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“When democracies collaborate, the world prospers.” – Narendra Modi | “Together, we shape a brighter future.” – Sanae Takaichi

India–Japan Strategic Partnership: Powering India's Next Economic Leap

*From Bullet Trains to Semiconductors, Strategic Investments to Supply Chain Security
—How India and Japan Are Building the Economic Architecture of the Future*

Bornali Biswas-Editor-in Chief

The India–Japan partnership has evolved into one of Asia's most consequential strategic and economic relationships. Built on shared democratic values, mutual trust, and a common vision for a free, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific, the collaboration today extends far beyond diplomacy. It is driving India's infrastructure revolution, accelerating high-technology manufacturing, strengthening resilient supply chains, and creating new opportunities for investment, innovation, and employment.

As both countries deepen their Special Strategic and Global Partnership, Japan is emerging not only as a trusted diplomatic ally but also as a catalyst for India's long-term economic transformation.

Japan: India's Largest Development Partner

Japan has consistently been India's largest bilateral development partner through Official Development Assistance (ODA), financing several of the country's most ambitious infrastructure projects.

The flagship Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (Bullet Train) Corridor symbolizes this collaboration, bringing world-class Japanese Shinkansen technology to India while creating thousands of jobs and boosting indigenous engineering capabilities.

Beyond high-speed rail, Japanese investments have supported:

- Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru and Ahmedabad Metro Rail projects
- Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs)
- Highway and logistics infrastructure
- Smart city development
- Water supply and urban modernization initiatives

These projects improve connectivity, reduce logistics costs, and enhance India's overall competitiveness.

Driving India's High-Tech Manufacturing Revolution

India and Japan are now expanding cooperation into next-generation technologies.

The partnership focuses on:

- Semiconductor manufacturing
- Electronics
- Aerospace



- Artificial Intelligence
- Robotics
- Clean energy
- Advanced materials

A major milestone is the ₹7,600-crore CG Power–Renesas Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) facility, which strengthens India's semiconductor ecosystem and reduces dependence on imported chips.

Japanese expertise is also helping Indian industries adopt advanced manufacturing technologies aligned with the country's Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiatives.

"The India–Japan partnership is no longer just diplomatic—it is becoming one of the defining economic alliances shaping the Indo-Pacific."

Industrial Corridors Creating Jobs

The India–Japan partnership has given rise to 11 Japan Industrial Townships (JITs) spread across eight Indian states, including:

- Neemrana (Rajasthan)
- Sri City (Andhra Pradesh)
- Gujarat
- Tamil Nadu
- Karnataka

These industrial clusters host more than 1,400 Japanese companies engaged in:

- Automotive manufacturing
- Precision engineering

- Electronics
- Chemicals
- Logistics
- Industrial machinery

The result has been large-scale employment generation, increased exports, technology transfer, and stronger integration of Indian industries into global manufacturing networks.

Building Resilient Global Supply Chains
Recent geopolitical developments have highlighted the importance of diversified and resilient supply chains.

India and Japan are working together to secure critical supply chains in:

- Semiconductors
- Rare earth minerals
- Critical minerals
- Pharmaceuticals
- Biopharmaceuticals
- Clean energy technologies

This cooperation reduces dependence on single-country suppliers while improving India's strategic resilience and manufacturing security.

Such initiatives also strengthen India's role as a trusted global production hub.

Boosting Bilateral Trade

The India–Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) has significantly expanded trade between the two nations.

By lowering tariffs and simplifying

market access, CEPA benefits Indian exporters across multiple sectors, including:

- Pharmaceuticals
- Textiles
- Engineering goods
- Agricultural products
- Marine exports
- Information technology services

Japanese investment continues to diversify across automobiles, renewable energy, electronics, financial services, healthcare, logistics, and digital infrastructure.

Technology, Innovation and the Future Economy

The partnership is increasingly focused on innovation-driven growth.

Areas of emerging cooperation include:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Quantum technologies
- Cybersecurity
- Green hydrogen
- Renewable energy
- Digital public infrastructure
- Space technology

Joint research programmes between universities, industries, and research institutions are creating new opportunities for innovation, startups, and skilled employment.

Strategic Partnership Beyond Economics

Economic cooperation is complemented by expanding defence and strategic collaboration.

India and Japan are enhancing cooperation through:

- Maritime security
- Indo-Pacific stability
- Defence technology
- Joint military exercises

- Critical infrastructure protection
- Cyber resilience

Both nations also collaborate closely through forums such as the Quad, reinforcing regional stability and rules-based international order.

The Road Ahead

The India–Japan relationship is no longer limited to development assistance—it has matured into a comprehensive partnership shaping Asia's economic future.

With continued Japanese investment, advanced technology transfers, resilient supply chains, industrial expansion, and growing strategic cooperation, the partnership is helping India transition into a global manufacturing and innovation powerhouse.

As both countries navigate an increasingly complex global economy, their collaboration stands as a model of sustainable development, trusted partnership, and shared prosperity.

Key Highlights

- Japan remains India's largest bilateral development partner.
- Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train is the flagship infrastructure project.
- ₹7,600-crore semiconductor investment boosts India's chip ecosystem.
- 11 Japan Industrial Townships host over 1,400 Japanese companies.
- CEPA expands bilateral trade and improves market access.
- Joint efforts focus on resilient supply chains for semiconductors, critical minerals, and pharmaceuticals.

- Cooperation now spans AI, aerospace, green energy, defence, cybersecurity, and digital technologies.
- The partnership supports Make in India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, and India's ambition to become a leading global manufacturing and technology hub.

References: Government of India (Ministry of External Affairs); Government of Japan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs); India–Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA); Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT); Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India; India–Japan Economic Security Cooperation Fact Sheet. If you'd like, I can also adapt this into a magazine-style cover story with pull quotes, fact boxes, timelines, infographics, and highlighted statistics for a more premium publication layout.

SNIPPETS

Court Directs Abhishek Banerjee to Submit Voice Sample by July 8

A court has directed Abhishek Banerjee to provide a voice sample by July 8 in connection with an investigation into an earlier speech-related case. The order was issued to assist police in verifying the authenticity of an audio recording being examined as part of the probe. The voice sample will be used for forensic analysis to aid the ongoing investigation. The case remains under judicial consideration, with further proceedings expected after the forensic examination is completed.

ED Intensifies Probe into ₹1,300-Crore Assets Case

The Enforcement Directorate has stepped up its investigation into assets worth around ₹1,300 crore allegedly linked to former Debraj Chakraborty, focusing on suspected financial irregularities and property transactions.

Former Kolkata Councillor Arrested in Extortion Case

Police arrested former Kolkata councillor Shams Iqbal in connection with an alleged ₹70 lakh extortion case. He was subsequently granted bail by the court, while the investigation continues.

Calcutta High Court Seeks Reports on Frozen TMC Bank Accounts

The Calcutta High Court questioned the "hot haste" behind the freezing of Trinamool-linked bank accounts and directed banks and police to submit detailed affidavits and investigation reports for judicial scrutiny.

CM Highlights Hospital Reforms, Doctor Safety on Doctors' Day



Ajay Chowdhury: Speaking at the inauguration of health and family welfare projects on National Doctors' Day, Suwendu Adhikari said healthcare infrastructure in the state has witnessed significant improvements compared to previous years. He highlighted the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Scheme over the past one-and-a-half months

and emphasised legal safeguards for medical professionals under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The Chief Minister noted that the new legal provisions, introduced by the Centre in 2023, are aimed at ensuring the safety and protection of doctors, stressing that medical professionals always strive to save patients' lives.

Chief Minister of West Bengal Suwendu Adhikari Backs Bengal Public Safety Bill, Targets Previous Left Regime

Ajay Chowdhury: Speaking during the discussion on the West Bengal Public Safety and Control of Anti-Social Activities Bill, 2026 in the State Assembly, Suwendu Adhikari defended the proposed legislation, saying similar laws are already in force under different names in states such as Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand. He alleged that the previous Communist Party of India (Marxist) government failed to act against anti-social elements and accused it of introducing a "goonda culture" in West Bengal politics through the



use of "Harmads." Adhikari argued that the new Bill is aimed at strengthening law and order and tackling organised anti-social activities in the state.

TMC Rift Deepens as Rebel Faction Moves EC, Both Camps Vie for July 21 Rally Venue

Internal tensions within the All India Trinamool Congress have intensified as a rebel faction, reportedly led by Ritabrata Banerjee, approached the Election Commission of India over the party's name and election symbol, fuelling speculation of a leadership battle and possible split. Adding to the turmoil, both the official and rebel factions have applied for permission to hold the party's traditional July 21 Martyrs' Day rally outside Victoria House in Kolkata. Kolkata Police Commissioner Ajay Kumar Nand said no decision has been taken due to restrictions under



Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Meanwhile, cases have been registered against Kunal Ghosh, Dola Sen and Baiswanar Chatterjee for allegedly obstructing traffic during a site inspection.

