

39-Day Grand Vikramotsav to begin in Ujjain from February 12

Renowned Composer Pritam to lead devotional worship of Mahadev on Mahashivratri

Ujjain: The ancient city of Ujjain is bracing for an unprecedented cultural renaissance as the Vikramotsav-2026 kicks off on February 12.



A global cultural tapestry

The festival reaches its first crescendo on February 15 (Mahashivratri). Renowned Bollywood composer Pritam will lead a magnificent devotional tribute titled "Shivo'ham Mahadev," dedicated to the creator of the universe.

and a 10-day theatre fest featuring National School of Drama (NSD) productions.

Heritage & Science: National Science and History Conclaves, Vedic contests, and exhibitions showcasing Mahabharata-era weaponry.

Folk & Arts: A Puppet Festival and All-India Poets' Meets, including a special 'Matrushakti' session on International Women's Day.

From drone shows by composers like Vishal Mishra to the traditional Mahakal Van Mela, Vikramotsav-2026 is designed to be a unique fusion of India's timeless traditions and contemporary brilliance.

India's richest honour

In a historic move to revive the legacy of Samrat Vikramaditya, the state has instituted the Samrat Vikramaditya International Award, carrying a staggering prize of Rs 1.01 crore—making it the nation's highest honour.

Holi Special: RKMP-Danapur Express to ease festive rush



Bhopal: To accommodate the massive surge of travelers during the upcoming Holi festival, West Central Railway has announced a special train service between Rani Kamalapati (Bhopal) and Danapur. The special express (Train No. 01667/01668) will operate two round trips, providing much-needed relief to passengers heading toward Bihar.

Train No. 01667 will depart from Rani Kamalapati on February 27 and March 2, 2026, at 2:25 PM, reaching Danapur the following morning at 8:45 AM. For the return journey, Train No. 01668 will leave Danapur on February 28 and March 3, 2026, at 11:15 AM, arriving back in Bhopal at 8:55 AM the next day.

IIFM to set up campuses in W Bengal, Odisha

New centres to strengthen forest governance and conservation education

Bhopal: The Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM) is set to establish new campuses at Kurseong in West Bengal's Darjeeling hills and Mayurbhanj in Odisha, marking a major expansion aimed at strengthening forest governance and environmental education.



challenges related to conservation and eviction. According to officials, these themes are critical for balancing development needs with environmental protection.

government. It is being transformed into a modern academic facility to train future forest managers and policy professionals.

Second campus at Mayurbhanj

Parallely, IIFM is also setting up its third campus at Mayurbhanj in Odisha on around 200 acres of land. Dubey said the expansion aligns with the Union government's forest and wildlife conservation priorities and will prepare students for leadership roles, including in the Indian Forest Service.

The move comes amid growing debates over diversion of forest land and industrial projects in wildlife habitats, positioning the expansion as a push towards science-based, sustainable forest management.

MP NEET PG Counselling: Revised mop-up round schedule announced

Bhopal: The Directorate of Medical Education (DME), Madhya Pradesh, has officially released the revised schedule for the NEET PG 2025-26 Mop-Up round, providing a final lifeline for thousands of medical aspirants across the state.

The fresh choice-filling and locking window is set to open at 5:00 PM on February 9 and will remain active until midnight on February 11. Authorities have

emphasized that fresh choice-filling is mandatory for all participants; those failing to update their preferences will not be considered for new seat allocations.

The much-anticipated seat allotment results will be declared on February 14. Successful candidates must then report to their respective medical colleges for document verification and admission between February 15 and 17. Candidates are reminded that a security deposit is compulsory for this round, and any resignations will attract a prescribed penalty as per state medical education norms.

Bharatanatyam dance class opens for railway staff children

By Special Correspondent Bhopal: A Bharatanatyam dance class was inaugurated at Habibganj Railway Colony for the benefit of children of railway employees. The initiative has been launched under Nirtyati Kalakshetram and was formally opened by Anita Tyagi, President of the West Central Railway Women's Welfare Organ-



sation, Bhopal. She inaugurated the class by lighting a ceremonial lamp.

Addressing the gathering, she highlighted the importance of dance and music alongside formal education, stating that artistic training helps in the holistic development of children.

Parents and children welcomed the initiative, expressing hope that it would nurture cultural values and creative talent among young learners.

Bank employee dies of suicide

Bhopal: A bank employee living in the Teela Jamalpur area died of suicide by hanging himself. His body was found hanging from a tree on Saturday morning. Police have registered a case and launched an investigation. The deceased, Himanshu Raikwar (28), son of Sunil Kumar Raikwar, was a resident of Regiment Road in the Teela Jamalpur police station area. On Saturday morning, his family members found him hanging from a tree in the backyard of their house. They then informed the police. The police sent the body for post-mortem examination. No suicide note was found during the search.

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Police crackdown on cattle smuggling



Bhopal: The Madhya Pradesh Police have achieved significant success in their statewide drive against illegal cattle and animal smuggling, rescuing 141 cattle and other animals over the past seven days. The action, carried out through coordinated, intelligence-led and technology-enabled operations, also led to the seizure of vehicles used in the smuggling activities.

In Chhatrapur district, Naugaon police intercepted a suspicious 16-wheeler truck on the four-lane highway following a tip-off. A search revealed 45 cattle packed beyond the permitted capacity, leading to the arrest of three accused.

In Anuppur's Kotma area, police recovered 22 buffaloes and calves from a truck and arrested the smugglers. An illegal country-made firearm and two live cartridges were also seized, with the total value of the recovered property estimated at around Rs 26 lakh.

The police said sustained action against animal smugglers would continue to strengthen law and order and curb animal cruelty.

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