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Seychelles Confers Highest Honour on PM Modi

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred the 'Guardian of the Blue Horizon', Seychelles' highest civilian distinction for leadership in environmental conservation and sustainable development. The prestigious honour recognises Prime Minister Modi's sustained commitment to sustainable development, climate action and green growth, further adding to the list of international recognitions he has received for promoting environmental stewardship. Prime Minister Modi is currently on a three-day State visit to Seychelles, where he attended the country's Golden Jubilee National Day celebrations as the Guest of Honour. On Sunday, PM Modi held bilateral talks with Seychelles President Patrick Herminie at the State House in Victoria after being accorded a ceremonial Guard of Honour. During the visit, India handed over several key assets to strengthen Seychelles' maritime security and public services, including: A Made-in-India Fast Patrol Vessel (PS LESPWAR) for maritime surveillance and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) patrols, Six ambulances, Ten utility vehicles, Five laser radial boats. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the assistance reflects India's Vision MAHASAGAR and reinforces the growing defence and maritime partnership between the two countries, contributing to peace and stability in the Indian Ocean Region.

Top 10 Firms Add ₹88,678 Crore in Market

The combined market capitalisation of six of India's top 10 most-valued companies increased by ₹88,678 crore during the holiday-shortened trading week, reflecting positive investor sentiment despite modest gains in the benchmark indices. During the week, the BSE Sensex gained 297.57 points (0.38%), while the Nifty 50 advanced 42.9 points (0.17%). Among the country's most valuable companies, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India (SBI), Bajaj Finance, and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) registered gains in their market valuations. In contrast, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), and Hindustan Unilever Ltd. (HUL) witnessed declines. ICICI Bank emerged as the biggest gainer during the week, with its market capitalisation rising by ₹29,588.75 lakh crore to ₹9.95 lakh crore. HDFC Bank followed closely, adding ₹24,718.3 crore to take its valuation to ₹12.25 lakh crore, retaining its position as India's most valuable listed company. Bajaj Finance added ₹11,580.28 crore, pushing its market value to ₹6.10 lakh crore, while State Bank of India gained



₹9,322.93 crore, taking its valuation to ₹9.64 lakh crore. Larsen & Toubro also posted a modest increase of ₹1,423.88 crore, ending the week with a market capitalisation of ₹5.80 lakh crore. On the downside, Bharti Airtel recorded the steepest fall, with its market value declin-

ing by ₹35,615.21 crore to ₹11.27 lakh crore. LIC lost ₹21,188.74 crore, reducing its valuation to ₹5.35 lakh crore, while TCS shed ₹11,143.71 crore, bringing its market capitalisation down to ₹7.58 lakh crore. Hindustan Unilever also saw its valuation decline by ₹5,321.83

crore to ₹5.10 lakh crore. At the end of the week, HDFC Bank remained the country's most valuable listed company, followed by Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Tata Consultancy Services, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, LIC, and Hindustan Unilever.



India Win Maiden AVC Men's Cup Bronze

The Indian men's volleyball team scripted history on Sunday by winning its first-ever medal at the AVC Men's Cup, defeating defending champions Bahrain 3-1 (25-23, 23-25, 25-21, 25-17) in the bronze medal match held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The historic victory marked India's maiden podium finish in the continental tournament and capped off one of the country's finest campaigns in Asian volleyball. After narrowly missing out on a place in the final, the Indian team produced a determined performance to overcome Bahrain and secure the bronze medal. The achievement is being hailed as a landmark moment for Indian volleyball, reflecting the team's growing competitiveness against Asia's top-ranked nations. India had come agonisingly close to reaching its first-ever AVC Men's Cup final before losing a thrilling five-set semi-final against Asian powerhouse Indonesia. The hosts went down 2-3 (25-15, 24-26, 20-25, 25-19, 13-15) after a fiercely contested encounter. India dominated the opening set with aggressive serving, effective blocking and sharp attacking play to win 25-15.

