an opportunity to handle matters connected with the Assembly and Secretariat. He said political differences should not come in the way of national responsibility. According to him, Zameer Ahmed Khan had acted in the interest of the country while handling the recent matter.

Beldale, however, strongly opposed the State Government's proposed legislation to regulate public programmes and protests. He said the proposal dis-



cussed by the Cabinet could require prior permission for public events and protests and may include strict penalties, including imprisonment of up to three years and fines for violations.

The BJP MLA alleged that the proposed law was politically motivated and could target organisations such as the Rashtriya Swaya msevak Sangh. He criticised statements from the ruling party and said the BJP would not remain silent if the legislation was brought before the Assembly. He warned that his party would strongly oppose it and consider a statewide agitation. Beldale urged the Chief Minister and Home Minister to focus on pressing public concerns instead. He pointed to farmers facing difficulties after rains, problems reported in Ram nagara and pensioners struggling to receive old-age pensions.

Bidar MP urges citizens to build stronger India

BIDAR

Congress MP Sagar Khandre greeted people on Independence Day and urged them to remember the sacrifices of freedom fighters. He said the

occasion was a proud and joyful moment for every Indian. Khandre recalled the courage and valuable contributions of those who fought for freedom, saying their sacrifices must never be forgotten.

Protest erupts in Raichur against Ajay Singh

RAICHUR

Tension prevailed at Ambedkar Circle in Raichur city as members of the Alliance of Dalit and Progressive Organisations, Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KARAVE), and the Raichur District Forums staged a protest opposing Minister Ajay Singh.

The protesters launched a "Go Back Ajay Singh" campaign and attempted to block the Minister's programme. Police intervened immediately and detained the protesters to prevent any disruption. The protesters expressed strong displeasure with the State Government for allegedly denying Raichur district a ministerial berth. They ac-

cused Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar of doing injustice to the district by failing to provide it representation in the Cabinet. The protesters demanded that the govt immediately provide a ministerial berth to a representative from Raichur district, warning that they would intensify their agitation if their demand was not addressed.

Rajugowda seeks Minister's dismissal over flag ceremony

YADGIR

Former minister Rajugowda has urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to remove Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan from the Cabinet, alleging that he skipped the Independence Day flag-hoisting ceremony in Vijayanagar district.

Rajugowda said attending such an event is a basic responsibility of every Indian and an important duty for a minister.

He said ministers get the chance to hoist the national flag only twice a year and should consider it an honour. Questioning the value of a ministerial post when a leader cannot make time for such a national occasion, he said the Chief Minister should act if the allegation is true. Rajugowda stressed that respect for the Tricolour should rise above political differences and personal schedules.

Rajugowda also turned his attention to Home Minister Priyank Kharge, advising him to concentrate on his duties instead of repeatedly attacking the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, or RSS. He said the organisation had contributed to nation-building and helped during disasters, earthquakes and the COVID-19 pandemic. Rajugowda added that if Priyank Kharge disagreed with the BJP, he should criticise the party directly rather than constantly targeting the RSS.

Papnash spring rejuvenated after rains in Chincholi

KALABURAGI

The historic Papnash Panchalingeswar spring, situated on the banks of the Mullamari River on the outskirts of Chincholi town, has come back to life following continuous rainfall over the past four to five days.

The natural spring, which had dried up due to a prolonged dry spell, is now overflowing with water, drawing the attention of locals and visitors. There are two tanks at the spring site. One of them houses five Shiva Lingas and a Nandi idol. Water is now gushing from a trench in front of the Nandi idol and from gaps between the rocks surrounding the Shiva Lingas.

Though the five Shiva Lingas appear to be positioned at almost equal heights and distances, local belief holds that each Linga represents a different water level. The tank has two outlets to drain excess water. Locals say that if these outlets are closed, the water level rises gradually, submerging the Lingas one after another. The second tank adjacent to the Shiva Linga tank is considered particularly significant. According to senior residents, it did not dry up even during the severe drought of 1972. Water from the spring was

then supplied through tankers to around 25 villages in and around Chincholi, helping meet the drinking water requirements of residents.

Both tanks have natural water sources. While the tank containing the Shiva Lingas had dried up due to inadequate rainfall, the adjoining tank continued to flow. The site also holds religious and historical significance. The area was once used as a Hindu cremation ground. According to local tradition, after performing the last rites, people would take a ritual bath at the spring and then visit the Shiva Lingas in the adjoining tank.