Over 20 Injured in Haldia Petrochemicals Pipeline Fire



Ajay Chowdhury: More than 20 people were injured, including five critically, after a major fire broke out in a naphtha-carrying pipeline of Haldia Petrochemicals Limited in West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district. The blaze, which erupted in the early hours of Tuesday, spread rapidly to nearby houses in Haldia's Chiranjibpur area, prompting the deployment of 12 fire engines. Several victims were shifted to hospitals in Haldia, Tamluk, and Kolkata for treatment. The fire

also damaged overhead railway equipment, disrupting train services. Preliminary findings suggest the incident may have originated near an unauthorised naphtha theft point, though authorities suspect a pipeline leak and have launched an investigation to determine the exact cause. Haldia Petrochemicals said it is cooperating fully with investigators while reiterating warnings against unauthorised handling of highly flammable petroleum products.

Annapurna Cash Scheme Reaches 1.1 Crore Women in First Phase

Ajay Chowdhury: The first phase of the state's Annapurna Cash Scheme has credited financial assistance to nearly 1.10 crore women, while around 26 lakh applications were rejected due to data mismatches and verification issues. Announcing the rollout, Chief Minister of West Bengal Suwendu Adhikari commented on the implementation of the scheme



and the verification process. Authorities said the rejected applications were excluded because of discrepancies in beneficiary records, with eligible applicants expected to receive benefits after successful verification. The cash transfer programme aims to provide direct financial support to women through a transparent, database-driven system.

When Relationships Break: Rethinking Commitment in an Age of Individual Choice



Ms. Bornali Biswas –Editor in Chief

Marriage and committed relationships have undergone one of the most profound social transformations of the 21st century. Once viewed primarily as lifelong institutions rooted in family, economic security and social obligation, relationships today are increasingly defined by personal choice, emotional compatibility and individual fulfillment. While this shift has expanded personal freedom, it has also introduced new challenges that society cannot ignore.

Historically, marriage was often a social contract. Families played a decisive role in partner selection, divorce was rare, and relationships endured despite hardships because social, economic and cultural pressures discouraged separation. Today, education, urbanisation, women's financial independence, digital connectivity and changing legal frameworks have fundamentally altered this landscape. Individuals are marrying later, choosing their partners independently, and placing greater emphasis on emotional well-being, equality and mutual respect.

These changes have brought undeniable benefits. Women are no longer compelled to remain in abusive marriages solely because of financial dependence. Men and women alike have greater freedom to leave relationships marked by violence, coercion or neglect. The growing acceptance of counselling, remarriage and alternative family structures reflects a society that increasingly values personal dignity over social conformity.

Yet this transformation has also coincided with rising marital instability. Divorce rates have increased in many parts of the

world, particularly in urban centres, although India continues to have one of the lowest divorce rates globally. Experts attribute the trend to changing expectations, financial stress, work-life pressures, social media influence, declining family mediation and an increasing unwillingness to tolerate incompatible relationships.

More disturbing is the growing number of cases where relationship conflicts escalate into extreme violence. News reports of spouses murdering one another, partners resorting to brutal crimes, or families becoming victims of domestic disputes have become alarmingly frequent. Such incidents are rarely the product of a single disagreement. They often involve a combination of possessiveness, psychological distress, domestic abuse, substance dependence, financial conflict and an inability to resolve emotional crises peacefully. Modern relationships therefore require more than love. They demand emotional maturity, communication, patience and conflict-resolution skills. Freedom of choice should not diminish the values of responsibility, empathy and commitment. As society evolves, the challenge is not to return to outdated traditions or to celebrate unrestricted individualism. The real task is to build relationships founded on mutual respect, accountability and resilience. Lasting partnerships are sustained not by perfect compatibility alone, but by the willingness to grow together, navigate disagreements with dignity and seek help before conflict turns into irreversible tragedy.

If you'd like, I can also rewrite this in the style of a national newspaper editorial (The Hindu/Indian Express tone) or a magazine cover story with pull quotes, fact boxes, and statistics.

Please contact me with your valuable comments in -editor.newsmania@gmail.com

Meghalaya Moves Supreme Court Over Bail in High-Profile Murder Case



The Meghalaya government has approached the Supreme Court challenging a High Court order granting bail to Sonam Raghuvanshi, the prime accused in a high-profile murder case. The state has argued that the bail was granted due to a typographical error in the charges framed under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and contended that such a clerical mistake should not be the basis for the accused's release. The state's legal team has urged the apex court to quash the bail order, emphasizing the seriousness of the case and the need to ensure justice.

Mizoram Launches Government-Approved 'MizoTaxi' Cab Aggregator App



In a significant step towards strengthening digital public infrastructure, the Mizoram government has launched "MizoTaxi," a home-grown cab aggregation mobile application designed to offer safe, transparent, and affordable transportation services across the state.

The app operates with fares fixed strictly in accordance with guidelines approved by the State Transport Authority (STA), ensuring transparency in pricing and protecting passengers from arbitrary fare hikes. The initiative aims to promote reliable urban mobility while empowering local taxi operators through a government-approved digital platform. By standardizing fares and streamlining bookings, the state hopes to enhance commuter convenience and encourage the adoption of technology-driven public transport solutions.

NORTH EAST BEATS

Severe Monsoon Rains Trigger Flood Crisis Across Multiple States

Heavy monsoon rains have unleashed severe flash floods and landslides across multiple states, leaving a trail of destruction and disrupting normal life. The extreme weather has damaged roads, bridges, homes, and other vital infrastructure, while rescue teams continue to evacuate stranded residents from affected areas. More than 48,000 people remain severely impacted as floodwaters continue to rise in several districts. The central government has stepped in with emergency assistance, deploying relief



and rescue agencies to support state authorities. Temporary shelters, food supplies, and medical aid are being provided to affected communities as efforts continue to restore connectivity and minimize further loss of life and property.

DRI Seizes ₹6.54 Crore Worth of Codeine Syrup in Agartala

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized a consignment of codeine-based cough syrup worth ₹6.54 crore during a major anti-narcotics operation at Agartala railway station in Tripura. Acting on specific intelligence, officials intercepted the illegal shipment and arrested one person in connection with the case. The seizure is part of intensified efforts to curb drug trafficking through the Northeast, a key transit route for narcotics. Following the



operation, security agencies have stepped up surveillance and inspections at railway stations and other transit hubs across the region to prevent the movement of illegal substances.

Fresh Ethnic Violence Erupts Along Manipur Border

Fresh ethnic tensions have flared in Manipur's Kamjong district along the Indo-Myanmar border after several houses were allegedly set on fire, escalating fears of renewed unrest in the region. The incident has sparked a fresh exchange of allegations between Kuki and Naga groups, with each side blaming the other for the violence. The latest flare-up has intensified concerns over law and order, prompting opposition leaders to



criticize the handling of the security situation. Authorities are closely monitoring the area, while efforts are underway to prevent further violence and restore peace in the border district.

Phase-1 House Listing for Census 2027 Begins in Nagaland

The first phase of the Census 2027 exercise has commenced in Nagaland with the launch of the house-listing and housing census operations across the state. The survey will cover residential and institutional buildings, including key government establishments such as Lok Bhavan, to collect essential demographic and housing data. Scheduled to continue until July 30, the exercise aims to create an updated administrative database ahead of the nationwide



population enumeration. Officials have urged residents to cooperate with enumerators to ensure the smooth and accurate completion of the census process.

India-Japan Deepen Strategic Partnership with Defence, AI & Northeast Investment Push



India and Japan have strengthened their strategic partnership by advancing cooperation in defence, artificial intelligence, and regional economic development. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting Japanese leader Sanae-Takaichi signed a landmark defence agreement along with a comprehensive AI partnership aimed at strengthening semiconductor supply chains and boosting technological collaboration. During

high-level bilateral trade meetings, Union Minister Piyush Goyal reaffirmed Japan's role as a key strategic partner in India's growth journey, highlighting expanding cooperation in infrastructure and advanced manufacturing. Japanese companies are planning significant investments across Northeast India, with a focus on semiconductors, automotive components, sustainable agriculture, and cross-border connectivity projects. The expanded partnership is expected to enhance economic integration, strengthen resilient supply chains, promote innovation, and accelerate development in one of India's fastest-growing strategic regions while reinforcing the long-standing India-Japan relationship.