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Lotus Will Bloom in TG Soon: Nabin

Hyderabad: BJP national president Nitin Nabin on Sunday asserted that the party's Lotus symbol will soon bloom in Telangana, urging party workers to intensify their efforts to bring the BJP to power in the state. Addressing party workers after inaugurating the Ranga Reddy Rural district BJP office and virtually launching party offices in nine other districts at Shamshabad, Nabin called on the cadre to draw inspiration from the BJP's recent electoral success in West Bengal and work towards achieving a similar victory in Telangana. Claiming that it was the BJP that weakened and removed the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government politically, Nabin alleged that the Congress ultimately reaped the electoral benefit. He accused the Congress government in Telan-



gana of being corrupt and anarchic and asserted that BJP workers were prepared to launch a mass struggle to dislodge it. "We struggled in West Bengal, made sacrifices and worked hard. That struggle resulted in the lotus blooming there. Telangana will also witness the same change," he said. The BJP chief urged

party workers to strengthen the organisation at the grassroots level by taking the party's ideology and welfare agenda to every village, street and locality. "We must reach every mohalla, every street and every town. Our policies and intentions should reach every household," he said. Nabin claimed that the Narendra Modi-

led Central government has been implementing several welfare schemes benefiting the people of Telangana. However, he argued that the state's overall development would accelerate only if Telangana gets a "double-engine government" with the BJP in power at both the Centre and the state. He reiterated that the BJP's larger goal is to realise the vision of 'Viksit Bharat 2047', stating that Telangana's contribution would be crucial to achieving that objective. Highlighting Telangana's historical significance for the BJP, Nabin pointed out that when the party had only two Members of Parliament in 1984, one of them was elected from the Telangana region. He said this fact disproves allegations that the BJP is an outsider party in the state.



EDITORIAL

Building Champions
Begins Here

Every time an Indian athlete stands on the podium at the Olympics, World Championships, or other international competitions, the nation celebrates with pride. Behind every medal, however, lies years of relentless training, discipline, and sacrifice. While individual determination is indispensable, talent alone is rarely enough to produce world-class athletes. The foundation of sporting excellence is strong, accessible, and modern sports infrastructure. India is home to immense sporting talent. From the villages of Haryana producing wrestlers to the tribal regions nurturing archers, from badminton champions emerging from Hyderabad to hockey players rising from Odisha, examples abound of natural ability waiting to be discovered. Yet, countless young athletes never realize their potential because they lack access to quality playgrounds, stadiums, coaching facilities, and scientific training. In many parts of the country, aspiring sportspersons still practice on uneven grounds with inadequate equipment and little professional guidance. World-class infrastructure goes far beyond building stadiums. It includes high-performance training centers, modern gyms, sports science laboratories, physiotherapy units, nutrition support, recovery facilities, and access to qualified coaches. Countries that consistently dominate international sporting events invest heavily in these areas, ensuring that athletes receive comprehensive support throughout their careers. India must adopt the same long-term approach if it aims to become a global sporting powerhouse. Grassroots development deserves equal attention. Every district should have well-maintained sports complexes where children can train in multiple disciplines. Schools and colleges must encourage participation in sports alongside academics, identifying talent at an early age and providing structured pathways for growth. Partnerships between governments, private organizations, and sports federations can help bridge the gap between grassroots participation and elite performance. Sports infrastructure also contributes to broader social and economic development. It promotes healthier lifestyles, creates employment for coaches and sports professionals, encourages tourism through tournaments, and inspires community engagement. Most importantly, it provides young people with positive opportunities that build discipline, teamwork, and resilience. However, infrastructure alone cannot produce champions. Facilities must be managed efficiently, maintained regularly, and made affordable for athletes from all backgrounds. Equal opportunities should be extended to women, para-athletes, and those from rural and economically disadvantaged communities. Talent should never be limited by geography or financial constraints.

