

# absolute india

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**NATION** >02  
India's power demand touches all-time high of 197.06 GW...



**HOLLYWOOD** > 06  
Gwen Stefani & Blake Shelton stun during Oklahoma ...



**SPORTS** > 07  
Shafali, Sneha nominated for ICC Player of the Month award...



## Thespian Dilip Kumar laid to rest with full state honours

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The 'Kohinoor' of Indian Cinema, Mohammed Yusuf Khan, known to the world by his screen name Dilip Kumar, was laid to rest in a suburban cemetery amid full state honours here on Wednesday evening.

Dilip Kumar's body was kept at his Bandra home a few hours for people to pay their last respects even as huge crowds assembled outside to catch a glimpse of the legendary star before his final journey.

Later, his body was ceremonially draped in the national Tricolour by a Mumbai Police contingent, and taken in procession to the Juhu Muslim Cemetery with scores of people lined up on both sides of the roads to bid a tearful adieu. At the cemetery, many other top

Bollywood personalities had gathered for his final 'deedar', awaiting the funeral cortege brought by the police and his family members.

After the traditional rituals and prayers and the state protocols, Dilip Kumar was laid to rest as many of the mourners cried and other fought back their tears even as Mumbai Police deployed tight security and implemented Covid-19 protocols.

Besides, two Bharat Ratnas Lata Mangeshkar and Sachin Tendulkar, Amitabh Bachchan and other prominent Bollywood personalities mourned his demise and recalled his contributions to the film industry.

He was a method actor. The most important thing to notice was how he maintained a balance in his work. If in "Foot Path" he has done a realistic role where his character

brings out the negative shades, "Deedar" shows love at its extreme where the lover forcefully blinds himself because his childhood lover doesn't remember him anymore. In "Aan" you find him as a typical hero of commercial cinema who rides horses, engages in sword fights with villains and protects his beloved from them. He became a complete entertainer in this film.

Dilip Kumar will not only be remembered because he was an actor par excellence, but also because he re-lived his characters. Even without uttering a single word his eyes can be seen speaking a thousand words. Look at his character in Mehboob Khan's "Amar", and you find grey shades, too. Dilip Kumar, through his eyes, conveyed resentment, guilt and remorse of a man who raped an innocent village girl.

- A stunned nation woke up to learn of the demise of Dilip Saab - as he was popularly known in the film industry where he strode like a colossus for over 6 decades.
- Dilip Kumar's close aide Faisal Farooqui, said that he breathed his last around 7.30 am at the Hinduja Hospital following bouts of old-age related illnesses.
- Top people from all walks of life including President R.N. Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Congress President Sonia Gandhi, party leader Rahul Gandhi, mourned his passing.

# GOODBYE LEGEND

## Modi Cabinet gets makeover with emphasis on experience, qualification

# OVERHAUL SYNERGY

► 5 MINORITY MINISTERS -- 1 MUSLIM, 1 SIKH, 2 BUDDHISTS, 1 CHRISTIAN; 27 OBC MINISTERS, 5 WITH CABINET RANK; 8 ST MINISTERS, 3 WITH CABINET RANK; 12 SC MINISTERS, 2 WITH CABINET RANK AVERAGE AGE OF CABINET: 58; 14 MINISTERS BELOW 50; 11 WOMEN IN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, 2 WITH CABINET RANK  
► IN TERMS OF GENDER, 11 WOMEN INDUCTED IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, INCLUDING TWO WITH CABINET RANK.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As the Modi government gets a makeover, the new Council of Ministers is being shaped in terms of experience and qualification.

In the new Council of Ministers, there are four former Chief Ministers, 18 former state ministers, 39 former MLAs and 23 MPs who have been elected for three or more terms. Fifteen Cabinet ministers and 28 Ministers of State, comprising new faces and those elevated, were sworn in at a ceremony held in the Darbar Hall of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

While most of the members took oath in Hindi, a few of them took it in English. This is the first reshuffle in the Council of Ministers by Prime Minister Modi since he assumed charge for a second term in May 2019. An extensive and protracted review was carried out by Modi and the BJP top brass through



a series of meetings with ministers ahead of Wednesday's big exercise. This is also a young looking Cabinet with an average age of 58, with 14 ministers below the age of 50 years. In total, 43 ministers took oath in a major expansion-cum-reshuffle of the Union council on Wednesday evening in the first reshuffle of the second term of the Narendra Modi government. The official list released by the President's House said that 15 ministers took oath as Cabinet ministers on Wednesday, along with 28 others following a major rejig in the Union Cabinet.

### PM TO OVERSEE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE; AMIT SHAH IN-CHARGE OF NEW COOPERATION MINISTRY

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accorded the top priority to the Ministry of Science & Technology as India tries to ensure that we are among the topmost in the world when it comes to scientific innovation particularly as the country battles a devastating second wave of Covid-19. Minister of State (PMO) will be the minister in charge and PM Modi will himself actively monitor the ministry. Currently, MoS PMO is Dr Jitender Singh. Huge importance has been given to the Ministry of Co-operation with Home Minister Amit Shah being made the minister.

The same minister will look after Ministries of Culture, Tourism and North East, ensuring that Culture and Tourism in North East gets a boost.

Detailed list on Nation page...

## SEVEN CABINET HEAVYWEIGHTS AXED IN ONE FELL SWOOP



New Delhi: It is not every day that seven Cabinet Ministers are axed from the Union Cabinet in one fell swoop. Wednesday was one such day when the huge surgery in the Narendra Modi government led to the axing of several heavyweight ministers holding key portfolios.

Most of these resignations were unexpected and not part of the usual speculation binge which takes place in the run-up to a Cabinet reshuffle.

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan was in the firing line because of perceived mismanagement of the Covid second wave which took a toll of millions of lives. Harsh Vardhan had been widely criticised for the Covid situation and vaccine administration. Among the senior ministers, Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Chemicals and Fertiliser Minister DV. Sadananda Gowda, and Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Gangwar have also resigned. Law and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and I&B and Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar have also put in their papers, while Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot has been appointed as Governor of Karnataka.

A total of 12 ministers have resigned from the Modi government and President Ram Nath Kovind has accepted their resignations, a statement from Rashtrapati Bhavan said. Among the Ministers of State who have resigned are Debasree Chaudhuri (Women and Child Development), Rattan Lal Kataria (Jal Shakti and Social Justice & Empowerment), Sanjay Dhotre (Education), Pratap Chandra Sarangi (Animal Husbandry), Babul Supriyo (Environment), and Raosaheb Danve Patil (Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution).

## 2 EX-CONGRESS LEADERS - RANE & SCINDIA - TAKE OATH AS CABINET MINISTERS



New Delhi: Two former Congress leaders -- ex-Maharashtra Chief Minister Narayan Rane and former minister in the UPA government Jyotiraj Scindia -- were inducted into Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new-look Cabinet on Wednesday. Rane had rebelled against the Congress for not being appointed the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, while Scindia had quit after being upset with the treatment meted out to him by the party in Madhya Pradesh, subsequently leading to the toppling of the state government. Rane had also been in the Shiv Sena, but left to join the Congress before jumping ship to the BJP. Rane and Scindia are the only two former Congress faces who have been included in the new-look Union Cabinet.

## Six Pakistani migrants granted Indian citizenship in MP under CAA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Six Pakistani migrants, living in Madhya Pradesh for decades, were granted Indian citizenship on July 7 under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), officials said.

State Home Minister Narottam Mishra said these migrants were victims of religious persecution.

"Indian citizenship has been provided to these Hindu migrants who reached here due to religious persecution in neighbouring countries. The

State government has completed the process and handed them Indian citizenship certificates today," Mishra told reporters. Among the six who were granted Indian citizenship, Nandlal and Amit Kumar are residents of Bhopal while Arjundas Manchandani, Jairam Das, Narayan Das and Saushalya Bai are from Mandsaur, the minister said.

Talking to reporters, Manchandani said, "We are happy that the government has provided us citizenship. I was neither an Indian nor a Pakistani for the last 31 years,

but now I am an Indian citizen". Officials said these people came to Madhya Pradesh from the Sindh Province of Pakistan between 1988 and 2005 and were granted Indian citizenship under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). The CAA, passed in December 2019, expedites grant of Indian citizenship to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian immigrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh who arrived in India before December 2014 due to religious persecution.

## ARMY FOILS INFILTRATION BID IN J&K, KILLS ONE

Jammu: One terrorist was killed and some arms and ammunition were recovered after the Indian Army foiled an infiltration bid at the LoC in Nowshera sector of Jammu and Kashmir, a defence statement said on Wednesday. "In the early hours of July 7, 2021, a group of Pakistani terrorists made an attempt to infiltrate across the Line of Control in the Nowshera Sector, District Rajouri (J&K). Alert Army troops thwarted the infiltration bid by suitably employing an integrated surveillance grid alongwith domination by fire, and engaging the terrorists in a fierce firefight in which one terrorist was neutralised and his body has been recovered," an army statement said. It said war-like stores including an AK-47 rifle, four magazines of AK-47 with ammunition and two hand grenades have been recovered from the slain terrorist.

## A park in Bhopal to be built with the ashes of Covid victims

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Bhopal's Bhabhadra Vishram Ghat, one of the biggest crematoriums in the city, will soon have a park in the memory of those who died due to Covid-19 in the second wave of the pandemic. The park is being developed using the ashes of Covid victims.

The ashes of hundreds of people are lying uncollected at Vishram Ghat. Due to Covid, patients from different parts of the state came for treatment in various hospitals of Bhopal, during which a large number of patients also died. Family members could

not take their ashes due to strict lockdown, as a result of which a large amount of ashes were stored at Vishram Ghat. Mamtesh Sharma, secretary of the managing committee of Bhabhadra Vishram Ghat, says, "Between March and June, a large number of people died of Covid and their last rites were performed here. The relatives of the dead took only a small quantity of ashes with them after the last rites. After this, a large amount of bones and ashes have accumulated here." If Sharma is to be believed, there are about 21 truckloads of ashes at Vishram Ghat and it is not proper to immerse them in the rivers

from an environmental point of view. Due to this, the management committee has decided that a park should be built in the memory of the deceased by using the ashes as manure. This park will be built in an area of about 12,000 square feet. A target has also been set to plant 3500-4000 saplings in the park. People associated with the committee say that in order to make the plants grow at a faster pace, ash, dung and wood dust will be mixed with the soil. This park will be developed on the basis of Miyawaki technology of Japan. The saplings to be planted in the park will be looked after by the committee.

## Delta variant can possibly breach vaccine shield: Experts

Rachel V. Thomas | New Delhi

The Delta variant of Covid-19 can possibly shatter the vaccine cover, as SARS CoV-2 -- the virus which causes the disease -- has the potential to acquire deadly mutations, health experts said on Wednesday.

As new variants are formed, it causes change to the spike protein and the structure undergoes a complete change -- a reason why it can render the current vaccines, originally designed to target the protein, ineffective. Spike proteins, on the surface of SARS CoV-2, are what enable the virus to attach to and enter our cells, and all current vaccines are directed against them. Changes on the spike protein can determine how far and quickly the virus can spread. When muta-

tion changes, it can possibly breach vaccine protection. A recent study by the SGRH revealed that the Delta variant of Covid-19 virus shows eight-fold approximately reduced sensitivity to vaccine elicited antibodies compared to the Wuhan strain.

The study, available online as a non-peer reviewed preprint version in Research Square, noted that the Delta variant (B16172), first identified from India, not only dominates vaccine-breakthrough infections with higher respiratory viral loads compared

to non-Delta infections, but also generates greater transmission between fully vaccinated people as compared to the other variants -- Alpha (B117), or Kappa (B16171).

The experts stressed that vaccinations undeniably play a great role in curbing the spread of Covid-19. However, experts also noted that it is important to evaluate the need for boosters with time.