Rahul Gandhi Revamps Congress Organisation Ahead of Key Elections

Rahul Gandhi has initiated a major organisational reshuffle within the Indian National Congress, assigning crucial responsibilities to senior leaders in Punjab and Tamil Nadu as part of the party's preparations for upcoming elections. The restructuring aims to strengthen the Congress' grassroots network, improve coordination between state and central leadership, and enhance its electoral strategy in key states. The move reflects the party's focus on reinforcing its organisational machinery, energis-



ing local units, and positioning itself for crucial electoral battles in the coming months.

Capgemini Shuts Bengaluru Creche After Child Abuse Videos Spark Outrage

Capgemini has shut down its on-campus daycare facility in Bengaluru following widespread public outrage over viral videos allegedly showing severe child abuse by creche staff. The disturbing footage triggered sharp criticism on social media and renewed concerns about child safety standards in workplace daycare centres. The company announced the immediate closure of the facility and stated that it is cooperating with authorities in the ongoing investigation. The incident has prompted calls for



Bengaluru daycare horror: Five nannies booked after videos show toddlers locked in washing machine

stricter oversight, regular inspections, and stronger accountability measures for childcare centres, particularly those operating within corporate campuses, to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

Shinde Strengthens Grip as 'Operation Tiger' Expands in Maharashtra



Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has further consolidated his political position after senior Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sachin Ahir joined the Shinde-led Shiv Sena and was elected unopposed as the Legislative Council Deputy Chairman. The development comes just a week after six Lok Sabha MPs from the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) switched allegiance in what has been dubbed "Operation Tiger." The series of defections has dealt a significant setback to Uddhav Thackeray's faction, with speculation that more MLAs could follow. Political observers believe the realignment could further strengthen the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance and influence the passage of key legislative and constitutional reforms in Parliament.

Supreme Court Warns Against AI-Hallucinated Case Law



The Supreme Court of India has issued a strong warning against the unverified use of artificial intelligence in legal proceedings after setting aside an insolvency order that relied on fictitious, AI-generated judicial precedents. The Court observed that legal professionals have a duty to verify the authenticity of every citation and cannot rely blindly on AI-generated content. Emphasising that technology is only an aid—not a substitute for legal research and professional diligence—the Court cautioned that the use of fabricated case law can undermine the integrity of the justice system and lead to serious judicial errors. The ruling serves as a significant reminder for lawyers and litigants to exercise caution while using AI tools in legal practice.

Cabinet Approves ₹6,969-Crore Tunnel to Ease Delhi Airport Traffic



The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹6,969-crore infrastructure project to build a new six-lane tunnel connecting the Dwarka Expressway with Vasant Kunj, providing faster and smoother access to Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. The project is designed to decongest key traffic corridors, reduce travel time for commuters, and improve

connectivity between southwest Delhi, Gurugram, and the airport. The tunnel is expected to enhance urban mobility, support the growing passenger traffic at India's busiest airport, and strengthen the National Capital Region's transport infrastructure as part of the government's broader push for modern, efficient road networks.

Delhi High Court Denies Interim Relief to Raghav Chadha in Defamation Case

The Delhi High Court has refused to grant interim protection to Raghav Chadha in a defamation matter and directed the removal of five allegedly defamatory social media posts. The Court observed that the content in question warranted immediate action pending further proceedings. The case will continue before the High Court, where the parties will present their arguments on the merits. The order underscores the judiciary's approach to



balancing freedom of expression with protection against alleged defamation in the digital space.

Akal Takht Gives Punjab Government One Month to Amend Anti-Sacrilege Law



Akal Takht has given the Aam Aadmi Party-led Punjab government one month to amend the state's anti-sacrilege law, citing concerns over certain provisions and terminology. The Sikh temporal body summoned all Sikh MLAs in Punjab to discuss the issue, stressing the need for legislation that reflects the sentiments of the Sikh community. AAP MLA In-

derjit Singh Nijjar, who attended the meeting, said both the government and the Akal Takht support enacting a strong anti-sacrilege law and that concerns over specific wording can be resolved through amendments. The development underscores the growing focus on achieving consensus over legislation concerning religious sentiments in Punjab.

Skål Kolkata Marks International Day of Yoga with British Deputy High Commission on a Scenic Ganga Cruise



Kolkata, June

29: Celebrating the spirit of wellness, unity, and cultural harmony, **Skål International Kolkata** observed the **International Day of Yoga 2026** in collaboration with the **British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata**, aboard the luxurious **Vivada Cruises** on the serene waters of the River Ganga. The early Sunday -28th June 2026 morning event brought together tourism professionals,

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diplomats, media representatives, and wellness enthusiasts for a unique yoga session set against Kolkata's iconic riverside skyline.

The programme was graced by **Pranav Prakash, Regional Director (East), India Tourism, Kolkata**, and **Amit Sengupta** from the British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata. Their presence highlighted the growing partnership between tourism and wellness initiatives that promote international friendship and cultural exchange.

This year's celebration marked

the **fifth consecutive collaboration** between Skål Kolkata and the British Deputy High Commission to commemorate International Day of Yoga. "**Amin Asghar, President, Skål International Kolkata** applauded the joint collaboration between Skål and British High Commission to celebrate the International Day of Yoga since 2022." Since its inception, this unique partnership has celebrated the International Day of Yoga at some of Kolkata's most iconic landmarks each year, showcasing the city's rich cultural heritage while promoting wellness, harmony, and

global friendship.

Participants practised yoga under the expert guidance of wellness coach **Madhusatta Chaudhury** of **Grab Your Mat**, while enjoying breathtaking views of the River Ganga, the majestic Howrah Bridge, the historic Howrah Railway Station, and several heritage buildings lining Strand Road. The event concluded with a delightful brunch hosted by **Vivada Cruises**, providing participants an opportunity to relax, network, and celebrate the essence of holistic well-being.

Skål Kolkata expressed gratitude to all its members, guests, and

media partners, including **News Mania**, for supporting the initiative and helping spread the message of yoga, healing, and wellness. Adding a unique artistic touch to the celebration, renowned painter **Rajeeb Dutta** created a **special live sketch** onboard, beautifully capturing the spirit of yoga, the serenity of the Ganga, and the vibrant energy of the event.

The celebration reflected the enduring power of yoga as a bridge connecting cultures, promoting healthy living, and strengthening global friendship through tourism and community engagement.

Faith Betrayed: What the Ayodhya Ram Mandir Donation Scam Reveals About Temple Governance in India

Binay Gupta —New Delhi

The alleged embezzlement of donations from the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya is more than a criminal investigation—it is a test of institutional integrity. Coming barely two years after the consecration of one of India's most revered temples, the case has raised uncomfortable questions about financial governance, accountability, and public trust in religious institutions.

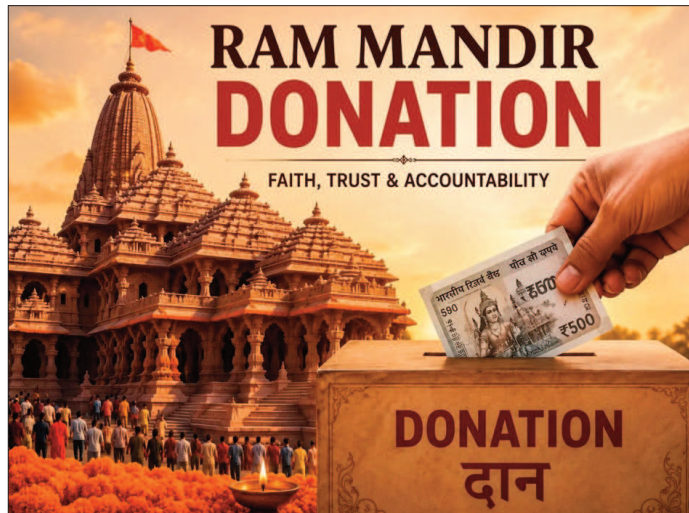
According to the Special Investigation Team (SIT), eight individuals, including employees entrusted with counting devotees' offerings, have been arrested for allegedly siphoning temple donations. Investigators have recovered nearly ₹80 lakh in cash and traced multiple immovable properties allegedly purchased using stolen funds. The accused are also alleged to have operated an unauthorized "Ram RajyaKosh" using QR codes and collection boxes to divert online and offline donations meant for the temple.

A Well-Planned Financial Fraud

The investigation suggests that this was not an isolated theft but a systematic conspiracy. The accused allegedly exploited their privileged access to the temple's cash-counting process. Police claim that duplicate keys were used to access the counting room, while bank employees and associates of a former trust official allegedly facilitated the operation.

The SIT believes that the largest diversion of funds occurred during the early 2025 KumbhMela, when the flow of donations surged dramatically. Investigators allege that cash was concealed in blankets, cartons, and other containers before being removed from the premises. The brother-in-law duo, Lavkush Mishra and Anukalp Mishra, has been identified as the principal beneficiaries, with investigators tracing several real estate purchases allegedly financed through the stolen money.