The site has been developed in recent years, but locals have expressed dissatisfaction over the quality of the development works and urged the authorities to take steps to improve maintenance and preserve the historic spring. Special prayers are conducted at the site during Maha Shivaratri. During summer, the water-filled tank also serves as a small swimming area for children.

The revival of the spring following the recent rains has brought relief and renewed interest among local residents, who have called for better protection and maintenance of the natural water source.

80th Independence Day Celebrated in Yadgir

The 80th Independence Day was celebrated with patriotic fervour at the Yadgir District Sports Hall on Saturday. Yadgir District In-charge Minister Dr. Sharan Prakash Patil hoisted the national flag and addressed the gathering. Before the flag-hoisting ceremony, floral tributes were offered to the portraits of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, architect of the Indian Constitution, and Ma-

hatma Gandhi. Following the flag-hoisting, Minister Sharan Prakash Patil inspected the parade by various contingents. MP G. Kumar Nayak, MLA Channareddy Patil Thunnur, Ambigara Chowdarya Development Corporation Chairman Baburao Chinchansur, along with other elected representatives, dignitaries and senior district officials, participated in the Independence Day celebrations.



He also condemned the reported purification of a place after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge visited it, calling the practice casteist, discriminatory and outdated. Rajugowda said a person's caste should never be a reason to clean or purify a place after a visit. He called for action against those responsible and said modern society must move away from such practices.

es. He also questioned the use of caste and religion to keep Dalits away from broader social and religious life.

According to Rajugowda, Dalits should not be excluded in the name of Hindutva, because their inclusion would strengthen society and Hindu unity. He said political leaders often seek Dalit votes during elections while ignoring discrimination at other times. He pointed to their role in social and religious work, including temple construction, and urged leaders to treat them with dignity. Rajugowda said public life must move beyond such divisions, with national duty, equality and respect given equal importance for everyone, across the country.

Priyank Kharge hoists national flag in Kalaburagi

KALABURAGI

Home Minister Priyank Kharge hoisted the National Flag at the Police Parade Ground in Kalaburagi on Saturday as part of the 80th Independence Day celebrations.

Following the flag-hoisting ceremony, Kharge reviewed the parade contingents in an open vehicle and received the guard of honour. The disciplined march-past by the participating contingents added grandeur to the celebrations. Addressing the gathering, Kharge called upon people to resolve to build an enlightened and prosperous society, work together towards creating a New India through a progressive and youthful Karnataka. Cultural programmes presented by schoolchildren were another major attraction of the celebrations.

MP Radhakrishna Doddamani, MLAs Kaneez Fatima and Allamaprabhu Patil, Legislative

National flag hoisted upside down in Bidar

BIDAR

A national flag was reportedly hoisted upside down during the Independence Day celebrations at K.K. Gandigudi Kalyana Mantapa in Mamanakere, Bidar, sparking concern and criticism among those present.

The incident occurred during the flag-hoisting ceremony and has raised questions over adherence to the prescribed protocol for displaying the National Flag.

Locals expressed displeasure over the incident, describing it as disrespectful to the Tricolour.

They urged the organisers and concerned authorities to ensure that proper flag-hoisting procedures are strictly followed during national events and that such incidents are not repeated.

New law not aimed at RSS, Says Prakash Patil

YADGIR

Minister for Medical Education Dr. Sharan Prakash Patil has clarified that the proposed law to regulate the use of public places is not aimed at curbing the activities of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) or any particular organisation.

Speaking in Yadgir, Patil said there is currently no specific law governing permission to conduct programmes in public places. The proposed legislation is intended to regulate the use of public spaces and ensure that they are not occupied indefinitely by indi-



viduals or organisations. "Some people have been occupying public places for years by putting up tents. The new law is being brought to regulate such use of public spaces. Once the law comes into force, programmes can be organised in

public places after obtaining the required permission," he said. Patil stressed that the legislation was not intended to restrict or target any organisation. "There is no question of making a law to curb the RSS or any other organisation. It is

only aimed at properly managing public spaces," he clarified.

Patil Condemns Cleaning of Place Visited by Kharge Reacting to the reported cleaning of a place visited by AICC President Dr. Mallikarjun Kharge, Patil condemned the incident and said such acts reflect a narrow-minded mentality. "Such incidents are happening in the country because of some narrow-minded individuals. Protests are being held across the country against this," he said. Patil said everyone must be treated with love, dignity and trust in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution.