**The findings can be explained by the fact that despite high vaccination rates, Israel -- 60.6 per cent have received the first dose of the vaccine, while 5.18 million have received the second dose -- is seeing an outbreak of Covid-19 due to the Delta variant. Similar is the case with the UK (48.7 per cent) and the US (47.1 per cent) and other countries with reasonably high inoculation rates.**

“There is an alteration in the structure of the virus proteins due to mutations, which can bypass the targets of some vaccines. This means there is a possibility that the virus may elude the vaccine coverage.”  
Dr Praveen Gupta, Director Neurology, Fortis Memorial Research Institute

## Trouble for Hooda as SC orders CBI probe into Rohtak land case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the CBI to investigate the release of land in Haryana's Rohtak to a real estate developer under the then Congress government of Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. In 2002, about 850 acres was proposed for acquisition for residential and commercial sectors in Rohtak by the Haryana Urban Development Authority (HUDA). However, in April 2005, the award was passed for 422 acres. In March 2005, realtor Uddar Gagan Properties

Ltd entered into collaboration agreements with some farmers, whose land was supposed to be acquired for development of a colony. The realtor had applied for a licence to develop a colony on 280 acres. In June 2006, the licences were granted by the town and country planning director. Following the grant of licences, the corresponding land was released from acquisition. The licences were remitted to the builder, which led to execution of sale deeds in favour of the builder through power-of-attorney holder of the landowners.



# INDIA'S POWER DEMAND TOUCHES ALL-TIME HIGH OF 197.06 GW

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With the mercury rising, India's peak electricity demand touched a new high of 197.06 gigawatt (GW) at around 11.43 a.m. on Tuesday.

"All Time Highest All India Demand of 197060 MW observed at 11:43hrs today has been met," said a tweet by the Ministry of Power. On July 1, India's peak electricity demand had touched a new high of 191.24 GW.

The rising power demand shows revival in economic activities leading to higher commercial and industrial demand, which was affected due to the pandemic.

Of India's total electricity demand load pattern, industrial and agricultural consumption account for around 41 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively. On the other hand, commercial electricity consumption accounts for 8.24 per cent.

The development also gains significance as India's thermal power projects are under financial stress and the government has taken several steps to provide them financial support.

India's power demand started declining from April last year as the Covid induced lockdown across the country affected economic activities.



The pandemic affected power demand for five months in a row from April to August 2020.

Thereafter, demand started to rise with minor disruptions during the peak of the second Covid wave.

## BENGAL BJP YOUTH WING CHIEF QUILTS

Kolkata: On a day when four BJP MPs from West Bengal were inducted into the Narendra Modi government, internal differences in the party's state unit came to fore after the state BJP Yuva Morcha president Saumitra Khan resigned from his post and strongly criticised Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari and state BJP chief Dilip Ghosh for "inefficiency" in running the party in the state.



Appearing on Facebook Live, Khan strongly criticised Adhikari for "misleading" the central leadership. "What is happening is not happening right. One is going to Delhi and misleading the central leaders. I am cornered in the party," Khan said without naming Adhikari. "I have never asked for anything for my family. I have also sacrificed but there is one who is projecting himself in such a way as if he is doing everything. I have also won the election without even entering into the constituency but there is one who is trying to project himself - misleading the central leadership," Khan said. "I shall be in the party and work for the party but I shall always point out the wrong things," he added.

## Mamata fined Rs 5 lakh by court

Team Absolute | Kolkata



Though Calcutta High Court Justice Kausik Chanda recused himself from hearing West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's plea challenging the Assembly election verdict in Nandigram, the court fined her Rs 5 lakh for

the way in which she sought the judge's recusal. Justice Chanda said that the settled practice was to approach the concerned judge with an application seeking recusal. However, Mamata Banerjee approached the Acting Chief Justice on the administrative side. When the case was first put up before the bench on June 18, no request for recusal was made, Justice Chanda noted. The West Bengal Chief Minister had lost the Nandigram Assembly seat to Bharatiya Janata Party leader Suvendu Adhikari, her former close aide, who had joined the saffron party before the elections. On June 17, Banerjee had moved the Calcutta High Court, challenging the Nandigram election result.

## SC SEEKS STATUS REPORT ON VACANCIES IN CENTRAL, STATE INFO PANELS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Centre and state governments to file the latest status report on the filling up of vacancies in the Central Information Commission (CIC) and the State Information Commissions (SICs).

A bench of Justices S. Abdul Nazeer and Krishna Murari gave four weeks to the Centre and state governments to file the latest status report in the matter.

The top court order came on a PIL filed by activist Anjali Bhardwaj and others, seeking directions to the government to implement the top court's directions regarding appointment of Information Commissioners within a stipulated time and also in a transparent manner. The bench also allowed the petitioner to file an additional affidavit in the matter.



## Woman raped in front of her husband in Bihar's Saran



Patna | Agencies

A woman was raped in front of her husband in Bihar's Saran district, an official said. The incident came to light when a video of the incident went viral on social media. Saran SP Santosh Kumar, has ordered an inquiry.

"On the basis of a viral video, we have detained some suspects. The interrogation is currently underway and we will soon crack the case," Kumar said. The incident happened on Ghosi-Parsurampur road when 6 accused intercepted the victim and her husband who were riding on a motor bike. They overpowered the victim's hus-

band and dragged the woman behind the bushes and raped her in front of her husband.

The accused also made a video of the brutal act and threatened them of dire consequences if they report the matter to police.

"The victim and her husband have not come before the police. We have taken cognizance on the basis of viral video and will identify the accused. Now, we are trying to ascertain how many accused committed the heinous crime with the victim. So far, it seems one accused raped the victim as per the preliminary investigation," Kumar said.

### Cabinet reshuffle:

## Here is the complete list of portfolios

Narendra Modi - Prime Minister and also in-charge of: Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Department of Atomic Energy; Department of Space; All important policy issues; and All other portfolios not allocated to any Minister

#### CABINET MINISTERS

- Raj Nath Singh** - Minister of Defence
- Amit Shah** - Minister of Home Affairs; and Minister of Cooperation
- Nitin Jairam Gadkari** - Minister of Road Transport and Highways
- Nirmala Sitharaman** - Minister of Finance; and Minister of Corporate Affairs
- Narendra Singh Tomar** - Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar** - Minister of External Affairs
- Arjun Munda** - Minister of Tribal Affairs
- Smriti Zubin Irani** - Minister of Women and Child Development
- Piyush Goyal** - Minister of Commerce and Industry; Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; and Minister of Textiles
- Dharmendra Pradhan** - Minister of Education; and Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- Pralhad Joshi** - Minister of Parliamentary Affairs; Minister of Coal; and Minister of Mines
- Narayan Tatu Rane** - Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- Sarbananda Sonowal** - Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways; and Minister of AYUSH
- Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi** - Minister of Minority Affairs
- Dr. Virendra Kumar** - Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment
- Giriraj Singh** - Minister of Rural Development; and Minister of Panchayati Raj
- Jyotiraditya M. Scindia** - Minister of Civil Aviation
- Ramchandra Prasad Singh** - Minister of Steel
- Ashwini Vaishnav** - Minister of Railways; Minister of Communications; and Minister of Electronics and Information Technology
- Pashu Pati Kumar Paras** - Minister of Food Processing Industries
- Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** - Minister of Jal Shakti
- Kiren Rijju** - Minister of Law and Justice
- Raj Kumar Singh** - Minister of Power; and Minister of New and Renewable Energy
- Hardeep Singh Puri** - Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas; and Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs
- Mansukh Mandaviya** - Minister of Health and Family Welfare; and Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers
- Bhupender Yadav** - Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; and Minister of Labour and Employment
- Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey** - Minister of Heavy Industries
- Parshottam Rupala** - Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- G. Kishan Reddy** - Minister of Culture; Minister of Tourism; and Minister of Development of North Eastern Region
- Anurag Singh Thakur** - Minister of Information and Broadcasting; and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports

#### MINISTERS OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

- Rao Inderjit Singh** - Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation; Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Planning; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- Dr. Jitendra Singh** - Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Earth Sciences; Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office; Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Minister of State in the Department of Atomic Energy; and Minister of State in the Department of Space

#### MINISTERS OF STATE

- Shripad Yesso Naik** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism
- Faggansingh Kulaste** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development
- Prahalad Singh Patel** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Jal Shakti; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Food Processing Industries
- Ashwini Kumar Choubey** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- Arjun Ram Meghwal** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Culture
- General (Retd.) V. K. Singh** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Civil Aviation
- Krishan Pal** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Power; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Heavy Industries
- Danve Raosaheb Dadarao** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Coal; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Mines
- Ramdas Athawale** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development
- Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- Nityanand Rai** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs
- Pankaj Chaudhary** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance
- Anupriya Singh Patel** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Law and Justice
- Rajeev Chandrasekhar** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- Shobha Karandlaje** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- Darshana Vikram Jardosh** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Textiles; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways
- V. Muraleedharan** - Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
- Meenakshi Lekhi** - Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Culture
- Som Parkash** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Renuka Singh Saruta** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- Rameswar Teji** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Employment
- Kailash Choudhary** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- Annpurna Devi** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Education
- A. Narayanaswamy** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- Kaushal Kishore** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- Ajay Bhatt** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism
- B. L. Verma** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Cooperation
- Ajay Kumar** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs
- Devusinh Chauhan** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Communications
- Bhagwanth Khuba** - Minister of State in the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
- Kapil Moreswar Patil** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- Pratima Bhounik** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- Dr. Subhas Sarkar** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Education
- Dr. Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance
- Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh** - Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Education
- Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Bishweswar Tudu** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Jal Shakti
- Shantanu Thakur** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
- Dr. Munjapara Mahendrabhai** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Women and Child Development; and Minister of State in the Ministry of AYUSH
- John Barla** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Minority Affairs
- Dr. L. Murugan** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- Nisith Pramanik** - Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

## Himachal to get tough against overcrowding



Shimla | Agencies

A day after the central government expressed concern over tourist overcrowding at hill stations, the Himachal Pradesh Cabinet on Wednesday issued directions to local authorities to ensure Covid-appropriate behaviour to contain the spread of the virus.

At a meeting presided over by Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur here, the Cabinet relaxed the limit on gatherings, allowing a maximum of 200 persons in closed spaces. In open spaces, gatherings are allowed with 50 per cent capacity of the area.

It also decided to recommend to the Governor to convene the monsoon session of the Vidhan Sabha from August 2 to August 13.

It gave its consent to bring children who lost both parents in the pandemic, under the ambit of Mukhya Mantri Bal Uddhar Yojna, enabling them to provide additional monthly assistance of Rs 1,500.

The Cabinet gave consent to increase the additional honorarium of the Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers from Rs 2,000 to Rs 2,750 per month. This would benefit 7,964 workers.



# WE ARE FULLY PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE THIRD WAVE OF CORONA: CM

Chouhan said that hope children should never get infected, but even if such a situation arises, best arrangements have been made for children to play and their admission apart from their mothers' lodging in the district hospital, Jabalpur.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that we are fully prepared to deal with the possible third wave of Covid. He said that hope children should never get infected, but even if such a situation arises, best arrangements have been made for children to play and their admission apart from their mothers' lodging in the district hospital, Jabalpur.



work of the 20 bedded ICU ward to be built at a cost of about Rs two crore 12 lakh and also inspected the 13 bedded Intensive Care Unit built earlier.

During the inspection, Chouhan was told by Collector Karmaveer Sharma that the existing 13-bedded ICU of the children has been up-

graded and 20 more beds are being increased. Now there are 33 ICU beds in the district hospital. Arrangements will be made to provide Multipara monitor, ventilator, bed side x-ray machine etc. in each bed.

Multipara Monitor, Highflow Oxygen Machines, CPAP, BIPAP,

Highflow Nasal Cannula, Oxygen Concentrator have been set up for the best treatment of children in the 20-bedded HDU ward. The Chief Minister also visited a photo exhibition of the preparations made in view of the possible third wave during the Covid period besides the health arrangements.

