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Rajiv Gandhi : A Visionary Who Walked with the Tribals and Dreamt a Digital India



From Dhanol's dusty paths to India's digital highways, Rajiv Gandhi's legacy lives on

Udaipur: On a rainy August day in 1985, the quiet tribal hamlet of Dhanol in Rajasthan's Kherwara tehsil etched its name into history. What began as a heartfelt telegram from a humble villager turned into a moment of transformation — not just for Dhanol, but for India's welfare trajectory. At the heart of it stood a man whose journey from airline pilot to Prime Minister

redefined the nation's technological, educational, and social fabric — Rajiv Gandhi. Often hailed as the Architect of Digital India, Rajiv Gandhi was not just a reformer in Delhi's corridors of power. He was also the empathetic leader who walked barefoot through muddy village trails to understand the pulse of India's most marginalized. Accompanied by Sonia Gandhi, he walked nearly two kilometers through rugged terrain to reach Dhanol, where he listened, learned, and most importantly, acted.

A Telegram that Touched the Nation

The spark was ignited by Somaram Pargi, a tribal resi-

dent of Dhanol, who sent a simple but sincere telegram to the Prime Minister, describing the poverty and neglect his village faced. Moved by the plea, Rajiv Gandhi chose action over bureaucracy. He arrived in Dhanol, walking shoulder-to-shoulder with villagers, and witnessing first-hand the realities of tribal life.



There, he met a woman named Dhanna grinding kagani kuni, a local millet. When he asked why they didn't eat wheat, she replied with stark honesty, "Wheat is too expensive; this is all we have." The millet bread she offered him

struck a chord — not only with his taste buds but with his conscience. That moment sowed the seeds for reforms that would ripple across India.

Turning Compassion into Policy - Upon returning to Delhi, Rajiv Gandhi swiftly launched a wave of welfare schemes that would shape India's rural and tribal development for decades:

- Indira Awas Yojana: Affordable housing for the rural poor.

- Jeevandhara and Kutir Yojanas: Livelihood schemes tailored for marginalized communities.

- Public Distribution Reforms: Making wheat and essential grains available at subsidized rates — an initiative that continues today under schemes like ₹2/kg wheat.

Dhanol's story became a symbol — of how the voice of a tribal villager could reach the nation's highest office, and how empathetic leadership could convert ground realities into grassroots policy.

The Visionary Behind the Change

Beyond tribal welfare, Rajiv Gandhi's far-reaching reforms shaped modern India. He lowered the voting age from 21 to 18, giving young Indians a voice in democracy. He championed the 1986 National Policy on Education, fostered rural education through Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, and ignited India's IT revolution by supporting telecom and computer infrastructure through institutions like C-DOT.

He laid the foundation for Panchayati Raj reforms, empowering village-level governance and promoting decentralization. His support for ISRO and indigenous defense initiatives paved the way for self-reliant technology and scientific growth.

A Legacy Etched in Stone and Spirit - In Dhanol, the past still lives. The grinding stone used by Sonia Gandhi with Dhanna remains preserved in a humble hut. A stone marks the spot where Rajiv and Sonia stood — now a silent monument to that historic visit.



Every August 8, the village observes Rajiv Gandhi Smriti Diwas, not out of political obligation, but genuine reverence. Villagers continue to hope that his legacy will return in the form of a visit by Sonia, Rahul, or Priyanka Gandhi.

Laxminarayan Pandya, who coordinates the Gandhi Gram Jagran Abhiyan, aptly summarizes:

"One telegram changed the destiny of a village and influ-

enced the policies of an entire nation."

Somaram Pargi, now elderly, still recalls with pride:

"He came because I sent a telegram. He promised to return. He didn't — but we are still waiting for his family."

