

# Holika Dahan performed at over 2000 locations

**Holi to be celebrated today with zeal and enthusiasm**

**Bhopal:** The Festival of Colors commenced in the capital with vibrant celebrations as Holika Dahan was performed at more than 2,000 locations across the city late Monday night. The main ritual was conducted during the auspicious muhurat from 1:26 am to 2:38 am, while in several areas devotees also lit Holika during the Pradosh period between 6:22 pm and 8:53 pm, praying for happiness, health and prosperity.

This year, many residents chose to burn Holika using cow dung cakes instead of wood, promoting an eco-friendly message. Festive scenes were witnessed in New Market, Roshanpura, Nehru Nagar,



Vaishali Nagar and Kolar. Traditional Holika Puja accompanied by folk songs and dances took place at Shaitan Singh Square in Shahpura and near the Curfew Wali Ma Temple in the old city.

## Markets bustle with last-minute shoppers

Markets bustled with last-minute shoppers buying colours, gulal and water guns, while homes were filled with the aroma of gujiyas and festive delicacies. Astrologers told that due to a lu-



nar eclipse on March 3, with Sutak beginning at 6:20 am, Dhulendi will be celebrated on March 4. Special temple events and colourful

processions are planned in the old city. Holi Dooj will follow on March 5, and the festivities will culminate with Rang Panchami on March 8.

# Sharim Khan aged 23 years goes missing from Shahjahanabad

**Family appeals for Help**

**Bhopal:** The family of 23-year-old Sharim Khan is in a state of deep distress after he went missing from his residence in the Shahjahanabad area of Bhopal. Sharim, son of Abdul Latif Khan, reportedly left his home near Aisha Mosque in Ramnagar around 1:00 AM on March 2, 2026, and has not been seen since.

Described as having a fair complexion, a height of 5.5 feet, and a slim build with a light beard, Sharim was last seen wearing sky-blue jeans, a black jacket, and casual shoes. Despite exhaustive efforts by his family to locate him, his whereabouts remain unknown. The family has issued an urgent appeal to the public, requesting anyone with information to con-



tact them at 7869933059 or report to the nearest police station. Sharing this information could prove vital in reuniting a worried family with their son.

# Holi rush triggers soaring bus fares in MP



**Passengers allege up to six-fold hike; Transport Dept cites limited control over app rates**

**Bhopal:** With a surge in travel ahead of the Holi festival, bus operators across Madhya Pradesh have sharply increased fares, leaving passengers burdened with exorbitant ticket prices. Travelers allege that operators are taking advantage of festive compulsion, as many people have limited options but to return home.

On online booking platforms such as RedBus, fares have multiplied several times over normal rates. The usual fare from Bhopal to Satna, which ranges between Rs 1,000 and Rs 1,200, has climbed to Rs 4,500. Similarly, tickets from Bhopal to Rewa that typically cost Rs 900 to Rs 1,200 are now being sold for as high as Rs 6,000 by Sunil Tours & Travels, Rs 4,500 by Dev High Speed Travels, and Rs 5,000

by Anjuman Travels.

## Long-distance routes have witnessed even steeper hikes

Long-distance routes have witnessed even steeper hikes. Ratan Tours and Travels is charging up to Rs 6,006 for Bhopal-Mumbai tickets, compared to the regular Rs 1,400- Rs 1,700 fare. Meanwhile, Betwanti Travels has priced Bhopal-Lucknow tickets at Rs 8,899, several times higher than the standard Rs 1,400- Rs 1,800 range.

The steep increase comes just a day after Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav directed police officials to curb illegal fare collection. However, officials state that the Transport Department has no direct control over fares displayed on booking apps, as operators set their own rates.

Bhopal RTO Jitendra Sharma said passengers facing overcharging can lodge complaints with the department for necessary action.

# BHEL Ladies Club celebrates pre-Holi extravaganza with floral splendor

**Bhopal:** BHEL Ladies Club hosted a joyous pre-Holi celebration the other day. Members played Holi with flowers, conveying a beautiful message of mutual affection and joy. The atmosphere, adorned with colorful flowers and traditional attire, captivated everyone.

A captivating array of cultural performances enlivened the event. A humorous poetry session, filled with laughter and fun, enthralled all the women present, while various cultural dance performances brought alive the spirit of Indian tradition and celebration. The energy and enthusiasm of the participants made the event memorable.

Chief Guest Shrimati Rosy Upadhyay graced the event with her gracious presence. She extended Holi greetings to all members, emphasizing



the importance of such events as strengthening mutual harmony and cultural unity.

