

# absolute india

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## IMF commends India's 'swift, substantial' response to pandemic

# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

- The IMF said that the fiscal deficit has increased to 8.5 per cent for the central government and 12.8 per cent for the state governments because of "the contraction in economic activity, lower revenue, and pandemic-related support measures".
- Large corporates have benefited from the "easier conditions in capital markets" even though "despite policy support, bank credit growth has remained subdued".
- The foreign exchange reserves have increased because of net inflows and improvement in the current account, it said, but expected a "return to a deficit of about 1 per cent of the GDP in FY2021/22 due to a gradual recovery in domestic demand and higher oil prices".



**Arul Louis | United Nations**  
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has commended Indian authorities' "swift and substantial" response to the Covid-19 pandemic and noted that there is the possibility of "a faster than expected recovery".  
"Directors commended the authorities' response to the pandemic which includes scaled-up support to vulnerable groups, monetary policy easing and liquidity provision, accommodative financial sector and regulatory policies, and continued structural reforms," the IMF said on Friday reporting on its executive board's consultations held with India to assess

the state of its economy and finances. The report of what is known as "Article IV Consultations" in reference to the article in the IMF agreement requiring the periodic assessment, however, warned of the risks from the Covid-19 pandemic lurking ahead especially due to its deleterious effect on people's development.  
"The economic outlook remains clouded due to pandemic-related uncertainties contributing

to both downside and upside risks. A persistent negative impact of Covid-19 on investment, human capital, and other growth drivers could prolong the recovery and impact medium-term growth.  
"While India benefits from favourable demographics, disruption to access to education and training due to the pandemic could weigh on improvements in human capital," it said.  
Along with the caution, the report added a note of optimism: "At the same time, the recovery could also be faster than expected. Faster vaccination and better therapeutics could help contain the spread and limit the impact of the pandemic. In addition, successful implementation of the announced wide-ranging structural reforms could increase India's growth potential."  
The report repeatedly emphasised the importance of vaccinations. "Directors agreed that addressing the health crisis remains a near-term policy priority. In that context, they welcomed the recent increase in vaccinations," it said.  
While the inflation pressures have been higher, inflation in fact eased to 5.6 per cent in July, "returning to within the RBI's (Reserve Bank of India) inflation target of 4.2 per cent, driven by softer food prices and base effects", it said.

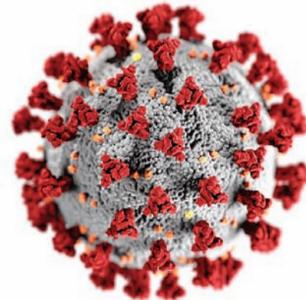
"India was among the fastest-growing economies in the world in the decade before the pandemic, lifting millions out of poverty. While the economy was moderating prior to the Covid-19 shock, the pandemic implied unprecedented challenges. Two Covid-19 waves caused a health and economic crisis however, the economy is gradually recovering. Following the first wave, the GDP contracted an unprecedented 7.3 per cent in FY (fiscal year) 2020/21. The second wave resulted in another sharp fall in activity, albeit smaller and shorter, and recent high-frequency indicators suggest an ongoing recovery. Growth is projected at 9.5 per cent in FY2021/22 and 8.5 per cent in FY2022/23."

## Overhyped science behind fake stem cell treatments for Covid

There are clinics offering unproven and unsafe "stem cell" therapies that promise to prevent Covid-19 by strengthening the immune system or improving overall health, the researchers noted in the paper published in the journal *Stem Cell Reports*. The findings from preliminary studies on possible stem cell-based Covid-19 treatments are frequently being exaggerated through press releases, social media and uncritical news media reports.

NEW YORK | Agencies

Amid the rush to find quick treatments for Covid-19 last year, the world saw a global race to find new stem cell-based treatments. Now, researchers report that such therapies were filled with violations of government regulations, inflated medical claims and distorted public communication.



There are reports of patients suffering physical harm -- including blindness and death -- from unproven stem cell therapies. "Efforts to rapidly develop therapeutic interventions should never occur at the expense of the ethical and scientific standards that are at the heart of responsible clinical research and innovation," said lead study author Laertis Ikononou, associate professor of oral biology at University at Buffalo, New York. Clinics selling supposed stem cell treatments on a direct-to-consumer basis sometimes use these findings and news reports to exploit the fears of vulnerable patients by unethically advertising the unproven

benefits of stem cell treatments to boost the immune system, regenerate lung tissue and prevent transmission of Covid-19, said co-author Leigh Turner from the University of California, Irvine. "Patients suffer financially as well, as the products range in price from a few thousand to tens of thousands of dollars, and people are often encouraged to receive the expensive treatments every few months," added Ikononou. Patients led to believe they are protected against Covid-19 may decide against vaccination, stop wearing masks, cease engaging in physical distanc-

ing, or otherwise avoid behaviours intended to promote personal safety and public health. "They may also become less likely to take part in carefully-developed clinical trials conducted by companies that follow ethical standards. "Scientists, regulators and policymakers must guard against the proliferation of poorly designed, underpowered and duplicative studies that are launched with undue haste because of the pandemic, but are unlikely to provide convincing, clinically meaningful safety and efficacy data," Turner stressed.

## Praise flows in for TN foresters after heart-warming picture

CHENNAI | Agencies

Tamil Nadu Forest Department officials are garnering praise from netizens after a senior forest officer tweeted a photo of an elephant calf hugging a forest official who rescued it. A few days before, a group of forest officials had rescued an elephant calf that was injured and then reunited it with its mother. The photo of the elephant calf hugging the forest officer who rescued it was tweeted by Indian Forest Service officer, Parveen Kaswan with the caption: "Love has no language. A baby elephant hugging a forest officer. The team rescued this calf and reunited it with its mother."  
Her tweet went viral on the microblogging site with more than 11,000 likes. A Twitter user commented: "This picture is so powerful, it has the potential to be the conservation picture of the year!"



Another wrote: "This leaves me speechless with eyes glistening with tears", while a further Twitter user said: "Wow, so adorable!! Awesome, invaluable, precious moment indeed". Senior IFoS officer Sudha Raman had tweeted a video of the same baby elephant being reunited with its mother. "This little calf happily walks to get reunited with its mother guarded with Z+ security of the Tamil Nadu foresters team," she posted.

## Drone warfare is a new challenge, we are capable to handle it: NSG DG

National Security Guard (NSG) DG M.A. Ganapathi on Saturday said that drone warfare is a new challenge and the NSG is fully capable to handle it.

MANESAR (GURUGRAM) | Agencies

He was speaking on the sidelines of the 37th foundation day event of the NSG, here on Saturday. "Every security force needs to upgrade counter drone technology. Drones are an easy way to create mischief, to drop bombs and payload like weapons and ammunition," he said. Earlier, speaking at the 37th foundation day of the NSG, the DG said that the NSG has been upgrading itself to the new security challenges and in the last few years, many initiatives have been taken to strengthen the counter terror measures. "To effectively deal with drone attacks, the Force is now equipped with counter



drone equipment, radar, jammers and drone killing guns", Ganapathi said. Referring to the upgradation of the force in the last one year, he further said that in light of the drone attacks on Jammu airport recently, the Counter terrorism Commando forces of NSG, equipped with anti-drone technology,

been deployed at the Jammu and Srinagar airports to provide anti-drone cover to these vital installations. The force has also destroyed the IEDs and tiffin box bombs sent across the border through drones in Amritsar in Punjab, he added. The NSG DG further said that the Force has been equipped with modern weapons and equipment and also strengthened the infrastructural setups across the country and indoor shooting ranges have been established in Manesar, Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Kolkata. With an aim to increase the efficiency of the bomb disposal squads, mini-remotely operated vehicles, total containment vehicles, and robots have been added to the force, he added.

## KERALA'S FIRST ARTIFICIAL HEART IMPLANTATION DONE SUCCESSFULLY

**Kochi:** Kerala's first artificial heart implantation was successfully performed at a private hospital on a 61-year-old woman patient. The cardiothoracic surgical team at VPS Lakeshore hospital implanted the Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD), an advanced and unique mechanism designed to aid patients suffering from heart failure by helping the bottom left chamber of the heart (left ventricle) pump blood out to the aorta and the rest of the body.



The patient, who has been undergoing treatment for dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) for the past six years, was admitted to the hospital with cardiogenic shock, breathing difficulty, and hypotension on September 13. Her condition deteriorated with ongoing heart failure with fluid in the lungs (pulmonary oedema) and she was shifted to ventilator support. Even though the option to bring her back to life was a heart transplant, which needs a donor heart and an unpredictable waiting period, time was running out and it was then the doctors decided to implant LVAD - an artificial heart. With the family's consent, the doctors, on October 8 performed the nine-hour-long extremely rare surgery which saved her life. Now the patient is safe and sound, she has started taking food orally, and is in the recovery phase undergoing rehabilitation. As per the medical team, she can live an improved, long, and normal life with this support.

## BITCOIN COULD CAUSE THE NEXT FINANCIAL CRASH

**New Delhi:** Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies could cause the next financial crash, according to a top Bank of England official, Daily Mail reported. Deputy Governor Sir Jon Cunliffe said a massive collapse in the price of cryptocurrencies to as low as zero is 'certainly a plausible scenario' and that there was 'a possibility of contagion' across the global financial sector. As per the report, Cunliffe said the hit to individual investors if cryptocurrencies collapse would be unlikely to cause a 'financial stability risk'. But he added: "The picture is less clear for financial institutions." He compared a possible crypto crash with other financial meltdowns, and highlighted that the crypto market is now worth e1.7 trillion, larger than the subprime mortgage market in 2008 when it collapsed.

## No global sports team gets as much support as Indian cricket team: Sourav Ganguly

PANAJI | Agencies

The kind of support which the Indian cricket team gets across the globe is unprecedented for any sports team in the world, former India captain Sourav Ganguly said on Saturday. Ganguly was speaking at an online conference organised by Games24x7 to launch its campaign ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup on its fantasy platform My11Circle. "If cricket is a religion in India, then the fans are the biggest devotees. Their constant support and the fervour with which they follow their team and favourite cricketers has been the most important factor in exalting cricket to a national passion that unites our country," Ganguly said at the online conference. "As a player and captain of the Indian team, I can tell that the sort of support which Indian cricket team gets in whichever country it is playing, is unprecedented for any sports team across the world," said Ganguly who is also a brand ambassador for My11Circle. My11Circle has a user base of over 25 million players on the fantasy sports platforms,



and apart from Ganguly, Indian cricketers VVS Laxman, Ajinkya Rahane as well as Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh are its brand ambassadors. My11Circle's new campaign titled 'Game ke Deewane' is aimed at celebrating the passion and dedicated support of the Indian cricket fans.