A Life Cut Short, But Never Forgotten - Rajiv Gandhi's life was tragically cut short in 1991, but his legacy is stitched into the nation's progress. From the dusty paths

of tribal Rajasthan to the fiber-optic backbone of digital India, his influence endures — in every school, every rural home, every young voter, and every tribal voice that dares to dream. He was not just a leader — he was a listener, a doer, a visionary. He believed that the future of India rested not in grand speeches, but in the quiet resolve of its most forgotten citizens and he walked with them.

SPSU Shines at Inter School Premier League

Udaipur: Sir Padampat Singhania University (SPSU) took pride in being the presenting partner of the prestigious Inter School Premier League, a grand sports tournament hosted at the world-class Madan Paliwal Miraj Sports Centre in Nathdwara. Held from May 13th to 17th, the event witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 15 reputed schools across Rajasthan, creating an atmosphere of excitement, sportsmanship, and healthy competition. The league served as an excellent platform for young athletes to display their talent and gain first-hand experience of playing in an international-standard sports facility. For many students, it was a dream come true to compete in such an impressive setting.

The tournament featured a series of thrilling matches across several days, keeping the audience and supporters on the edge of their seats. On the grand finale day, CPS School clinched the championship trophy after a spirited performance, showcasing remarkable teamwork and strategy. The winning team was lauded for their dedication, discipline, and competitive spirit. President and Vice Chancellor of SPSU, Dr. Prithvi Yadav, expressed his heartfelt congratulations to CPS School and appreciated the efforts of

all participating schools for making the tournament a memorable success. He also conveyed his sincere thanks to the Madan Paliwal Miraj Sports Centre team for their flawless management and hospitality, which played a crucial role in the event's success. The prestigious trophy and commemorative memento were presented to the champions by Col. Neeraj Kumar and Mr. D. K. Gupta. Esteemed guests Mr. Sunil Panday and Mr. Sumer Singh also graced the occasion with their presence, adding dignity and value to the closing ceremony. The event stood as a testament to SPSU's commitment to promoting holistic education through sports and community engagement, leaving a lasting impression on students, teachers, and spectators alike.



Lavisha Selected for National Volleyball Training Camp



Udaipur: Lavisha Dangi, a talented student of St. Gregorios Sr. Sec. School, has been selected for the Under-16 Girls National Volleyball Training Camp. She is the only player selected from Udaipur, making this achievement not only a matter of pride for her school but also for the entire city.

Lavisha is among just 20 players chosen from across the country for the camp. She plays as a Center Attacker and is known for her dedication and intense training schedule, practicing eight hours daily. Over the past two years, she has consistently won medals at both the state and national level volleyball competitions.

Her selection was celebrated by Manager Fr. Varghese Thomas, the School Management Committee, Principal Shubha Jose, Vice Principal Anil Goswami, and Physical Education teacher & coach Suresh Chandra Bhatt, along with the entire staff. They all expressed immense joy and congratulated Lavisha on this remarkable achievement, wishing her continued success in her sports career.

Udaipur Becomes Eye Surgery Hub: A Conversation with Dr. Ashok Bairwa

Advanced cataract procedures now available locally, thanks to modern techniques and expert hands

In a rare and exclusive interview conducted from the Operation Theatre of Maharana Bhupal Government Hospital, Dr. Munesh Arora speaks with Dr. Ashok Bairwa, a leading eye surgeon, about revolutionary developments in cataract surgery and eye care now available in Udaipur.

Dr. Munesh Arora (Interviewer):

Dr. Bairwa, thank you for joining us today. To begin with, what makes eye care such an important subject for the public?

Dr. Ashok Bairwa (Interviewee):

Thank you. Eyes are one of the most delicate and essential sensory organs. We use poetic phrases to describe their importance — like "when the eyes lower, it becomes modesty; when vision is lost, it becomes a crisis." But beyond poetry, the ability to see is critical for quality of life. That's why modern and accessible eye care is vital.

Dr. Arora: You're known for bringing advanced phacoemulsification (phaco) technology to Udaipur. Can you explain what it is and how it benefits patients?