# Excise department flouts transfer rule for corrupt AEO

Breaches all rules for controversial Assistant Excise Officer Despite former Collectors' resentment Tiwari is overweighing all creating a big question mark over the honesty of Principal Secretary Dipali Rastogi

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Going through the government rules it looks like that if rules are violated then the officials could be relieved of their jobs and legal action could be taken against them. But the Excise Department has become such department of the state where government rules are flouted and the most amazing thing is that despite so many irregularities in the department government and administration are mute spectators.

issued on July 5, 2021, transferred Assistant Excise Officer (AEO) Indresh Tiwari from Mandla on administrative grounds and posted him in Jabalpur. It is worth mentioning that Tiwari had earlier also served as the AEO in Jabalpur. But his recent posting order seems to be playing with many provisions of the transfer policy and raises question that under what administrative compulsions Tiwari has been given posting again in Jabalpur? One more question that arises is that under whose pressure such transfer orders have been issued, though the clause (37) of the Transfer Policy clearly mentions that if an officer has served on certain designation in a district then he can't be posted again in the same district on same designation. Besides, clause (17) of the rule book mentions that the transfers could be made on administrative grounds only after serving a minimum of three years in a district. But what was the compulsion of the department that in violation of all the rules, Tiwari had been transferred before completing 3 years. Indresh Tiwari, who

keeps the reins of government rules in his hands, has a deep connection with controversies. Some time back also, former collector of Jabalpur Mahesh Chandra Chaudhary had written clearly written in his semi-official letter that Tiwari is indulged in illegal recovery and that he should be removed elsewhere. However, due to the beginning of the transfer phase, where people are roaming around with files for their transfers, emphasis is being laid on stopping the transfer more than getting the transfer done in the same Excise Department. It is to be known that according to clause (11) of the transfer policy, the responsibility of issuing orders according to the guidelines lies with the departmental principal secretary. Now it will be interesting to see that for how long the Excise Department will continue to flout the rules like this and for how long the Principal Secretary of the Excise Department Deepali Rastogi will blindly cover up the violation of the rules being done by the department.

# Archdiocese of Bhopal stands with Fr Stan, a Defender of Indigenous people's Rights

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Archbishop Most Rev Leo Cornelio svd expressed his pain and anguish over the death of a Catholic priest and social activist Fr. Stan Swamy SJ. Fr. Stan breathed his last in a hospital in Mumbai yesterday. Standing with Stan, Archbishop said that in all likelihood injustice was done to Fr. Stan, a Human Rights Defender. This has posed a serious question on the values of our country. Hard core criminals are made free but an innocent Fr. Stan was treated as a criminal in jail. Where is justice? His supporters only asked for a bail. But it is very painful to know the

manipulative system of justice in our country which denied bail to the 84 years old priest who was already suffering with multiple ailments.

In the current prevailing system in the country it appears that justice is beyond the reach of most of those who stand for truth and justice are falsely accused. The Archbishop said. "The death of an 84 year old social worker who helped the helpless for decades is eroding our country's standing as a liberal democracy in the eyes of the world". When the youth stand up against the systemic wrong doings, they are putting themselves at risk of being arrested and imprisoned

for years without trial.

Fr Stan lived his life to the full. He worked for and among the poor all his life. A strong, courageous person who led the way to truth, justice and peace, added the Archbishop.

Fr Maria Stephen, the PRO said that Fr. Stan has left a legacy for the people of India to follow in his footsteps. We, as citizens of this country, need to realize the importance of our Constitutions, continue to uphold its values at all odds and disseminate these as responsible citizens. By doing so, we pay homage to the founding fathers of our country and stand in solidarity with all the human rights defenders.

# JEC will be established as a world class college: CM Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the Amrit Mahotsav programme on the entry of Jabalpur Engineering College into its glorious 75th year. He also launched the Center for Incubation Design and Innovation and New Teaching Block established under 'Srajan', a step towards Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh. Chouhan said that it is a privileged moment for me to participate in this Amrit Mahotsav of Jabalpur Engineering College. This is a historic occasion. This college has churned out many national and international personalities.

Chouhan said that we will make efforts to establish this heritage of Jabalpur as a world class engineering college. Chief Minister said that there is a need to start two new branches at the graduation level in JEC for which we have worked out. We have decided that branches of Artificial Intelligence and Data Science and Mechatronics Engineering will be



started here. Chouhan also interacted with young engineering students during the Amrit Mahotsav programme. During this, he answered the queries of students Arya Singh Thakur, Ritika Sharma, Shrin Dubey, Purnima Srivastava and Rajneesh Kushwaha.

Chouhan said that a decision has also been taken to build three industrial corridors in the state. The first is the Atal Expressway, the second is to establish a corridor for different

industries via Jabalpur-Rewa-Satna to Singrauli and the third is the Narmada Expressway. We will start the Narmada Expressway from Amarkantak and take it to the border of Gujarat via Jabalpur and try to build industrial clusters for small scale industries, cottage industries and big investments. Chief Minister while answering the question, called upon the youth to become job providers, and not job seekers. He

said that the state government would extend all possible cooperation to the youth. We had earlier launched the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Yojana for financial support. We will revive it and create opportunities for our youth to set up industries.

During the interaction with the youth, engineering college student Ritika Sharma asked a question regarding skill development. On this, Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that education has three objectives, to impart knowledge, to impart values of citizenship and to impart skills. We have to fill the gap between normal manpower and skilled manpower. For this, we have started work towards setting up model ITIs in all the divisional headquarters of the state. Along with this, we are working on setting up a Global Skill Park in Bhopal in collaboration with Singapore, in which 6 thousand children will get admission simultaneously and it will be our world class skill park.

# Tribal society is the backbone of Indian culture: Thakur

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Tribal society of Madhya Pradesh is the backbone of Indian culture. Tribal society has saved Indian values through its paintings by staying connected with Indian culture and rites. Minister of Tourism, Culture and Spirituality, Usha Thakur was addressing the inauguration program of 'Chitra Shivir' focused on the painters of Bhil and Gond community at the Tribal Museum, Bhopal. Thakur said that 'Chitra Shivir' has been organized to promote the sacred tradition of beautiful paintings of the tribal society and to give due value and respect to the artists for their hard work. Thakur inaugurated the Shivir by drawing on canvas along with renowned Bhili painter Bhuri Bai. Thakur also honored Bhuri Bai for her contribution in the field of art by



giving a shawl and shripahal and welcomed all the invited artists with a bouquet.

Principal Secretary Culture Sheo Shekhar Shukla informed that 'Chitra Shivir' focused on 'Glory of Nature in Tradition' is being organized by Gond and Bhili painters by Janjateeya Lok Kala Evam Boli Vikas Academy of Culture Department. In the 'Chitra Shivir', the public will be able to buy paintings from the private collection of more than 70 invited painters. Shukla informed that the

An online platform will be made available by the Department of Culture and Tourism by creating a portal for selling and buying paintings of tribal artists. On this portal, artists will be able to upload the photo of their artwork along with the price. Unique ID of each painting will be generated, which will give copyright rights to the painter. The more times the painter's picture get sold, the royalty will come in his account. This work is being done by the Madhya Pradesh government with the aim of protecting the rights and income of tribal artists.

On the occasion of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' under 'Gamak' series, 'Chitra Shivir' will be displayed for the visitors from 12 noon to 6 pm from 7 to 11 July. Including Director Culture Aditi Kumar Tripathi invited painters and concerned officials were present on this occasion.

# FORMATION OF UNION MINISTRY OF COOPERATION A HISTORIC STEP: CM

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the formation of the Union Ministry of Cooperation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for expansion of cooperative activities is a historic step. Chouhan said that PM Modi has given the mantra of prosperity through cooperation. This department will play an important role in realizing the basic mantra of "Bina Sahkar Nahi Uddhar" (no prosperity without cooperation). Chief Minister said that it is true that where there is cooperation, there is prosperity. Everyone's cooperation and everyone's trust is cooperatives. With the formation of this department, people will come together in new fields and will start such new works which will give employment to the people and will also make them prosperous. Madhya Pradesh is making continuous efforts in this direction.

# Hindustan Power awarded for being highest blood donor during Covid19

Team Absolute | Anuppur

Madhya Pradesh State AIDS Control Society (MPSACS) recognized and awarded Hindustan Power for its contribution towards blood donation during the COVID19 pandemic. The Company was awarded for its exemplary work in conducting blood donation camps and donation of 694 units of blood, which was also the highest such donation from Anuppur, Madhya Pradesh.

On the occasion, Shaheed Blood Bank felicitated 12 individual volunteers, 20 NGOs and Hindustan Power (Anuppur) among others for

taking the initiative. Speaking on the occasion, Mr Lalit Jain, President (Thermal), Hindustan Power said, "It has always been our resolve to help the nation, especially in these challenging times. At a time, when all stakeholders around us, especially in the vicinity of our plant were fighting the Pandemic, Hindustan Power decided to step up and motivated the employees to organise a large blood donation drive that can provide immediate relief to people around us. We saw an acute shortage of blood in the reserves as the donation had stopped due to the fear in people and misconceptions and thus, this was conceived

as an important campaign. The success of this large blood donation drive has inspired us to continue to launch similar initiatives in the coming times."

Dr Sudha Namdeo, Civil Surgeon, Dist. Shahdol, was the chief guest for the occasion and presented the certificate and award to Dr Tanveer Ahmed, CSR Dept, Hindustan Power. While appreciating the efforts she said, "Though Hindustan Power thermal plant is not in our district yet they have been supporting our blood bank regularly and providing blood units on every blood donation camp that they organize with our help.

# Nurture the values of self-reliance: Governor Patel

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Anandiben Patel has said that the values of self-reliance should be nurtured in the girl child. They should be motivated to become self-reliant by making them skilled. Patel was discussing with the residents and staff of the Bal-Grih Balika run by the Women Empowerment Department on Wednesday. It is noteworthy that the Governor has provided material worth about Rs 7 lakh to four social-service organizations of Bhopal city after getting information about their requirements.

Governor Patel said that it is necessary to have a regular routine for a secure future. Education is indispensable. Education is the basis of a safe and happy future of the girl child. Self-supporting woman gets respect in family, society and everywhere. For all the girls of the Balika Grih, in addition to regular education, the time of study and yoga should be fixed. Along with studies, it is also necessary to have skill. She directed that girls learning skills like sewing, embroidery etc. should appear in the certification examinations. The Governor said that the staff of the institution



is the caretaker of the resident girls. Treat them with the same spirit. Take care of them like family. Win their trust. Understand their problems and their state of mind with constant cooperation and dialogue. Counsel them so that they develop a sense of self-sufficiency and self-reliance. During the discussion with all the staff of the institution, she asked them to run the arrangements for the protection home like a family. On getting information that all the employees were educated till graduation, she said that each person should educate the girl child according to

her interest. Make groups of five girls and discuss with them. Take care of them. Encourage their interests. On this occasion, the women officers present were asked to stay in touch with the protection home and inspire the girl child with their own example. Patel discussed with the resident girls about their daily routine. The Governor received information about the arrangements related to the operation of the girl's home. She had a look at the store, toilet, kitchen, bedroom. She received information about availability and maintenance of smart classes, sports, food prepara-

tion, sanitary material, related equipment. She instructed to dispose of the unusable material in the store and keep it in a systematic manner.

In the beginning, in the welcome of the Governor, Lata and Shivani presented Vandana of Ma Saraswati and welcome song. The girls of the Children's Home, Kumari Kirti Rana and Payal Rathore presented a Tulsi plant to Patel. Saloni Vishwakarma recited the poem "Jago aur Jagao." The Governor presented a water cooler, three air coolers and four sewing machines to the children's home. Kumari Riya and Diya presented books to the Governor. On this occasion, Principal Secretary to the Governor, DP Ahuja, on behalf of the Governor, provided material worth Rs. 3 lakh 76 thousand to the Government Girl Child Care Home, Arera Colony. It included 10 double beds, TV, almirah, sanitary pad machine, 3 coolers. Similarly, Manoj Khatri, Additional Secretary to the Governor, provided fridge and water coolers to Apna Ghar, Sarvadharm Kolar. The Governor's Law Officer, DPSGaur, presented a water cooler machine worth Rs 30,000 to Anand Dham Old Age Home, Bhopal.

# CM pays tribute to Cine Actor Shri Dilip Kumar

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has condoled the demise of noted cine actor Dilip Kumar. Chouhan said that Dilip Kumar was a great artist and a great actor. Seeing his roles in different films, it did not appear as if an artist was working, on the other hand he lived every character. Indian cinema world is incomplete without him. Referring to the relationship of Late Dilip Kumar in context with Madhya Pradesh, Chouhan said that he had come to Budhni during the shooting of the film "Naya Daur". I was not even born at that time. I pay tributes to him.