The recovery of ₹79.85 lakh represents only the amount seized so far. The actual financial loss may be significantly higher, as the investigation into cash flows, digital transactions, and property acquisitions continues.



Why Temple Donations Are Vulnerable

India's major temples collectively receive thousands of crores of rupees every year through cash, gold, jewellery, and digital contributions. While leading institutions such as the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams and the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration have developed sophisticated auditing systems, internal controls, CCTV surveillance, automated counting machines, and independent financial oversight, many religious institutions continue to depend heavily on manual cash handling.

Financial experts have long warned that wherever large volumes of cash are processed manually, the risks of theft, substitution, collusion, and accounting manipulation increase substantially. Even institutions with strong reputations are not immune if internal checks fail.

The Ayodhya case appears to illustrate exactly such a breakdown in internal controls.

The Legal Framework

The accused have been booked under multiple provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, including:

- Sections 305 and 306 relating to theft, including theft by employees entrusted with property.
- Section 316(5) concerning aggravated criminal breach of trust, one of the gravest offences involving entrusted property.
- Sections 317(4) and 317(5) dealing with possession or disposal of stolen property.
- Section 61 relating to criminal conspiracy.
- Section 3(5) covering offences committed by a group acting with common intention.

Additionally, provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, particularly Sections 13(1)(a) and 13(2), have reportedly been invoked because investigators suspect collusion involving bank officials and persons connected with the temple's financial

processes.

If proved in court, these offences carry severe penalties, including lengthy imprisonment, substantial fines, and confiscation of assets acquired through criminal proceeds.

Beyond Criminal Liability

Religious institutions function on trust rather than contracts. Millions of devotees contribute believing their offerings will support worship, charitable activities, education, healthcare, and community welfare.

When those entrusted with safeguarding donations allegedly become participants in their diversion, the damage extends beyond financial loss. It undermines public confidence in institutional governance.

The alleged use of fake QR codes and unauthorized donation boxes is particularly significant because digital payment systems are generally perceived as more secure than cash. This case demonstrates that digital technology itself is not sufficient; every payment gateway must be authenticated, monitored, and regularly audited.

Lessons for Temple Administration

The Ayodhya investigation is likely to become a landmark case in temple financial management. Regardless of the final judicial outcome, it highlights the urgent need for stronger governance mechanisms across major religious institutions.

Key reforms deserve serious consideration:

- Fully automated cash counting with AI-assisted reconciliation.
- Mandatory CCTV recording of the entire counting process.
- Independent third-party forensic audits at regular intervals.
- Public disclosure of audited annual financial statements.
- Secure, officially verified digital payment platforms.
- Rotation of personnel handling donations.
- Real-time inventory and reconciliation of cash collections.

Such measures are already standard practice in many charitable trusts, banks, and public institutions handling large volumes of public money.

Restoring Public Trust

It is important to remember that these allegations concern individuals—not

the faith of millions of devotees nor the sanctity of the Ram Mandir itself. The prompt action by investigators, the recovery of cash, and the tracing of assets indicate that law enforcement is pursuing the matter seriously. Ultimately, guilt or innocence will be determined by the courts after due process.

The real challenge extends beyond prosecuting those responsible. India's religious institutions are custodians of enormous public faith and financial resources. That responsibility demands governance standards comparable to those of the country's best-managed public institutions.

The Ayodhya donation scam should therefore serve as a catalyst—not merely for punishment—but for comprehensive reforms that ensure every offering made in devotion reaches its intended purpose. Only then can public confidence be fully restored, and the sacred trust between devotees and religious institutions remain unbroken.

The central and state governments were not initially aware of the theft due to a combination of the temple trust's complete administrative autonomy, severe internal process lapses, and deliberate operational cover-ups by the accused.

PM Modi Orders Crackdown on Alleged Ram Mandir Donation Irregularities

Following reports of alleged financial irregularities in donations to the Ram Mandir, the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh government have launched a coordinated investigation to identify those responsible and recover the misappropriated funds. According to reports, Prime Minister Narendra Modi directed strict administrative and legal action to ensure accountability and transparency. Authorities said the alleged theft initially went undetected due to the temple trust's administrative autonomy, internal procedural lapses, and deliberate concealment by the accused. The multi-agency probe includes financial scrutiny, recovery of stolen money, and criminal proceedings against those involved, with officials emphasising that public donations to religious institutions must be protected through robust oversight and accountability.



Hollywood Revisits 'The Battle of the Bulge' After Six Decades

Hollywood is set to revisit one of Battle of the Bulge's most iconic stories, with filmmakers developing a new adaptation for the first time in nearly 60 years. The project will bring the dramatic World War II campaign back to the big screen for a new generation, revisiting the historic Allied-German confrontation fought during the winter of 1944-45. The upcoming film is expected to blend modern



filmmaking techniques with historical authenticity, renewing global interest in one of the defining battles of the Second World War.

Netflix Sets July 24 Release for 'Musafir Cafe'

Streaming giant Netflix has officially announced the release date of its upcoming high-profile project Musafir Cafe, which will premiere on July 24. The platform described the title as one of its key new offerings, aimed at strengthening its regional and global content slate. The project is



expected to feature a mix of drama and emotional storytelling set around interconnected lives in a café setting. With anticipation building among viewers, the release is expected to attract strong streaming traction upon debut, further expanding Netflix's competitive content lineup in 2026.

'Hera Pheri 3' Shelved as Priyadarshan Exits Project

Veteran filmmaker Priyadarshan has confirmed his exit from the much-anticipated comedy sequel Hera Pheri 3, stating that ongoing legal disputes have stalled the project and it is unlikely to move forward. The announcement has effectively put the long-awaited third installment of the cult comedy franchise in jeopardy, disappointing fans who had been awaiting the return of the iconic characters. According to reports, unresolved legal and production issues



have led to uncertainty over the film's future. The development marks a significant setback for one of Bollywood's most popular comedy franchises, which has maintained a strong fan following since its earlier installments.

'Mirzapur: The Movie' Teaser Sparks Massive Buzz



Streaming platform Amazon Prime Video has released the official Hindi teaser of Mirzapur's cinematic extension, titled Mirzapur: The Movie, generating strong excitement among fans of the cult franchise. The teaser hints at a darker and more intense narrative, expanding

the gritty world of power struggles, crime, and revenge that defined the original series. The move marks a significant step in the franchise's evolution from episodic storytelling to a full-scale film adaptation. The announcement has triggered widespread online discussion, with viewers eager for updates on the cast, storyline, and release date. The film is expected to further deepen the universe of one of India's most popular OTT crime dramas.

GLITZ MANIA

Marvel Prioritises Spider-Man 5, Black Panther 3 and Shang-Chi 2

Marvel Studios is reportedly shifting its focus to the next phase of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) after the release of Avengers: Secret Wars. The studio's top priorities include Spider-Man 5, Black Panther 3, and Shang-Chi 2. The projects are expected to play a central role in shaping the MCU's future storyline, introducing new character



arcs while building on the success of previous installments. Fans are eagerly awaiting official announcements on release schedules and casting details.

Taylor Swift-Travis Kelce Wedding to Feature Tight Security



A high-security arrangement has reportedly been put in place for the wedding of Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce at Madison Square Garden. Organisers have enforced

a strict "no phones" policy for guests to ensure privacy and prevent leaks from the star-studded ceremony. The event is expected to attract several high-profile celebrities from the worlds of entertainment and sports, making security one of the top priorities. The measures are aimed at ensuring a private and seamless celebration for the couple and their guests.

Josh Gad Joins Star-Studded Cast of 'Ocean's' Prequel



Josh Gad has officially joined the cast of the highly anticipated Ocean's prequel, starring Margot Robbie and Bradley Cooper. Best known for voicing Olaf in Frozen, Gad's addition further strengthens the star-studded ensemble. The

prequel is expected to explore the origins of the iconic Ocean's franchise with a fresh storyline and new characters. Fans are eagerly awaiting more details on the film's plot, production schedule, and release date.

GLITZ MANIA

'Alpha' Gains Early Momentum with Advance Bookings

Yash Raj Films' upcoming female-led action spy thriller Alpha has opened to encouraging early advance bookings, collecting around ₹1.75 crore ahead of release. The film stars Alia Bhatt and Sharvari Wagh in lead roles and is part of the expanding YRF Spy Universe. Early ticket sales indicate strong audience interest in the high-octane action entertainer, which is expected to feature large-scale stunts and a female-led narrative within the franchise. Industry observers suggest the ad-



vance response reflects growing anticipation for the project, with further momentum expected as promotions intensify closer to release.

Rajamouli's Epic with Mahesh Babu Targeting October 2026 Wrap



Varanasi: SS Rajamouli confirms 80 days shoot left for Mahesh Babu starrer's wrap-up; Action scenes completed

Industry reports suggest that acclaimed filmmaker S. S. Rajamouli is aiming to complete his upcoming large-scale epic starring Mahesh

Babu by October 2026.