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                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ■ <b>8.02 crore:</b> Free bus journeys under Shakti                       |
| ■ <b>₹323.29 crore:</b> Shakti scheme expenditure till July 31            |
| ■ <b>10,35,434:</b> Annabhagya beneficiaries receiving monthly foodgrains |
| ■ <b>2,85,403:</b> Women receiving Gruha Lakshmi assistance               |
| ■ <b>67,000 hectares:</b> Area covered under district sowing              |
| ■ <b>₹2,000 crore:</b> 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.

MLA Ravikumar highlights constitution's power to transform lives

CH NEWS, SHIDLAGHATTA

Shidlaghatta MLA B.N. Ravikumar said the Constitution gives ordinary citizens the opportunity to reach important positions and urged officials to ensure government schemes reach deserving people. Speaking after hoisting the national flag at Nehru Stadium on Saturday, he said the sacrifices of freedom fighters must always be remembered. He said Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders fought British rule through non-violence and Satyagraha, while Dr. B.R. Ambedkar gave India a strong Constitution. If politicians and officials follow its principles honestly, the country can progress further. Ravikumar said his own journey from a farmer family to the Assembly showed the strength of constitutional democracy. Tehsildar N. Gaganasindhu said young people are the future of the nation and must contribute through education, technology, sports, agriculture and social service. He said India's progress depends on unity, brotherhood and a shared belief that national development matters alongside personal growth. He called on citizens to respect the country's democratic values. Students saluted the national flag by singing the national anthem and Vande Mataram. Later, the MLA and Tehsildar reviewed the procession from an open vehicle.

Police personnel, Home Guards, NCC members and students from government and private schools participated in the march, adding colour and patriotic spirit to the Independence Day celebration. Chikkaballapur Milk Union Director Bunk Munappa, Field Education Officer P. Swamy, Taluk Panchayat Executive Officer Hemavathi, Municipal Commissioner Amrita G., Advocates Association president A. Narayanaswamy and farmers' leaders attended. The celebration ended with a message that every citizen has a role in protecting freedom, strengthening democracy and helping the nation move forward with unity.

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 presented 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

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-

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.

PASE knowledge city celebrates 80th Independence Day

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QUICK READ

**Kodagu office faces anger over missing flag hoisting**

**MADIKERI**

Public anger has grown in Kodagu after Independence Day celebrations were reportedly not held at the Devaraj Urs Backward Classes Development Corporation office near the district stadium. The national flag had not been hoisted even by afternoon, while the office remained locked and officials and staff were reportedly absent. Locals questioned the absence of employees, reportedly citing the third Saturday as the reason. The incident has raised concerns about negligence during an important national celebration. Residents expressed disappointment that a government office failed to observe Independence Day properly. They demanded accountability and appropriate action from senior authorities over the lapse.

**Horanadu Hotel faces dispute over lizard in vada**

**CHIKKAMAGALURU**

A dead lizard was reportedly found in an urad vada served to six tourists at a hotel in Horanadu, Kalasa taluk. The Bengaluru group was having breakfast when they noticed the lizard after eating part of the vada. Tourist Abhishek reportedly showed it to the hotel owner, leading to an argument. The tourists said children had also eaten the food and requested medical help, but the owner allegedly refused. They called 112, following which police arrived and arranged medical checks. The tourists, including children, were admitted to a private hospital in Kalasa. Fortunately, doctors found no health problems, and the group later returned to Bengaluru.

PRAJASEVA BRANCH PROMISES FASTER SOLUTIONS TO PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

**CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA**

District In-charge Minister T. Raghumurthy said the newly launched Prajaseva branch will help people get quicker responses and timely solutions to their problems. He made the statement while inaugurating the public service facility at the Zilla Panchayat office in Chitradurga on Saturday.

Raghumurthy said the initiative was introduced following Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's vision of making government services faster and more accessible. He said people visiting district and taluk offices should not face unnecessary delays. The earlier Gramophone system has been expanded under Prajaseva to cover several departments, including the Deputy Commissioner's office, Zilla Panchayat, taluk offices and the Education Department.

The minister stressed that

Balakrishna seeks support for Mekedatu project approval

Misnister said inadequate rainfall had left farmers struggling to sow crops, with the district receiving far less rain than expected.

