

Mahakal Temple defies lunar eclipse

- The lord Mahakal remains unaffected
- Restrictions applied only to offerings and physical touch

Ujjain: As the year's first lunar eclipse cast a shadow over the religious city of Ujjain, a striking contrast emerged between its sacred sites. While the Satak (inauspicious period) began at 6:20 AM, leading to the closure of almost every temple in the city, the gates of the world-renowned Shree Mahakaleshwar Temple remained wide open for devotees.

Tradition vs. the eternal lord

In accordance with Vedic traditions, the Satak period typically mandates the cessation of all religious activities. Across Ujjain, prominent shrines—including Mangalnath, Sandipani Ashram, and Angareshwar Mahadev—shut their doors, covered their idols



with cloth, and suspended all rituals. Priests confirmed that these temples will undergo purification rites only after the eclipse concludes at 3:20 PM.

No eclipse for the "Lord of Death"

However, the Mahakal Temple continues its rituals, albeit with minor adjustments. While the physical touching of the Jyotirlinga and the offering of Bhog (food) are temporarily restricted, the regular

cycle of Aartis and Darshan continues unabated. "Mahakal is the Pradhan Devta—the Lord of Time and Death," explained priest Mahesh Sharma. "He is beyond the influence of celestial alignments. Whether it is a solar or lunar eclipse, the Lord of Time remains unaffected by the Satak." This unique tradition reinforces the temple's status as the only shrine where the cosmic shadow fails to interrupt the connection between the deity and his followers.

Jabalpur bans LPG vehicles for school transport

A step to ensure student safety

Jabalpur: The Jabalpur district administration has announced a decisive ban on all LPG-powered vehicles used for transporting school children, prioritizing student safety over cost-effective but risky fuel alternatives. Effective from April 1, 2026, the mandate applies to both government and private educational institutions across the district.

The decision was finalized in a high-level meeting chaired by Collector Raghavendra Singh, involving officials from the RTO, traffic police, and various school principals. Safety audits revealed that LPG kits in vans and autos pose a significant fire hazard and structural risk during student commutes. To enforce this, the police and transport departments have been authorized to conduct surprise inspections during school hours starting this April.

District authorities have instructed all CBSE, ICSE, and state-affiliated schools to transition to certified petrol, diesel, or CNG ve-



hicles that meet official fitness standards. School management and vehicle owners found violating these norms after the deadline will face strict penal action. Parents are also being urged to verify

the fuel source of their children's transport to ensure compliance with these life-saving regulations, marking a significant shift toward a more secure educational infrastructure in Jabalpur.

Car collides with parked crane, three youths dead

- 2 critically injured

Betul: A speeding car collided with a roadside crane in Betul district, killing three youths on the spot and seriously injuring two others.

According to police sources, the accident occurred around 3 a.m. during the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday near the Basant Petrol Pump on Itarsi Road in the Kotwali police station area. According to police, a car with a Bhopal registration number collided with a roadside crane. The impact was so severe that the car was severely damaged, trapping the youths inside.

Upon receiving information, police arrived at the scene and,



with the help of local residents, began rescue operations. The injured were pulled out by breaking the car's doors and windows. The in-

jured were taken to the district hospital by 108 ambulances and private vehicles, where doctors declared three youths dead.

The deceased have been identified as Hrithik Solanki (30), a resident of Garg Colony, Vinay Prajapati (21), a resident of Ramnagar, and Abhay Thakur (22), a resident of Ramnagar. According to police, Hrithik Solanki was driving the car at the time of the accident. He used to drive a taxi in Bhopal.

The injured include Deva Pandey (32), a resident of Ganj, and Akash Pal (30), a resident of Ramnagar. Akash Pal's condition is critical and he has been referred to Nagpur for better treatment.

Police said the five young men in the car were returning from a dhaba after dinner when the accident occurred. The matter is under investigation.

Indore businessman swindled of 65 lakhs in sophisticated trading scam

Indore: A resident of Mahesh Avenue has fallen victim to a high-tech investment fraud, losing a staggering Rs 65.57 lakh to cyber criminals posing as financial experts. The ordeal began in December 2025 when Deepak Chandore clicked on a Facebook advertisement for the "A69 ABCL Wealth Navigator Club." The scammers used a mix of fake profit screenshots, professional-looking webinars, and a cloned mobile application branded with a reputable corporate name to gain his trust.