The untitled project, one of the most ambitious in Indian cinema, is currently in advanced stages of production. Trade sources indicate that the team is working on extensive action sequences, visual effects, and international shooting schedules to meet the planned timeline.

The film is expected to be a major pan-India release, with high expectations following Rajamouli's global successes. More official updates on title, cast details, and release plans are awaited from the makers.

'Awarapan 2' Teaser Drops as Emraan Hashmi Returns in Emotional Avatar

Emraan Hashmi has unveiled the official teaser of Awarapan 2, marking his return to the iconic "heartbroken lover" role that defined the original film's cult status.

Sharing an emotional note alongside the teaser, Hashmi expressed gratitude to fans for their long-standing love for the franchise. The teaser hints at a darker, more intense continuation of the story, blending romance, pain, and action-driven drama.

The announcement has sparked strong reactions among fans, with nostalgia-driven excitement building



around the sequel. Further details on the cast, storyline, and release date are expected to be revealed soon.

Kangana Ranaut Returns as 'Janta Ki Awaaz' in Lock Upp 2

Kangana Ranaut is set to return to the reality format as she joins Lock Upp 2 in a new role as the "Janta Ki Awaaz," starting this weekend. The makers announced that Ranaut will act as a public voice within the show, influencing key decisions and adding a new dynamic to the reality format. Her involvement is expected to bring heightened drama and strong viewer engagement, continuing the controversial and high-impact style of the franchise. The show's second season is being



positioned as more interactive and audience-driven, with Kangana's

entry marking one of its biggest highlights ahead of launch.

'Jailer 2' Set for Mega Box Office Clash with 'Vishwambhara'



Superstar Rajinikanth's highly anticipated action sequel Jailer 2 has

been officially slated for a theatrical release on October 15, 2026.

The release date sets up a major box office clash with Vishwambhara starring megastar Chiranjeevi, creating one of the most awaited cinematic face-offs of the year across South Indian cinema. Trade analysts expect massive opening-day collections and strong fan-driven buzz as two major pan-India films compete during the festive release window. Both projects are currently in advanced stages of production, with promotional campaigns expected to intensify in the coming months.

'Jana Nayagan' Leak Case: Court Denies Bail Amid Massive Piracy Row

The High Court has denied bail to the accused in the ongoing Jana Nayagan leak case, after police alleged that a pirated version of the film was illegally viewed by nearly 1.2 crore people online.

Investigators told the court that the large-scale circulation of the leaked content caused significant financial losses to the production and violated copyright



laws on a massive scale. Authorities described it as one of the biggest piracy incidents in recent times. The court observed the seriousness of the allegations while refusing bail, and further hearings in the case are expected to continue. The incident has reignited concerns over digital piracy and the urgent need for stronger enforcement mechanisms in the film industry.

West Bengal Plans AC Trams, New Routes and Green Transport Push

Buddhadeb Misra-Kolkata: West Bengal Transport Minister Arjun Singh announced plans to introduce air-conditioned trams and develop new tram routes across Kolkata, including corridors connecting New Town and the Dakshineswar-Kalighat stretch. Speaking at an interactive session organised by the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce & Industry, he said RITES has been tasked with conducting a survey for the expansion. The state will also add new electric and CNG AC buses, build charging



infrastructure, explore inland water transport and develop a port along the Ganges. The Minister assured investors of faster clearances, improved logistics, and a business-friendly environment to attract fresh investments.

GSTARI Launches PM-SETU Training Programme for ITI Instructors

Buddhadeb Misra-Kolkata: The Central Staff Training & Research Institute, under the Directorate General of Training, has inaugurated a week-long Training of Trainers (Pedagogy) programme under the PM-SETU scheme. The initiative brings together 76 Government ITI instructors from West Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Meghalaya to strengthen industry-aligned, competency-based teaching skills. Chairing the inaugural session, S. S. Naik, Deputy Director General (Eastern Region), stressed the importance of faculty development in



strengthening India's skilling ecosystem. GSTARI Director Rajnish Kumar Jha described instructors as the backbone of technical education and reaffirmed the institute's commitment to developing them as "change agents" to improve the quality of vocational training nationwide.

Prof. Haripada Bharti's 107th Birth Anniversary Marked with Biography Release

Buddhadeb Misra-Kolkata: The 107th birth anniversary of educationist and former West Bengal BJP president Haripada Bharti was commemorated at Bharat Sevashram-Sangh's Srinath Hall with the release of his biography, Mastermashai. The book was unveiled by Swapan Dasgupta, who delivered the memorial lecture on "Impact of Spirituality in Education." Rahul Sinha attended as Chief Guest, while Swami Viswatmanandaji Maharaj was the Special Guest. Speakers paid tribute



to Prof. Bharti's contributions to education and his leadership during the Naxalite era. The programme also honoured several distinguished personalities for their contributions to literature, culture and social service.

Rashmi Group Inaugurates Community Hall and ICDS Centre in Kharagpur Village

Ajay Chowdhury-Kharagpur: Rashmi Metallurgical Industry Pvt. Ltd. inaugurated a Community Hall and an ICDS Centre at AmbaPaschim (Jagai) village under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. The event featured vibrant Adivasi cultural performances and traditional ceremonies. Addressing the gathering virtually, Executive Director Bhaskar Chaudhuri reaffirmed the group's commitment to community development. Company representatives and local leaders attended the programme. The Community Hall will support social, cultural and



educational activities, while the ICDS Centre will provide nutrition, healthcare and pre-primary education services for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Villagers welcomed the initiative and expressed hope for continued developmental support from the Rashmi Group.

Science City Kolkata Marks 29th Anniversary with Inclusive Programme

Buddhadeb Misra-Kolkata: Science City celebrated its 29th anniversary by hosting a special programme for children from Manovikas Kendra, promoting science education, creativity and inclusion. The event featured sit-and-draw and colouring competitions, interactive science games and a nature study session at the Butterfly Garden, encouraging



scientific curiosity through hands-on learning. Addressing the

gathering, Director Pramod Grover said every child deserves the opportunity to explore and discover science in an inclusive environment. The initiative reinforced Science City's commitment to making science accessible to all and empowering specially-abled children through experiential learning and creative engagement.

NCRI Hospital Marks Doctors' Day with Cancer Care CME and Felicitation

Buddhadeb Misra-Kolkata: NCRI Hospital (Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Cancer Hospital) celebrated National Doctors' Day with a Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme and a felicitation ceremony at its Nayabad campus. The CME, themed "The Contribution of NCRI Hospital in Advanced Cancer Care," highlighted the hospital's



achievements in oncology, innovative treatment methods, multidisci-

plinary care and evidence-based clinical practices. The event was attended by Sharadwat Mukherjee and Indranil Khan. Hospital authorities reaffirmed their commitment to advancing cancer care through clinical innovation, research, education and patient-centred healthcare while honouring doctors for their dedicated service to society.

Manipal Hospitals Kolkata to Host Robotic Surgery Simulation Workshop

Buddhadeb Misra-Kolkata: Manipal Hospitals, Kolkata, will host an exclusive Robotic Simulation Workshop showcasing the latest advancements in robotic-assisted surgery and healthcare. The programme will feature live robotic demonstrations and interactive sessions with medical experts, offering insights into cutting-edge



surgical technologies. The event will be attended by Dilip Kumar

Pratihari, Head of the Mechanical Engineering Department at Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, as the Chief Guest, and Sushmita-Mitra as the Special Guest. The workshop aims to highlight the growing role of robotics in enhancing surgical precision, patient safety, and clinical outcomes.

West Bengal Reviews Preparations for Upcoming Durand Cup

Buddhadeb Misra-Kolkata: Indranil Khan, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Department of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of West Bengal, chaired a preparatory review meeting for the upcoming Durand Cup at Netaji Indoor Stadium. The meeting was attended by senior officials of



the Indian Army and various state

government departments. Discussions focused on ensuring smooth coordination, security arrangements, infrastructure readiness, logistics and other operational aspects to facilitate the successful hosting of one of Asia's oldest and most prestigious football tournaments.

Kamakhya Temple Reopens After AmbubachiMela Draws Over Eight Lakh Devotees

Ajay Chowdhury-Kamakhya: Kamakhya Temple reopened on Friday as the annual AmbubachiMela concluded, ending the four-day observance during which Goddess Kamakhya is believed to undergo her symbolic menstrual cycle. Thousands of devotees thronged the shrine for darshan after special rituals. Himanta Biswa Sarma said over



eight lakh devotees attended this

year's festival, describing it as a unique celebration symbolising the centrality of Nari Shakti in Assam's civilisational heritage. The turnout surpassed previous years, reaffirming the AmbubachiMela's status as one of India's largest and most significant spiritual gatherings, attracting pilgrims and visitors from across the world.