**CH NEWS, MAGADI**

Minister and district in-charge H.C. Balakrishna said a detailed report on the worsening drought situation in the district would be prepared soon and submitted to the Chief Minister. He said the government would seek an official drought declaration after assessing the conditions.

Speaking during an inspection of development works in Bachenahatti Gram Panchayat, Balakrishna said rainfall had remained inadequate and farmers were struggling to sow crops. He said the situation had become difficult because the district had not received sufficient rain as expected. The report would document the ground reality and support further action, he added.

The minister said around 33,000 farming families in the taluk grow millet, but only about 6,000 had crop insurance coverage. To encourage more farmers, the state gov-



**MAGADI PLANS KPS SCHOOL FOR EVERY PANCHAYAT**

Minister H.C. Balakrishna said the government plans to establish a Karnataka Public School in every Gram Panchayat to provide quality education in rural areas. Speaking during a site inspection at Bachenahatti, he said schools would offer English-medium education, modern facilities and better opportunities for poor families. Each school may cost Rs.3 crore to Rs.4 crore, depending on land and local needs. About 10 KPS schools have already started in Magadi and nearby areas. Balakrishna directed officials to prepare site-specific plans and inspect land at Chakrabavi. He also said free transport through partnerships could help rural children reach schools safely.

ernment is providing a matching contribution against the insurance premium paid by farmers. More than 4,000 additional farmers have reportedly enrolled this year. Bal-

akrishna urged the Centre to extend the insurance registration deadline so that more farmers can benefit.

On the proposed Mekedatu project, he said the state was waiting for environmental clearance from the Centre. Once permission is granted, the government would begin foundation work immediately. He said the project could provide a permanent solution to the Cauvery water issue and urged Union ministers and MPs to support the necessary approvals. Balakrishna also said his department would prepare a blueprint to improve basic facilities in town and municipal areas within the next 100 days. Responding to political questions, he said timely and practical decisions are important in politics. He added that the Congress leadership was working with the aim of returning to power in 2028. Local Congress leaders and officials accompanied him during the inspection of development works.

Mallikarjun seeks patience before Bhadra water decision

**DAVANAGERE**

A meeting with farmers' leaders and officials will be held in Bengaluru on August 18 to discuss the release of water from the Bhadra Reservoir, Minister S.S. Mallikarjun said on Saturday.

He appealed to farmers to remain patient until the meeting. Speaking to reporters, Mallikarjun said the government would carefully study the water situation before taking a decision. He said the aim was not to harm farmers and assured them that their concerns would be considered. He also requested the Indian Farmers Union to withdraw its proposed highway blockade. The minister said he was receiving regular information about the drought situation, even while away from the district. He added that having two ministers representing the region could help bring more funds and accelerate development in Davanagere and neighbouring Vijayanagara. Mallikarjun also spoke about ethanol blending in petrol. He said E20 petrol

Mallikarjun supported E20 after detailed studies, stressing fuel efficiency, foreign exchange savings, vehicle suitability, and noting his 2002 ethanol plant experience

could be beneficial if implemented after detailed studies. Recalling his earlier work, he said he had established an ethanol plant in 2002 using American technology. He stressed that fuel efficiency, foreign exchange savings and vehicle suitability should all be considered before increasing ethanol blending. Indian Farmers Union president Shamanur Lingaraj said the proposed national highway blockade by farmers from the Bhadra irrigation area had been temporarily withdrawn following the minister's request. He said farmers wanted adequate water for the monsoon crop. The union will discuss the issue with officials and irrigation experts during the August 18 meeting before deciding its next course of action.

One injured in short-circuit incident at YTPS in Raichur

**RAICHUR**

One employee sustained burn injuries in a short-circuit incident at the Yaramaras Thermal Power Station (YTPS) near Yaramaras in Raichur taluk.

The incident occurred while the employee was working in the switcher room of the power plant. The employee, identified as Sriram Reddy, suffered burn injuries to his hands and face.

A major mishap was reportedly averted following the incident.

Sriram Reddy was immediately shifted to a private hospital in Raichur city, where he is undergoing treatment.

YTPS is a major thermal power station with a generation capacity of 1,600 MW. The incident occurred within the jurisdiction of the Raichur Rural Police Station.

The government has entrusted the operation/maintenance work at the plant to a private company. Further details regarding the cause of the short circuit and safety measures are awaited.