Dr. Bairwa: Phacoemulsification is a modern, minimally invasive cataract surgery. Using high-frequency ultrasound, we dissolve the cloudy lens through a tiny 2.2 mm incision, and then insert a foldable lens using an injector. With machines like the Swiss 'Pharos' and German 'Zeiss' microscope, precision and safety are unmatched. Recovery is faster, and no injections are needed — we use only numbing drops. This technique is often called "tropical phaco."

Dr. Arora: So patients from Udaipur



no longer need to travel to metros like Chennai or Delhi for such procedures?

Dr. Bairwa: Exactly. Until recently, many patients had to travel outside Rajasthan for these advanced procedures. But now, the same world-class technology and expertise are available at Maharana Bhupal Hospital itself.

Dr. Arora: What are the common causes of cataracts, and at what age do they typically occur?

Dr. Bairwa: Cataracts can be age-related, congenital, caused by trauma, or due to occupational exposure. Earlier, we saw them post-55 years of age, but now, due to pollution, unhealthy diets, and increased screen time, they are appearing even at 40. It's no longer just a disease of the elderly.

Dr. Arora: Besides cataracts, what other eye conditions do you treat?

Dr. Bairwa: We treat a range of conditions including:

- **Retinal Detachment**

- Glaucoma (Kala Pani) — caused by high intraocular pressure.

- Diabetic Retinopathy — especially in diabetic patients.

- Hypertensive Retinopathy — due to chronic high blood pressure.

All these are managed through medications, laser therapy, and surgical intervention when needed.

Dr. Arora: There's often confusion about intraocular lenses (IOLs) used in

cataract surgeries. Could you clarify?

Dr. Bairwa: Of course. Lenses differ based on patient needs:

- Monofocal
- Advanced Monofocal
- Multifocal
- Trifocal

Multifocal and trifocal lenses aim to eliminate the need for glasses, though some patients may still need mild correction. The government provides excellent-quality lenses free of cost for many procedures, especially in public hospitals.

Dr. Arora: Young people today spend hours on screens. Are you seeing any effects on their eyes?

Dr. Bairwa: Yes, definitely. Increased screen time leads to digital eye strain, dry eyes, and reduced blinking. Over time, this can severely impact vision. We urge people — especially youth — to limit screen time, take breaks, and get regular eye checkups.

Dr. Arora: In your view, what makes your department at Maharana Bhupal Hospital stand out?

Dr. Bairwa: We've brought metro-level treatment to Udaipur with expert surgeons, the latest machines, and zero-cost or low-cost surgeries for the needy. Our goal is to ensure that no one in Rajasthan loses vision due to lack of access.

Dr. Arora: Your work is truly inspiring. Any message you'd like to give to the public?

Dr. Bairwa: Don't ignore your eyes. Get them checked regularly, especially if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, or are over 40. And yes, trust that you can now get the best treatment right here in Udaipur.

Dr. Arora (Closing): Thank you, Dr. Bairwa. Your dedication is giving the people of Udaipur — quite literally — a new vision. We wish you continued success in your mission.

Presented by: Dr. Munesh Arora

COAS LAUDS TROOPS FOR VIGILANT DEFENCE ALONG THE WESTERN FRONT

General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) visited Laungewala in the forward areas of the Konark Corps in the desert sector on 19 May 2025 to congratulate the troops for their exemplary role during Operation SINDOOR and to review the joint actions undertaken in coordination with the Indian Air Force and the Border Security Force.

The desert stretches from Jaisalmer to the Kutch region witnessed a swift and coordinated operational response from the Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and BSF. These joint actions not only blunted enemy intent but also established a new normal in maintaining operational dominance along the western front. As part of Operation SINDOOR, the Indian Army undertook rapid deployment of surveillance assets and air defence systems, in close coordination with the IAF and BSF. The calibrated positioning of weapon systems and other operational enablers, aligned with civil administration support, ensured effective area domination and neutralisation of potential threats.