India to Attend Khamenei's State Funeral as Iran Tightens Security Amid Regional Tensions



Mehbooba Mufti



Salman Khurshid



Syed Ata Hasnain



Pabitra Margherita

News Mania Desk: India will send a high-level delegation to the state funeral of Iran's former Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, reaffirming the long-standing diplomatic relationship between New Delhi and Tehran during a period of heightened regional uncertainty. According to India's Ministry of External Affairs, Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita and Bihar Governor Syed Ata Hasnain will represent the Government of India at the funeral ceremonies in Iran, while Mehbooba Mufti and senior Congress leader Salman Khurshid are also travelling to Tehran.

The funeral processions are scheduled to begin in Tehran on July 4 and conclude with Khamenei's burial in his hometown of Mashhad on July 9. Iranian authorities are also planning religious observances in Qom as

part of the national mourning period.

India's participation reflects the strategic importance of its ties with Iran, spanning energy security, regional connectivity, and the development of the Chabahar Port. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi received an invitation from Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, the Prime Minister is not attending because of previously scheduled overseas engagements.

The funeral comes amid heightened military tensions in the region. Iran has issued strong warnings to the United States and Israel against any further military action during the mourning period. Ali Abdollahi, commander of the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, said any aggression would invite a "harsh retaliation" from Iran's armed forces. Authorities have

also tightened nationwide security and imposed temporary airspace restrictions over several major cities, including Tehran and Mashhad.

The international significance of the funeral is reflected in the participation of foreign delegations from several countries, including China, which has confirmed that a senior parliamentary leader will attend the ceremonies.

For India, attendance at the state funeral represents a continuation of its balanced West Asia policy—maintaining constructive engagement with Iran while preserving strong partnerships with Israel, the Gulf states, and Western nations. As Iran navigates a major political transition, New Delhi's diplomatic presence underscores its commitment to regional stability, dialogue, and long-term strategic cooperation.

Ukraine War Enters a Prolonged Phase as Human Cost Mounts



News Mania Desk: Russia's latest large-scale drone and missile assault on Kyiv, targeting residential areas and civilian infrastructure, underscores a stark reality: the war in Ukraine is showing few signs of ending despite more than three years of intense fighting. The renewed bombardment came as recent independent assessments estimated that combined Russian and Ukrainian military casualties have exceeded two million, highlighting the extraordinary human cost of Europe's largest armed conflict since the World War II.

The conflict has increasingly evolved into a war of attrition. While both Russia and Ukraine have launched major offensives since 2022, neither side has achieved a decisive military breakthrough capable of fundamentally altering the strategic balance. Extensive trench systems, fortified defensive positions, drones, electronic warfare, and long-range missile strikes have transformed the battlefield into one where incremental territorial gains often come at enormous human and material cost.

Diplomatic prospects remain equally challenging. Russia continues to insist that Ukraine recognize its control over occupied territories and accept limitations on future security arrangements, including military alliances. Ukraine, supported by its Western partners, maintains that any negotiated settlement must preserve its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and right to determine its own foreign policy. These fundamentally incompatible

positions leave little room for an immediate peace agreement.

Military analysts therefore suggest that the conflict could continue for several more years unless there is a major shift in battlefield dynamics or political leadership. While no credible authority can predict when the war will end, many strategic studies indicate that prolonged stalemate remains the most likely near-term scenario rather than a decisive victory for either side.

International support also plays a defining role. The United States, European nations, and other allies continue to provide Ukraine with military equipment, financial assistance, humanitarian aid, and intelligence support. This sustained backing strengthens Ukraine's capacity to defend itself while simultaneously reducing the likelihood of a rapid military conclusion.

The latest attacks on Kyiv demonstrate that civilians remain at the center of the conflict's devastating consequences. As missile strikes, drone warfare, and infrastructure attacks continue, the humanitarian toll grows alongside the military losses.

Ultimately, the Russia-Ukraine war has become more than a regional conflict. It is a defining geopolitical struggle reshaping European security, global energy markets, and international diplomacy. Until meaningful political compromises emerge—or one side achieves a significant strategic advantage—the conflict is likely to remain one of the world's most consequential and enduring crises.

Ahilyabai Holkar is regarded as one of the most visionary female rulers in Indian history.

By Atanu Das, Senior Journalist, Former PTI



New Delhi: In 1772, a widow from a shepherd family in Maharashtra wrote a letter.

She warned the most powerful man in the Maratha Empire about the British.

She described their strategy with remarkable precision—so much so that it reads like a prophecy.

He ignored her.

Thirty years later, the Maratha Empire had fallen.

In many ways, events unfolded much as she had warned.

Her name was Ahilyabai Holkar.

She ruled Malwa from 1767 to 1795.

Twenty-eight years.

Not a single invasion succeeded against her kingdom.

This was during one of the most politically turbulent centuries in Indian history.

Every morning—without exception—she held an open court.

Any farmer. Any widow. Any merchant.

They could walk in.

No gatekeeper. No bribe. No appointment.

The queen herself listened and acted.

For 28 years.

She rebuilt the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in 1780.



It was 111 years after Emperor Aurangzeb had ordered the demolition of the earlier temple.

No ruler before her had dared to rebuild it.

She did it because she believed it needed to exist.

She built or restored temples at Kashi, Gaya, Somnath, Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Dwarka, Rameswaram, and dozens of other sacred sites.

She also built wells and rest houses so pilgrims would not die on the road.

Roads. Forts. Bridges.

She also promoted the textile industry that gave rise to the Maheshwari sari tradition, which continues more than 250 years after her death.

Her own people called her Pun-

yashlok—"one as pure as the sacred chants."

It was not a title conferred at a ceremony.

It was a name that arose spontaneously from the people who lived under her rule.

While she was still alive.

Sir John Malcolm wrote in 1823 that she was "one of the purest and most exemplary rulers that ever existed."

A British officer wrote that.

About an Indian Hindu widow who ruled in the 18th century.

And yet, most Indians today cannot name her.

Many believe this reflects the limited attention she has received in mainstream historical curricula.

The British often justified colonial rule by arguing that Indians were incapable of governing themselves.

To many, Ahilyabai Holkar's life and achievements stand as a powerful challenge to that narrative. If more people knew her story, they might ask:

"If India could produce a ruler like her without British rule, what exactly was the civilizing mission meant to achieve?"

A question that continues to inspire debate about India's colonial past.

Health Snippets

□ Blood Test May Predict Alzheimer's Decades Early

Scientists have identified a blood protein that could predict the risk of Alzheimer's disease years before symptoms appear, paving the way for earlier diagnosis and preventive treatment.

□ Global Experts Redefine Heart Failure

An updated international definition of heart failure aims to improve early detection, diagnosis, and patient care by identifying the condition at an earlier stage.

□ Better Heart Health for Adults with Obesity

A new Lancet study reports that adults over 40 living with obesity now have heart risk profiles closer to those of normal-weight individuals, largely due to improved preventive medications.

□ Experimental Injection Reverses Osteoarthritis

Researchers have successfully regenerated damaged joints and reversed osteoarthritis in animal studies using a promising new injectable therapy.

□ Fish Oil Shows No Memory Benefit

A large two-year study found that omega-3 fish oil supplements do not significantly improve memory or overall brain health in healthy adults.

□ Melatonin May Ease Chronic Pain

Research suggests melatonin relieves chronic muscle and joint pain as effectively as common over-the-counter pain medications.

□ Tylenol in Pregnancy Not Linked to Autism or ADHD

A 20-year sibling study found no evidence that taking acetaminophen (Tylenol) during pregnancy increases a child's risk of autism or ADHD.

□ Creatine Shows Promise Against Depression

Early research indicates that creatine, widely used as a sports supplement, may also help improve symptoms of major depressive disorder.

□ Scientists Uncover New Type 1 Diabetes Trigger

Researchers have discovered that insulin-producing beta cells actively contribute to the onset of type 1 diabetes, opening new avenues for treatment.

□ Vitamin C Supports Healthy Brain Aging

New findings suggest that regular vitamin C intake may promote healthier brain aging and help maintain cognitive function over time.



Why Petrol and Diesel Prices Haven't Fallen Yet Despite Cheaper Crude Oil

News Mania Desk: Global crude oil prices have dropped sharply over the past few weeks, raising expectations of lower petrol and diesel prices in India. However, Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has clarified that consumers may have to wait another two to three months before any significant reduction reaches fuel stations.

Speaking to the media, Puri explained that India's state-run Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are currently refining crude oil purchased nearly two months ago, when international prices were substantially higher due to tensions in West Asia. Since crude procurement and refining operate on a time lag, the recent decline in global prices has not yet translated into lower retail fuel prices.