Paying homage to Dilip Kumar, Chief Minister tweeted that his films like 'Andaz', 'Naya Daur', 'Madhumati', 'Mughal-e-Azam', 'Vidhata', 'Saudagar', 'Karma' gave a new dimension to Indian cinema. Late Dilip Kumar was a complete institution of acting in himself, from whom today's actors are learning the nuances of acting. His contribution to the world of cinema will never be forgotten. We all lost a great actor today in the form of Dilip Kumar. He will always be remembered for his extraordinary contribution to Indian cinema. This is an irreparable loss to the entertainment world.



# MAHA LEADERS PAY RICH TRIBUTES TO 'MAHANAYAK' DILIP KUMAR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray led the state in paying glowing tributes to the legend called Dilip Kumar, who passed away on Wednesday morning aged 98.

Terming him as the 'Mayanayak' of his generations, Koshyari recalled how he was so fascinated by Dilip Kumar that he watched his blockbuster "Mughal-E-Azam" twice, back-to-back.

"Unfortunately, I didn't watch any films thereafter 'Mughal-E-Azam' remained the first and the last film I watched. Dilip Kumar was a legend, nobody can take his place," said the Governor.

Thackeray, calling Dilip Kumar's passing as a bright shining star which has fallen from the silver screen, said the legendary actor will forever remain in the hearts of his fans. "Dilip Kumar dominated the film industry with his diverse roles and versatile acting. His career was one of the highlights of the Indian Cinema, and he will forever remain in the hearts of his fans," the CM said. He recalled how Dilip Kumar



enjoyed a close relationship with his father, the late Hindu Hriday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray and both nourished an inseparable bond of arts. Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said that the Dilip Kumar's demise has shattered the 'beacon of Indian Cinema' and the country has lost a great artist of the century. Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar said: "Saddened to hear about the demise of the veteran actor Dilip Kumar. We have lost a legend" Bharatiya Janata Party's Leader of Opposition (Assembly) Devendra

Fadnavis remembered how "we grew up watching his films" and the patriotic roles enacted by the versatile actor in films like "Kranti" and "Karma" are unforgettable. "He was a World Record holder for winning the maximum number of awards as an actor I had the privilege to honour him with the 'Padma Vibhushan' at his home (in Dec. 2015). History of Indian Cinema will fondly remember him forever," said Fadnavis. BJP's Leader of Opposition (Council) Pravin Darekar said that known for his inspiring perform-

ances, Dilip Kumar will be "missed not only by his Bollywood fans but people all over the world".

State Samajwadi Party President Abu Asim Azmi said that Dilip Saab was "not only a great actor, but an excellent human being" who was always at the forefront in serving people in society.

Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole, BJP State President Chandrakant Patil, Maha Vikas Aghadi government Ministers Eknath Shinde, Balasaheb Thorat, Nawab Malik and others recalled his sterling contributions to the film fraternity and society at large and condoled his wife Saira Banu Khan.

Farmers' activist and Shiv Sena leader Kishore Tiwari, according MoS status, said that "Dilip Kumar's passing marks the end of a glorious era". "Whenever the future generations think about him, they will find it hard to believe that there was a great, talented personality Dilip Kumar in the film world," said Tiwari emotionally.

The Bollywood Thespian is remembered for many of his immortal films, especially the bouquet of the 25 all-time superhits which mesmerizes his fans even today.

## Bombay HC issues notices to Centre, Maharashtra over PIL claiming Truecaller breached data privacy norms



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday issued notices to the Union and Maharashtra governments, among others, over a public interest litigation (PIL) claiming that the Truecaller mobile application "shared" user data breaching legal norms of the country.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G S Kulkarni was hearing a PIL filed by one Shashank Posture. "The Truecaller app collects data of all users. It shares such data with some of its partners without the consent of users, and dumps the liability on the user," the petitioner told the court. "This is a manipulative set

up because the user has no choice. The app also registers users for a Unified Payments Interface service without their consent, or without due process," Posture alleged.

When the court asked who were these partners benefiting from Truecaller, Posture named "Google India, Bharati Airtel, ICICI Bank", and claimed that several loan providing companies were also the beneficiaries of such data leaks by the app.

Posture further said he had impleaded the Union government, the Maharashtra government, the state IT department, Truecaller international LLP, ICICI Bank, and the National Payment Corporation as respondent parties in the

case. The government authorities approved Truecaller app "without proper checks and in contravention of the information security practices rules", Posture alleged. The High Court said this was a fit case for issuing notices.

"The case of the petitioner is that Truecaller through its mobile application has indulged in an absolute breach of data privacy of citizens. He submits that such breach is contrary to data protection laws," the court said.

"We have heard the petitioner for some time and we are of the opinion that a notice is required to be issued to respondents," it said, directing the respon-

## Bombay High Court Pulls Up Maharashtra Government Over Illegal Construction

Bombay High Court has pulled up Maharashtra government and Mumbai civic body over rampant illegal construction.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court has pulled up the Maharashtra government and the Mumbai civic body over rampant illegal construction in the city, saying it appeared the "state's property was the paternal property of the executive".

A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice GS Kulkarni made the remark on Tuesday while hearing a public interest litigation taken up suo motu (on its own) last year on illegal constructions across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) after the collapse of a building in Bhiwandi town of neighbouring Thane district.

Senior counsel AspiChinoy along with

advocate Joel Carlos, representing the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), submitted that the state's slum rehabilitation policy protected encroachers. Hence, the civic body could not take action against them under provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act. The BMC had a limited role to play as an outsider authority, they said. Advocate General Ashutosh Kumbhakar, who appeared for the Maharashtra government, told the High Court that the state government's slum rehabilitation policies granted statutory protection against the demolition of structures, constructed before January 1, 2000, and not higher than 14 feet.

He said the structures of

slum dwellers holding valid photo passes were protected and could not be demolished under the slum rehabilitation policies.

Kumbhakar said successive governments had extended the cut-off date for protecting tenements in notified slum areas till 2000.

The high court said this translated into legitimising encroachers on government land. "The moment you (state) bring them under a beneficial scheme, state land and corporation lands are written off," the High Court said. "It seems like the state's property is the paternal property of the executive," the court remarked.

The High Court will continue hearing the plea on Friday.

# Former Mumbai Congress chief Kripashankar Singh Joins BJP

Former Congress leader Kripashankar Singh joined the BJP in presence of state unit chief Chandrakant Patil and former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former Congress leader Kripashankar Singh, who was the minister of state for home in the previous Congress-NCP government in Maharashtra, joined the BJP on Wednesday.

Singh, who joined the BJP in presence of state unit chief Chandrakant Patil and former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, had also served as the Mumbai Congress chief during 2008-2012. He had resigned from the Congress in the run-up to the 2019



state Assembly elections and there had been hints ever since that he would be joining the BJP.

Singh's entry to the BJP comes ahead of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elec-

tions slated next year, for which BJP has already launched the 'Mission 2022' drive with a resolve to defeat ruling Shiv Sena.

The BJP had earlier targeted Singh, who had been linked to several cases

of corruption as well as allegations of holding assets disproportionate to known sources of income.

Notably, Maharashtra BJP leader Madhav Bhandari on Tuesday said, "Kripashankar Singh has been a big leader and has a relevance in Mumbai politics, he has been in touch since last few months, he will be joining BJP in the presence of former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, State BJP president Chandrakant Patil and other party leaders."

When questioned that whether he is being given any big responsibility being a north Indian face and as BMC elections are close, Bhandari said, "Definitely Singh has been a face in the city, whatever responsibility will be given it will be decided by the party and will be announced soon."

## Maha Congress urges CM, Dy CM to restore Muslim quotas

A Congress leader on Tuesday demanded that 5 per cent reservation be granted to the Muslim community in education.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

At a time when protests are being held in Maharashtra for the restoration of quotas for Marathas in jobs and education and OBCs in local bodies, a Congress leader on Tuesday demanded that 5 per cent reservation be granted to the Muslim community in education, which he claimed had been approved by the Maha Vikas Aghadi of the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress.

Former Minister and Maharashtra Congress Working President Naseem Khan on Tuesday urged Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Deputy Chief



Minister Ajit Pawar to take immediate steps to restore the 5 per cent quotas for the Muslim community.

In a letter, Khan said that the reservations in education and jobs were given by the previous Congress-Nationalist Congress Party regime in 2014, as per the recommendations of various Central panels on the issue.

"The quotas were not based on religion but on socio-educational-economic backwardness, and granted vide an Ordinance on July 19, 2014. A petition was filed against the government decision, and later the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government did nothing in the matter for five years," Khan contended.

The letter, copies of which were sent to various other Ministers, also demanded a special package to alleviate the backwardness in the Muslim community on the lines of schemes launched for other backward class groups till the quotas are implemented.

He said that the issue also figures in the election manifesto of the Congress and NCP, and also a part of the common minimum programme of the Maha Vikas Aghadi which took power 20 months ago, and urged that the 5 per cent quotas must be brought back on priority.

## ED ARRESTS NCP LEADER EKNATH KHADSE'S SON-IN-LAW

Mumbai: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday arrested Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Eknath Khadse's son-in-law Girish Chaudhary in alleged Pune land deal case. ED sources said that Chaudhary was arrested around 3 a.m. on Wednesday after being questioned for over 13 hours. The source said that he was not cooperating, so had to be placed under arrest. A Revenue Minister in the then Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis' Cabinet, Khadse had to quit in 2016 after his name cropped up in alleged wrongdoings in the Pune government land deal. He remained in the political wilderness, till he joined the NCP last year.

## Mumbai records light to moderate rainfall

As per the 48 hours forecast, Mumbai will see light to moderate rain in the city and suburbs with the possibility of occasional intense spells at isolated places. An intense 20-30 mm rain is expected in an hour

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After a break, rains in Mumbai slightly picked between Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. Light to moderate rainfall was recorded in Mumbai city and suburbs in the last 24 hours ending at 8:30 am on Wednesday.

As per the 48 hours forecast, Mumbai will see light to moderate rain in the city and suburbs with the possibility of occasional intense spells at isolated places. An intense 20-30 mm rain is expected in an hour. In 24 hours ending at 8:30 am on Wednesday, IMDs

Santacruz observatory recorded the 17.9 mm rain, taking the monthly tally to 7.8 mm rain as against the average tally of 200 mm. In comparison, last year in July, Mumbai was reeling under heavy rainfall. The minimum temperature continued to remain above normal at 26.6 degrees Celsius and high relative humidity at 74 per cent on Wednesday. As per the nowcast warning issued at 10 am, moderate to intense spell of rain is very likely at Thane, Palghar, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg in the next three hours, said IMD. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the rainfall activity is likely to be revived this week. As per the district forecast and warning, parts of Madhya Maharashtra, Marathwada and Vidarbha are likely to witness thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds at isolated places till Thursday. Heavy rain at isolated places is forecast for Palghar, Mumbai, Thane and Raigad on Saturday. While Heavy to very heavy rain at isolated places is forecast for Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg on Saturday.

## Gulshan Kumar murder case:

# Abdul Rashid surrenders before Mumbai court as per HC order

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Abdul Rashid Merchant, whose acquittal in the 1997 murder case of music baron Gulshan Kumar, was last week quashed by the Bombay High Court, on Wednesday surrendered before a sessions court here.

On July 1, the high court had quashed his acquittal and sentenced him to life imprisonment, noting that he was one of the persons who shot at Kumar.

The high court had directed him to surrender either before police station or the trial court, and also said that if he fails to surrender, the court can issue a non-bailable warrant against him. "Abdul Rashid Dawood Merchant surrendered

before the sessions court today as per the order of the Bombay High Court," his lawyer Ganesh Iyer said.

Nearly 24 years after the crime that shocked the Hindi film industry, the HC had upheld the acquittal of film producer and Tips Industries NSE 0.48% co-founder Ramesh Taurani in the Gulshan Kumar murder case, but confirmed the conviction of co-accused Abdul Rauf Merchant, brother of Abdul Rashid Merchant.

"The acquittal of another accused Abdul Rashid Merchant is quashed. Rashid is convicted under sections 302, 120(b) of the IPC and section 27 of the Indian Arms Act. The accused is sentenced to life imprisonment," the high court had said, in its order.

## Maharashtra HSC results 2021:

# MSBSHSE releases timetable for finalising Class 12 results

According to the schedule released by MSBSHSE, on July 7 between 11 am to 1 pm, a training programme would be conducted through YouTube for all teachers and principals on the marking system.