Magadi Tehsildar urges youth to honour freedom fighters

**CH NEWS, MAGADI**

Tehsildar Ranjit K.R. said remembering the sacrifices of freedom fighters and honouring their contribution is the responsibility of every citizen.

He was speaking after hoisting the national flag at the 80th Independence Day celebration organised by the taluk administration at the Kempegowda Fort grounds in Magadi on Saturday.

Ranjit said thousands of people made sacrifices for India's freedom, and their courage must never be forgotten. Karnataka also has a long history of struggle and contribu-

tion. He said citizens must continue working for social justice, economic progress and basic facilities while helping India strengthen its position globally. He called for unity and responsible citizenship.

Bamul director H.N. Ashok said India has a rich heritage and culture that must be passed to future generations, especially by the youth. Independence must go together with national unity and sovereignty, he said. He urged young people to follow the ideals of Subhash Chandra Bose, develop discipline and commitment, and become re-

sponsible citizens. He also praised ongoing development and fort restoration works.

Cultural programmes by schoolchildren were held during the celebration. Meals and laddus were distributed to thousands of children. Several public representatives, officials and local leaders attended the event, including TAPCMS president Honnapura Shivprasad, former Bamul president Narasimhamurthy, Magadi Planning Authority chairman Prakash, EO Jayapal and BEO Rajegowda. The programme concluded with a call to uphold the nation's values.

Shanvi wins bronze at Asian Taekwondo Championship



**CH NEWS, RAMANAGARA**

Young taekwondo athlete Shanvi Satish has won a bronze medal at the 11th Asian Taekwondo Championship held at Bayant Sports Complex in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

She represented India in the 25-28 weight pattern category for athletes aged eight to 10.

A Class 3 student of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Channapatna, Shanvi competed among athletes from 22 countries, including Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Australia and Russia. A total of 18 athletes represented India at the championship. Her latest success adds to an impressive record, as she has earlier won gold medals at international competitions held in Dubai, Malaysia and Bengaluru.

Shanvi received training from Indian team coaches Pradeep, Balarajan, Puneeth, Naveen and Kurath. Her achievement has brought pride to Ramanagara and her school. District Collector Yashwant V.

Gurukar, Zilla Panchayat CEO Anmol Jain and office-bearers of the Karnataka State Government Employees Association congratulated the young athlete. Her growing list of achievements highlights her talent, hard work and promising future in taekwondo.

Kalanagara forum celebrates Independence Day with unity

**CH NEWS, MADIKERI**

The Kalanagara Cultural Arts Forum celebrated the 80th Independence Day with patriotic spirit at Netaji Junction near Raghavendra Temple in Madikeri.

Renowned notary and lawyer Mukkatu Jayachandra hoisted the national flag and paid tribute. Those present then sang the national anthem together, expressing their respect and love for the country.

Speaking after the ceremony, Jayachandra said India was divided in 1947, but the sacrifices behind freedom must always be remembered. He warned that internal challenges can be as serious as external threats and urged young people to remain alert, avoid divisive influences and work for a united India.

He also explained the historical importance of Independence Day and called

for responsible citizenship.

Appu Mahesh, former president of the forum, said parents and guardians should guide today's youth and Gen Z generation carefully. Referring to recent student protests in the national capital, he said young people should stay cautious and not be misled by such developments. He stressed that discipline, awareness and good guidance can help youth become responsible citizens and protect the nation's unity. The programme was conducted by Rajesh Varadaraj. Children and elders presented patriotic songs, creating an enthusiastic atmosphere. Local elders, retired nurse B. Vasanthi, ex-serviceman Ayyappa, Anganwadi workers Geetha and Kaveri, and others attended. Sweets and refreshments were distributed to participants, bringing the celebration to a cheerful close together.



**RENOVATED T.R.S.U THEATRE OPENS WITH FRESH PROMISE**

Minister T. Raghumurthy inaugurated renovated T.R.S.U theatre on Independence Day, urging officials and local communities to protect public buildings through regular maintenance. The theatre, built in 2006, had fallen into disrepair despite earlier renovation work. The latest upgrade, costing Rs. 2.70 crores, includes Dolby sound, modern lighting, an LED stage screen and air conditioning. More than 100 workers spent over a year completing the project. Raghumurthy said community halls built with public money must remain useful and safe. He also called for local maintenance committees and better toilet facilities.

