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WHO WILL RULE?

Bihar Elections



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CHIEF EDITOR DESK



Dear Readers,

On behalf of National Awareness Times (India's National Weekly), the editorial board and the team of our journal would like to wish all the readers a wonderful week ahead & Happy Gandhi Jayanti to all.

The political temperature in Bihar is rising sharply as the state gears up for the Assembly Elections 2025.

A landmark event at the Indian Habitat Centre in Delhi on 2nd October 2025 marked the launch of Physiconomy, a transformative global campaign for a Non-Violent Green Economy.

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare convened a high-level meeting under the chairmanship of Health Secretary Smt. Punya Salila Srivastava with all States and Union Territories to review compliance with drug quality norms and promote the rational use of cough syrups, especially for children.

Union Minister for Agriculture, Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited his parliamentary constituency of Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh, where he participated in a programme at the agricultural produce market ('krishi upaj mandi') in Bilkisganj.

Deepak Singh,
Chief Editor

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WHO WILL RULE?

By Editor – Gaurav Singh



The political temperature in Bihar is rising sharply as the state gears up for the Assembly Elections 2025. Scheduled to take place in two phases on November 6 and 11, with results to be declared on November 14, the election promises to be one of the most consequential in recent history. With 243 seats up for grabs and over 7.4 crore voters expected to cast their ballots, the contest is not just about who governs Bihar but also about the direction of its future development and its role in the broader national political landscape.

The Political Landscape

At the heart of the battle lies the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA), led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Janata

Dal (United) in partnership with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Nitish Kumar, who has held power for nearly two decades in different alliances, faces the daunting task of convincing voters that his brand of governance often termed *sushasan* or good governance remains relevant in a state where aspirations are changing rapidly.

On the other side stands the Mahagathbandhan, or the INDIA bloc in Bihar, with Tejashwi Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leading the charge alongside the Congress and Left parties. Tejashwi, son of former Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav, has been pitching himself as the face of a new generation of leaders, promising jobs, better

infrastructure, and dignity for Bihar's youth.

Adding another dimension to the contest is Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party, which has announced plans to contest all 243 seats. Kishor, a seasoned political strategist turned activist, has spent years building grassroots networks across Bihar. His party is still untested in elections, but his presence introduces an element of unpredictability that could disrupt the traditional two-front contest between NDA and RJD-led alliances.

Key Issues Shaping the Elections

Bihar has long struggled with economic and social challenges that deeply influence its electoral politics. The 2025 elections are



no different, with the following themes dominating the campaign:

1. Unemployment and Migration:

Bihar's young population continues to grapple with a lack of employment opportunities, forcing large-scale migration to states like Delhi, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. Both Tejashwi Yadav and Prashant Kishor have made job creation their central promise, while the NDA points to ongoing skill-development initiatives and infrastructure projects as steps toward tackling the crisis.

2. Development and Infrastructure:

Nitish Kumar's government has often showcased its achievements in building roads, expanding electricity access, and improving school attendance. However, critics argue that while infrastructure has improved, Bihar's economic growth has not translated into adequate industrialization or urban job creation.

3. Healthcare and Education:

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed severe gaps in Bihar's healthcare system, and the state's literacy rate remains

below the national average. These issues resonate strongly with voters, particularly in rural areas where public services are often inadequate.

4. Caste and Social Equations:

Bihar's politics has always been deeply intertwined with caste identities. The RJD continues to bank on its traditional Yadav-Muslim vote base, while the NDA leans on upper-caste, Kurmi, and non-Yadav OBC support. Smaller parties and the Jan Suraaj movement are attempting to cut across these traditional lines by appealing to youth and marginalized communities.

5. Governance and Corruption:

Allegations of corruption and inefficiency are central to opposition attacks on the ruling government. Tejashwi Yadav has positioned himself as the alternative to what he calls "stagnant leadership," while Nitish Kumar stresses stability and his long record of governance reforms.

Campaign Dynamics

The campaign trails have been marked by sharp exchanges between leaders. Nitish Kumar, despite criticism, is projecting himself as a steady hand

capable of balancing Bihar's complex social fabric. His alliance with the BJP gives the NDA a strong organizational and financial advantage. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's presence in the campaign is expected to further energize the NDA's base, particularly in urban and semi-urban constituencies. Tejashwi Yadav, meanwhile, has been holding massive rallies with a clear focus on youth. His slogan of providing 10 lakh government jobs has struck a chord among young voters, many of whom feel neglected by existing policies. His challenge lies in broadening his appeal beyond the RJD's traditional support base.