Preparing India for the AI Workforce Revolution

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation are no longer futuristic concepts confined to science fiction. They are rapidly transforming industries, redefining jobs, and reshaping economies across the world. From manufacturing plants using robotic systems to banks deploying AI-powered customer service, and from hospitals leveraging machine learning for diagnosis to farms adopting precision agriculture, technology is changing the nature of work at an unprecedented pace. For India, a nation with the world's largest youth population, the challenge is not whether AI will influence the workforce, but whether the workforce will be prepared to thrive in an AI-driven economy. India's demographic advantage has long been regarded as one of its greatest economic strengths. Every year, millions of young people enter the job market, aspiring to build successful careers. However, technological disruption is altering the skills employers seek. Routine and repetitive tasks are increasingly being automated, while demand is growing for professionals who possess analytical thinking, digital literacy, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and technological expertise. This shift requires a fundamental transformation in education, skill development, and employment policies. The rise of AI should not be viewed solely as a threat to jobs. History shows that every technological revolution has eliminated certain occupations while creating entirely new ones. The Industrial Revolution replaced manual labour with machines but generated millions of manufacturing jobs. The Information Technology revolution automated paperwork but created opportunities in software development, cybersecurity, digital marketing, and e-commerce. Similarly, AI is expected to generate new careers in machine learning, data science, robotics, AI ethics, cybersecurity, cloud computing, and intelligent automation. However, the transition will not be automatic or painless. Workers whose jobs involve repetitive data processing, basic customer support, routine accounting, or predictable administrative functions may face increasing pressure from automation. Manufacturing sectors are



also adopting robotics to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs. Without timely reskilling, a significant segment of the workforce could struggle to remain competitive in the evolving labour market. The solution lies in preparing people rather than resisting technology. Education must move beyond memorization and examination-oriented learning toward developing critical thinking, creativity, communication, and adaptability. Schools should introduce students to computational thinking, coding, digital literacy, and responsible AI use from an early stage. Universities must redesign curricula to include interdisciplinary learning that combines technology with business, healthcare, law, agriculture, and social sciences. Skill development will become the defining factor of India's economic future. Continuous learning can no longer be considered optional; it has become essential. Governments, industries, educational institutions, and technology companies must collaborate to create affordable upskilling and reskilling programs. Workers already employed in traditional industries should have opportunities to acquire digital competencies without leaving their jobs. Online learning platforms, vocational institutions, and corporate training initiatives can play a crucial role in making lifelong learning accessible. Artificial Intelligence also presents enormous opportunities for India's key sectors. In agriculture, AI-powered systems can help farmers predict weather patterns, monitor crop health, optimize irrigation, and improve yields. In healthcare, AI can assist doctors in early disease detection, medical imaging, and personalized treatment planning. Manufacturing industries can use predictive maintenance, smart factories, and automated quality control to improve productivity. Financial institutions are already using AI to detect fraud, assess credit

worthiness, and deliver personalized banking services. Education itself can become more inclusive through adaptive learning platforms that cater to individual student needs. India's startup ecosystem stands to benefit immensely from AI innovation. Young entrepreneurs are developing solutions in language technologies, healthcare diagnostics, financial inclusion, logistics, climate technology, and education. With supportive policies, access to research funding, and stronger collaboration between academia and industry, India can become not just a consumer of AI technologies but also a global developer of responsible and affordable AI solutions. Yet, alongside opportunities come significant ethical and social concerns. AI systems must be transparent, accountable, and free from discrimination. Algorithms trained on biased data can reinforce inequalities in hiring, lending, healthcare, and law enforcement. Protecting personal data and ensuring cybersecurity are equally critical as AI applications expand. India must establish robust regulatory frameworks that encourage innovation while safeguarding individual rights and public trust. Another challenge is the digital divide. While urban professionals increasingly benefit from advanced technologies, millions in rural areas still lack reliable internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and access to quality education. If AI-driven growth remains concentrated in a few metropolitan regions, existing social and economic inequalities could widen. Bridging this gap requires investments in broadband connectivity, digital infrastructure, affordable devices, and localized digital education across rural India. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which employ a substantial portion of India's workforce, also need support in adopting AI technologies. Many businesses lack the financial resources or technical