GADAG ROAD NIGHTMARE Residents demand permanent repairs to pothole-ridden highway

**CH NEWS, Malingaraya Pujar**

The Gadag-Lakshmeswar stretch of the Kaiga-Ilkal State Highway has become a serious danger for motorists, with large potholes making travel difficult and unsafe. The road connects important areas of North Karnataka and serves as a key route for daily commuters.

However, its present condition has left many people wondering whether they are travelling on a state highway, a village road, or even a farm path. Residents say the deteriorating road has caused frustration for years, while

authorities have failed to provide a lasting solution.

The 40-kilometre journey between Lakshmeswar and Gadag city now takes several hours because of the damaged surface.

According to residents, only about 14 kilometres were repaired last year following strong public protests, while the remaining 26 kilometres continue to be filled with dangerous potholes.

Earlier repair work has also failed to last. Patches laid at considerable cost reportedly peel away after the monsoon, exposing the same

old potholes and creating fresh problems for commuters.

The poor road affects much more than private vehicles. School and college buses, tractors carrying farm produce, public transport vehicles and ambulances regularly use the route.

Potholes make it difficult to transport pregnant women and seriously ill patients to hospitals. Regular motorcycle riders complain of back and hip pain, while minor accidents are frequently reported, particularly at night.

Bus services have also suffered, as vehicles from dis-

tant depots are reportedly reluctant to operate on the damaged stretch, affecting travel and business between Gadag and Lakshmeswar.

Residents are questioning promises that the road will be upgraded to a National Highway.

They allege that officials have relied on the proposed upgrade as a reason for delaying permanent repairs.

They also criticised political leaders for promising action during elections but failing to return after winning. Commuters have demanded that officials, ministers and legislators inspect the road

immediately and release funds for permanent asphalt-ing of the remaining stretch.

Chandrakant Chavan, State General Secretary of Jaya Karnataka Sangathan, warned that the potholes must be closed and the road permanently asphalted without delay.

He said commuters would launch a strong protest by blocking the highway if authorities failed to act soon. Residents said repairing the route would improve safety, transport, agriculture and local trade, making the long-neglected highway safer for everyone.

MP Prabha urges fairer NEET PG centre allotments

**CH NEWS, DAVANAGERE**

Davanagere MP Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun has urged Union Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda to review the allotment of examination centres for NEET PG-2026 candidates.

She said many medical graduates have reportedly been assigned centres far from their homes and outside the states they selected. Under the revised examination system, candidates were asked to choose three preferred states, with their home state as the first choice and two neighbouring states as alternatives. However, complaints have

emerged that some applicants received centres in distant cities and states that were not among their selected preferences. Dr. Prabha said such allotments could create additional financial and mental pressure for candidates preparing for an important medical entrance examination. Long-distance travel may increase expenses for transport and accommodation and create difficulties in reaching examination centres on time. She urged the Union Health Ministry to consider shifting candidates to centres within their preferred states or to the nearest available locations.



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

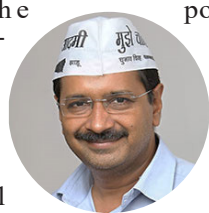
frontline workers, traffic personnel, wireless operators, and cyber experts, describing them as the real strength of the state police. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of prestigious commendation discs and certificates to selected police personnel for their distinguished service.

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-

ships with more than 70 international institutions and invests around AED 10 million annually in research grants.

Thumbay Group has developed a large private academic healthcare network comprising hospitals, clinics, medical centres, diagnostic laboratories and pharmacies.

Its facilities have treated more than 19 million patients from 175 nationalities and conducted over 100,000 deliveries.

Thumbay Medicity in Al Jurf, Ajman, is the centre of this healthcare ecosystem. Spread across 25 acres, it includes the 350-bed Thumbay University Hospital.

Thumbay Dental Hospital and Thumbay Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Hospital. The integrated facility receives around 15,000 visitors



daily.

The group is expanding with projects including a 120-bed psychiatric and rehabilitation hospital at Sharjah Healthcare City, a veterinary teaching hospital and college, and the Thumbay International Research Centre.

Thumbay Medicity Dubai is another major upcoming project expected to create around 1,000 jobs.