Prashant Kishor's strategy is distinct from both. Rather than large rallies, Jan Suraaj has emphasized door-to-door outreach and grassroots mobilization, positioning itself as a people's movement rather than a traditional party. While it is unclear how this will translate into votes, his campaign has generated curiosity and may influence outcomes in constituencies where margins are thin.

The Role of Women and First-Time Voters

One of the most significant shifts in Bihar's politics in recent years has been the rising participation of women voters. In previous elections, women turned out in larger numbers than men in many constituencies, making them a decisive factor. Parties are tailoring their campaigns to appeal to women through promises related to healthcare, safety, education for girls, and financial empowerment schemes.

Similarly, nearly 14 lakh first-



time voters are expected to cast their ballots in 2025. This group, largely composed of young men and women who have grown up in a digital age, is more vocal about issues like jobs, infrastructure, and corruption. Their choices may well tip the scales in closely fought constituencies.

Challenges for the Major Players

- **NDA:** The alliance must overcome anti-incumbency after Nitish Kumar's long tenure. While his governance model once set benchmarks, fatigue among voters and demands for a fresh face may hurt the NDA.
- **Mahagathbandhan:** The RJD and Congress must counter the perception of instability and address concerns about the past era of misrule often associated with Lalu Yadav's tenure. Tejashwi has the challenge of proving he is not just carrying a legacy but offering a genuine alternative.
- **Jan Suraj:** As a new entrant, Prashant Kishor's party faces the uphill task of converting enthusiasm into actual votes.



Organizational strength and booth-level management will be critical.

What's at Stake

Beyond deciding Bihar's next government, the 2025 elections carry broader national significance. For the BJP, retaining Bihar with Nitish Kumar is essential ahead of future national elections, as it secures a major Hindi-heartland state. For the opposition INDIA bloc, a strong performance in Bihar would provide momentum and morale to counter the BJP at the national level.

The rise of Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj could also signal the beginning of a third force in Bihar politics, challenging the entrenched two-front system. Even if the party does not win a large number of seats, its impact could be felt in vote splits that shape the final outcome.

Conclusion

The Bihar Assembly Elections 2025 are shaping up as a triangular battle that blends old political loyalties with new aspirations. Caste equations, development narratives, and youth demands are colliding to create an unpredictable scenario. With high stakes for both state and national politics, the eyes of the entire country will be on Bihar as millions of voters line up at polling stations this November. Whether Nitish Kumar's steady hand, Tejashwi Yadav's youthful energy, or Prashant Kishor's new experiment captures the imagination of voters remains to be seen. But one thing is certain: the verdict on November 14 will mark a turning point in Bihar's political journey and perhaps alter the contours of Indian politics itself.

EVENTS



The Union Minister for Defence, Shri Rajnath Singh meets the soldiers at the Barakahna and cultural programme on the eve of Vijayadashami at Bhuj, in Gujarat.

The Vice President of India & Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan paying floral tributes and homage at the Samadhi of the former Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri at Vijay Ghat, in Delhi.



The Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah attends the 'Khadi Karigar Mahotsav' at Rohtak, in Haryana.



PM graced the Kaushal Deekshant Samaroh held on the sidelines of the unveils of various youth-focused initiatives at Vigyan Bhawan, in New Delhi.

Glimpses of the 10th edition of the National Level Pollution Response Exercise (NATPOLREX-X) along with the 27th National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP), in Tamil Nadu.



The Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri attends the 19th Foundation Day of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board, in New Delhi.

CELEBRATING MAHATMA GANDHI LEADERSHIP AWARD



A landmark event at the Indian Habitat Centre in Delhi on 2nd October 2025 marked the launch of Physiconomy, a transformative global campaign for a Non-Violent Green Economy. Founder Konstantin Pavlidis delivered a powerful keynote, diagnosing the "modern violence" of our current systems—from Ecocide and data exploitation to the cognitive crisis fuelled by "mass distraction." He presented Physiconomy as the antidote: a new operating model for society based on Custodian Governance. Its framework is built on three core pillars—a truly regenerative "cradle-to-rebirth" economy, the development of Green AI through sustainable computing and a decentralised, transparent system that empowers individual self-sovereignty.