Team



highest degree of professionalism, consistency and care," said state school education minister, Varsha Gaikwad.

According to the schedule released by MSBSHSE, on July 7 between 11 am to 1 pm, a training programme would be conducted through YouTube for all teachers and principals on the marking system. Between July 7 to 14, assessments are to be carried out of those students who have not had any kind of internal assessment - unit tests, term exams, home assignments, projects - due to the Covid-19 situation.

Class teachers then have to send each student's final marks to the results committee set up at the high school/junior college level. Between July 8th to July 17, the

results committee has to scrutinise the final marks sent by the class teacher. From July 14th to July 21, headmasters/principals have to fill the final marks of the student into the online system of the state board. From July 23, MSBSHSE divisional and state boards will do the necessary work for the declaration of results. A seven-member results committee headed by the school principal has to be formed immediately which will take a meeting of all subject teachers and ensure they understand the methodology to calculate marks, tabulate results within deadline and also scrutinise the results before they are sent to the state.

The results are to be tabulated for nearly 14 lakh Class 12, higher secondary certificate students. Marks will be calculated on the basis of a three-year assessment formula, similar to the one adopted by the CBSE. The scores of HSC students will be calculated on a 30:30:40 formula, which is the 'best of three' subject marks of Class 10, final exam marks of Class 11 and remaining based on college-level assessment in Class 12, which can be either unit tests, first-semester exams, or practice exams. For the practical component, marks will be awarded based on the state board's existing policy. The same mode of assessment will also be used to assess the performance of a candidate appearing for minimum competency vocational courses, bifocal vocational courses & courses aligned with the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF).

Absolute | Pune

The Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education has declared the timetable for the tabulation of marks for class 12 board exams 2020-21 based on internal assessments by the school. A deadline of July 21 has been set for headmasters to fill students' marks into the online system of the state board. It is expected that the state board results will be declared by July 31. "I'm requesting all junior colleges, teachers to adhere to the schedule for timely declaration of results. For a fair and objective assessment, all stakeholders must read the procedures laid down carefully and ensure that their roles and responsibilities are clearly understood. I'm confident that our colleges, teachers will undertake the process with the



EDITOR'S SPECS

# Low testosterone is risky in Pandemic

Men with symptomatic Covid-19 and low testosterone are six times more likely to become severely ill and die from the disease, new research has shown.

"At the start of the Covid pandemic, we were seeing far more men than women coming to hospital and suffering very severe forms of the disease. We immediately thought this might be related to male hormone levels, particularly testosterone. But we never expected to see such a high proportion of Covid patients with these extremely low levels of testosterone, in comparison to a similar group of healthy men. The relationship is very clear: the lower the testosterone, the higher the severity of the condition and likelihood of death. I've never seen anything like it in my 25 years in the field."

Prof. Andrea Salonia, Specialist in Urology & Endocrinology

The study, conducted by researchers at San Raffaele University Hospital in Milan, Italy, found that the lower the levels of testosterone, the higher the likelihood that male patients would need intensive care, be intubated on a ventilator and remain in hospital over a longer period. For the study, the team compared 286 male Covid patients, who came to the emergency department, with 305 healthy

male volunteers between February and May 2020. Nearly 90 per cent of the patients had testosterone below 9.2 nanomoles per litre (nmol/l), compared to just 17 per cent of the healthy volunteers. Those with testosterone levels between 3-4 nmol/l and had mild symptoms or were admitted to hospital, while those admitted to ICU or died of the disease had just 0.7-1.0 nmol/l. However, since the team does not have data on the testosterone levels in the patients before they contracted Covid-19, they cannot say whether low testosterone was a pre-existing long-term condition that exacerbated the disease or whether it was caused by the SARS-COV2 virus.

# Pandemic tests organisational leadership

D.C. PATHAK

The global health crisis created by Covid-19 has predictably put in focus the role of political rulers of nations across the world but in an all-permeating manner it has also tested leadership in different spheres -- businesses, organisations and institutions in terms of setting apart the brilliant from the ordinary. A true leader not only faces a crisis competently but 'rides the challenge' to take the organisation forward through the difficulty and put it on the path of progress. The first requirement of this role is for the leader to have the combination of 'insight' and 'vision' in order to see the roots of the crisis and determine how to reset the goal through necessary course corrections. The leader has to be comprehensively well-informed about the various facets of the problem and their impact on the business at hand and be in possession of 'business intelligence' about demand, logistics of supply and delivery as well as the new technology that might have become available at that moment.

The pandemic did not represent a challenge of 'competition' that was the feature of normal times and instead came as a big 'equaliser' in as much as it caused the ultimate organisational 'disruption' for all entities and set off a new quest for technological solutions. In a competitive world of globalised norms, the successful leader would retain the organisational loyalty of the best of his or her human assets, study the rivals and keep track of the external environ affecting business. In the beginning of the Nineties, Delta in the US overtook the PanAm as the world's largest airline primarily because, it is said, six of the latter's top leaders parted company with their CEO to join the new rival. In the context of the pandemic the crisis enveloped individuals and organisations across the board and the threat of competition gave way to the challenge of restoration, innovative management and adoption of new technology for enhancing the 'outreach'. In the period of recovery, quality of product and service will become doubly important because the customer wading through the crisis would become far more sensitive to 'reliability' of what was being offered. Failure in this regard will make the customer permanently hostile to the business concerned.

An intelligent leader would realise that the pandemic had produced three distinct consequences. First, it had 'flattened' the organisations by making excessive vertical hierarchy redundant, legitimised the concept of working from home and altered the methodology of internal communication. Secondly, it had revolutionised the human resource development by recognising the fact that the individual was at the centre of all productivity, that teamwork had emerged as the prime instrument for recovery replacing the top-down directives and that the crisis demanded a new sense of camaraderie overcoming physical distances. And finally, the new management framework enjoined upon the leadership to revisit the earlier norms of performance evaluation, take to practices that encouraged members down below to develop a sense of 'ownership' towards the organisation and make the pay packet look like a compensation for work done for a 'cause'. A learning forced by the pandemic is that organisations must be able to work with fewer hands horizontally spread out without compromising on productivity or quality



of output -- this is different from trying to be cost effective by laying off people. Heavy vertical hierarchy has to give way to multiple leaders working with compact teams, some of whose members would be operating out of home. Home as the new workplace is going to become part of the new normal in the post-Covid times as the corporate head office will not be a crowded place anymore and a certain proportion of employees will not be required to report there everyday. In this scenario, a leader would have to learn to decentralise decision-making. Reluctance of a leader to delegate authority often arises from the fear that this will add to the accountability of the former -- a leader must know the people working for him or her well enough and have a grid of confidence with them. This is a sign of success even in the normal times. In the new normal, the leader will have to be far more communicative and be available for any guidance urgently required, even from a distance. A blend of centralised working with decentralisation of operational decisions is needed for the future.

For this to happen, the leader will be required to know the members of the organisation a lot more closely than was the case before. Covid has stressed every one's life and made it vital for the leader to have a developed Emotional Quotient -- this means a capacity to understand that the responses of a person are shaped also by his or her emotional state of mind. The leader must have a pretty good idea of the life of the employee outside of the workplace, including any major problem at home, since an entirely impersonal relationship limits the willingness of the person to work for the 'boss'. In fact, the boss-subordinate relationship will change in favour of the Indian concept of management that prescribed a 'paternal nurtural' leadership. In the post-Covid world the modern leadership will have to become 'nurtural', the paternal component would not be mandatory.

In the backdrop of several alterations in the management practices becoming the order of the day for the future, the system of performance evaluation would also have to be reformed. This is the call of leadership. Assessment of an individual in the rushed corporate life has mostly been a 'third party' affair with the senior acting on behalf of the organisation and at the back of the employee being reported on.

Working during Covid from home, everyone -- left to one's own devices -- would become aware of the 'self' and cognisant of his or her contribution to the organisation in realistic terms. This makes it possible for the employee to improve the output and warrants introduction of 'self-assessment' as a uniform practice in performance evaluation. Moreover, in the new environ the organisation will benefit from the internal 'feedback' that was more or less neglected so far. 'Nobody knows everything but everybody knows something' -- it will be good for the organisation to remember this for its own betterment. A better planning for re-skilling and upskilling is going to become essential and an improved performance evaluation system will help in that plan. On the whole, the expected changes in the old practices of running businesses, institutions and organisations can be described as an evolution of management marking an advance over the past. Some of this will rub on the governance too -- bureaucracy would become more adept in micromanagement and the government machinery will be drawn closer to the people which is a gain for democracy. Prime Minister Modi had set an example in focusing on a pro-people agenda and guiding its comprehensive execution, ranging from vaccine policy to the direct transfer of money to the poor and the weak during the crisis. Personal integrity of rulers is tested in times of a crisis like pandemic which allowed power to be used for one's own benefit -- many lesser 'leaders' did get exposed. Fraudulent vaccination programmes, black marketing of essential equipment and downright cheating of innocent citizens in distress did occur but only on a limited scale because the strong Modi government at the Centre acted as a deterrent. Prime Minister Modi has personally monitored the pace of economic revival 'from below' that is suited to Indian conditions. His visibility in this crisis has given confidence to the people and made him a leader who would 'ride the challenge' of pandemic and take the nation through it successfully towards a new path of progress.

(The writer is a former Director Intelligence Bureau)

## international

# NEARLY 190 SHOT DEAD ACROSS US DURING JULY 4TH WEEKEND

Washington | Agencies

Nearly 190 people were shot dead across the US over the July 4th or Independence Day holiday weekend, according to data compiled by the Gun Violence Archive, a research organisation.

By Monday, the non-profit group reported that 189 people were killed and 516 were injured in more than 540 shootings over the three-day weekend that started on July 2. US media outlet NPR said Tuesday after reviewing the data, noting that those numbers may go up as the organisation is continuing to collect additional information. The Chicago Tribune newspaper reported that at least 95 people were shot in the city during the long weekend, and among those injured were two police officers, reports Xinhua news agency. In New York, there were 26 victims from 21 shootings from July 2-4, the New York Police Department said.

In Norfolk, eastern state of Virginia, police have charged a 15-year-old boy in the weekend shooting of four chil-



dren between the ages of 6 and 16 on July 2, said the NPR report.

Police in Cincinnati, Ohio, said two males aged 16 and 19 respectively who were 'engaged in a verbal altercation that resulted in the two exchanging gunfire' were shot dead, and three others were injured at a holiday celebration at a park on July 4. In Toledo, Ohio, a 17-year-old boy was killed when a block party was disrupted by gunfire early Monday, according to

police. At least 12 people were hurt in the shooting.

On July 4, at least eight people were shot and injured after an argument broke out in Fort Worth, Texas, local media reported. On the same day, five men were found shot in Dallas, Texas, and three of them later pronounced dead. In suburban Atlanta, Georgia, golf professional Gene Siller was fatally shot at a country club on July 3.

Two other gunshot victims were

also found on the course and police are still looking for the suspect.

Through the first 172 days of 2021, gun violence killed 9,420 Americans, an average of 55 people a day, according to the Gun Violence Archive. The figures include homicides and accidental gun deaths but not suicides. A sample of 37 S cities with data for the first three months of this year saw an 18 per cent spike in murders compared with the same period in 2020, according to an earlier New York Times report.

Many experts already predicted that gun violence will get even worse this summer, when it historically goes up with the arrival of warm weather.

Furthermore, most states have relaxed Covid restrictions after months of shutdowns.

In June, President Joe Biden launched a new crime prevention strategy amid soaring gun violence across the country, focusing on illegal sale of firearms, law-breaking gun dealers and better community support.

# Taliban enters Afghan provincial capital, fighting continues

Taliban fighters entered the city after capturing police headquarters on Wednesday morning and fighting was going on for the control of Qala-e-Naw city

Kabul | Agencies

Taliban militants entered Qala-e-Naw city, the capital of Afghanistan's western Badghis province on Wednesday as fighting continued, a top official said.

According to the official, Taliban fighters entered the city after capturing police



headquarters on Wednesday morning and fighting was going on for the control of Qala-e-Naw city, reports Xinhua news agency.