"We are using the crude petroleum stock today that we had bought two months ago. If this decline continues for two to three months, we will see," the minister said, indicating that any price revision would depend on whether lower international prices remain stable.

Brent crude oil had surged to nearly US\$120 per barrel during the peak of the West Asia conflict before retreating to around US\$70 per barrel after diplomatic efforts eased tensions between the United States and Iran. Despite this sharp correction, refiners continue to process higher-cost inventories acquired during April and early May.



Hardip Singh Puri



The minister also highlighted the financial strain faced by public sector OMCs, which reportedly incurred losses of ₹74,781 crore while absorbing part of the increase in global crude prices to shield consumers from steeper retail price hikes. Defending the government's fuel pricing strategy, Puri stated that petrol prices in India increased by 5.58% during the geopolitical crisis, significantly lower than the nearly 20% rise reported in several developed economies and about 35% in some neighbouring countries. He also noted that India maintained uninterrupted fuel supplies throughout the conflict, avoiding shortages and panic buying.

Meanwhile, the first signs of relief have begun to emerge. Private fuel retailer Nayara Energy has reduced petrol prices by ₹5 per litre and diesel prices by ₹3 per litre across its network of more than 7,000 fuel stations, suggesting that the decline in global crude prices is gradually beginning to filter into the domestic market.

For consumers, the message is clear: if international crude prices remain around current levels over the coming months, a broader reduction in petrol and diesel prices is likely to follow. Until then, retail fuel prices will continue to reflect the cost of earlier, more expensive crude purchases.

Sources: Statements by Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri during a press briefing.

BUSINESS WEEKLY SNIPPETS

Parle Products Eyes \$1 Billion IPO

Parle Products, the maker of the iconic Parle-G biscuits, is preparing for an initial public offering (IPO) worth over \$1 billion. The listing is expected to value the company at more than \$10 billion, making it one of India's largest consumer-sector IPOs.

Google Ordered to Pay Record EU Antitrust Fine

Google has lost its final legal appeal against a European Union antitrust ruling and must pay a record \$4.7 billion fine over alleged anti-competitive practices linked to its Android ecosystem.

Japan Commits ₹1 Lakh Crore Investment in India

Japan has announced investments worth ₹1 lakh crore in India, supporting over 120 projects across manufacturing, semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and other strategic sectors, further strengthening bilateral economic ties.

Amazon Expands India Investment to \$48 Billion

Amazon has pledged an additional \$13 billion investment in India, taking its total commitment to \$48 billion by 2030. The funds will primarily support AI capabilities, cloud infrastructure, and digital services.

US Jobs Data Eases Rate-Hike Concerns

The US economy added fewer jobs than expected in June, while the unemployment rate declined to 4.2%. The mixed labour market data has strengthened expectations that the Federal Reserve may slow the pace of future interest-rate hikes.

SP Group Raises ₹25,500 Crore Using Tata Sons Stake

The Shapoorji Pallonji Group (SP Group) is leveraging its stake in Tata Sons to secure a ₹25,500 crore cash infusion, aimed at strengthening liquidity and refinancing existing debt.

Apple Plans Five New iPhones by 2027

Apple is reportedly planning to launch five new iPhone models by 2027 while also exploring the use of Chinese-made chips, reflecting changes in its long-term product and supply-chain strategy.

Government Puts WhatsApp's Username Feature on Hold Amid Cybersecurity Concerns

News Mania Desk: The Union Government has directed WhatsApp to pause the rollout of its proposed username feature, citing concerns that it could create new avenues for cybercrime, identity fraud, and online impersonation. A show-cause notice has reportedly been issued to the messaging platform, seeking a detailed explanation of the feature's security architecture and safeguards before it can be introduced in India.

The proposed feature would allow users to communicate using unique usernames instead of sharing their mobile phone numbers. While the change is intended to enhance privacy by reducing the need to disclose personal contact details, authorities fear it could also make it easier for fraudsters to conceal their identities and exploit users.



Government officials have asked WhatsApp to clarify how usernames will be verified, what mechanisms will prevent duplicate or misleading identities, and how the platform plans to detect and curb impersonation, phishing, and financial scams. The Centre is also seeking details on complaint redressal systems and the company's ability to trace and respond to

misuse while complying with Indian laws.

The move comes at a time when India is witnessing a sharp rise in cyber fraud, including digital arrest scams, impersonation, investment fraud, and phishing attacks conducted through messaging platforms. Law enforcement agencies have repeatedly stressed the need for

stronger identity verification and faster cooperation from digital intermediaries to combat online crime.

The government's intervention reflects a broader push to ensure that technological innovations do not compromise user safety. While privacy-enhancing features are encouraged, regulators are increasingly emphasizing that they must be accompanied by robust security measures and accountability mechanisms.

For WhatsApp, the pause offers an opportunity to demonstrate that the proposed username system can balance user privacy with public safety. For millions of Indian users, the decision signals that the government is taking a cautious approach to emerging digital features, prioritizing cybersecurity and consumer protection as online threats continue to evolve.

Air Marshal PV Shivanand Takes Charge of South Western Air Command

Air Marshal PV Shivanand assumed charge as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the South Western Air Command on July 1, 2026, succeeding Air Marshal Tejinder Singh. After taking over, he paid tribute to the Bravehearts at the South Western Air Command War Memorial.

Commissioned into the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force in December 1988, Air Marshal Shivanand is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy and has logged over 2,800 flying hours on the MiG-21 and IL-76 AWACS. During his distinguished career, he has commanded frontline fighter squadrons, a premier airbase



in the Eastern Sector, and served as Defence and Air Attaché at the Embassy of India in Washington, D.C. Most recently, he served as Senior Air Staff Officer at Headquarters Central Air Command. His leadership is expected to further strengthen the IAF's operational readiness and integrated air defence capabilities.

INS Trikand Foils Piracy Threat, Secures Merchant Vessel in Gulf of Aden

The Indian Navy successfully responded to a piracy attempt on MV Golden Arsenal in the Gulf of Aden, ensuring the safety of all 21 crew members, including one Indian national. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines-flagged bulk carrier came under attack on July 1 while sailing about 300 nautical miles east-northeast of Djibouti.

Mission-deployed stealth frigate INS Trikand was immediately diverted after the incident was reported through the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR). On July 2, an Indian Navy boarding team searched and sanitised the vessel, finding no pirates on-board. A P-8I Maritime Patrol Aircraft



also conducted aerial surveillance to support the operation. After the threat was neutralised and damage assessed, MV Golden Arsenal safely resumed its voyage. The operation highlights the Indian Navy's continued commitment to protecting global merchant shipping and maintaining maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.

Indian Coast Guard Decommissions Hovercraft H-186 After 24 Years of Distinguished Service

The Indian Coast Guard has decommissioned Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV) H-186 after 24 years of distinguished service at a ceremony held on June 29, 2026, at 88 ACV Squadron, Coast Guard Headquarters No. 8, Haldia, West Bengal. The event was attended by Inspector General Iqbal Singh Chauhan, senior Coast Guard officers, civil dignitaries, and members of the maritime community. Commissioned on March 21, 2002, H-186 played a vital role in coastal surveillance, search and rescue (SAR), anti-smuggling operations, and maritime law enforcement. The hovercraft earned recognition for rescuing 511 pilgrims in Janu-



ary 2023 and another 182 pilgrims in January 2024 during challenging SAR operations. It also assisted in a search mission at Bakkhali Beach in August 2024. Earlier, H-186 received the Coast Guard's Best Search and Rescue Unit award in 2004 and was honoured again in 2006 after saving 78 lives.

As part of the Coast Guard's Golden Jubilee celebrations, H-186 will be preserved as a heritage exhibit in New Town, Kolkata, while the force continues to modernise with a new generation of indigenously built hovercraft to strengthen India's maritime security.

General Dhiraj Seth Outlines 'VIJAY' Vision After Taking Charge as Army Chief

A day after assuming office as the 31st Chief of the Army Staff, General Dhiraj Seth paid tribute to the nation's fallen heroes at the National War Memorial before reviewing a ceremonial Guard of Honour at South Block on July 1. Addressing the media, General Seth reaffirmed his commitment to the principles of "Duty, Honour and Nation First" and outlined his leadership vision through the acronym "VIJAY." The roadmap focuses on Vigilance to maintain operational readiness, Innovation and Transformation through advanced technologies, Jointness and



Integration with the Indian Navy and Air Force under a Whole-of-Nation approach, Atmanirbharta by promoting indigenous defence capabilities, and Yodha First, pri-

oritising the welfare, training, and professional growth of soldiers, veterans, Agniveers, and Veer Naris.