## I've idolised Big B, SRK, Akshay Kumar since childhood: Ranveer Singh

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**MUMBAI: BOLLYWOOD'S LIVEWIRE STAR RANVEER SINGH SHARED THAT WHILE GROWING UP, HE WAS MESMERISED BY ON-SCREEN PERSONALITIES LIKE AMITABH BACHCHAN, SHAH RUKH KHAN, SALMAN KHAN, AKSHAY KUMAR, AMONG OTHERS, WHO HAVE ALL SUCCESSFULLY HOSTED TV SHOWS AND ENTERTAINED THE WHOLE OF INDIA.**

Iconic mainstream Hindi film heroes like Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar have all connected with and captivated the nation through their television shows. I've idolised them since childhood and closely followed their journey," says Ranveer. Ranveer is all set to host his first television show 'Big Picture'. He feels it will help him connect with a larger audience. The actor said: "I always recognised the fact that they garnered an immense amount of love from people for their charismatic turns on the television screen. I have a great opportunity here with the Big Picture to connect with the youth of India as well as the entire Indian family audience. I hope I can continue the grand legacy of



the mainstream men of Hindi cinema on national television." On the work front, Ranveer will soon be seen in Kabir Khan's '83', which recreates India's historic World Cup Cricket win in 1983, as well as Rohit Shetty's comedy film 'Cirkus' and action drama 'Sooryavanshi'. He is also prepping for his role in 'Jayeshbhai Jordaar', directed by Divyank Thakkar.



# HOW FACEBOOK ADS EXPLOIT SPECIFIC USER VIA 'NANOTARGETING'

New Delhi | Agencies

As governments aim to break the Big Tech and tighten control over social media platforms regarding data privacy of billions of users, significant research has revealed that Facebook advertising platform can be systematically exploited to deliver ads exclusively to a specific, single user.

Described as "nanotargeting", the potentially harmful practice might be a very powerful tool for attackers willing to manipulate a specific individual and blackmail him or her on Facebook, according to the paper written by a team of academics and computer scientists from Spain and Austria.

The paper, titled "Unique on Facebook: Formulation and Evidence of (Nano) targeting Individual Users with non-PII Data" -- describes a "data-driven model" achieved through 21 Facebook ad campaigns.

The researchers showed they were able to use Facebook's Ads Manager to target ads in such a way that each ad only reached a single, specific Facebook user.

The privacy of an individual is bounded by the ability of a third party to reveal their identity. Certain



data items such as a passport ID, email or a mobile phone number may be used to uniquely identify a person, referred to as Personal Identifiable Information (PII) items.

The non-PII items are the interests that FB assigns to users based on their online and offline activity. Therefore, since a user can be uniquely identified by a set of interests on Facebook, it may be possible to configure a Facebook ad campaign that reaches exclusively a single user.

The results revealed that the 4 rarest interests or 22 random interests from the interests set Facebook assigns to a user make them unique on Facebook with a 90 per cent probability.

Users' interests represent a very important asset for Facebook since its revenue model is based on delivering relevant ads to users. Many advertisers use the Facebook advertising platform to create ad campaigns to reach users based on their interests. "To the best of our knowl-

edge, this represents the first study of individuals' uniqueness at the world population scale. Besides, users' interests are actionable non-PII items that can be used to define ad campaigns and deliver tailored ads to Facebook users," wrote the researchers from Madrid's University Carlos III, the Graz University of Technology in Austria and the Spanish IT company, GTD System & Software Engineering.

It is worth noting that "our work has only revealed the tip of the iceberg regarding how non-PII data can be used for nanotargeting purposes". "An advertiser can use other available socio-demographic parameters to configure audiences in the FB Ads Manager such as the home location (country, city, zip code, etc.), workplace, college, number of children, mobile device used (iOS, Android), etc, to rapidly narrow down the audience size to nanotarget a user," the researchers warned. The research raises fresh questions about potentially harmful uses of Facebook's ad targeting tools, especially at a time when the social media platform is facing intense scrutiny across the world regarding user data security and privacy.

# DU issues third cut-off list, admission to begin from Oct 18

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi University released the third cut-off list on Saturday for admissions in different undergraduate courses.

After 100 per cent cut-off in the first and second lists, the third list has relaxed it slightly for most courses. Many colleges have shut the admission process for the most sought after courses.

Shri Ram College of Commerce is still inviting admissions for BA Economics and B.Com. The Economics cut-off has been fixed at 99.50 per cent and for B.Com it is 99 per cent.

Hindu College has closed admission for all courses except Economics and B.Com at 99 per cent and 98.75 per cent, respectively. Miranda House has also closed admission for top arts courses.

Ramjas college has 98.75 per cent cut-off for Economics and 98 per cent for English. Lady Shri Ram College has 99 per cent cut-off for Economics and 98.50 per cent for English. The college has made 99 per cent



the cut-off marks for political science and 99.25 per cent for psychology. Lady Irwin College has been closed admission for many courses in the third cut-off list.

The admission procedure for the third cut-off list will begin on October 18 and will be over by October 21. The colleges will approve the admissions through the DU third cut-off list by October 22. The first cut-off list for

Delhi University UG admission was released on October 1, while the second list came on October 9.

Official data said that over 48,000 students have secured admission under the first cut-off list in various colleges under DU, with the university receiving more than 1.18 lakh applications. Over 13,000 students have taken admission under the second cut-off list.

# Headmaster arrested for raping minor in school premises in Rajasthan

JAIPUR | Agencies

Rajasthan Police have arrested a school headmaster for raping an 11-year-old girl studying in class 8, inside the classroom of a government school, confirmed police officials on Saturday.

The victim called on the Child Welfare Committee and narrated her ordeal. The committee contacted the Singhana police station area police and got the accused arrested. As per the Singhana police station officer Bhajana Ram, "The crime was reported on October 5. The accused headmaster had also threatened to kill the girl if she tried to tell about the incident to anybody else." "However, as the girl shared her tale with the Child Welfare Committee,



the accused headmaster Keshav Yadav was arrested by police and a case was registered against him under POCSO Act. The accused is being interrogated," he added further. Police officials said that the girl was quite upset after the incident. While studying, she saw the child

helpline number and contacted on it which quickly informed Archana Choudhary, Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee. The team met the girl and informed the Jhunjhunu SP Manish Tripathi who sent the team to arrest the school headmaster.

# India to touch 100 cr Covid vaccination mark next week: Mandaviya

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Saturday that India will achieve the target of 100 crore Covid vaccinations in the coming week.

"We have administered over 37 lakh vaccines by this time today. We will achieve the target of 100 crore vaccinations in the coming week," said Mandaviya.

The minister made the remark after launching India's Covid-19 vaccination anthem along with Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

The audio-visual number produced and sung by noted singer Padma Shri Kailash Khher seeks to remove the false narrative and hesitancy surrounding Covid vaccination



among the people. Mandaviya said the anthem is the result of the government's holistic approach to fight the pandemic, adding that the Petroleum Ministry came up with the idea of the anthem to remove vaccine hesitancy. He said the song will create aware-

ness among the masses about the efficacy of vaccination.

The minister said that over 74 per cent of the eligible population in India has received the first dose of the Covid vaccine, while the second shot has been administered to over 30 per cent of the eligible population.

Hardeep Puri said, "Because of Health Minister Mandaviya's tireless work under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are going to achieve the target of one billion vaccination within a few days. This is a great achievement and the journey is still on."

He said the vaccination programme has become a 'Jan Andolan' now in the country. "We are working as a single unit and it is the result of our combined efforts that mass vaccination drives have become successful in the country," Puri said. Mandaviya also said that a new song will be released when India crosses the landmark of 100 crore vaccinations.

Sources in the Health Ministry said that the 100 crore vaccination figures could be achieved by October 19-20.

# Devotees immerse Durga idols in Yamuna despite ban

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Despite ban on idol immersion in Yamuna river and other natural water bodies in the national capital, several people flouted the rules issued by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), a day before the 'visarjan' (immersion) ritual.

Yamuna Ghat at the ITO was found littered with idols and other religious materials on Saturday morning.

DPCC in its October 13 order had ruled that idol immersion during Durga Puja and other forthcoming festivals in any public place, including river Yamuna or any other water body, ponds and ghats, should not be allowed.

"Consequent pollution of such water bodies has been a matter of concern. In addition to silt, toxic chemicals used in making idols tend to leach out and pose serious problems of water pollution. Studies carried out to assess deterioration in water quality due to idol immersion reveal the deterioration of water quality in respect to conductivity,



biochemical oxygen demand and heavy metal concentration," the order read.

The DPCC had ruled that idol immersion rituals may be performed in a bucket and container within the home premises. Convener of Yamuna Jiye Abhiyan, Manoj Mishra, told IANS, "The prohibition of idol immersion in any public place including Yamuna imposed by DPCC is a welcome step especially in view of idols made of Plaster of Paris (PoP) or painted with lead-based paints. But it is hardly a measure to rejuvenate

the river which is already overloaded with sewage and toxic pollutants from industries." The DPCC had directed the District Magistrates to enforce guidelines related to idol immersion, adding that each violator will be liable to pay Rs 50,000 to the DPCC body. River Yamuna whose catchment covers parts of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in addition to that of Delhi, is most polluted in and around the national capital.

## MANMOHAN SINGH DIAGNOSED WITH DENGUE, GRADUALLY IMPROVING: AIIMS

New Delhi: Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has been diagnosed with dengue, but his health condition is gradually improving and is out of danger, an AIIMS official said on Saturday. The official said that the former Prime Minister's "platelets are increasing and is out of danger now". The veteran Congress leader was admitted to the AIIMS on Wednesday evening after he complained of fever and weakness. Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya also visited him and enquired about his health. A team of doctors, under the guidance of Nitish Nayak, a well-known cardiologist, are attending on the former Prime Minister.

# Sidhu withdraws resignation as Punjab Cong president

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu who resigned as the chief of party's Punjab unit last month has met former party president Rahul Gandhi at his residence here following which he withdrew his resignation. Congress' Punjab in-charge Harish Rawat was also present in the meeting.

After the meeting that took place on Friday evening, it is believed that the political situation in Punjab will become normal now. Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi is expected to arrive in the national capital on Saturday morning to attend the



Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting.

During the meeting that lasted for about an hour, Rahul Gandhi took feedback from Sidhu. After the meeting, Harish Rawat said: "Sidhu has assured Rahul Gandhi that he will discharge his responsibilities properly... and he will con-

tinue as the Punjab state president. He told Rahul Gandhi that he has withdrawn his resignation." "He (Sidhu) shared his concerns with Rahul Gandhi. We have told him that his concerns will be taken care of here," Rawat said. Sidhu had reached Delhi on Thursday and met organization general secretary KC Venugopal and Punjab in-charge Harish Rawat at the Congress headquarters.

On the instructions of the Congress High Command, Sidhu arrived here on Thursday evening and held a meeting with both the leaders. This was the first meeting held in Delhi after Sidhu's resignation.

# 4 brothers arrested for NRI businessman's murder in Hyderabad

Hyderabad | Agencies

Police in Hyderabad have arrested four brothers for killing a Dubai-based Non-Resident Indian (NRI) businessman, it was revealed on Saturday.