Another official also confirmed the development, saying the Taliban militants "after capturing all the districts in the restive Badghis province" entered Qala-e-Naw city. He also asserted that the prisoners availing

opportunity had also escaped the jail from provincial capital Qala-e-Naw.

Badghis governor Hasamuddin Shams said that "enemies entered Qala-e-Naw" and fighting erupted.

If captured, Qala-e-Naw would be the first provincial capital overrun by the Taliban militants to consolidate position in conflict-battered Afghanistan.

# NEW IRANIAN GOVT WON'T CHANGE STANCE ON N-DEAL

Tehran: Iran's position on the country's 2015 nuclear deal and the removal of sanctions will not change even after the new government under President-elect Ebrahim Raisi takes over next month, a government official said.

"The government of Raisi will also be committed to it (potential agreement) because adherence to the commitments and promises is always a principle for the Islamic republic," Xinhua news agency quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh as saying to reporters on Tuesday. Progress has been made in the nuclear talks in the Austrian capital of Vienna and it is acknowledged by all parties to the negotiation, Khatibzadeh added.

However, there are still important issues that largely need to be decided by other parties, especially the US, as the finalization of the agreement on the revival of the landmark nuclear deal, officially referred to as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), "depends on the political will and tough decisions of other parties involved", he noted. Meanwhile, "we do not set any deadline for reaching an agreement which could guarantee the interests of the Iranian people... We are not in a hurry to reach an agreement, but we will not allow the negotiations to erode", Khatibzadeh warned. Under the deal reached in 2015, Tehran agreed to roll back parts of its nuclear program in exchange for decreased economic sanctions.

# UK overhauls asylum system after Brexit

London | Agencies

Britain will overhaul its asylum system to make it a criminal offence to knowingly arrive in the country without permission, the British government announced on Tuesday.

The Nationality and Borders Bill, entering Parliament on Tuesday, tackles the challenge of illegal immigration to make it harder to stay for those who enter Britain illegally, the Xinhua news agency reported.

The post-Brexit move came after the government had already ended freedom of movement of the European Union (EU) citizens after Brexit and introduced a points-based immigration sys-

tem to welcome talents from around the world. "For too long, our broken asylum system has lined the pockets of the vile criminal gangs who cheat the system. This isn't fair to the vulnerable people who need protection or the British public who pay for it. It's time to act," Home Secretary Priti Patel said in a statement. Patel said that this legislation delivered British people's hope to take full control of its borders and paved the way for a fair but firm system that will break the business model of the gangs that facilitate dangerous and illegal journeys to Britain while speeding up the removal of those with no right to be there. Other measures include making every effort to remove those who enter the

country illegally having travelled through a safe country in which they could and should have claimed asylum, and making it easier to remove someone from Britain to a safe country while their asylum claim is processed. Britain planned to increase the punishment for people smugglers who facilitate illegal entry to Britain, who will face up to life imprisonment. The bill also aims to give the home secretary power to control visa availability for countries refusing to take back their own citizens. Age assessment will also be changed to protect children from being wrongly moved into the adult asylum system and stop illegal entrants falsely claiming to be children.

# Florida building collapse toll reaches 36

Miami-Dade County Fire Chief Alan Cominsky said they failed to find any positive signs in regard to voids or livable spaces as rescue workers continue to search the rubble.

Miami | Agencies

The confirmed death toll in the partial collapse of a 12-storey residential building in Surfside, Florida, has increased to 36, Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava said.

Addressing reporters on Tuesday evening, Cava said that there were 109 "reports of people who are potentially unaccounted for", reports

Xinhua news agency. Miami-Dade County Fire Chief Alan Cominsky said they failed to find any positive signs in regard to voids or livable spaces as rescue workers continue to search the rubble. "Unfortunately we're not seeing anything positive," Cominsky said.

Search and rescue operations were halted for about two hours on Tuesday afternoon because of lightning and some gusts of wind that went above 48 km per hour with tropical storm Elsa approaching, according to a CNN report. The collapse occurred on June 24 at the Champlain Towers South condominium in the beachside town that sits around 9.6 km north of Miami Beach. Since the collapse, multiple Miami-area buildings have been evacuated, local media reported.

# IRAN SAYS PROGRESS MADE IN TALKS WITH SAUDI ARABIA

Tehran: Progress has been made in the recent talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the spokesman for the Tehran government Ali Rabiee said. Issues have been discussed from a friendly and good-intention position in the recent talks between the two countries, and some progress has been made so far, Rabiee said on Tuesday during his weekly press conference.

"We understand that disputes may have complexities in some areas which require time to resolve. We will continue these talks to minimise differences," Xinhua news agency quoted the spokesman as further saying. Meanwhile, Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said Iran has always welcomed dialogue to achieve results.



## GWEN STEFANI & BLAKE SHELTON STUN DURING OKLAHOMA WEDDING

Los Angeles | Agencies

**G**wen Stefani and Blake Shelton stunned during their Oklahoma wedding in first look photos at the couple's dance. The 51-year-old singer looked gorgeous in a Verga Wang dress.

In photos obtained from the wedding, The Voice coach looked beautiful in a long veil that matched her poofy dress. Additionally, the fabric trailed feet behind her in the extended dress train.

While Gwen and Blake, 44, seemed in love during their first dance, the pair also appeared excited when the No Doubt singer thrust her arms into the air the country singer cut the wedding cake. Many fans thought Gwen looked "gorgeous," though some took to Twitter to express their disappointment with the choice of wedding day attire. A common thought among critics was that they liked Gwen's dress better from her 2002 wedding to ex-husband Gavin Rossdale.



## SCARLETT JOHANSSON IS 'SECRETLY EXPECTING' SECOND CHILD

Los Angeles | Agencies

**S**carlett Johansson is pregnant with her first child with husband Colin Jost. The 36-year-old actress is expecting her second child according to a Tuesday report from Page Six. It will be the first for the 39-year-old SNL funnyman.

An insider for the publication said: 'Scarlett is actually due soon, I know she and Colin are thrilled.'

The reports come after the actress sparked rumours she was expecting when she skipped out on several events for her upcoming Marvel flick Black Widow.

Johansson has also appeared for promotional appearances virtually including her June 21 appearance on The Tonight Show With Jimmy Fallon in which she was shown from the shoulders up via Zoom.

She was also noticeably missing from several Black Widow related events in recent weeks including a world premiere fan event attended by co-star David Harbour in New York City last week.

There was also a screening in the Hamptons on Friday where Johansson and Jost are often seen out and about.



## BTS' 'Butter' tops Billboard Hot 100 Chart sixth week in a row



Seoul | Agencies

**T**he Korean boy band BTS' summer tune "Butter" continues its glorious run on the global stage. The song has now completed six weeks in a row as a chartbuster on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. According to MRC data, "Butter" amassed 28.3 million radio air-play audience impressions, up by two per cent, to dominate the music scene with their longest reigning number one song to date.

The Grammy nominated band is expected to release their new single "Permission to dance" that will be included in the CD single "Butter", scheduled to be out on Friday.

Ed Sheeran as well as Steve Mac, Jenna Andrews and Johnny McDaid have participated in the making of this song. BTS, comprising J-Hope, RM, Suga, Jungkook, V, Jin and Jimin, have been capturing the hearts of millions since June 2013, having gained recognition for their authentic and self-produced

music. They have broken a number of world records and have been nominated for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance at the 63rd Grammy Awards and recognised with Billboard Music Awards, American Music Awards and MTV Video Music Awards.

BTS is an acronym of Bangtan Sonyeondan, which translates to 'bullet-proof boy scouts'.

The band topped the Billboard Hot 100 chart thrice in 2020 and were Time's Entertainer of the Year 2020.

## BRITNEY SPEARS' CONSERVATORSHIP LAWYERS TO RESIGN

Los Angeles | Agencies

**A**fter a bombshell court appearance, Britney Spears' longtime court-appointed counsel Samuel D. Ingham III will resign from her conservatorship, according to documents filed Tuesday.

The very brief explanation in the application for appointment of counsel merely says it's necessary for the court to choose a new lawyer for Spears because Ingham, along with co-court appointed counsel Loeb & Loeb, "have tendered their resignations." If approved by L.A. County Superior Court Judge Brenda Penny, their resignations will become effective upon the appointment of new counsel. Ingham, who has represented Spears for the last thirteen years, was allegedly upset after hearing Spears' remote testimony to a judge last month during which she expressed for the first time publicly her desire to be free of the "abusive" legal arrangement.



## WHY TARANTINO HAD TO CUT FAVOURITE SCENE FROM 'ONCE UPON A TIME IN HOLLYWOOD'

Los Angeles | Agencies

**H**ollywood maverick Quentin Tarantino has revealed that his favourite scene in "Once Upon A Time In Hollywood" was chopped.

The filmmaker shared that one of his favourite parts of the film, where Leonardo DiCaprio's character Rick Dalton and Trudi Fraser, played by Julia Butters, have an emotional phone call conversation, had to be cut from the final edit, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"That was my favourite scene in the script. So the idea that that wouldn't be in the movie was unfathomable. That was my favourite scene in the script," he said on CinemaBlend's ReelBlend podcast.

"I think it was probably

Leo's favourite scene that he shot. We were in tears. It was the only time. I've gotten misty-eyed every once in a while when I was shooting this scene versus that scene. But that thing, I mean, Julia (Butters) was in tears every time we finished every take. We were just really proud of that sequence," he recalled.

Although Tarantino loved the scene, he said it didn't quite fit in.

"The reason it's not in the film is -- it's a two-fold one. It seems like an ending to the movie. Which actually was okay in the script, because in the script I looked at everything that happens in February as part of a three-act structure. And then the stuff that happens on the night of the murder as an epilogue. But that was the wrong way to think about it," he said.

## KEANU REEVES LOOKS IS IN BERLIN TO FILM JOHN WICK 4

Los Angeles | Agencies

**H**e's been busy filming John Wick 4 in Berlin in recent months. And Keanu Reeves was back on set again on Tuesday as he shot eerie night time scenes in the German capital. The actor, 56, looked suave in a dark grey suit as he roamed the streets in front of the iconic Sacred Heart Church, while a smoke machine added to the atmosphere. He teamed his smart suit with a black shirt and shoes and wore his long dark hair swept back.

Keanu could be seen sporting some stubble which had been carefully shaped and he looked pleased to be at work as he smiled while going about his business.

Keanu is in Berlin to film John Wick 4, in which he plays the character of the same name. Work on the next installment of the action thriller franchise began shortly after the release of its third film, John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum, in May of 2019. In April of last year, series director Chad Stahelski spoke to Collider and noted that the project's creative team had set their bar much higher for the upcoming film from its inception.

## Gigi Hadid pens open letter seeking privacy for 10-month-old daughter

Los Angeles | Agencies

**M**odel Gigi Hadid has written a long open letter to the paparazzi, the press and fan accounts with an appeal to protect her 10-month-old daughter's privacy.

Gigi, 26, has daughter Khai with boyfriend, singer Zayn Malik. In the letter, she said they

want their child to explore the world but they also want to protect her from the "media circus" of their fame and would wish the media blurred Khai's face from photographs, reports femalefirst.co.uk. She wrote: "To paparazzi, press and beloved fan accounts. As our baby grows up we have to realise that we can't protect her from everything the way we wanted to and could when she was smaller. She loves seeing the world! And although she gets a lot of that out near our farm, she also gets to experience other places -- a true blessing.

"I know the laws change State to State, and I've seen some paparazzi photos of kids in NYC with their faces blurred -- but, from asking

around, I believe that that comes down to the integrity of the photographer, publications, or fans sharing the images." I write this all to say: to the Paparazzi, press, and beloved fan accounts, you know we have never intentionally shared our daughter's face on social media. Our wish is that she can choose how to share herself with the world when she comes of age, and that she can live as normal of a childhood as possible, without worrying about a public image that she has not chosen. It would mean the world to us, as we take our daughter to see and explore NYC and the world, if you would PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE blur her face out of the images, if and when she is caught on camera.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Bella Hadid



## SHAFALI, SNEH NOMINATED FOR ICC PLAYER OF THE MONTH AWARD

Dubai | Agencies

Indian women cricket team players Shafali Verma and Sneha Rana were on Wednesday nominated for ICC Women's Player-of-the-Month award for June.