Describing the Indian Army as a battle-hardened and combat-ready force, the Army Chief emphasised accelerated modernisation to build a technology-enabled, future-ready military capable of addressing evolving security challenges. He concluded with the guiding motto "Jai se VIJAY," reaffirming the Army's unwavering commitment to safeguarding India's sovereignty and national interests.

Operation Amistad: India Sends Army Medical Team to Quake-Hit Venezuela

Under Operation Amistad, the Indian Army has dispatched a specialised medical contingent to earthquake-hit Venezuela to support humanitarian relief efforts. The 41-member team from 60 Para Field Hospital, including nine medical officers, departed from Hindon Air Force Station aboard two Indian Air Force aircraft carrying nearly six tonnes of medical supplies provided by the Ministry of External Affairs.

The contingent is equipped to deliver emergency medical care, trauma management, life-saving surgeries, and essential healthcare services. One aircraft is also transporting the indigenous BHISHM Cube under



India's AarogyaMaitri Project—a rapidly deployable modular field hospital capable of treating up to 200 patients with advanced trauma care, surgical, intensive care, and diagnostic facilities. The mission highlights India's commitment to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, reinforcing its role as a reliable first responder during global crises.

Rajnath Singh Launches DFP-2026 to Boost DRDO's R&D and Defence Self-Reliance

Rajnath Singh has unveiled the Delegation of Financial Powers to DRDO (DFP-2026), a major reform aimed at improving efficiency, accountability, and the timely execution of strategic defence research and development projects. The new framework empowers the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) with enhanced financial autonomy to accelerate the development, production, and induction



of advanced defence systems and technologies. DFP-2026 introduces dedicated funding for trials, testing, and evaluation, enables faster ap-

proval of pre-project R&D initiatives, and streamlines financial powers for research grants, Centres of Excellence, and Technology Development Fund projects. The Defence Minister said the reforms will strengthen collaboration with industry and academia, reinforce the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, and enhance India's defence preparedness by accelerating indigenous innovation and capability development.

ART OF THE WEEK



Banhisikha

SHOT OF THE WEEK



Photographer: Saikat Kumar Basu

Caption : Peace in my ultimate abode
Location -Chupi Chor, East Burdwan, West Bengal



"When you're silent, your silence condones it. Thus, whatever you believe in goes down the drain."
— Jennifer Tindugan-Adoviso

In the Morning Sun

By Ashutosh Das-Hailakandi-Assam

In the morning sun,
I gaze upon the flowers
and pray—
make me pure.
Like a flock of birds
unfurling their wings across the sky,
let us sing
the unspoken language of love.
So many traps surround us.
So many faces hidden behind
masks.
Transform every harsh and hateful
cry
into the sacred resonance of the
conch shell.
Turn every boast of violence
into the gentle melody of holy kir-
tan.
Let bodies stained by the black
dust of hatred
become radiant with the colors of
abir.
Let the dawn awaken
the music of goodness in every
human heart.
May the morning sun
roll laughing across the ripening
fields of grain.
May every woman carry in her
hands
the sacred vessels of blessing and
abundance.
On that luminous morning,
may courtyards bloom beneath
drifting clouds of cotton-white light,
while the wind of blessings
sways through the ears of golden
rice.
Let every snare of violence
dissolve in the triumph of light.
Let those who hide behind their
masks
rediscover their true faces—
their true colors,
their compassion,
their conscience.
I long to become
a flower laid upon the altar of wor-
ship,

offering myself
to the fragrance of incense,
the flame of the sacred lamp,
and the eternal chant of the Vedic
hymns.
Beyond the restless world
of greed, power, and endless con-
sumption,
let me glimpse
the immortal land of dreams—
a world where people recognize
one another
through love alone;
where humanity itself
is the highest act of worship;
where compassion is the greatest
wisdom,
and love
the only religion of life.
I long to flow like a river.
I long to give myself away,
carrying to every village and every
city
along both banks
the cool waters of peace
and the living stream of compas-
sion.
May my current wash away
the stains of violence, greed, and
hatred.
May every wave I bear
become a blessing for humankind.
Each morning,
as I look upon the flowers beneath
the radiant sun,
I am born anew.
I become
an eternal verse of the Vedas,
a prayer of light
for the welfare of all beings.
May love embrace the whole world.
May every heart awaken
in the dawn of peace.
May every hand reach out to an-
other hand.
And may tomorrow's sunrise
be the holiest dawn
humanity has ever known.

Indian Army Duo Wins India's First Gold at World Rowing Cup III

Lucerne: Indian Army rowers Lakshay and Ujjwal Kumar Singh created history by winning India's first-ever gold medal at the World Rowing Cup III in Lucerne, Switzerland.

The Indian pair delivered a dominant performance in the Light-weight Men's Double Sculls final, finishing ahead of a strong international field to claim the landmark title. Their victory marks a major milestone for Indian rowing on the global stage and highlights the growing success of Indian athletes in international water sports. The historic triumph is expected to



boost India's confidence ahead of upcoming world championships and major multi-sport events, while showcasing the Indian Army's continued contribution to the nation's sporting excellence.

Yuki Bhambri Exits Wimbledon Early, India's Doubles Hopes Continue

London: Yuki Bhambri suffered an early exit from Wimbledon after crashing out in the opening rounds of the doubles competition, dealing a setback to India's campaign at the prestigious Grand Slam.

The veteran doubles specialist was unable to progress beyond the initial stages, leaving Indian tennis fans hoping for stronger performances from the country's remaining doubles players as the grass-court season continues.

Bhambri, one of India's leading doubles players, has enjoyed a successful resurgence on the ATP Tour in recent



years. Despite the disappointing Wimbledon result, attention will now shift to upcoming tournaments where Indian players will look to regain momentum ahead of the remainder of the international tennis calendar.

Sreejesh Questions Coach Fulton After India's Pro League Campaign

New Delhi: Legendary former Indian goalkeeper P. R. Sreejesh has sparked a major debate by publicly criticizing Indian men's hockey chief coach Craig Fulton following the team's disappointing eighth-place finish in the FIH Pro League. Sreejesh questioned the coaching staff's tactics and expressed concern over the team's performances, while also taking a swipe at the coach's reported remuneration. His remarks have triggered widespread discussion within the hockey fraternity over the team's recent results



and future direction. The comments come as India looks to regroup ahead of upcoming international competitions, with expectations high for improved performances on the global stage.

Sports Ministry Declines to Send Men's Football Team to Asian Games

New Delhi: The Union Sports Ministry has confirmed that the Indian men's football team will not participate in the upcoming Asian Games, citing its policy of sending only teams ranked among the top six in Asia.

The decision follows the Ministry's strict enforcement of the "Top 6 continental ranking" eligibility criterion for team sports at the multi-sport event. As India does not



currently meet the required ranking, the football team has been ruled out of the Games.

The move has sparked discussions within the football fraternity, with many highlighting the importance of international exposure for the national team. The Ministry, however, has maintained that the eligibility policy is aimed at ensuring strong medal prospects for India at major sporting events.

Rain Washes Out India-England T20; India Set for First Sri Lanka Test Tour in Nine Years

Chester-le-Street: The opening T20 International between India national cricket team and England cricket team was abandoned without a ball being bowled after persistent rain made play impossible. In a separate development, the Board of Control for Cricket in India announced that Team India will tour Sri Lanka for a multi-match Test series, marking the country's first red-ball tour of the



island nation in nine years. The upcoming series is expected to strengthen India's preparations for

future ICC Test assignments while renewing a long-awaited bilateral Test rivalry.

Golden Boot Race Heats Up as USA Reach World Cup Round of 16



North America: The FIFA World Cup 2026 knockout stage has sparked an intense Golden Boot battle, with Kylian Mbappé leading the charts on six goals. He is closely followed by Harry Kane, who scored a crucial late double against DR Congo, while Erling Haaland and Lionel Messi remain firmly in contention.

Meanwhile, the United States secured a place in the Round of 16 with a gritty 2-0 victory over Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite playing with 10 men for a significant portion of the match. The result keeps the co-hosts alive in the tournament and adds fresh excitement to the knockout phase.

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- Age Limit:** Below 39 years
- Gender:** Both male and female candidates are eligible
- Experience:** Freshers can also apply

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

PHASE 1: PREPARATION

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- Complete B1 & B2 certification (mandatory)

PHASE 2: DOCUMENTATION & REGISTRATION

- Apply for nursing registration in Germany (3-6 months process)
- Apostille of documents from Ministry of External Affairs
- Translation of documents into German

PHASE 3: JOB PLACEMENT

- Attend video interview with German hospital
- Receive job offer/contract

PHASE 4: VISA & TRAVEL

- Apply and complete Germany visa process
- Travel to Germany
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PHASE 5: AFTER ARRIVAL

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