expertise to implement automation effectively. Government incentives, shared technology platforms, and public-private partnerships can help smaller enterprises modernize without being left behind in the digital transformation. The role of public policy will be crucial. National strategies should focus on research and development, AI innovation, digital infrastructure, ethical governance, and workforce preparedness. Investments in semiconductor manufacturing, cloud infrastructure, high-performance computing, and indigenous AI research will strengthen India's technological sovereignty while creating high-value employment opportunities. Importantly, human skills will remain irreplaceable even in an AI-powered world. Creativity, empathy, emotional intelligence, ethical judgment, leadership, negotiation, and complex decision-making are qualities that machines cannot fully replicate. Future workplaces will increasingly value professionals who can collaborate effectively with AI rather than compete against it. The goal is not to replace humans with machines but to empower humans through intelligent technology. Businesses, too, must adopt responsible automation strategies. Instead of viewing AI merely as a cost-cutting tool, organizations should invest in employee retraining, internal mobility, and workforce transition programs. A balanced approach that combines productivity gains with human development will produce sustainable long-term benefits for both employers and employees. Ultimately, Artificial Intelligence represents one of the greatest opportunities in India's economic history. With its large talent pool, vibrant startup ecosystem, expanding digital infrastructure, and growing technological capabilities, India is well positioned to become a global leader in AI innovation. But technological leadership cannot be achieved through software and algorithms alone. It depends on investing in people—their education, skills, creativity, and adaptability. The future of work is arriving faster than many expected. Countries that prepare their workforce today will lead tomorrow's economy.

- Praveen Rao
Chennamaneni,
Tech Expert, London

Stokes To Retire after NZ Series

England captain Ben Stokes has announced that he will retire from international cricket at the end of the ongoing three-Test series against New Zealand, bringing an end to one of the most influential careers in English cricket. The 35-year-old informed his teammates of his decision before the start of the fourth day's play in the third and final Test at Trent Bridge, Nottingham. Stokes will complete the remaining two days of the match before officially calling time on his international career. Addressing his teammates in an emotional dressing-room speech, Stokes urged them to give their maximum effort in his final match. "The reasons can wait, but I've had many tough times for this team, for you guys, and for those who came before. I have one more tough time to do," Stokes said. "The only thing I ask is that everyone gives their all. When we walk off the field after these two days, I want us to know we left nothing behind. That's all I ask—not just for me, but for this team." Stokes said he had already come to terms with the emotional aspect of his decision and was fully focused on helping England finish the series strongly. The announcement comes after a difficult week in which Stokes missed the second Test following an incident at a London nightclub. Upon returning to lead England in the third Test, he had only hinted at his future by saying he would captain the side "this week."

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Anirudh-Kavya Wedding Buzz Grows

Chennai: Fresh speculation surrounding the relationship between music composer Anirudh Ravichander and Kavya Maran has intensified after Anirudh's uncle, actor Y. G. Mahendran, reportedly suggested that the two are set to get married. Speaking in an interview with a television channel, Mahendran described Anirudh as "a very soft boy" and congratulated him on what he claimed would be a major wedding. "Based on what I've been told, it's a sure thing. They are getting married," he reportedly said, while refraining from revealing any details about the date or venue of the ceremony. Mahendran also praised Kavya Maran, describing her as a capable and hardworking professional. He said she had successfully managed a major cricket franchise and possessed strong business acumen inherited from her father. He added that the two would make a good pair. Despite the fresh wave of speculation, neither Anirudh nor Kavya Maran has officially confirmed or commented on the reported wedding plans. This is not the first time the duo has been linked. In 2025, social media reports claimed that the two had been dating for over a year and were planning to marry. At the time, Anirudh dismissed the marriage rumours through a post on social media, writing, "Marriage ah? Lol... Chill out guys, please stop spreading rumours." However, he did not address the dating speculation. Anirudh Ravichander is among the most sought-after music composers in Indian cinema. After making his debut with 3, he shot to international fame with the viral song Why This Kolaveri Di. His recent work includes music for Leo, Indian 2, Vettaian, Vidaamuyarchi and Coolie. Kavya Maran is the daughter of media baron Kalanithi Maran and serves as an Executive Director of Sun TV Network. She also heads the Indian Premier League franchise Sunrisers Hyderabad and has become a well-known figure in Indian cricket administration.