After an initial "test" investment of Rs 5,000 showed promising returns, the victim was coached by a handler named "Diya Mehra" to pour more capi-

tal into the platform. By February 2026, the fraudulent app displayed a fabricated profit of nearly Rs 4 crore. However, when Chandore attempted to withdraw his funds, the scammers cited technical glitches and demanded further investments for an IPO.

Suspecting foul play, the businessman approached the Cyber Cell, revealing that his entire investment had been siphoned through multiple bank accounts. The Aerodrome Police have now registered a formal case against four mobile numbers associated with the scam. Investigators are currently tracing the digital footprint and financial trail to identify the syndicate behind this elaborate deception.

Zero waste vision for Simhastha

A sustainable blueprint for Ujjain



Ujjain: Additional Chief Secretary Sanjay Dubey chaired a high-level review meeting on preparations for Simhastha Mahaparva 2028, outlining a strong commitment to a zero waste and zero pollution event.

Plans include well-maintained public toilets near parking zones with affordable user fees and trained support staff from urban and rural self-help groups. Plumbers and electricians will receive specialized training to ensure seamless services. Major roads and parking areas

will be finalized with strict quality standards, while drinking water pipelines will be installed above sewer lines for safety. The Simhastha area will be divided into organized zones and sectors for efficient management.

The Forest Department will lead plantation drives along key routes and the Panchkroshi Marg, focusing on shady and flowering trees, alongside plant protection plans. The goal is to deliver an innovative, eco-friendly Simhastha that leaves every visitor with a positive and lasting impression.

Six jailed in Bansagar Project compensation fraud

Satna: A special court in Satna district has sentenced six people to five years of rigorous imprisonment each in a case of compensation fraud related to land acquisition for the Bansagar project in Madhya Pradesh.

Government advocate Fakhruddin stated that in 1997, compensation of Rs. 14,514 for trees planted on land acquired under the Bansagar project was given to Shivdhari Patel and Kaushal Patel instead of the actual landowner, Rameshwar.

Indore lady SI faces inquiry after viral pistol photo controversy

Indore: An Indore Sub-Inspector has landed in hot water after a young woman, identified as Shivika, posted photos on Instagram brandishing a service weapon. The images, which quickly went viral, sparked an immediate outcry, prompting the police department to launch an urgent investigation.

Preliminary findings revealed that the pistol featured in the social media post belongs to a Sub-Inspector currently stationed at the Pardeshipura Police Station. Following the backlash and the intervention of senior officials, the woman deleted the controversial



photos from her account. However, the damage was already done. Additional DCP Rajesh Dandotiya

emphasized that the public display of firearms on social media is a serious violation of legal protocols and safety norms.

Acting on the directives of DCP Kumar Pratik, a show-cause notice has been formally issued to the concerned officer. Authorities have initiated a departmental probe to determine how the service weapon ended up in the civilian's hands. Further disciplinary action will be decided once the officer submits his response, as the department looks to reinforce strict guidelines regarding the handling of official arms.

Former Indore MLA Sanjay Shukla among passengers returning safely from UAE

- Stranded by war, home at last

Indore: Several Indian passengers, including former Indore MLA Sanjay Shukla, have safely returned home after being stranded in the UAE amid disruptions caused by the ongoing Israel-Iran conflict. Flight services to Dubai and Sharjah had been severely affected, leaving travelers stuck for several days.

Among those who returned are former MLA Vishal Patel, Praveen Kakkhar, industrialist Manish Shakra, Manish Agarwal, Pintu Chhabra, Golu Patni, Utpal Goyal, and Aditya Sharma, along with many others. All passengers have now reached India safely, bringing relief to their families.



Repeated flight cancellations left hundreds stranded

Tensions in the region led to multiple flight cancellations. Air India Express' Sharjah-Indore flight IX-256 was repeatedly can-

celled starting February 28 and did not operate on March 3 as well.

As a result, hundreds of passengers from Indore, Bhopal, and other districts of MP were stranded in Dubai and Sharjah. Many were forced to extend their hotel stays, while some described experiencing fear during

missile alerts. One returning passenger said, "Explosions occurred near our hotel in Abu Dhabi."