The accused have been identified as Raees Jabri, 23, Adil Jabri, 32, Saad Saleh Jabri, 29 and Saeed Saleh Jabri, 34.

They allegedly wanted to take revenge after the victim, Hamed Bin Ali Zubaidi, 45, refused to compensate for losses suffered by one of them following his arrest at Hyderabad Airport while carrying his gold parcel. According to Deputy

Commissioner of Police (DCP), Gajarao Bhoopal, Raees was arrested with the gold on his arrival from Dubai, where he was employed.

Zubaidi, a businessman who was known to Raees, had handed him a packet with to deliver it at his house. Raees, reportedly, unaware of the contents of the packet, was arrested and his passport was seized. After this, Zubaidi had promised to help Raees and his brothers in the legal case, get him back his seized passport and provide him a job.

However, when he came to Hyderabad in April, he, reportedly, refused to fulfill his promises. Angry over

this, the accused attacked him with knives and killed him on October 13.

Zubaidi was killed in Chandrayangutta and the South Zone police have recovered two motor cycles, two knives and four mobile phones from their possession, a police officer said. The investigations revealed that Zubaidi had lodged a complaint at Chandrayangutta police station after the four brothers came to his house and threatened to kill him.

However, the police failed to take any action.

Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar has suspended Sub-Inspector S. Venkatesh for dereliction of duty.

# Punjab Police bust illegal arms supply racket

Punjab Police on Saturday busted an inter-state illegal arms supply racket in Sangrur district with the arrest of two persons. Two country-made weapons and ammunition were recovered from their possession.

Chandigarh | Agencies

The arrested persons have been identified as Pawan Kumar, a resident of Aligarh district in Uttar Pradesh, and Kulwinder Singh from Muktsar Sahib district in Punjab.

Senior Superintendent of Police Swapan Sharma told the media that following the rise in incidents of illegal weapons supply in Sangrur and its surrounding areas, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by DSP Yogesh Kumar and Inspector Deepinder Singh was formed.

After a month-long investigation, the SIT managed to bust the inter-state racket, he said, adding that this was one of many trips which Kumar made to Punjab, when he was



nabbed. Kumar had supplied several weapons in Amritsar and Tarn Taran districts.

The SSP said that Kumar was working on the behest of Chanchal Kumar, a resident of Aligarh, who is posted at an army formation in Mau. Apparently, Kumar was in contact with illegal arms manufacturers and he had several conduits making trips to deliver country-made weapons to anti-social elements in the state.

The SIT revealed that Madhya Pradesh has become a hub of illegal arms manufacturing. Investigation in the previous cases also pointed to Madhya Pradesh as the place of origin of country-made weapons.



## SONIA GANDHI SLAMS CONGRESS LEADERS FOR SPEAKING TO MEDIA, SAYS

# 'I AM THE PARTY PRESIDENT'

"I am, if you will allow me to say so, a full-time and hands on Congress President. You are aware that I have been taking them up with the Prime Minister as have Dr. Manmohan Singh and Rahul ji. I have been interacting with like-minded political parties regularly. We have issued joint statements on national issues and coordinated our strategy in Parliament as well."

Sonia Gandhi



### CONGRESS ANNOUNCES INTERNAL ELECTION SCHEDULE

The CWC has approved to conduct the organisational elections and the schedule has been decided. The enrolment of members for organisational election on payment of Rs 5 each, will start from November 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. It will be a massive membership campaign, he said. DCCs shall publish preliminary list of members together with the list of eligible contestants for participation in the election enrolled up to March 31. This list will be published before April 15, 2022. Election of President and Executive of Primary Committees and Block Committees, and

Election of Block Presidents and Executive Committees and one member of the PCC by Block Congress Committee will be held from April 16, 2022 to May 31, 2022. Election of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Executive Committee of DCC will be held from June 1, 2022 to July 20, 2022. Election of PCC President, Vice President, Treasurer and PCC Executive and AICC Members, by the PCC general body will take place from July 21, 2022 to August 20, 2022. Election of the AICC President will be held from August 21, 2022 to September 20, 2022.

### CHORUS GROWS FOR RAHUL GANDHI TO BECOME CONGRESS PRESIDENT

Congress Working committee members on Saturday appealed to Rahul Gandhi to take over as the president of the party. A proposal in this regard was mooted by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and vetted by other Chief Ministers and leaders. Senior Congress leader Ambika Soni said, "all the members were unanimous that Rahul Gandhi should take over as president of the Congress party."

The Congress Working committee, the highest decision making body of the party, has given go ahead to the internal elections of the Congress party. Earlier the CWC met for more than five hours and deliberated upon the issues of organisational elections, upcoming assembly polls and issues faced by common man.

essential commodities, including food and fuel continue to rise unabated. "Could anyone in the country ever imagine that petrol prices would be over 100 Rs rupees a litre, diesel would be nearing the Rs 100 a litre mark, a gas cylinder would cost Rs 900 and cooking oil would be Rs 200 a litre. This is making life unbearable for people across the country."

Sonia Gandhi also condemned the killings in Jammu and Kashmir and said minorities clearly have been targeted.

## Four more soldiers martyred in anti-terror ops in Poonch-Rajouri

Team Absolute | Jammu

Four more army soldiers including a junior commissioned officer (JCO) were martyred during an anti-terror operation in Poonch and Rajouri districts of Jammu and Kashmir during the last 24 hours.

The operation entered 5th day on Saturday and so far, 9 soldiers including two JCOs have been killed in this operation.

Lt Colonel Devender Anand, defence ministry spokesman said, "Subedar Ajay Singh and Naik Harendra Singh of Indian Army were killed in action during search operations being conducted by the Indian Army along with Jammu and Kashmir Police in densely forested area of Nar Khas forest in Mendhar district of Poonch.

"Relentless operations continued to neutralize the terrorists and to re-establish communication with the soldiers. Subedar Ajay Singh and Naik Harendra Singh were killed in action in the fierce fight and their bodies have been recovered in the evening today," an army statement said. The operations in the area are continuing.



### TOP LET COMMANDER AMONG TWO TERRORISTS KILLED

Top LeT commander responsible for the killing of two policemen has been eliminated in an encounter between terrorists and security forces at Drangbal area of Pampore in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Saturday, officials said. One more terrorist was also killed in the same encounter between terrorists and security forces at Drangbal area of Pampore in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Saturday.

### NON-LOCAL CARPENTER SHOT DEAD IN J&K'S PULWAMA

After killing a non-local street vendor in Jammu and Kashmir's capital city Srinagar on Saturday, militants shot dead another non-local carpenter in Pulwama district. Police sources said militants fired at a non-local carpenter, identified as Sajeer Ahmad from Saharanpur, U.P. in Litter village of Pulwama district. "He was shifted to hospital for treatment where he succumbed to injuries", sources said adding that security forces have reached the spot to trace the militants. Earlier on Saturday evening, militants shot dead a non-local street vendor, Arvind Kumar Sah from Bihar near the Eidgah park in Srinagar.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Addressing the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting, interim President Sonia Gandhi on Saturday slammed party leaders for speaking to the media.

In her opening remarks, she said: "I have always appreciated frankness. There is no need to speak to me through the media. So let us all have a free and honest discussion. But what should get communicated outside the four walls of this room is the collective decision of the CWC."

In her remarks on Saturday, she also said the party is ready for the internal elections. "The entire organisation wants a revival of the Congress. But this requires unity and keeping the party's interests paramount. Above all, it requires self-control and discipline. I am acutely conscious of the fact that I

have been interim Congress President ever since the CWC asked me to return in this capacity in 2019. We had thereafter, you may recall, finalised a roadmap for electing a regular President by June 30, 2021. "But due to the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic in the country, this deadline was

extended indefinitely by the CWC in its meeting held on May 10, she added. "Today is the occasion for bringing clarity once and for all. A schedule for the full-fledged organisational elections is before you." She also praised young leaders for taking over leadership role. She said that prices of

## IT searches reveal massive import under-invoicing

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre on Saturday said that the Income Tax Department recently carried out 'search and seizure' operations at various locations around the country to unearth massive under-invoicing of imported products such as laptops, mobile phones and peripheral parts.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the operations were carried out on an importer and trader of laptops, mobile phones and peripheral parts".

Notably, the search operations which commenced on October 10 were spread across the National Capital Region, Haryana and West Bengal. As per the ministry, during the search operations, several incriminating documents, diaries and digital evidences have been found which reveal that the group is entrenched into large scale under-invoicing and wrongful declaration of goods



imported by it. Besides, large number of evidences indicating unrecorded transactions, unaccounted investment in properties, bogus loans taken, amongst others have also been gathered. "The modus operandi involves import of goods in the name of shell entities at under-valued and or wrongful declaration of description of goods imported, with an intent to evade customs duty. Upon clearance at port(s), such goods have been found to be distributed throughout India by way of out-of-books cash transactions." "This aspect has been fortified while searching one of the contain-

ers at Kolkata Port, where the bill of lading declared the goods as 'HDMI cables' valued at Rs 3.8 lakh. However, on de-sealing and searching the same, it has been revealed that the actual goods imported are high value items like laptops, mobile phones etc which are valued at Rs 64 crore."

Accordingly, the ministry said that evidences found and seized during the course of the search reveal that the payments for such under-invoiced goods to the foreign consignees have been made through hawala channels. Further investigations are in progress.

## ANOTHER NIHANG SIKH SURRENDERS IN PUNJAB IN SINGHU MURDER CASE



Chandigarh: The second accused and a Nihang Sikh, identified as Parminder Singh, in the Singhu border lynching incident, on Saturday surrendered at a gurdwara before the police in Jandiala Guru in Amritsar district in Punjab amidst the presence of a huge sympathizers. The local police had to show patience to allow the accused to surrender on his own after paying obeisance and performing rituals in the shrine.

Earlier, he had announced to surrender after paying obeisance at Akal Takht in Amritsar. Identified as Saravjeet Singh, took the responsibility for the brutal murder and surrendered before Haryana Police. He was produced before a court on Saturday and was remanded to police custody for seven days.

## SAFF CHAMPIONSHIP

# India beat Nepal 3-0 in final, lift eighth title



Male | Agencies

Indian football team won their eighth SAFF Championship title after beating Nepal 3-0 in the final here on Saturday. Sunil Chhetri (49th minute), Suresh Singh (50th) and Sahal Abdul Samad (90th) were the goal scorers for India in this historic game. Chhetri's goal in the final game helped him level with Lionel Messi on 80 international goals. Notably, this is the Indian football team's first title victory under head

coach Igor Stimac.

India dominated possession in the first-half but they failed to score any goal. However, captain Chhetri put India ahead minutes into the second half and even before Nepal could settle down, Suresh made it 2-0. Sahal made it 3-0 when he tricked a few defenders after receiving the ball on the left flank at the stroke of the final whistle.

The final was the 12th for India in 13 editions, which also shows their domination in this regional tournament.