The launch convened a remarkable confluence of thought leaders to champion this vision, featuring figures such as former Union Minister K.J. Alphons, spiritual guides Mahatma Sri Prem Prayojan Prabhu and Lama Shyalpa Rinpoche, and AI pioneers Vedant Ahluwalia and Mark Warburton. Through a series of panels on Green AI and its societal implications, the gathering forged a multidisciplinary coalition dedicated to a single, unifying principle: harmonising our human systems with Natural Law.

The event was graced by the presence of Justice Iqbal Ahmed Ansari, Hon Dr Deepak Singh, Sardar S.P.S. Ahluwalia, Mr Gurinder Singh, Member, Press Council of India, Dr Padma Bhushan Anil Kohli, and Gaurav Singh, Editor — besides several other distinguished guests.

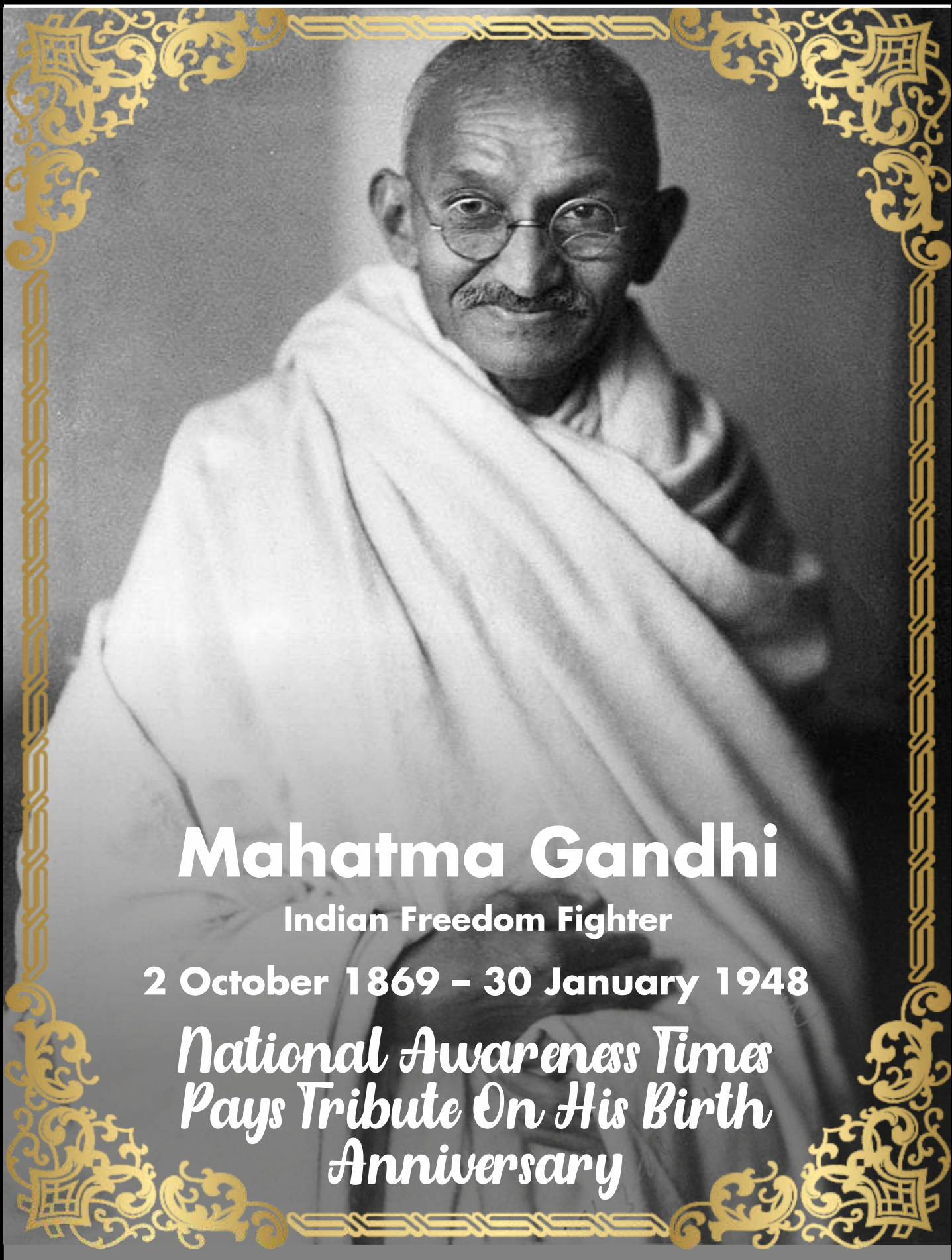
HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON QUALITY AND RATIONAL USE OF COUGH SYRUPS