Dr Moideen received

the Rajyotsava Award in 2024 and the New Year Award from the Academy of General Education, Manipal,

in 2026. Looking ahead, Thumbay Group aims to establish the world's largest network of medical education centres under its philosophy of "Growth through Innovation." The group currently operates 26 brands across 15 sectors and employs around 4,000 people.



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-

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. YAND-92, 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, "NIKUNJA", Aprameya Vrinda Layout, Uttarahalli Main Road, Sunkal Playa, Kengeri, Bengaluru - 560 060, Mob No. : +91 9980063907.

Date: 15.08.2026 Place: Bengaluru

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                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Reduced Levies:</b> Diesel export duty lowered to ₹24 and ATF to ₹19.50 per litre.                           |
| <b>Petrol Relief:</b> Export duty on petrol completely removed.                                                 |
| <b>Domestic Stability:</b> Regular fortnightly reviews ensure sufficient domestic fuel availability and supply. |
| <b>Excise Unchanged:</b> 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 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.

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

contributing to economic growth. He said aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul activities were also generating employment opportunities for skilled workers.

Modi noted that India was making progress towards developing domestic aircraft manufacturing capabilities, strengthening the country's position in the aviation sector.

He further referred to government initiatives that have benefited around 3.25 crore families and said assets worth nearly Rs 140 lakh crore had been unlocked. The measures, he said, were helping create greater economic opportunities and supporting growth.

The Prime Minister said the expansion of electric mobility, bioeconomy, aviation and drone technology demonstrated India's growing capabilities in emerging industries.

He stressed that these sectors could create new employment opportunities for young Indians while strengthening the country's technological and industrial base.

Modi said continued policy support, innovation and youth participation would be crucial for India to take advantage of emerging technologies and build a stronger, self-reliant economy.

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.

# 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, Alik 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 T20 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.

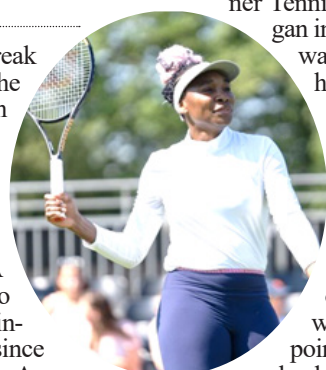


## Venus Williams' singles losing streak reaches 13 matches after Cincinnati defeat

**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

**"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



**Cleverly on leadership:**

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

domestic and international levels, alongside her communication and leadership qualities. Williams said Cleverly had made a positive start to her journey as a Bee and demonstrated a strong desire to continue learning and developing.

With a new leadership group in place, Brentford will hope Cleverly's experience and approach can help establish a strong culture as the team enters the new season.

## 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

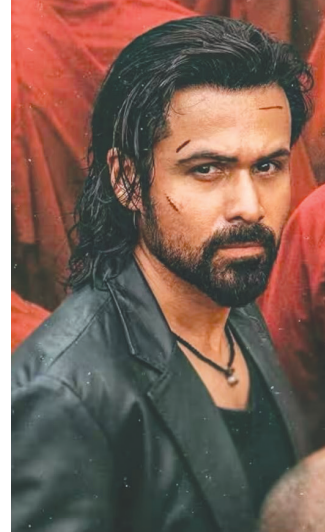
Emraan Hashmi has sparked excitement among fans by hinting that a third Awarapan film could be made soon. The actor made the comment while visiting a Mumbai theatre with co-star Disha Patani during promotions for Awarapan 2.

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 be-

cause 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



## “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.

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.