## IS CLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY FOR KANDAHAR MOSQUE BOMBINGS

New Delhi: In a statement on its Telegram channel, the Islamic State (IS) terror group on Saturday claimed that its Khorasan branch (IS-K) carried out the twin bombings inside the Shia mosque in Kandahar, that claimed the lives of 63 people while injuring 83 others. In the statement, the terror group said that two IS-K suicide bombers carried out the attack on Friday inside the Bibi Fatima Shia mosque in the city's police district one (PD1) when hundreds of worshippers were offering prayers. Khaama Press reported. The statement said that the first suicide bomber detonated his explosives in the hallway of the mosque and while the second did it inside.

- ▶ LUCY WILL BE THE FIRST SPACECRAFT TO STUDY JUPITER'S TROJAN ASTEROIDS.
- ▶ THESE SMALL BODIES ARE REMNANTS OF OUR EARLY SOLAR SYSTEM, NOW TRAPPED IN STABLE ORBITS ASSOCIATED WITH -- BUT NOT CLOSE TO -- THE GIANT PLANET JUPITER.
- ▶ THE TROJAN ASTEROIDS ARE IN TWO "SWARMS" THAT LEAD AND FOLLOW JUPITER IN ITS ORBIT AROUND THE SUN AND ARE ALMOST AS NUMEROUS AS THE OBJECTS IN THE MAIN ASTEROID BELT.
- ▶ THESE PRIMITIVE BODIES HOLD VITAL CLUES TO DECIPHERING THE HISTORY OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.
- ▶ THE SPACECRAFT'S FIRST EARTH GRAVITY ASSIST IN 2022 WILL ACCELERATE AND DIRECT LUCY'S TRAJECTORY BEYOND THE ORBIT OF MARS.
- ▶ THE SPACECRAFT WILL THEN SWING BACK TOWARD EARTH FOR ANOTHER GRAVITY ASSIST IN 2024, WHICH WILL PROPEL LUCY TOWARD THE DONALD JOHANSON ASTEROID - LOCATED WITHIN THE SOLAR SYSTEM'S MAIN ASTEROID BELT - IN 2025.

## NASA sends Lucy mission to seek out solar system's 'fossils'

WASHINGTON | Agencies

In a novel bid to seek out the origin of our solar system, the US space agency on Saturday launched the Lucy mission, the agency's first to Jupiter's Trojan asteroids.

Launched atop the United Launch Alliance Atlas V 401 rocket from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida in the US at around 3 p.m. (India time), Lucy will circle back to Earth three times for gravity assists, making it the first spacecraft to return to the vicinity of Earth from the outer solar system.

During its 12-year primary mission, Lucy will explore a



record-breaking number of asteroids, including a flyby of one asteroid in the solar system's main belt and seven Trojan asteroids near Jupiter.

"Lucy embodies NASA's enduring quest to push out into the cosmos for the sake of exploration and science, to better understand the universe and our place within it," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson. "I can't wait to see what mysteries the mission uncovers!"

Lucy will explore the Trojan asteroids with a suite of remote sensing instruments. Additionally, the navigation cameras will be used to determine the shapes of the Trojan asteroids.

## 8 dead, 4 missing as heavy rains lash Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

At least 8 people are dead and five persons are reported missing after heavy rains lashed Kerala since Friday evening.

A team of Army officials attached to the Pangode Military camp in the state capital have already left to Kottayam district and is expected to arrive shortly where a landslide took place at Kootikal.

Two families comprising 12 people who bore the major brunt, of which six people have been declared dead, while four continue to be missing.

A car with two people who were asked not to go forward near Thodupuzha in Idukki district was swept away by the gushing waters and a few hours later the dead bodies

were recovered by the locals who swung into action.

Consequent to the rains the authorities have issued a red alert in 6 districts while another 6 districts are on orange alert and two districts are under yellow alert, thereby indicating that all the 14 districts in the state are experiencing heavy rains.

Heavy rains have been lashing the state starting Friday evening leaving roads at several places flooded and normal traffic affected at a number of places.

The Indian Meteorological Department has warned of more rains on Sunday also.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday morning issued an advisory that people have to be extremely cautious and under no circumstances should they ignore the warnings that are given from time to time.



# 'GET JOE BIDEN, WE ARE NOT SCARED', RAUT TAUNTS BJP

Kickstarting the campaign for the upcoming Lok Sabha bypoll to the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli seat, Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut said the party is not worried even if the BJP brings US President Joe Biden for canvassing, here on Saturday.

Team Absolute | Silvassa

When the Shiv Sena speaks, it's called a roar. The Railway Minister of India is sitting in Silvassa for the past four days. Is there no work left in his ministry or has it been auctioned off like Air India? Even if they deploy Biden for campaign, we are not bothered," Raut said. The Shiv Sena has fielded Kalaben M. Delkar, the widow of former seven time MP Mohan S. Delkar, who committed suicide in a



Mumbai hotel on February 22. "There is a reign of terror in Dadra & Nagar Haveli unleashed by the current administration. Mohan Delkar 'sacrificed' his life for the people. We have fielded Kalaben Delkar to ensure justice for his 'atma-samarpan' and the masses of this Union Territory are suffering under the present regime," Raut asserted. Addressing

mediapersons here, the Sena's Chief Spokesperson took potshots at the BJP, saying that even during the West Bengal elections, the entire Union Cabinet and the BJP top brass campaigned there, but they proved no match for the charisma of Mamata Banerjee. "In the same way, no attempts by the BJP will work here. We have held the hand of Kalaben Delkar,

she's our mother and sister, we will support her throughout. We expect her poll victory will be the biggest ever in the electoral history of this constituency," Raut declared.

He said Kalaben Delkar does not need any sympathy but only support since her family has worked in the UT - around 170 km north of Mumbai nestling between Maharashtra-Gujarat borders - for several decades and she deserved to win the seat held by her late husband and her late father-in-law Sanjibhai R. Delkar.

"After the 2024 elections, Shiv Sena will play a crucial role in national politics... It will start with the Dadra & Nagar Haveli seat. It's a fight for our dignity and self-respect and we shall struggle till the end," Raut said. Last week, Kalaben Delkar, along with her family and thousands of supporters joined the Shiv Sena in the presence of party President and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in Mumbai and was made the candidate for the parliamentary bypoll, taking political circles by surprise.

# MVA govt 'most corrupt', betrayed public mandate in 2019: Fadnavis

Team Absolute | Nagpur

In a stinging counter-attack at Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis once again labelled the MVA government as the "most corrupt" in the state's history, here on Saturday.

Rubbishing Thackeray's statements on Friday night that the BJP was misusing central agencies like ED, IT, CBI to target the non-BJP ruled states, Fadnavis defended the Centre, saying it was not doing so.

"If indeed the Centre had really misused the probe agencies, then half the MVA cabinet ministers would have been in jail. The parties like Congress are scared because PM Narendra Modi will not rest till he uproots corruption in the country," Fadnavis asserted. Alleging that massive 'dalali' (middlemen deals) are going on, Fadnavis declared that as long as corruption exists in the state, the central agencies would keep coming here. The BJP leader also alleged that the MVA ministers are having a 'soft-ware' for indulging in 'vasuli'



(extortion), and other corrupt activities are going on in full swing in the state.

On the CM's call to his party workers to "learn from West Bengal", Fadnavis asked whether the CM wanted to make Maharashtra a "lawless state" like West Bengal, and said the BJP would fight it tooth-and-nail.

Slamming the CM's challenge to the BJP to "topple the MVA government", Fadnavis said that the CM was speaking only out of 'sheer frustration', and claimed the BJP is not interested in bringing down the government which would collapse on its own.

Rejecting Thackeray's charges, Fadnavis reiterated that the Shiv Sena had

betrayed the people's mandate in the 2019 assembly elections by allying with the Nationalist Congress Party-Congress to form the MVA government, in the name of fulfilling the promise made to the late Balasaheb Thackeray to have a Shiv Sainik as the CM. "If you were so keen to make a Sainik the CM, then why did you bypass all other senior leaders in your party? It was always your personal ambition to become the CM - nothing wrong in this - but at least drop this mask now," Fadnavis said.

The BJP leader's thunderous speech at the Shiv Sena's annual Dashehra rally held in Shanmukhananda Hall.

# Pawar will meet Amit Shah to discuss BSF row

Team Absolute | Mumbai

NCP chief Sharad Pawar said Saturday he would meet Home Minister Amit Shah "to know his thoughts about" the extension of operational jurisdiction of the Border Security Force, or BSF, within Indian territories in the states of Assam, Punjab, and Bengal.

"I will be meeting Home Minister Amit Shah to know his thoughts about it," he was quoted by news agency.

Earlier this week the Home Ministry said the BSF could operate up to 50 km from the international border in the above three states; previously this was 15 km. The new order has proven controversial since it means the BSF can search and make arrests within a wider area in each state, giving them powers on par with local police. In Punjab this means the Golden Temple at Amritsar, for example, now comes under their jurisdiction too; it is 35 km from the border.

The centre has said it will help maintain a "zero tolerance" stance against terrorism and cross-border crimes.



However, the Congress - in power in Punjab, and where elections are due next year - has cried foul and alleged a "conspiracy", accusing the BJP government at the centre of destroying the country's federal structure.

# Silence of Sunni clerics on Shia killings in Afghanistan condemned

After two Shia mosques in Afghanistan were bombed in a span of one week killing hundreds of worshippers, Shia Muslim clerics in India have slammed the silence of Sunni clerics on the targeted killings which have increased after the war-torn country was taken over by the Taliban in August.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Speaking to reporter on the phone, top Lucknow-based Shia cleric Kalbe Jawwad said: "No Sunni Muslim clerics have come out to condemn the killings. We have supported them when any such inci-



dent happens... And this is not happening for the first time but from the last 25 years." If the Sunni Ulema from India and Pakistan start condemning the killings, then such incidents will not happen. But their silence is tacit support to the killings." He also alleged that the killings are result of a conspiracy by the US Israel, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to wipe out the

Shias since the past three decades. The cleric added that the Islamic State (IS), Taliban and other terror organisations have been operating with the support of US Israel and Saudi Arabia. He said the Taliban has deceived the Shias by saying that everything will be normal and then cheated the community by killing them. Another cleric from Mumbai,

Maulana Ashraf Zaidi told reporter over the phone that the incidents were condemnable and requested the Indian government to take the matter to UN. "I request our government to take the persecutions of Shias in both Pakistan and Afghanistan to UN as a sensitive country we should pay our attention on such incident."

The Islamic State (IS) terror group on Saturday claimed that its Khorasan branch (IS-K) carried out the twin bombings inside the Shia mosque in Kandahar a day ago, that claimed the lives of 63 people while injuring 83 others. Friday's attack came exactly after a week when another Shia mosque in Kunduz city was hit by a suicide bombing which claimed the lives of at least 50 people.