The successful organization of the event was accomplished under the able leadership of Club Vice Presidents Shrimati Yogita Baghel and Shrimati Jyoti Sharma. With the efforts of the Vice Presidents of various organizations of the Ladies Club, Shrimati Anuja Majumdar, Shrimati Preeti Agarwal, Shrimati Lalita Chatterjee and Secretary Shrimati Manisha Sharma, Shrimati Veena Baranwal, Shrimati Ritu Arya and all others, this pre-Holi celebration was a great success and joyous occasion.

This event of BHEL Ladies Club became a symbol of enthusiasm, tradition and unity, which enthused everyone to welcome this holy festival of colors.

# Perfume business in its worst phase, Orders worth lakhs of rupees from Gulf get cancelled

**Bhopal:** The capital's centuries-old perfume trade is currently going through its worst phase. The ongoing war in West Asia (Iran-Israel tensions) has completely disrupted Bhopal's perfume supply chain. During the month of Ramadan, when traders were expecting business worth over 10 crore rupees, orders worth lakhs of rupees are now being cancelled.

Approximately 35% of Bhopal's perfume trade is exported to Gulf countries, which has now come to a complete standstill. This is the first time in Bhopal's 100-year history that such a crisis has occurred. Veteran traders in the capital say they have never experienced such a recession in their lifetimes. Perfume manufacturing units in areas like Jehangirabad and Bairagarh are stocked with goods, but there seems to be no way to export them. The halt of shipments has crippled small and medium-sized businesses.



# Bhopal markets to remain shut on Holi

**Essential services to operate; trade bodies announce voluntary closure**

**Bhopal:** Markets across the city will remain closed on the occasion of Holi, with only essential services such as milk booths and medical stores allowed to operate. Ahead of the shutdown, shoppers thronged major markets on Tuesday to complete last-minute purchases.

Commercial hubs including Old City markets, New Market, Number 10 Market and MP Nagar will observe a complete closure. Anupam Agarwal of the Bhopal Wholesale Grocery Federation said the wholesale grocery market, which supplies goods

within a 200-kilometre radius, dispatched stocks on Tuesday as it will remain fully closed on Holi.

Key trading areas such as Lakhera Pura, Chowk, Ibrahimganj, Hamidia Road and Azad Market will also remain shut. However, in view of Ramadan, some shops are expected to open after 4 pm to facilitate evening shopping.

Several trade organisations have extended support to the shutdown call. Former CAIT spokesperson Vivek Sahu said multiple associations, including grocery,

grain, oil, confectionery, clothing and transport bodies, have decided on a voluntary closure. Hotels and restaurants will remain closed until 4 pm on Holi before resuming operations.

Ajay Devnani of the Bhopal Chamber of Commerce said the market traditionally remains closed on Holi and reopens gradually on Rangpanchami. The wholesale drug market will stay closed on Holi and Rangpanchami, though retail chemists will function. Van Vihar National Park will also remain closed on March 4 and 8.

# E-Auto driver stabbed in chest over fare dispute

**Bhopal:** A trivial disagreement over an e-auto fare escalated into a horrifying life-threatening assault in Bhopal's Piplani area, leaving a driver battling for his life at AIIMS Bhopal. The victim was brutally attacked by two youths after he requested the standard fare at the end of their journey. What began as a verbal spat quickly turned violent when one of the passengers pulled out a sharp ice pick and plunged it deep into the driver's chest.



The force of the blow was so severe that the industrial ice-breaking tool remained embedded in the victim's torso

as he collapsed. Onlookers rushed the critically injured driver to the hospital, where a specialized medical team is currently

monitoring his fragile condition. The gruesome nature of the attack has sent shockwaves through the local

community and sparked intense protests from e-auto driver unions demanding better protection for transport workers.

The Piplani Police have officially registered a case of attempted murder and launched a massive manhunt to apprehend the fleeing suspects. Authorities have conducted multiple raids across the city, asserting that the attackers will be brought to justice swiftly. This chilling incident highlights a rising trend of aggression over minor disputes, prompting calls for stricter street patrolling and faster judicial intervention to deter such senseless violence.