The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare convened a high-level meeting under the chairmanship of Health Secretary Smt. Punya Salila Srivastava with all States and Union Territories to review compliance with drug quality norms and promote the rational use of cough syrups, especially for children. The discussion followed directions from Union Health Minister Shri J.P. Nadda to ensure strict regulatory action and coordinated efforts by all States and UTs. The meeting was attended by senior officials, including Shri Amit Agarwal, Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals; Dr. Rajiv Bahl, Secretary, Department of Health Research and Director General of ICMR; Dr. Sunita Sharma, Director General of Health Services (DGHS); Dr. Rajeev Raghuvanshi, Drugs Controller General of India; and Dr. Ranjan Das, Director, NCDC. Health secretaries, drug controllers, and NHM Mission Directors from all States and UTs also participated. The review came in the wake of recent child deaths in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh,

reportedly linked to contaminated cough syrups. The Metropolitan Surveillance Unit in Nagpur, under the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, had reported the incident to the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP). Acting swiftly, a Central team comprising experts from NCDC, NIV, and CDSCO visited the affected areas and collected clinical, environmental, and drug samples for analysis. Preliminary findings ruled out major infectious diseases except for one case of leptospirosis. However, among 10 drug samples tested, one cough syrup Coldrif was found to contain Diethylene Glycol (DEG) beyond the permissible limit. The Tamil Nadu FDA has initiated regulatory action against the Kancheepuram-based manufacturer, and CDSCO has recommended cancellation of its license. Criminal proceedings have also begun. The Health Secretary emphasized strict compliance with the Revised Schedule M and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) by all pharmaceutical units. States

were advised to ensure the rational use of cough syrups, particularly for children, since most coughs are self-limiting and require no medication. The DGHS advisory on the safe and limited use of paediatric cough syrups was also discussed. Risk-Based Inspections (RBI) have been launched in 19 drug manufacturing units across six States to strengthen quality assurance. States were directed to enhance surveillance, ensure timely reporting from both government and private facilities, and improve coordination between agencies for rapid outbreak response. Dr. Rajiv Bahl highlighted that children should not be pre-scribed cough syrups unnecessarily, as they provide little benefit and may cause side effects. He noted that the National Joint Outbreak Response Team is functional to support States during such emergencies. Dr. Sunita Sharma also stressed the need for rational prescribing and announced that guidelines for parents, pharmacists, and doctors would soon be shared. DCGI Dr. Rajeev Raghuvanshi reiterated the importance of GMP compliance, noting that firms under the government's upgradation scheme have been given time till December 2025 to meet standards. The Department of Pharmaceuticals informed that many manufacturers are already availing of the Revamped Pharmaceutical Technology Upgradation Assistance Scheme. The Ministry reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring high drug quality and patient safety and urged States and UTs to remain vigilant, strengthen monitoring systems, and take prompt action to prevent recurrence of such incidents.



Mahatma Gandhi

Indian Freedom Fighter

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CENTRE COMMITTED TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



Union Minister for Agriculture, Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited his parliamentary constituency of Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh, where he participated in a programme at the agricultural produce market ('krishi upaj mandi') in Bilkisganj. During the event, he addressed farmers and women beneficiaries, distributed benefits under various government schemes, and inspected exhibitions and a health camp organised by various organisations.

Speaking at the event, Shri Chouhan said, "Everyone lives for themselves, but a true life is lived in the service of the people, society, and the nation. I assure you that we will leave no stone unturned in serving our people." He urged women attending the health camp to undergo full medical check-ups and assured them that if they are detected with any illness, their treatment would be provided free of cost.

The Union Minister said, "Serving our sisters and daughters is akin to worshipping goddesses", as he described the 'Ladli Behna Yojana' as a transformative initiative to improve the lives of women. He also highlighted the 'Lakhpati Didi Abhiyan', which focuses on increasing the income of rural women. "The Prime Minister has also entrusted me with the responsibility of

Rural Development. Our goal is to ensure that every sister earns at least ₹1 lakh annually through self-help groups. Only then will their lives truly change," Shri Chouhan said. He reaffirmed that the central government is fully committed to empowering women economically and will strengthen self-help groups as key instruments to achieve this goal.