The IS-K had claimed responsibility for the attack, which was the deadliest since the US forces left Afghanistan at the end of August.

# Jacqueline Fernandez skips ED's summon for the 3rd time

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Jacqueline Fernandez today skipped her third summon by the Enforcement Directorate for questioning in connection with a money laundering case against fraudsters Suresh Chandrasekar and his actor-wife Leena Paul. The actress cited "professional commitments" behind her no-show, as per sources.

The probe agency had earlier asked Fernandez to appear at its office in Delhi on Friday but she didn't show up. She has been summoned again on Monday.

According to sources, the probe agency officials want to confront Fernandez with the con couple.

Chandrasekar and Paul have already been arrested by Delhi Police for allegedly duping the family of Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Singh of around ₹ 200 crore. The



agency had earlier also questioned actor Nora Fatehi.

Fernandez appeared before the Enforcement Directorate for the first time on August 30, during which she was examined for four hours as a witness in the case and her statement recorded under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The case was filed based on a complaint by Shivinder Singh's wife, Aditi Singh, who said a man posing as a senior Law Ministry official offered to help get bail for Singh (then in jail) in return for money.

Singh said she paid out ₹ 200 crore in 30 instalments starting June 2020 and was told the money was meant for BJP party funds. She also claimed to have been told that Home Minister Amit Shah and then Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad were both on her side.

# Man drags Pune traffic policeman on car bonnet for 700 metres, held

Team Absolute | Pune

A man was remanded to the custody of Pune police by a local court for the attempted murder of a police officer for levying a traffic violation charge on him along Kharadi bypass on Friday.

The man allegedly rammed into the policeman and dragged him atop his car bonnet for 700-800 metres, according to the police. The arrested man has been identified as Prashant Shridhar Kantawar (43), a resident of Mohammadwadi in

Hadapsar.

A complaint in the matter was lodged by Sheshrao Jaybhay of the traffic division of Pune police. "We do not know yet what kind of charges are against him. It was his first traffic offence and it was for ₹400. He did not want to pay. We have produced him in court for further charge and investigation," said police sub-inspector Gajanan Bhosale of Mundhwa police station.

Jaybhay was manning the traffic at Mundhwa signal chowk near Kharadi bypass around 4:15pm

when Kantawar allegedly arrived in his car. Jaybhay submitted in his complaint that he flagged the vehicle and asked him to clear the fine that was reflecting against the number of his car. After refusing to pay the ₹400 fine, Kantawar allegedly rammed his car into Jaybhay, making him fall on the bonnet, and drove for around 700-800 metres before dropping him. Jaybhay sustained injuries in the process and Kantawar was arrested after the first information report (FIR) was registered.

# Thane Covid centres temporarily closed due to less footfall

Team Absolute | Thane

Covid care centres in Ambernath, Badlapur and Murbad of Thane district are temporarily shut due to less patients visiting them and to cut down on expenditure.

The head of the department said that hardly anyone turned out at these centres for treatment even after getting a positive report. They are less symptomatic and are able to be treated at home itself, the official said.

In August, rural areas of Thane district witnessed a decline in daily positive cases. It dropped from 64 daily positive cases in the first week to 27 by the last week of August. Although there was a slight increase in daily positive cases in September, they have not gone beyond 50 daily cases. In October, again a decline has been noted



with the daily positive cases ranging between 25 and 35 over the last few days. Till now Thane rural areas have recorded around 1,00,056 positive cases. Municipal councils of

Badlapur and Ambernath have to spend around ₹50 lakh per month for the maintenance of one centre and that includes payment of the employees of agencies and other expenses.

# Is NCB spreading terror in Bollywood, asks Nawab Malik

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a fourth stinger attack in the past 10 days, NCP Minister Nawab Malik on Saturday asked whether the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is willy-nilly targeting film personalities to instil terror in Bollywood with the help of some outsiders.

Malik revealed details of a NCB witness Fletcher Patel who claims to be a family friend of the agency's Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede and has posted pictures on social media with a woman he calls 'Lady Don'.

"Who is this Fletcher Patel and the other woman, 'Lady Don'? How come this Fletcher Patel, who's close to Sameer Wankhede figuring as a Witness (Pancha) in at least three NCB cases. Is it ethically correct and what does it reflect on the credibility of the NCB's operations against drugs," demanded Malik.

Again accusing NCB of carrying out fraudulent raids on prominent



personalities to grab publicity, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) National Spokesperson said in the past one year alone, Fletcher Patel was a Witness in CR No 38/20, CR No 16/20 and CR No 02/21, and his team was collecting more information on other cases.

"After we exposed the two persons linked with the BJP, the NCB

last week said that they did not know any of the 'Independent Witnesses' they had taken on record in the cruise ship raids. Then how come the same Witness Fletcher Patel appears in multiple NCB cases in the past one year, known to the NCB chief," Malik asked.

Later, Fletcher Patel and the

alleged 'Lady Don' Yasmeen Wankhede, said to be a relative of the NCB chief, appeared on certain media channels and denied Malik's allegations.

"I have been saying from the beginning that the NCB is carrying out fake raids on film personalities but now with the involvement of Wankhede's friends and family members emerging as witnesses in official case, what is the real motive behind these operations. As in the past, the NCB must hold a press conference and clarify," Malik demanded. He again questioned if the so-called NCB raids are 'pre-planned' in advance with close friends like Fletcher Patel taken in as 'Witness' in multiple cases, violating the laws. "Also, who is this 'Lady Don'. It has come to light that she is a lawyer and connected with one political party. So what are their motives and links with the NCB chief? What is the real racket going on in Bollywood with these people. The NCB must reply to this," Malik asked.



### DAUGHTERS WILL ALSO PARTICIPATE IN ATMANIRBHAR MP: CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In Madhya Pradesh, about 40 lakh Ladli Laxmis have been made so far under the Ladli Laxmi Yojana, which was started from the year 2007 to make daughters self-dependent along with providing security to them. The state government has not only made all these Ladli Laxmis lakhpatis, but the responsibility of their education, health and higher education is also being fulfilled. The biggest benefit of the scheme is that now a girl child born in the state is considered a boon and not a curse.

It has been decided to expand Ladli Laxmi Yojana, born out of sensitive thinking of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan towards the daughters. Chief Minister Chouhan says that every daughter of the state should be educated, her health should be better and she should feel self-dependent. The participation of the daughters of the state will also be ensured in the fulfillment of the goal of self-reliant Madhya Pradesh.

From the birth of the daughter till her complete education and marriage, the responsibility is being taken up through Ladli Laxmi Yojana. On one hand, this scheme has given protection as guardian to the daughters of the state, on the other hand it has also changed the thinking of the society towards



daughters. There was a time when the whole family used to get disappointed on the birth of a daughter. With the implementation of Ladli Laxmi Yojana, now families celebrate the birth of a daughter. Due to this change in the society towards daughters, the sex ratio of male and female has also improved in the state.

Chief Minister Chouhan believes that empowerment of women is necessary for the empowerment of the society. A daughter born today

could play her role in empowering the society, state and nation tomorrow. That's what we are trying to do. Ladli Laxmi Yojana, the experiment of making the daughter strong and making her self-dependent, has been successful in Madhya Pradesh. As much as this scheme has been appreciated in the state, the scheme has been appreciated and adopted in other states also. New provisions are constantly being added to make the scheme more effective. The state government will now give 25 thousand rupees to the girls who pass 12th on taking admission in graduation. Along with this, the government will bear the cost of every ladli who gets admission in engineering and medical.

For the empowerment of women, the initiative has been taken to make the women of the state self-help groups self-dependent by providing them financial support through various banks, in which rural women have brought their skills to the market with their hard work. Today, such materials are being manufactured by many women's groups, which are being purchased not only in the state but also in other states. An app has also been launched for the branding and marketing of the materials produced and manufactured by the women's groups. The state government is extending every cooperation to provide the financial support to the groups and to bring the goods made by them at the national and international level.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that in order to make Ladli Laxmis self-reliant, along with providing them full facilities of education, vocational training would also be provided to them. After the training, bank loan facility will also be provided to the daughters to start their own employment.

### Initiative for Atma-nirbhar Madhya Pradesh with new MSME policy

#### Package of concessions for food processing units and mega food parks

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In order to make Madhya Pradesh self-reliant, the Department of Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises of the Government of Madhya Pradesh has formulated a new MSME Development Policy to revive the industries. In this policy, apart from increasing investment in the state, every possible provision has been made to provide employment to the local youths. Madhya Pradesh is much ahead in the country in agricultural products and for processing these products in the state itself, it has been announced to give concessions along with many facilities to these units.

Under the policy, many types of assistance, facilities will be provided to the new food processing unit, in which investment of more than Rs 10 crore and up to Rs 50 crore has been made in the machinery-plant.

According to the policy, a rebate of Re 1 per unit or 20 percent, whichever is less, will be provided to high pressure consumers on getting a new connection in the prevailing



electricity consumption assistance. This exemption will be admissible for food processing units for a period of 05 years from the date of production, commercial operation. In off-season, 10% of the contract demand or the actual recorded demand, whichever is higher, will be billed at the normal tariff, rebate will be payable to the food processing units of the respective category. Similarly, the facility of exemption from mandi fee is also in the policy. All such eligible food processing units will be exempted up to maximum of 50 percent of the investment in plant and machinery or for a period of five years in mandi fee, whichever is less. This facility of exemption from duty will be available only to those units, which will purchase agricultural produce of this state. There is also a provision to facilitate in the policy for special

assistance on the development of food parks. In order to encourage the establishment of food processing projects in the state under the infrastructure development assistance and to improve the infrastructure, 15 percent of the project cost and maximum amount of Rs. 5 crore will be provided to the private sector on the establishment of mega food park as per the guidelines of the Government of India, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries for the establishment of mega food park. This assistance will be payable on the establishment of minimum 10 units in the developed park. This assistance will be payable in the form of top-up. Under the assistance of stamp duty, the stamp duty paid by the promoters will be reimbursed in the land transferred by the promoters to the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for the establishment of Mega Food Park. The unit availing the benefit of this special package will also be able to get the other remaining facilities announced under this policy, which are not of the same type.

### CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN PLANTS NEEM SAPLING IN SMART CITY PARK



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan today planted a neem sapling in the Smart City Garden. Rich in antibiotic elements, neem is known as the supreme medicine. Neem may be bitter in taste, but its benefits are like nectar. Neem is also very useful from environmental point of view.

## He is 'Ravana': Pragya Thakur

### Member of Parliament from Bhopal slams the man who shot kabaddi video

Team Absolute | Bhopal

After a viral video showed her playing kabaddi, Bhopal's BJP MP Pragya Singh Thakur, who was confined to a wheelchair for a long time and had obtained bail in the 2008 Malegaon blast case on medical grounds, described the one who shot and circulated the clip as "Ravana" and said his old age and next birth will get spoiled.

Thakur was speaking during a Dussehra programme in Bhopal's Sant Nagar (Bairagarh), a Sindhi community-dominated area, on Friday night.