Batter Shafali and all-rounder Sneh face competition for the award from England left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone, who too has been nominated.

New Zealand's Devon Conway and Kyle Jamieson, who both were part of their country's series win over England as well as the World Test Championship (WTC) final win against India have been nominated in the men's category along with South African wicketkeeper-batsman Quinton de Kock.

"The nominees for the monthly



men's awards this time are Devon Conway, Quinton de Kock and Kyle Jamieson while Sophie Ecclestone, Sneh Rana and Shafali Verma figure

in the women's shortlist," said a statement from the International Cricket Council (ICC). Big-hitting opener Shafali made

an impressive Test debut against England and was named Player of the Match in the one-off Test in Bristol. The 17-year-old became the first Indian woman and fourth from any country to score half-centuries in both innings of a debut Test, notching 96 and 63. Her first innings score was the highest by an Indian woman on debut. She also aggregated 59 runs in two ODIs against India at a strike rate of 85.50. All-rounder Sneh had a memorable Test debut in Bristol, her unbeaten 80 off 154 deliveries helping stage off defeat against England after India were made to follow on. Earlier in the match, she finished with four for 131, accounting for well-set opener Tammy Beaumont and Amy Jones among others. She also took one for 43 in an ODI against England.

## Billion hearts waiting for Sindhu to better silver medal at Tokyo

Amaravati | Agencies

Pusarla Venkata Sindhu, a name that needs no introduction in India, is all set to wield her badminton racquet in her second Olympics in Tokyo, even as a billion hearts wait for her to better the silver medal she won five years ago.

Born on July 5, 1995 at Hyderabad, the lean, lanky and power hitting shuttler is eager to add more medals to the silver medal she bagged in the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016. Sports and winning medals are no stranger to Sindhu as both her parents were former volleyball play-

ers. In fact her father PV. Ramana bagged a bronze medal at the 1986 Seoul Asian Games. The 179-cm-tall Sindhu turned pro at 13 and made her international debut at the age of 17. Just turned 26, Sindhu has been a member of the Indian national team since 2013. Honing her badminton skills at the Gopichand Academy, founded by 2001 All England Open champion Pullela Gopichand, Sindhu started making a mark in junior tournaments first. She won junior badminton titles such as All India Ranking Championship, sub-junior nationals

and the Hyderabad-based shuttler went on to capture the bronze medal at sub-junior Asian badminton championships. She followed it up with impressive victories of a bronze medal in the women's singles at the Commonwealth Games in 2014 and several others. Falling in love with the sport after watching Gopichand in action in her formative years, Sindhu has emerged as one of India's biggest medal hopes at Tokyo. The agile athlete promised to return to India with a medal from Tokyo even as her well-wishers hope for nothing less than a gold.



## Gopichand not part of 9-member badminton contingent for Tokyo

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chief national coach Pullela Gopichand will not be on the court-side when PV Sindhu starts the campaign for her second Olympic medal at Tokyo later this month. With Saina Nehwal and Sindhu winning Olympic medals in 2012 and 2016 consecutively, the Indian team will look to complete a hat-trick of medals at Tokyo.

Gopichand was Sindhu's coach when she won the silver at Rio in 2016. With the Badminton Association of India (BAI) getting to choose only a five-member support for the four qualified players because of strict COVID-19 protocols, Gopichand decided to opt out in favour of two foreign singles coaches. Thus, the nine-member Indian contingent finalised on Tuesday comprises the four qualified players -- Sindhu, B Sai Praneeth and men's doubles duo of Chirag Shetty and Satwik Rankireddy -- three coaches and two physios.

Singles coach Park Tae-Sang and Agus Dwi Santosa, along with doubles coach Mathias Boe and physios Evangeline Baddam and Sumansh Sivalanka will be accompanying the



players in Tokyo. "With just one quota available, Gopichand decided to opt out to ensure Agus Dwi Santosa could be accommodated. Santosa has been training with Sai [Praneeth] since the pandemic," said BAI General Secretary Ajay Singhania said in a statement on Tuesday. Earlier, BAI had proposed a seven-member coaching and support staff to be sent along with the players.

However, due to strict COVID-19 protocols, only a 5-member team of coaches and support staff has been allowed to travel with the badminton contingent, the release said. As a rule, only 33 per cent of any nation's contingent can be support staff.

## EURO 2020: Italy reach final after penalty shootout against Spain

London | Agencies

Italy qualified for the final of the European Championships after beating Spain in a dramatic penalty shootout at Wembley after 120 minutes of football had ended 1-1.

Although Spain keeper Unai Simon saved the first Italian penalty taken by Manuel Locatelli, Dani Olmo fired over for the Spanish and Alvaro Morata saw his spot kick saved before Jorginho calmly slotted home to send the Italians into the final on Tuesday, reports Xinhua.

It was harsh on the Spanish, who played arguably their best football of the tournament and should have won the game in 90 minutes.

The only change made by Italy coach Roberto Mancini ahead of the game was to bring Emerson in at left back for the injured Leonardo Spinazzola, while Luis Enrique brought Eric Garcia for Pau Torres in defence, while Dani Olmo and Mikel Oyarzabal replaced Alvaro Morata and Pablo Sarabia,



who has a muscle injury. Italy had controlled the ball in their earlier games and was clearly uncomfortable against Spain's pace and aggression. They failed to manage a single shot until Unai palmed away Emerson's effort in the 45th minute, while the Spanish will have been disappointed at not working Donnarumma more despite their dominance.

The second half started as the first ended with Di Lorenzo putting Olmo's cross out for a corner with Torres waiting to pounce, before Sergio Busquets fired just over after a pass from Oyarzabal. Luis Enrique reacted quickly with Alvaro

Morata and Gerard Moreno quickly on the pitch, but things looked to be going Italy's way as they took the pace out of the game until the 80th minute when Morata collected the ball in midfield, exchanged passes with Olmo and scored with a low finish. In extra time, the impressive Olmo almost surprised everyone with a low free kick, with the ball ping-ponging around the area before bouncing out. Donnarumma then punched clear as Morata threatened to pounce. The second period of extra time saw little in the way of chances and the game went into the dramatic penalty shootout.

## Wimbledon: Federer crashes out, Djokovic enters semi-finals

London | Agencies

Eight-time champion Roger Federer crashed out of Wimbledon Championships, losing 3-6, 6-7(4), 0-6 to 14th seed Hubert Hurkacz of Poland in quarter-finals on Wednesday. But world No. 1 Novak Djokovic recorded his 100th win on grass courts as he beat Marton Fucsovics of Hungary 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 to enter semi-finals. The former world No. 1 could convert only one of the four break-points while opponent Hurkacz converted five out of 15 break-points. Federer could also win only 67 per cent of points on first serve as against 79 per cent by the Polish player. Federer had last won a Grand Slam title at the 2018 Australian Open and it is looking unlikely that he will win any more as a lot of youngsters are beginning to challenge him. While the 39-year-old Federer lost in straight sets, Djokovic won in straight sets. The Serb, who has won Wimbledon singles title five times, will face Canadian 10th seed Denis Shapovalov who overcame Russia's 25th seed Karen Khachanov in a tough five-set game 6-4, 3-6, 7-5, 1-6, 4-6 to enter the last-four stage of the



tournament.

The top-seeded player is looking to win his 20th Grand Slam title and draw level with Federer and another former world No. 1 Rafael Nadal as men's players with most singles titles at tennis majors.

The 34-year-old converted four of the 14 break-points he got and 83 per cent points on first serve. He committed fewer double faults (three) than his Hungarian opponent, who committed five. Djokovic is now third among players to have entered Wimbledon semi-finals the most number of times. This is his 10th entry to semi-finals at SW19. He is behind Federer (13 appearances) and Jimmy Connors (11 appearances). The match between Shapovalov and Khachanov was closely-fought. The 22-year-old Canadian, who entered his first semi-final, managed to prevail in three hours and 26 minutes.

## HOCKEY GREAT KESHAV CHANDRA DATT PASSES AWAY

New Delhi: Indian hockey great Keshav Chandra Datt, who was part of the country's golden era of the sport post-Independence, died on Wednesday morning. He was 95. Datt was a formidable halfback and part of independent India's historic feat at the 1948 Olympics where they beat Great Britain 4-0 in the final at the Wembley Stadium in London. Before the 1948 Olympics, Datt had toured East Africa in 1947 under the leadership of hockey wizard Major Dhyan Chand. Datt, born on December 29, 1925 in Lahore, was also a part of the Indian team at the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki where they beat the home team Netherlands 6-1 in the final to become Olympic champions for the fifth consecutive time. Having moved to Calcutta in 1950, Datt also represented Mohun Bagan -- the most famous Indian club of that time in multiple sports. In its condolence message, Hockey India president, Gyanendra Ningombam, said, "We are all very saddened to hear about the legendary halfback Keshav Datt's demise early this morning. He was the lone surviving member of the 1948 and 1952 Olympic Games, and today truly feels like the end of an era."



## Copa America: Argentina sets up tantalising final against Brazil

Brasilia | Agencies

Emiliano Martinez saved three penalty attempts as Argentina progressed to the Copa America final with a 3-2 shootout victory over Colombia here.

The Aston Villa goalkeeper guessed correctly to deny Davinson Sanchez, Yerry Mina and Edwin Cardona in a dramatic climax to their semifinal at Brasilia's Mane Garrincha stadium on Tuesday, reports Xinhua.

Earlier, Lautaro Martinez combined with Lionel Messi to net his third goal of the tournament before Luis Diaz equalised from a tight angle just after the hour mark.

The result sets up a tantalising final between Argentina and Brazil at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana Stadium on July 10. It will be the first time that South American football's biggest rivals have



met in the final of the continental tournament since 2007, when Brazil won 3-0 in the Venezuelan city of Maracaibo.

Argentina took the initiative from the outset in Brazil's capital, with Messi dribbling past three defenders before chipping a pass to Martinez, whose header flew just wide.

The pair's growing chemistry was on display again three minutes later and

this time Martinez made Colombia pay, hammering a powerful finish into the bottom left corner after Messi turned smartly and spotted the Inter Milan striker alone 12 yards out.

The goal spurred Colombia into action but Juan Cuadrado's fierce shot was saved by Martinez before Wilmar Barrios and Yerry Mina were denied by the woodwork.

Colombia continued to foray forward early in the second half and they were back on level terms when Diaz made a driving run into the box before somehow finding the target from the byline while off balance.

Martinez missed the chance to put Argentina ahead when he hesitated and had his shot blocked by Mina after fine work by Di Maria. Messi then saw his shot rebound off the post after another Di Maria pass as the game went to penalties.

## INDIA WINGER ISAAC VANMALSAWMA JOINS ODISHA FC

Bhubaneswar: Odisha FC has signed a two-year deal with 24-year-old Indian winger Isaac Vanmalsawma ahead of the eighth season of the Indian Super League, the club announced on Wednesday. The contract has an option to extend it for the third year. "I am delighted to join this young and exciting team. We will play vibrant and entertaining football, delighting our loyal fans who have been with us every step of the way. I want to assure them that, neither I nor the team will ever give up and will keep fighting till the final whistle," Vanmalsawma said after signing the contract.



"I would like to thank the Odisha FC management for this opportunity, and I shall work hard to repay the faith that they have shown in me," the winger said. After representing India under-19 in 2013 and graduating from the AIFF Elite Academy, Vanmalsawma started his professional career with I-League side Shillong Lajong FC. The winger from Mizoram then started his ISL journey with FC Pune City in 2017 and went on to play for ISL clubs Chennaiyin FC and Jamshedpur FC as well. The promising footballer made his senior India debut against Bhutan under coach Stephen Constantine.