'Fauzi' Release Date Speculation Continues

Hyderabad: Speculation over the release date of Fauzi, starring Prabhas, has intensified following reports suggesting that the film may hit theatres on December 3, 2026. However, the makers have not officially announced a release date. Industry reports indicate that December 3 is being considered for the film's release, though there has been no confirmation from the production team. Earlier, Mythri Movie Makers CEO Cherry had stated that nearly 80 per cent of the film's shooting had been completed. He revealed that, apart from three major action sequences featuring Prabhas, most of the production work was finished and the makers were initially aiming for an October release. Meanwhile, reports suggest that Prabhas has been juggling multiple projects simultaneously, including Fauzi, Spirit and the sequel to Kalki 2898 AD. Sources claim the actor's packed shooting schedule is expected to continue for several more months due to the vastly different preparations required for each project. Directed by Hanu Raghavapudi, Fauzi is one of the most anticipated Telugu films currently in production. The film stars newcomer Imanvi as the female lead and features veteran actors Mithun Chakraborty and Jaya Prada in pivotal roles. While recent reports point towards a December release, earlier industry buzz had suggested that the makers were targeting a Dussehra release. As of now, fans are awaiting an official announcement regarding the film's theatrical release date.



'Lenin' Trailer Likely on June 30

Hyderabad: The makers of Lenin are reportedly gearing up to release the film's trailer on June 30, although an official announcement is still awaited. According to industry reports, the trailer launch is expected to kick-start the film's final promotional campaign ahead of its theatrical release on July 10. Starring Akhil Akkineni and Bhagyashree Borse in the lead roles, Lenin has generated considerable buzz among moviegoers. The film was originally scheduled for release on May 1, but the makers postponed it to avoid a box-office clash with Ram Charan's Peddi. Subsequently, the film was rescheduled for June 26, but the release was pushed once again. It is now officially set to hit theatres worldwide on July 10. Directed by Murali Kishor Abburu, Lenin is described as a rural action drama that blends an intense love story with a socially relevant theme. The film also witnessed a key casting change during production. Actress Sreeleela was initially signed as the female lead and even featured in the early promotional material. However, she later exited the project due to scheduling conflicts, after which Bhagyashree Borse was brought on board. With the release date fast approaching, fans are now eagerly awaiting the official confirmation of the trailer launch, which is expected to offer the first detailed look at the film's action-packed storyline and lead performances.

Rashmika's 'Raaka' Role Sparks



Hyderabad: Actress Rashmika Mandanna is reportedly set for a major transformation in her on-screen image with her upcoming film Raaka, starring Allu Arjun and directed by Atlee. According to industry reports, Rashmika is expected to join the latest shooting schedule of the film this week alongside Allu Arjun. However, what has generated greater curiosity is speculation that she will portray a dark, negative-shaded character—something she has rarely attempted in her career. Though the makers have not officially confirmed the details, industry buzz suggests that director Atlee has designed the role with several unexpected twists, making it one of the film's most intriguing characters. Producer Lagadapati Sridhar said he was unaware of the exact nature of Rashmika's role but noted that if she is indeed playing a grey or negative character, it would present a completely new challenge. He observed that audiences have largely associated Rashmika with glamorous appearances and emotionally driven performances. According to him, such a role could redefine the way she is perceived as an actress. The Allu Arjun-Rashmika pairing has already delivered blockbuster successes with Pushpa: The Rise and Pushpa 2: The Rule.

Ganguly Biopic Postponed



Former India captain and ex-BCCI president Sourav Ganguly has confirmed that his much-awaited biopic, starring Rajkumar Rao in the lead role, will now release in April 2027, instead of the previously expected December 2026. Speaking in Kolkata, Ganguly revealed that nearly 75 per cent of the film's shooting has already been completed, with the remaining portions scheduled to be filmed in England during July. The production team plans to shoot at iconic cricket venues including Lord's, The Oval, and Yorkshire, after which extensive post-production work will begin. Explaining the delay, Ganguly said the additional time is required to complete post-production. "The film will release in April. Around 75 per cent of the shooting is over. The remaining 25 per cent will be filmed in England, and post-production will take considerable time," he said. The cricket legend expressed confidence in Rajkumar Rao, praising the actor's talent and dedication. Ganguly described Rao as an exceptional performer who has done a "fantastic job" portraying him on screen.