"I went for offering aarti (at a Durga pandal) two days back, when some sportsmen playing on a ground requested me to conduct a (kabaddi) raid. A small clip of this was captured and shown in the media," she said.

"If someone fretted and fumed, it was Ravana among you, some Sindhi brother...someone who is a big enemy (of



Congressmen burnt effigy of Pragya Thakur, Member of Parliament from Bhopal. Congress workers were opposing her statement in which she slammed former CM of MP, Digvijay Singh.

mine). I am not his enemy, but he considered me as his enemy. I don't know what precious thing I snatched from him...But Ravana can be anywhere," she added.

"I am telling the person, whose sanskaras have got spoiled, to mend them. If you don't, your old age and next birth will also get spoiled because whenever anyone has clashed with the patriots, revolutionaries and above all saints, neither Ravana or Kansa survived, nor will the 'adharmi' or 'vidharmi' of the present be saved," she said.

She said that her 'tapasya' (penance) and meditation was for public.

The video that went viral on social media showed Thakur playing a game of kabaddi on the premises of a Kali temple.

Earlier, another video of her taking part in a Garba dance during the just-concluded Navratri festival had emerged.

## Rewa 1st district in MP to have direct flight to Bhopal

Praveen Dwivedi | Bhopal

If everything proceeds as per the plan, Rewa will become the first district in Madhya Pradesh to have direct flight connectivity with state capital Bhopal, as its Raja Bhoj Airport is all set to connect the two destinations by the end of 2021.

According to officials at the Raja Bhoj Airport, flight connectivity between Bhopal and Rewa has been approved by the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS).

"Raja Bhoj Airport has got approval for flight connectivity between Bhopal and Rewa. Rewa would be the first district which will have direct connectivity of flights from Bhopal," said K.L. Agarwal, Director, Raja Bhoj Airport. He informed that an agency has also been selected to run the flights.



Replying to whether there will be daily flight services between Bhopal and Rewa, Agarwal said, "It would be decided by the air service agency and the Madhya Pradesh government. The agency would conduct a survey and then decide whether to run daily or

weekly flights."

Asked about the Raipur flight, Agarwal said that IndiGo will start daily services from November 2, whereas flights between Bhopal and Rewa are likely to start by the end of 2021.

Under RCS, plans are to connect underserved airports to key airports through flights that will cost nearly Rs 2,500 per hour. The scheme also envisages to provide subsidy to the airlines to offer these fares.

The RCS is applicable on routes with a length between 200 and 800 km. Raipur, the capital of the neighbouring state of Chhattisgarh, will be the second new destination from Bhopal's Raja Bhoj Airport, a senior official told correspondent. At present, a total 30 flights are operating from the Raja Bhoj Airport to destinations like New Delhi, Mumbai, Agra, Ahmedabad, Pune, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Hyderabad etc. Apart from Bhopal, there are some other prominent cities in Madhya Pradesh such as Ujjain, Indore, Gwalior and Jabalpur, but these don't have direct air connectivity with the state capital.



Union Minister for Tourism Prahalad Patel flagged new train from Bhopal to Damoh.

## 97 percent complaints of electricity consumers resolved: Energy Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Energy Minister Pradyuman Singh Tomar has informed that in the first fifteen days of the current October month, a total of 1 lakh 77 thousand 852 complaints were received at the state level, out of which 1 lakh 73 thousand 252 complaints have been resolved. The resolution percentage is 97.14 percent.

Centralized call centres have been set up in all the three power distribution companies for speedy redressal of complaints of electricity consumers in the state. These call-centres located at company headquarters Bhopal, Jabalpur and Indore are working 24x7. In this, complaints can be



sent to the concerned officer and employee by registering complaints through the common number 1912. After redressal of complaints, feedback of the consumer is also being taken from the call centre. Out of 36 thousand

900 complaints, 34 thousand 780 have been resolved by East Zone, 59 thousand 14 complaints out of 59 thousand 458 by Central Zone and 79 thousand 458 complaints out of 81 thousand 494 were resolved by West Zone. Most

of these complaints are related to electricity supply, which have been resolved promptly. Apart from this, complaints related to faulty distribution transformers and metres or bills are also being resolved.

## Do compounding process online - Urban Development Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh said that under building permission cases, compounding of construction without building permission and construction in excess of building permission has been implemented in all urban bodies through online ABPAS system. Along with this, instructions have also been given to all the urban bodies to make the process of compounding online. Singh has given instructions to the officers of all urban bodies to strictly follow these instructions.

Singh has said that by amending the



Madhya Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, the limit of compounding under building permission has been increased by 30 percent. Along with this, a discount of 20 percent has also been given in the cases received for compounding till February 28, 2022.

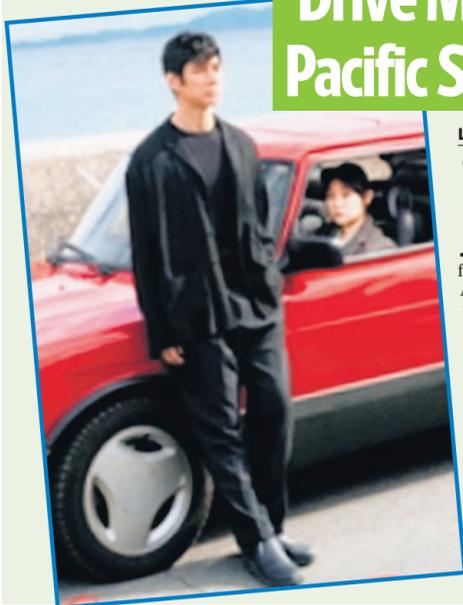
Urban Development and Housing Minister Singh has said that it has come to notice that the process of compounding is being done offline in some urban bodies. He said that the process of both types of compounding is conducted in all the bodies through online ABPAS system. Therefore, disciplinary action will be taken against the officers who engage in offline compounding.

### CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN CONDOLES ON THE DEATH OF YOGENDRA MOHAN GUPTA

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the demise of Dainik Jagran Group (Uttar Pradesh) Chairman Yogendra Mohan Gupta. Chief Minister Chouhan has prayed to God to give peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family members to bear this loss. Chief Minister Chouhan said that Yogendra ji has done important work in the field of journalism, art and literature. My sympathies are with his family members.



## 'Drive My Car', 'A Hero' lead Asia Pacific Screen Awards nominations



Los Angeles | Agencies

Japanese filmmaker Hamaguchi Ryusuke's 'Drive My Car' and Iranian director Asghar Farhadi's 'A Hero', two films that debuted in Cannes, emerge as the strong favourites for the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA), after nominations were announced on Wednesday.

Both films are nominated for the best film, best directing, best screenplay and best performance by an actor. The best film category is rounded out by nominations for India-France co-production 'A Night of Knowing Nothing', directed by India's Payal Kapadia; 'The Pencil' from Russia's Natalya Nazarova; and 'There is No Evil', an Iran-Czech-Germany co-production directed by Mohammad Rasoulof that won the Golden Bear in Berlin. Organisers said

that nominations had gone to 38 films from 25 Asia Pacific countries and regions. Films from Japan and Iran each collected seven nominations.

After 14 years, a representative from Vietnam (cinematographer Nguyen Vinh Phuc nominated for his work in Le Bao's 'Taste,' aka 'Vi') collected the country's first APSA nomination.

The APSA nominations represented a complete shut-out for both mainland China and Taiwan.

That is in stark contrast to the Asian Film Awards, announced earlier this week in Busan, in which three Chinese films won four awards, including the best director prize, which went to Zhang Yimou.

The APSA nominations are also at odds with those for the Golden Horse Film Awards announced last week, in which Hong Kong's 'Drifting' and Taiwan's 'The Falls' each picked up nearly a dozen nods.

## DUA LEADS THE FASHION PARTY

Los Angeles | Agencies

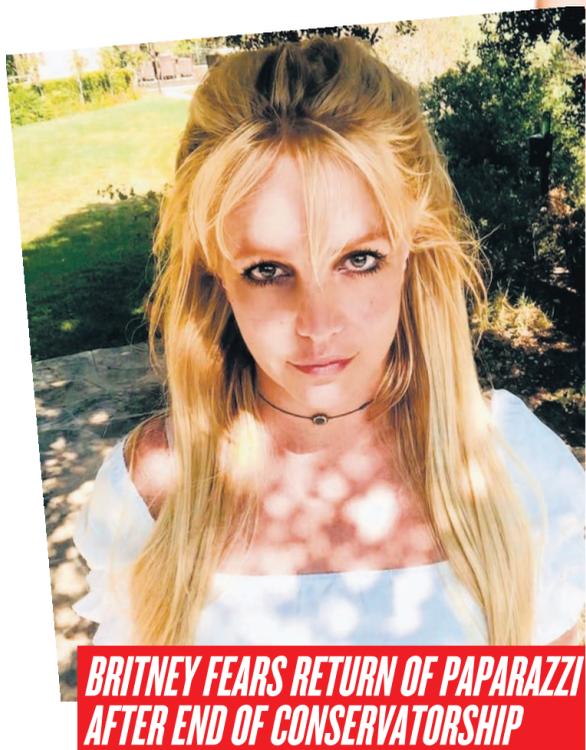
Dua Lipa, Iris Law and Donatella Versace led the glamour at the star-studded Frieze and Versace party in London on Friday. The songstress, 25, who has just topped the charts with her single Cold Heart (a collaboration with PNAU and Elton John) showcased her toned legs in a glittery purple mini skirt and green satin heels. The beauty paired this with a lime green shimmering top and a chunky gold chain. Her tresses were styled in a high ponytail and she sported smoky shadow and rose gloss. Iris, 21, flaunted her cleavage, midriff and toned legs in a black, blue and pink bra top, paired with a matching split skirt. Fashion mogul Donatella, 66, looked age-defying in a busty silver dress, paired with dramatic eye make-up, as she joined Dua for a chat at the soiree. Kylie Minogue looked smitten with Paul Solomons at the party - amid claims Paul won't be moving back to her native Australia with her.

The songstress, 53, and editor Paul, 47, sweetly held hands as they posed for the camera, in their first public sighting since it was revealed Kylie was moving back to Australia after 30 years living in London.

Kylie wowed in a silver sequined dress which flaunted her toned legs, boosting her height with silver heels.



Dua Lipa puts on a leggy display in glittery mini skirt as she joins an ab-flashing Iris Law and a glamorous Donatella Versace at star-studded fashion party



BRITNEY FEARS RETURN OF PAPAZZI AFTER END OF CONSERVATORSHIP

Los Angeles | Agencies

Britney Spears is opening up about her fears regarding life after her 13-year conservatorship comes to its expected end. In a lengthy Instagram post on Friday, the pop star poured out her apprehensions and said she was concerned that her life will return to the paparazzi frenzy that it was before and any mistakes will make headlines. The post, quoted by Variety.com, said: "I'll just be honest and say I've waited so long to be free from the situation I'm in ... and now

that it's here I'm scared to do anything because I'm afraid I'll make a mistake."