Some flight operations resumed

Relief came when some flight operations resumed at Dubai Airport on the evening of March 2. Flights from Abu Dhabi to Delhi and Mumbai also restarted.

According to airport sources, stranded passengers first traveled to Mumbai before taking connecting flights to Indore. However, direct Sharjah-Indore flights are yet to resume.

Late Monday night, four flights from the UAE landed in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Bengaluru, marking a significant step toward restoring normal operations.

Students protest demanding scholarship payments and portal activation

Betul: Students in Betul district protested at the Collector premises over delayed scholarship payments and technical issues with the portal, submitting a memorandum to the Collector demanding an immediate solution.

According to reports, fourth-year B.Sc. and M.Sc. students from Jaywanti Haksar College participated in the protest on Monday. The protest was led by the city joint secretary of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP).

In the memorandum, the students stated that eligible fourth-year B.Sc. students have not yet received their scholarships for the 2024-25 academic year. Furthermore, the scholarship portal for M.Sc. students have not been activated, preventing them from completing the application process. Students say the portal being down



is delaying applications, impacting their studies and financial situation.

In this regard, college Principal Dr. Meenakshi Choubey stated that scholarships for students enrolled in the fourth year of undergraduate studies in the 2024-25 academic year are currently under process at the government level, and no cases are pending at the college level. She added that students will be able to apply for first-year postgraduate scholarships only after receiving their fourth-year undergraduate scholarships.

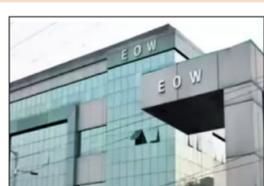
Council Chief, CMO, and officials booked in Rs 83 lakh scam

- Massive fraud scandal uncovered in Lakhnadon Municipal Council

Jabalpur: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Jabalpur has blown the lid off a major financial scam in the Lakhnadon Municipal Council, involving an estimated embezzlement of ₹83 lakh. Following a detailed probe into the illegal allotment and auction of shopping complex units, the EOW has registered an FIR against 23 individuals, including the Council President, Chief Municipal Officers (CMOs), revenue officials, and several councilors.

Gross violations of auction norms

The investigation revealed that while 75 shops across eight complexes were auctioned, the council officials colluded with bidders to bypass mandatory procedures. Under the rules, winners were required to deposit 25% of the bid amount within 21



days and the remainder within 120 days before signing a formal contract. However, officials allegedly handed over physical possession of 32 shops without securing full payments or executing legal agreements. Specifically, 13 shopkeepers failed to deposit nearly Rs 79.82 lakh in auction fees, while an additional Rs 2.88 lakh in monthly rent remained uncollected.

Illegal reservation swaps and favoritism

The scandal also highlights the blatant manipulation of reservation rosters. In

one instance, a shop reserved for the Scheduled Tribes (ST) category was illegally reallocated to an unreserved bidder, Vaibhav Dubey, without the required re-auctioning process. This maneuver allowed Dubey to secure adjacent shops (one in his wife's name) at a significant loss to the state exchequer, effectively violating social justice mandates for personal gain.

High-profile suspects named

The FIR names a long list of accused, including former CMOs Gajendra Pandey and Ms. Geeta Valmik, Revenue Sub-Inspector Ravi Jharia, and Council President Meena Balram Golhani, alongside various members of the President-in-Council. The EOW is now probing further to identify additional beneficiaries in this systematic plunder of public funds.

Gwalior Railway Station set for high-tech Airport-style makeover



Gwalior: The transformation of Gwalior Railway Station into a world-class transit hub is nearing its final phase, promising a seamless blend of modern luxury and rigorous security. Moving away from traditional layouts, the station is adopting an "airport-style" blueprint where safety and passenger experience take center stage.

Under a new security mandate, every traveler and their luggage must undergo mandatory high-tech screening before reaching the platforms. To facilitate this, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) is installing

19 advanced Door Frame Metal Detectors and state-of-the-art luggage scanners across all concourse entry points, VIP gates, and the parcel office.

Safety isn't limited to just scanning bags; the entire station will be equipped with a sophisticated smoke detection system. This "zero-tolerance" setup will trigger immediate alarms at the slightest hint of smoking, ensuring a clean and secure environment. Additionally, the previously dormant parcel scanners are being reactivated to ensure no loophole remains in the station's security grid.