## 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.

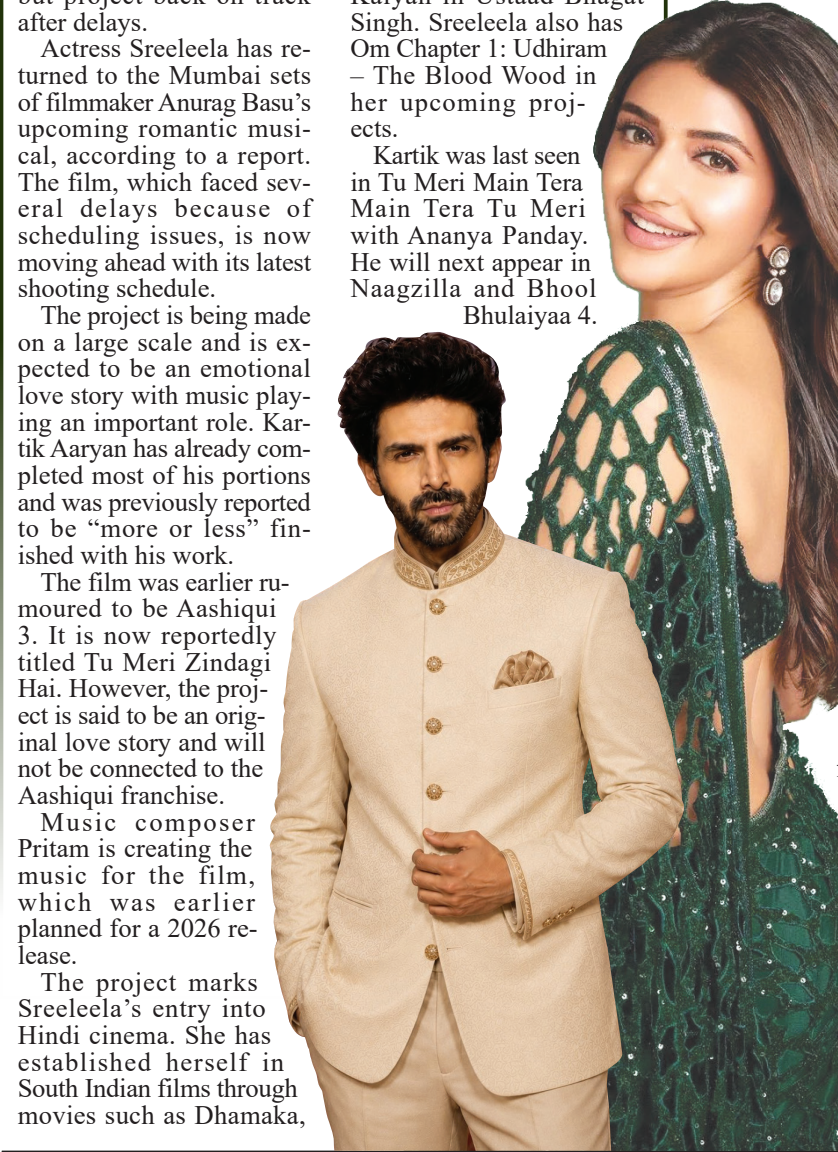
Actress Sreeleela has returned to the Mumbai sets of filmmaker Anurag Basu’s upcoming romantic musical, according to a report. The film, which faced several delays because of scheduling issues, is now moving ahead with its latest shooting schedule.

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,



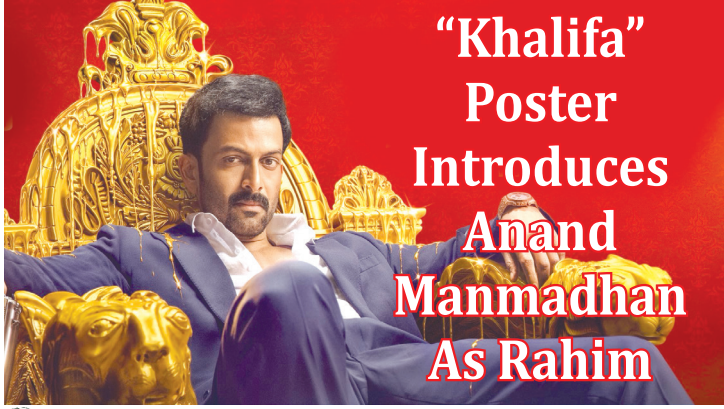
## “Khalifa” Poster Introduces Anand Manmadhan As Rahim

Prithviraj Sukumaran has introduced Anand Manmadhan as Rahim in Khalifa, adding another character to the upcoming Malayalam revenge thriller.

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



## “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.

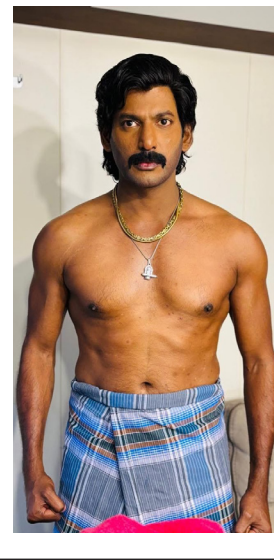
Raaka is a science-fiction film in which Allu Arjun will reportedly appear in multiple roles. The makers earlier released his first look on his



## “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.

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