Britney continued: "For so many years I was always told if I succeeded at things, it could end ... and it never did!!! I worked so hard but now that it's here and getting closer and closer to ending I'm very happy but there's a lot of things that scare me." In September, Britney's father, Jamie Spears, was suspended from her conservatorship, signaling that a termination of the arrangement was highly likely. Another hearing has been set for November 12 to determine if that will happen.

## KUMAIL NANJIANI BECAME 'OBSESSED' WITH HIS WEIGHT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor-comedian Kumail Nanjiani has worked out relentlessly as he prepared for his role in the Marvel movie 'Eternals', and he says that the focus on his weight ultimately became unhealthy for him. Nanjiani told Vulture: "I'll tell you, man, it's very easy to get obsessed with that number on the scale. It's a tough thing. It's deceiving. You become obsessed with it. I certainly have, and for me, it's not great to weigh myself every day. I could tell you what I weigh today."

A photo of Nanjiani's ripped physique went viral in 2019, and he confessed that his appearance became "too important" to him at one stage.

The actor said: "The way I look has been way too important to me, and so to hear a bunch of people reaffirming my own darkest thoughts about myself was very difficult."

Nanjiani recently said that he feels "less and less comfortable" talking about his body.

He hasn't enjoyed the scrutiny that's come his way over recent years, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Nanjiani said: "I've found out over the last year and a half, since I did that picture, that I am very uncomfortable talking about my body, and it's become less and less and less comfortable."

The 'Silicon Valley' actor thought that gaining muscle would improve his career prospects and create new "opportunities" within the acting industry.

He said: "I wanted different types of opportunities. I wanted the industry to see me differently. With brown people, there are very specific roles that we used to get. Either we're terrified or we're causing terror. Those are the only two options we had. Either I'm fixing your computer, or I'm, like, planning something at the stock exchange."



## 'The Forgotten Battle' transports the viewer into the warzone



TROY RIBEIRO

(Streaming on Netflix)

Creator: Matthijs van Heijningen Jr

Cast: Gijs Blom, Jamie Flatters, Susan Radder, Jan Bijvoet, Tom Felton, Coen Bril, Marthe Schneider and Ronald Kalter.

Duration: 127 minutes.

Ratings: \*\*\*\* (four stars)



Director Matthijs Van Heijningen Jr. puts his stamp on the Battle of Scheldt, often referred to as The Forgotten Battle.

The bloody but crucial battle claimed the lives of more than 10,000 people but secured the lines for the push by the Allied forces to liberate Europe from Nazi Germany. It took place between October 2 and November 8, 1944.

The film offers a bravura virtual-eye-witness account that begins fragmentally and then craftily interweaves events as seen from the perspective of three people involved in the conflict.

The three are: Marinus van Staveren (Gijs Blom), a young Dutchman fighting for the Germans; William Sinclair (Jamie Flatters), a stray English glider pilot; and Teuntje Visser (Susan Radder), daughter of a doctor in Zeeland who gets involved in the resistance after her brother is arrested

by the Nazis. The narrative begins from September 5, 1944, with the map of Europe, showing retreating Nazi Germany armies being steadily displaced by the advancing English and Canadian armies of the allies. The Dutch province of Zeeland is still in German hands, but the arrival of the allies seems imminent.

The film is an immersive experience as it places the viewer directly into the warzone never showing false heroism or glorifying the violence of war. Driven by a mix of naivete and survival instinct, along with gunfights and aerial attacks, it focuses on fear, pain and loss.

Susan Radder's scenes are more like a war espionage film, but those of the male protagonists are more set in the action arena where the director chooses to zoom in on the main characters. This makes the war scenes a bit unclear because you only get to see

what the main character is doing and not the rest of the army unit.

Nevertheless, the war scenes are extremely well-choreographed and brilliantly portrayed, though they may appear to be familiar.

Every actor in the film plays their part in a realistic manner to perfection. Prominent among the supporting cast are Jan Bijvoet as Teuntje's father, Doctor Visser; Ronald Kalter as Sussan's brother Dirk Visser; Marthe Schneider as Janna, the resistance fighter; Theo Barklem-Briggs as John; and Tom Felton as Tony Turner.

The visuals of the film are absolutely spectacular. Cinematographer Lennert Hillege's frames are brutal as he captures the strewn bodies, ballistic bombardments, and raw emotions adroitly. The sound design, too, elevates the viewing experience. Overall, this film will appeal to all hardcore war film fans.

## TIMOTHEE CHALAMET ON RAPE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ARMIE HAMMER

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Timothee Chalamet has spoken out about sexual assault allegations against his 'Call Me by Your Name' co-star, Armie Hammer.

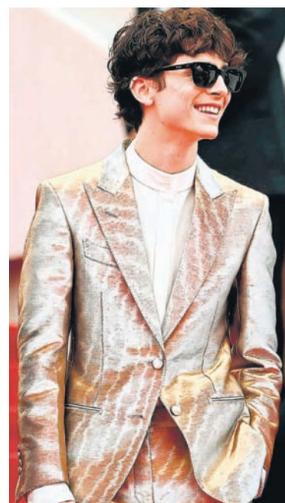
In a new interview, the Elio Perlman depicter in the 2017 movie declared that he won't give a "partial response", reports aceshowbiz.com.

"I totally get why you're asking that," the 25-year-old said when asked about the matter in an interview with Time magazine.

He added: "But it's a question worthy of a larger conversation, and I don't want to give you a partial response."

Hammer was accused of rape back in March. One of his former partners, Effie, alleged that he "mentally, emotionally and sexually" abused her during a four-year on/off relationship.

At that time, he was still married to Elizabeth Chambers.

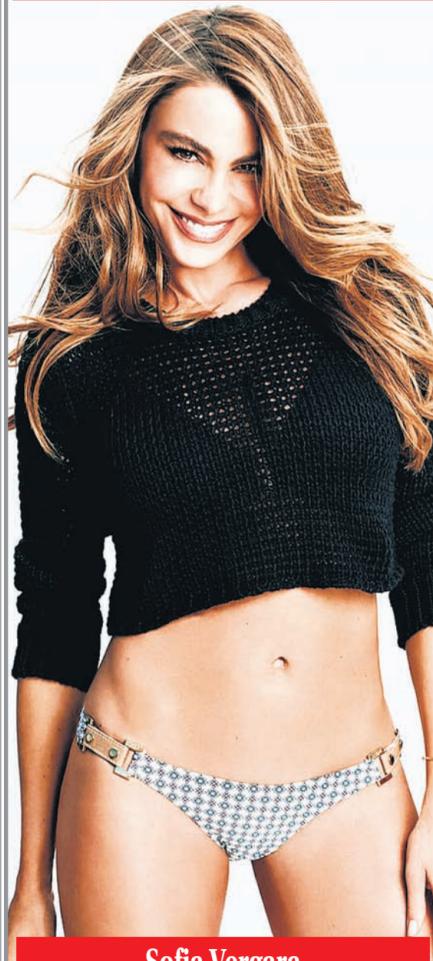


In a March press conference, Effie said that the alleged abuse escalated to rape in April 2017, when she was 20 years old. She detailed that during the attack, the "Rebecca" leading man "repeatedly slammed" her "face against the wall" and left her bruised.

Hammer's attorney Andrew Brettler, however, was quick to shut down the allegations.

"Her own correspondence with Mr. Hammer undermines and refutes her outrageous allegations," Andrew said in a statement.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Sofia Vergara



## Rahul Dravid to be India's chief coach!



The BCCI official has now confirmed that "Rahul has agreed to coach the Indian team till 2023 World Cup". The official told reporter that BCCI chief Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah had a meeting with Dravid on the side-lines of the IPL final on Friday evening and they managed to convince him.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Indian cricketer Rahul Dravid has agreed to coach the national side after the ICC T20 World Cup but there are a couple of issues which he wants to be sorted out before joining, said a BCCI official. Earlier, there were reports that Dravid would be the

interim coach for the upcoming home series against New Zealand. "There are a couple of issues which Dravid wants to settle with the BCCI and hopefully that will be done," he added.

Asked what are the "issues", the official said, "Like, Dravid wants to have new support staff, changing the entire old one. And a couple of other things. I am sure everything will be sorted out. Because BCCI wants Dravid to lead the charge."

It is learnt that former Mumbai pacer Paras Mhambrey may take over from Bharat Arun as the bowling coach. Sources further said that Dravid had suggested Australian Tom Moody's name for the coach's job, but the Board didn't show too much interest.

The 48-year-old Dravid has been in charge of the India A and U-19 set-up for the past six years. He currently heads the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru.

"He will resign from there and take over the charge (of Team India)," sources added. Dravid had recently coached

a second-string Indian team to a tour of Sri Lanka even as the national senior team was playing concurrently in England.

### 'World Better Beware': Vaughan

Former England captain Michael Vaughan has warned all the cricket teams around the world after it has been learned that Rahul Dravid is set to take over as the Indian men's cricket team's head coach following the conclusion of the upcoming T20 World Cup. "If it's true Rahul Dravid is to be the next Indian coach I think the rest of the world better beware..." tweeted Michael Vaughan.

### BADOSA BEATS JABEUR, TO MEET AZARENKA IN FINAL AT INDIAN WELLS

Indian Wells (USA): Spain's Paula Badosa continued her dream run in the WTA event at the BNP Paribas Open here as she defeated Ons Jabeur of Tunisia to set up a clash in the final with Victoria Azarenka of Belarus.



Paula ended the winning spree of Ons, who is set to become the first Arab woman to reach the top 10 when the WTA rankings are released on Monday, defeating her in straight sets, 6-3, 6-3 in the semi-finals.

The World No.27 will face two-time champion and former No.1 Azarenka for the first time for the title. Having already scored wins over Barbora Krejčíková and Angelique Kerber this week, Paula is looking to beat a third major champion en route to a second WTA title, according to a report on the WTA tour website. In the other semi-final, Victoria Azarenka pulled off a stirring comeback victory on Friday night, as the former World No.1 from Belarus defeated Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia, 3-6, 6-3, 7-5. No.27 seed Victoria, who won the title in Indian Wells in 2012 and 2016, charged back from a set and a break down to claim a hard-fought 2-hour and 20-minute win over No.24 seed Ostapenko.

## Firmino, Salah and Mane star in Liverpool's 5-0 over Watford

Watford | Agencies

Roberto Firmino's hat-trick and stunning goals from Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane led Liverpool to a comprehensive 5-0 match over Watford in the Premier League, here on Saturday.

With this win, Liverpool reclaimed top spot in the Premier League with 18 points, two ahead of Chelsea who can retake the lead if they beat Brentford in Saturday's late game. Watford are 15th on seven points.

This was Liverpool's biggest win since the 7-0 hammering of Crystal Palace last December, which was also the last time Firmino, Salah and Mane all scored in a top-flight game.