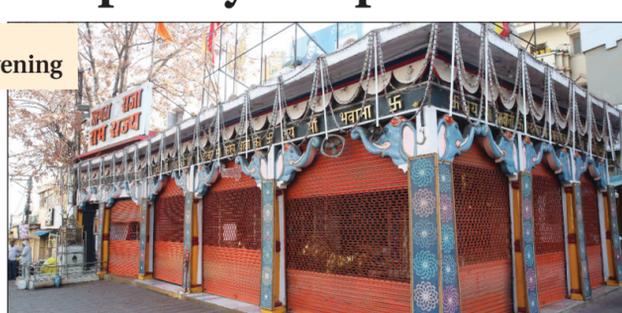
# Lunar eclipse keeps city temples closed

**Sutak observance leads to restricted darshan until evening**

**Bhopal:** The first lunar eclipse of the year on Tuesday led to the closure of temples across the city from early morning hours. Observing the Sutak period, temple authorities suspended regular darshan and rituals, allowing entry to devotees only after the eclipse concluded in the evening.

Priests performed early morning puja and aarti before drawing curtains on sanctums as per religious customs. Devotees were not permitted inside during the Sutak period, which is traditionally considered inauspicious for worship activities.

Prominent temples including Gufa Mandir, Manua Bhan Tekri, Gayatri Temple, Khatapura Tem-



ple and Kankali Mata Temple remained closed until approximately 6:45 pm.

After the eclipse ended, temple premises were thoroughly washed and purified. The deities were ceremonially bathed, dressed in fresh attire, and elaborately adorned be-

fore evening aarti was performed. Only after these rituals were completed were devotees allowed to resume darshan. Temple management committees ensured that all rituals were conducted in accordance with established religious practices.

# 1,024 offerings mark grand Ashtanika celebration

**Bhopal:** A spiritually vibrant atmosphere prevailed at Parasnath Digambar Jain Temple as 1,024 offerings were made to the Siddhas during the Siddha Chakra Mahamandal Vidhan organized on the occasion of the Ashtanika festival. Special oblations were also offered in the havan kund for world peace.

The ritual began in the morning with Abhishek, Shanti Dhara and Nandishwar Deep



Pooja. After the ceremonial offering of Manda, 1,024 offerings were made to Indra and Indrani as part of the Vidhan, followed by a havan dedicated to global harmony.

Society president Sachchendra Jain Guddu Bhaiya, Mahila Mandal president Amita Jain and numerous devotees participated, praying collectively for peace and well-being across the world.

# National Science Day celebrated at Rabindranath Tagore University



**Bhopal:** Rabindranath Tagore University (RNTU) successfully concluded a vibrant three-day celebration of National Science Day 2026, centered on the empowering theme, "Women in Science: Catalysts for a Developed India." Organized in collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh Council of Science and Technology (MPCST), the event showcased academic excellence and a shared commitment to fostering a scientific temper among the youth.

Inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ravi Prakash Dubey, the festivities featured expert lectures, an innovative science exhibition, and a series of competitive student sessions. Dr. Dubey emphasized that women's growing participation in research and

innovation is fundamental to the vision of a "Viksit Bharat." Distinguished speakers, including Dr. Charanjeet Kaur and Dr. Ashish Srivastava from IISER Bhopal, echoed this sentiment, highlighting how gender inclusivity in STEM drives national self-reliance.

The celebration reached its crescendo with a spirited "Science Rally" and the distribution of awards to outstanding student performers. Led by Dr. Sudeshna Ray and coordinated by Dr. Priti Singh, the event served as a powerful platform to honor the leadership roles women occupy in technology today. By blending traditional curiosity with modern research, RNTU has once again reinforced its role as a hub for scientific advancement and social progress.

# Shahjahanabad youth injured in accident dies

**Bhopal:** The Shahjahanabad community is mourning the tragic demise of Abdullah Khan, a young man who passed away on Tuesday following a harrowing road accident. The incident occurred in the early hours of February 21 near the Sher Wali building. Abdullah was traveling with a friend when they were struck by a vehicle, leaving him with critical injuries that required immediate hospitalization at Hamidia Hospital.



Despite battling for his life under intensive medical care, Abdullah succumbed to his injuries just days before his 28th birthday, which would have been celebrated on Febru-

ary's final day. What should have been a milestone of joy for his family has instead turned into a season of profound grief, leaving his parents and neighbors devastated. The tragedy is compounded by the fact that the rogue vehicle and its driver remain at large. Local residents have expressed growing frustration over the lack of progress in the investigation, urging authorities to intensify their search for the culprit. As the police continue to scan for leads, the community stands united in demanding swift justice and stricter road safety enforcement to prevent such senseless losses in the future.

# Railways announce special Raxaul-Udhna Express via Bhopal Division

**Bhopal:** To accommodate the surging travel demand and ensure passenger convenience, the Railways has introduced a special weekly service connecting Raxaul and Udhna. Operating through the Bhopal Division, Train No. 05559/05560 will run for three trips in each direction, providing a vital link for commuters traveling during the busy month of March.