## Mathews may retire from international cricket

Colombo | Agencies

Sri Lankan cricketer Angelo Mathews has informed Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) about his plans to retire from international cricket, a media report said. "According to sources, Mathews (34) has informed SLC that he is currently discussing the matter and will inform about his decision in the upcoming weeks," reported Newswire. The former skipper was among the senior cricketers who objected to the new contracts list for the 2021/22 season due to 'lack of transparency'. The senior player is now the only cricketer out of 30 players who hasn't signed a tour contract ahead of the series against India. He has asked SLC "to relieve him from national duties until further notice". The all-rounder was not part of Sri



Lanka's white-ball squad in England since he was on paternity leave. Mathews had last featured in white-ball format against West Indies in Antigua in March this year. He had to leave the tour midway due to personal reasons. He featured in Sri Lanka's 1-0 Test series win over Bangladesh in May. Mathews made his international debut in 2008 and had been a very important member of the team with his all-round skills. He was appointed as captain of the Test team at 25 becoming the youngest-ever skipper of the island nation. He quit captaincy in 2017 to focus on his game. Despite being riddled with issues around form, fitness and injuries, Mathews always remained in focus. As of now, Mathews has played 90 Tests, 218 ODIs, and 49 T20Is for Sri Lanka.

## Constable Naganathan: No thief can outrun this Olympic bound athlete

Team Absolute | Chennai

No ordinary thief can outrun this city police constable. If a thief outran this city police constable then one will have to conclude that the former is an Olympic Games material. Meet the special police constable or 'police express' and the Indian athlete 25-year-old P. Naganathan who is bound to Tokyo Olympics as a member of India's 4x400 metres men's relay team who has come up the hard way. Born into a big and poor family, Naganathan used to work as a construction work-



er in his native town during weekends and school vacations while studying 10th

standard. "In a way it has helped me in my sporting career as I was able to gain stamina and power by lifting bricks and other construction materials," Naganathan mused. The young tender shoulders not only bore the weight of the bricks and other materials but also the family that was in dire financial situation. Naganathan's father Pandi was a construction worker and mother Panchavaram, a homemaker. During the major part of his school days, Naganathan used to run in races bare foot-even in the 1,500 metres race. It

was after making a mark in the inter-school/district meets he was presented with shoe spikes by his school and he got a shoe on his own. Speaking about his coaches Naganathan said during his school days he was trained by Veeravel and while in college it was Sivabalan and Senthil. After joining the police force, Naganathan is trained by coach Prabhakaran. His sporting career became a bit easier after he joined the PTMTM College where his physical training teacher and others helped. After he joined the Tamil

Nadu police force things started to ease fast. Initially Naganathan would practice during the free time available after police duty. But after winning the medal in the All India Police meet, senior police officials have asked him to focus on his training. Hopeful of India getting an Olympic medal this time in the 4x400 men's relay event, Naganathan said his next target will be to participate in Asian and Commonwealth Games individual events and think about tying the wedding knot four years later.



# And Memories bring back you...

## THE ON-SCREEN LOVES AND MANY CONQUESTS OF DILIP KUMAR

In a career spanning around five decades and six dozen films, including some that remained incomplete, Dilip Kumar romanced with or died (on-screen) for some of the most popular heroines of his era Noorjehan, Kamini Kaushal, Vyjanthimala Bali, Waheeda Rehman, Suchitra Sen, Meena Kumari, Nargis, Madhubala, Nimmi, Nutan, Leena Chandavarkar, and of course, his dotting wife Saira Banu, who cheerfully cared for him till the end.

And occasionally, Dilip Kumar clashed onscreen with stalwarts ½ Prithviraj Kapoor in 'Mughal-e-Azam', Raaj Kumar in 'Paighaam' (1959) and 'Saudagar' (1991), apart from Ashok Kumar, Sorab

Modi, Raj Kapoor, Shammi Kapoor, Sanjeev Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan, Anil Kapoor, and more.

He even 'conquered' vamps and villains such as Shashikala, Murad, Ajit, Prem Nath, Dara Singh, Manorama, Jayant, Pran, Jeevan, Rehman, Madan Puri, Lalita Pawar, K.N. Singh, Motilal, Kanhaiyalal, Amrish Puri, Bindu, Raza Murad, Prem Chopra and even Gulshan Grover. At an early stage in his career, Dilip Kumar and his co-star, Mumtaz Jehan Begum Dehlavi, better known as Madhubala, were deep in love,

but could never marry because of her father's

opposition and certain other issues later. Nicknamed the 'Marilyn Monroe of the Indian film industry' by the western media, Madhubala died in 1969, aged 36, but is still remembered and adored by her admirers across the world. In 1966, Dilip Kumar married the glamorous Saira Banu, who was 22 years younger than him, and barring a brief hiccup, their marriage lasted happily for more than five decades till he took his last breath. The superstar made headlines in 1981 when he fell in love with and married Asma Rehman, who was then living in Hyderabad. It ended in 1983 ½ and Rehman later migrated to Canada.



### JOURNEY FROM YUSUF KHAN TO TRAGEDY KING

Dilip Kumar, veteran Bollywood actor who died Wednesday morning, was born as Mohammad Yusuf Khan. In his autobiography that released in 2014, he talked in detail about how the change in his name came about right before he started working on his debut film. The veteran actor revealed that actor Devika Rani had suggested his name change.

In his book Dilip Kumar: The Substance and the Shadow, the actor said he was not nervous or anxious when Devika Rani asked

him to meet her in her office. She said, "Yusuf, I was thinking about your launch soon as an actor and I felt it would not be a bad idea if you adopted a screen name."

"I thought Dilip Kumar was a nice name. It just popped up in my mind when I was thinking about a suitable name for you. How does it sound to you?" I was speechless for a moment, being totally unprepared for the new identity she was proposing to me. "Dilip Kumar said he was not sure about changing his name at first. He

discussed it with S. Mukherjee (producer). He told him, "I think she has a point. It will be in your interest to take the name she has suggested for the screen. It is a very nice name, though I will always know you by the name Yusuf like all your brothers and sisters and your parents." Dilip Kumar further wrote in his book, "I was touched and it was a validation that cleared my thoughts then and there."

The story behind the name 'Tragedy King' is Dilip Sahab played some well known

characters in tragic love stories. Films like Nadiya Ke Paar (1948), Andaz (1949), Mela (1948), Arzoo (1950) saw the lead, played by him, having a tragic ending. His heart-wrenching, but award-winning roles in films that had a tragic plot earned him the title of 'Tragedy King'. It is also said that Dilip Kumar became depressed after a point due to working in films like Devdas. He was advised by his psychiatrist to take up lighter roles for his mental well-being. Later, Dilip Kumar was seen doing movies like Kohinoor.



Tributes and condolences continued pouring in from the film fraternity for late legend Dilip Kumar all through Wednesday. The veteran actor passed away in a Mumbai hospital aged 98 in the early hours of the day. Actors, singers, filmmakers and others associated with the film industry, especially those lives he had touched, took to social media to mourn his demise, recall their experiences of meeting him and working with him, and offered their condolences to the bereaved family and his wife, veteran actress Saira Banu.

Singer Mangeshkar wrote: "Yusuf bhai aaj apne chhotisi behen ko chhodke chale gaye... Yusuf bhai kya gaye, ek yug ka ant ho gaya, mujhe kuch sujh nahi raha, main bohot dukhi hoon, nishabd hoon, kayee batein, kayee yadein humein deke chale gayen. Actor Amitabh Bachchan wrote: "An institution has gone.. when ever the history of Indian Cinema will be written, it shall always be 'before Dilip Kumar, and after Dilip Kumar'.. My duas for peace of his soul and the strength to the family to bear this loss.. Palms up together Palms up together Palms up together... Deeply saddened.

Actress Hema Malini posted: "Veteran actor, exemplary role model for all heroes, my respected co star in Kranti, Dilip Kumar ji, is no more. I recall a couple of visits to his house & the pleasant meetings I had with him & Saira ji. My heart goes out to Saira ji, his life partner of many

years, for this loss."

Actress Madhuri Dixit posted: "Every now & then some individuals come along who single-handedly alter the present & write history... One such legend was Dilip saab for the world of cinema." Political figures also expressed their grief over the great loss. PM Modi tweeted: "Dilip Kumar ji will be remembered as a cinematic legend. He was blessed with unparalleled brilliance, due to which audiences across generations were enthralled. His passing away is a loss to our cultural world. Condolences to his family, friends and innumerable admirers. RIP."

## THE KOH-I-NOOR of Indian Cinema

It was at the peak of the Mumbai riots of 1992-1993 when my boss at The Indian Express, D. K. Raikar (now, Group Editor, Lokmat Media Pvt. Ltd.), saw that I was 'underemployed' and called me. "Get Dilip Kumar's reactions. Quick!" he ordered softly.

With mild trepidation, I dialed Dilip Saab's number - and he personally answered. I reeled off my questions in a single breath, and he started his replies.

There was a long pause, a short sentence, another long pause, a brief reply, one more long halt and a tiny reaction, each word measured before he uttered it. And so it went on for an hour. In between the mega-pauses, a couple of times when I couldn't even hear him breathe, I would blurt out anxiously: "Dilip Saab...?"

And he would shoot back in chaste Urdu: "Intezar kijiye. Main aapse mahve guftagu hoon!" (I am with you,

please wait!). I almost fainted. After a weary hour, the marathon call ended, and I secured five or six sentences of invaluable, well thought-out reactions.

As I replaced the warm receiver, Raikar mischievously remarked: "So, you got a full-fledged interview, huh?" I just smiled and trudged back to my workstation. That was the legend - Dilip Kumar, who had a phenomenal rise from the son of a Pathan horticulturist to canteen manager to India's first and ever-green superstar adored across generations, besides being a shining example of a great actor, good human being and an intellectually sensitive person.

The death of the 'Tragedy King' has orphaned his teary-eyed kingdom of fans, followers and admirers, both in India and abroad. The much-revered Koh-i-noor (Mountain of Light) of Mumbai's film industry has stopped glowing forever.

## LEGENDARY 'LIFE IN A TIMELINE'



Dilip Kumar's life is nothing short of a beautiful film, replete with every colour of life. From his birth in Peshawar to becoming the First Khan of Bollywood, the screen legend's life is an inspiration to anyone who dares to dream.

**1922:** Dilip Kumar, originally known as Mohammed Yusuf Khan was born in Peshawar to Lala Ghulam Sarwar Khan and Ayesha Begum on December 11.

**1944:** Makes his acting debut in 'Jwar Bhatta', directed by Amiya Chakravarty, with the screen name Dilip Kumar.

**1947:** Tastes first major box office success, 'Jugnu', co-starring Noor Jahan and directed by Shaukat Hussain Rizvi.

**1949:** First breakthrough role in Mehboob Khan's 'Andaz', co-starring Raj Kapoor and Nargis.

**1951:** Rumoured to fall in love with actress Madhubala during the shoot of "Tarana".

**1955:** Release of career-defining film, Bimal Roy's 'Devdas' alongside Vyjanthimala and Suchitra Sen.

**1960:** Featured in K. Asif's epic historical drama 'Mughal-e-Azam' as Prince Salim, his career defining role, alongside Madhubala and Prithviraj Kapoor. 'Kohinoor' co-starring Meena Kumari also opens in the same year.

**1961:** Turns producer with the self-starring 'Gunga Jumna'. Broadly inspired by Mehboob Khan's "Mother India", the Nitin Bose directorial was allegedly ghost-directed and ghost-edited by Dilip Kumar, according to unconfirmed rumours. The film starring the actor with his brother Nasir Khan and Vyjanthimala was the highest-grossing Bollywood film of 1961.

**1966:** Marriage with actress Saira Banu, 22 years younger than him.

**1980:** Appointed honorary Sheriff of Mumbai.

**1981:** Marriage with Hyderabad-based Asma Sahiba, or Asma Rehman. The same year marked his comeback to Bollywood after a five-year break, with Manoj Kumar's "Kranti".

**1983:** Divorce with Asma Rehman

**1991:** Honoured with Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award in India.

**1994:** Honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in the field of cinema.

**1998:** Honoured with Nishan-e-Imtiaz, the highest civilian award of Pakistan.

**1998:** Release of his last Hindi film Qila, directed by Umesh Mehra and starring Dilip Kumar in a dual role. The film also had Rekha, Mamta Kulkarni and Mukul Dev.

**2014:** The thespian's autobiography "The Substance And The Shadow" is published.

**2015:** Honoured with Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian award in India.

**2020:** His younger brothers Aslam Khan and Ehsan Khan pass away owing to Covid.

**2021:** The legend passes away at a Mumbai hospital around 7.30 am on July 7. He is cremated with state honours at Juhu Qabrastan, Santacruz, Mumbai around 5 pm the same day.