Shri Chouhan informed that under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin, Madhya Pradesh has so far received 19 lakh houses. "Those whose names were not earlier included in the list are now being surveyed and will be added. No poor person will remain in a kutcha

house anymore," he said. Asserting that electricity will reach even the remotest areas, he said, "Electricity will be provided even if only five houses exist in a location. Our government's aim is to ensure every poor family has a pucca house, electricity, and a dignified life." On crop damage, Shri Chouhan said, "Some farmers have reported heavy losses to soybean crops due to excessive rainfall. The government will conduct a thorough survey, and compensation will be provided under the crop insurance scheme. Both the Centre and the State are working in coordination to address farmers' challenges. Farmers will not be allowed to suffer any losses, and every eligible farmer will receive timely benefits under the schemes."

The Union Minister reiterated his commitment to make Sehore district completely free from tuberculosis (TB). "Teams of doctors are conducting surveys. Free medicines and nutritional support will be provided to all TB patients to ensure complete recovery," he said. He informed that so far, 500 patients have been screened, including 90 pregnant women, and all arrangements for their treatment are being made. Appealing for public cooperation, Shri Chouhan said, "This campaign to eliminate TB will succeed only through collective efforts, and together we will make Sehore district TB-free."



SHAH RUKH KHAN SET TO HOST 70TH FILMFARE AWARD AFTER 17 YEARS



Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan is set to return as the host of the Filmfare Awards for the first time since 2008. The 70th edition of the prestigious awards ceremony will take place on October 11, 2025, at the EKA Arena in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Khan will co-host the event alongside actor Maniesh Paul and filmmaker Karan Johar.

Filmfare made the announcement on their official Instagram handle, describing Khan as, "The Superstar, The Icon, The Enigma." The post read, "Hold your hearts, because the one and only #ShahRukhKhan is making his way to co-host the most awaited #70thHyundaiFilmfareAwards2025withGujaratTourism, happening on October 11 at Eka Arena, Ahmedabad."

Khan has previously hosted the Filmfare Awards on multiple occasions, including memorable stints with fellow actor Saif Ali Khan in 2003 and 2004. He returned as co-host with Karan Johar in 2007. The 53rd Filmfare Awards in 2008 were the last time Shah Rukh was the host, when he shared the stage with Saif, Karan, and Vidya Balan. Known for his wit and charm, Khan's hosting has been a highlight of the ceremony over the years.

The 2025 Filmfare Awards will be held in Gujarat for the first time, following a memorandum of understanding signed between the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Limited (TCGL) and Worldwide Media Private Limited in Gandhinagar. The event is expected to bring significant attention to the state's growing prominence in the film industry.

As the date approaches, anticipation is building for a night of glamour, laughter, and celebration of Indian cinema's finest talents. With Shah Rukh Khan back at the helm, the 70th Filmfare Awards promise to be a memorable occasion for fans and industry professionals alike.

SHWETA TRIPATHI BEGINS SHOOTING FOR MIRZAPUR: THE MOVIE IN BENARAS



Actress Shweta Tripathi has officially commenced shooting for the highly anticipated *Mirzapur: The Movie*, stepping once again into the shoes of her beloved character, Gajgami "Golu" Gupta. Known for her powerful portrayal across the web series, Shweta now brings Golu to the big screen for the first time, marking a new chapter in the franchise's journey.

According to sources, Shweta was visibly elated and emotional as she stepped onto the sets in Benaras, the city that has been integral to *Mirzapur*'s world. Having lived with the character for several years, Shweta shared that Golu continues to hold a deep and personal place in her heart.

Speaking about the experience, Shweta Tripathi said, "Golu is not just a character for me, she has been a companion, a part of my life for so many years. To see her journey unfold on the big screen is overwhelming and surreal. Benaras is like my

second home, it is so special because so many of my milestones are connected to this city. From *Masaan* to *Mirzapur* seasons 1 and 2, from *Escape Live* to *Kalkoot*, every project here has given me something unforgettable. My trainer Trivedi Pandey, who is like a brother to me, is also from Benaras, which makes it even more personal. This beautiful city of worship keeps calling me back, and I keep returning for its people, its food, and the love it has always given me."

With *Mirzapur: The Movie* set to carry forward the legacy of the cult-favorite franchise, fans are eager to see how Golu Gupta evolves in this cinematic adaptation.



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PIC OF THE WEEK



Sydney Sweeney

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