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## Motera stadium named after Modi

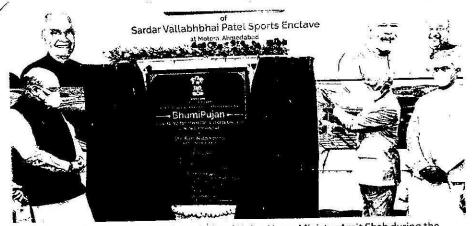
Conceptualised by PM when he was Gujarat CM: President Kovind

MAHESH LANGA

The world's largest cricket arena at Motera in Ahmedabad, the Sardar Patel Cricket Stadium, was renamed Narendra Modi Stadium and was inaugurated on Wednesday by President Ram Nath Kovind in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, his son Jay Shah, who is BCCI Secretary, and others.

The rebuilt stadium is part of the proposed Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave to be spread over 220 acres on the Sabarmati river bank in the North East of Ahmedabad. The foundation stone for the Enclave was also laid on Wednesday by the President. It will comprise a natatorium, athletics track, football, hockey and tennis stadia, velodrome/skating area among other facilities.

"Coupled with the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave and Narendra Modi Stadium in Motera, a sports



At the launch: President Ram Nath Kovind and Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the Bhumi Pujan of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave.

complex will also be built in Naranpura," Home Minister Amit Shah announced in his speech. "These three will be ready to host any international sports event."

The initiative at Motera was the dream project of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had conceived it as President of GCA and Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2014. The construction had begun

in 2016 and has been completed at the estimated cost of ₹800 crore.

The refurbished venue is spread over 63 acres and has a seating capacity of 1.1 lakh, more than double the previous number of 49,000. The ground has been equipped with LED floodlights, a first for any Indian sports site.

"This stadium was conceptualised by Prime Minis ter Narendra Modi when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat. He was president of the Gujarat Cricket Association at that time," President Ram Nath Kovind said during his inaugural address.

It may be noted that exactly one year ago, on February 24, PM Modi had hosted the then US President Donald Trump at the same venue in a mega event Namaste Trump.

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