From the first whistle, Liverpool looked in control as Mane, in a superb move in the eighth minute, found the net with a first-time strike after an outstanding pass from Salah. The goal marked Mane's sixth of the season and 100th in the Premier League. Mane then picked out James Milner on an overlapping run and he drove a perfect ball across the goal for Firmino to steer home from close range in the 37th minute to put the Reds 2-0 up at halftime. Milner then found Firmino inside the area following another flowing team move and he made no mistake with the easiest of finishes from close range to double Liverpool's lead on 37 minutes, to put the Reds 2-0 up at halftime. It got worse six minutes after the restart when



Firmino scored another tap-in after Foster spilled the ball in the area. Salah then scored a fine fourth with a goal of the season contender, and Firmino tapped in the fifth inside the six-yard box in stoppage time.

## Australia desperate to win elusive T20 World Cup title: Finch

Dubai | Agencies

Australian limited-overs captain Aaron Finch said on Saturday that winning the ICC T20 World Cup would be a "huge" achievement for his side, given that the title has eluded them all this while.

Australia will play South Africa in the 'Super 12' opening game on October 23 and would hope to overcome the jinx that has plagued them all these years. Their preparation too hasn't gone as planned as the side lost to the West Indies and Bangladesh.

"It (winning the title) would be huge, obviously it is the one that has eluded us, we have been close a couple of times but we've also been quite a distance off in other times," said Finch on Saturday.

Australia were defeated in



the semifinals by eventual champions India in the very first edition in 2007. The cricketing superpowers reached the final three years later but fell at the last hurdle to England, while they also lost to the eventual champions in 2012 as the West Indies won their semifinal match. And while they failed to reach the knockout stages in both 2014 and 2016, captain Finch believes his squad possesses the talent to finally end their T20 drought.

## T20 WORLD CUP

### Dhoni is quite excited with getting back to the environment: Kohli

Dubai | Agencies

India captain Virat Kohli said that former captain MS Dhoni is very excited about getting back to the environment of the Indian team. He also said that Dhoni's eye for practical inputs and intricate details will help improve the team's game by one or two percent. Dhoni has been appointed as the mentor of the Indian team for the men's T20 World Cup in the UAE and Oman.

"Massive experience. He is quite excited about getting back to the environment. He has always been a mentor for all of us, when we were starting our careers at the time he played and now he has the same opportunity to continue the same again. Especially the younger guys, who are in early stages of their career," said Kohli in a Captain's Call organised by the International Cricket Council (ICC) ahead of the mega event on Saturday.

"Just the experience that he has



gained over the years and having conversations with him about the

game. Such practical inputs and intricate details will help improve

the game by one or two per cent. We are absolutely delighted to have him back in the environment. His presence will further boost the morale and confidence of the team," added Kohli.

Asked about Rahul Dravid's appointment as the next head coach of the Indian team after Ravi Shastri's tenure ends, Kohli conceded he had no idea of the developments. "No idea exactly what's happening on the coaching front. No detailed discussion with anyone yet."

Talking about India's opening match in Super 12 against Pakistan on October 24 in Dubai, Kohli said that his approach for the high-octane clash will be like any other game. "I can talk from personal experience. Honestly never felt so. I have always approached this game like any other game. I know there is hype around this game, more so around with ticket sales and values of them are ridiculously high."

Dubai | Agencies

New Zealand cricket team captain Kane Williamson said on Saturday that there were match-winners in every side competing in the ICC T20 World Cup, adding that on any given day anything could happen in the tournament, which gets underway in the UAE and Oman on Sunday (October 17).

If the Black Caps lift the T20 World Cup trophy in November, it will be their second ICC trophy in a single year, after the team won the World Test Championship Final against India in England.

"It comes down to getting it done on the day. Every team can win any game, we know that in T20 cricket, there's match-winners right



across board so we just have to turn up at the right time," said Williamson, who recently completed his assignment for Sunrisers Hyderabad in the just-concluded Indian Premier League 2021.

New Zealand are still searching for their first title in the shortest format, having previously reached the semi-final stages in the inaugural tournament in 2007 and again in 2016.

## BIENNIAL WORLD CUP WOULD ALLOW TEAMS 'TO DREAM': FIFA CHIEF



Caracas (Venezuela) | Agencies

FIFA president Gianni Infantino says that a plan to stage the World Cup every two years would provide "a chance to dream" for countries and regions that have never won football's showpiece tournament.

FIFA's member associations are set to vote on the proposal in December and, if approved, a radically revamped international calendar could be implemented as soon as 2025.

"Our job is to constantly think about how we can improve football in the world, to make football truly global," Infantino said at an event in Venezuela's capital Caracas.

"The FIFA president is president of the 111 countries (and regions) and all those countries (and regions) have the right to dream, a dream like the Vinotinto [Venezuela's national team] dream. They also have to be able to achieve that dream because if you have to dream for eternity, in the end, you prefer to do other things."

## Yuki Bhambri to lead Delhi in 3rd edition of Tennis Premier League

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As Indian tennis player Yuki Bhambri will lead the challenge for the Delhi Binny's Brigade during the third edition of the Tennis Premier League (TPL), which will be played from December 9 to 14 at the Celebration Club in Mumbai. The dates for the tournament was announced in the presence of Yuki, Ankit Bhambri, mentor of the Delhi team, Nandan Bal, mentor of the Chennai Stallions, Zeeshan Ali, Davis Cup coach, co-Founders of TPL, Kunal Thakur, ex-national player and actor Mrunal Jain and others at an event in the national capital on Saturday, which was also the first of the two 'Talent Days' held to pick the rest of the Delhi squad.

Kashish Bhatia, who won the women's event at the Talent Day and will fill the second women players slot for Delhi Binny's Brigade, while runner-up Prema Bhambri will turn out for Chennai Stallions.

Yuki, the former junior World No 1, winner of the 2009 Australian Open Junior Championship and flagbearer for the Indian Davis Cup squad for many years, will have Manish Suresh Kumar and Thailand's Peangtarn Plipuech as teammates.

The enhanced TPL 3.0 will have India No 1 Ankita Raina and Rutuja Bhosle, besides



participation from six international women players, who are Samantha Murray Sharan from Great Britain, ranked 206, Diana Marcinkevica of Latvia, ranked 262, Thailand's Peangtarn Plipuech, ranked 294, Sabina Sharipova of Uzbekistan, ranked 317, Valeriya Strakhova of Ukraine, ranked 379 and Sofia Shapatava. In the player's auction, held in Mumbai in March this year, Ramkumar Ramanathan emerged the surprise pick, garnering the highest bid of the day of Rs 4.5 lakh, and was picked by the Mumbai Leon Army. Prajnesh Gunneswaran was picked by Rajasthan Tigers for Rs 3.70 lakh while Saketh Myneni went to Pune Jaguars for Rs 4.40 lakh. Divij Sharan was picked by Gujarat Panthers for 4.10 lakh, while Purav Raja went to the Chennai Stallions for 3 lakh. Ankit Raina garnered the highest price for women's players, picked by Hyderabad Strikers for 4.10 lakh, while Rutuja Bhosle was picked by Pune Jaguars for Rs 3 lakh. While each team picked two men's and one women's player at the auction, another men's and women's player for each team will emerge from the Talent Days.

A total of 250 players have already registered for the Delhi Talent day in various categories, who will be vying for the different age group slots on the Delhi team.



## Malaika reveals her nickname on 'India's Best Dancer 2'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**A**ctress, dancer and model Malaika Arora and contestant Meyitemsu Naga discover they share a similar-sounding nickname on 'India's Best Dancer 2'. Malaika is a judge, along with Geeta Kapur and Terence Lewis; together they're known as E.N.T.I. (Entertainment, Newness and Technique). Meyitemsu Naga, who's from Nagaland, impressed the judges with his performance on the song, 'Ishq Walla Love', in the audition round. Post his performance, Meyitemesu revealed to the judges that he cannot speak Hindi and can only communicate in either English or his mother tongue Nagamese. And as Meyitemsu's name was nothing short of a tongue twister for the judges, he asked them to call him 'Me, as it was his nickname. This led to Malaika saying her nickname was also similar, for she known as 'Mimi' in her family. This came as a surprise to even her close friends and fellow judges, because it's an unknown aspect of Malaika's otherwise very public life. Speaking about his experience, an excited Meyitemsu said: "Dance is my passion. I am so happy that the judges appreciated my performance and my talent. I want to give my best through the show and win the trophy as a gift for my parents. This is just the beginning. I promise to do whatever it takes and prove my mettle as not just a good dancer, but also a respected artist."



## 'Big Boss 15': Salman lectures Afsana in 'Weekend Ka Vaar'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**T**he 'Weekend Ka Vaar' episode of 'Big Boss 15' will see Afsana Khan being scolded by the celebrity host Salman Khan for being rude to her housemates. In the previous episode, Afsana had a massive face-off with Shamita Shetty. Afsana was not only rude, but also used foul language. This made Salman angry and he questioned her about her behaviour

with fellow contestants.

In the latest 'Big Boss 15' promo, Salman asked Afsana how she could use such words. He called her "superstar of the season" sarcastically. Salman questioned her about body shaming and age shaming Shamita. He reminded her about the kind of words she had used, such as "budhi aurat" (old woman), "ghar baithne ka time hai tera" (it is time for you to sit at home) and "ghatiya aurat" (cheap lady).

Salman said, "Now, you will decide who is cheap." Afsana clarified that she was angry. To this Salman said, "Does that mean you can say anything?"

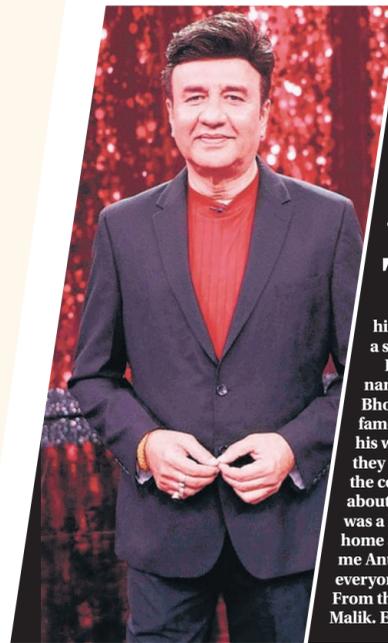
When Salman said she had a set pattern of the rude behaviour, Jay Bhanushali, Tejaswi Prakash, Vishal Kotian and Shamita Shetty agreed wholeheartedly. The host then declared he would have thrown Afsana out of the house, to which she responded saying she was ready.

## ANU MALIK REVEALS HOW ASHA BHOSALE GIVE HIM HIS NAME

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**T**he weekend episode of 'Zee Comedy Show' will see musician and singer Anu Malik sharing the secret behind his name. He appears on the show as a special guest.

For the uninitiated, Anu Malik's real name is Anwar Sardar Malik. It was Asha Bhosle who suggested to his parents, the famous music composer Sardar Malik and his wife Bilqis, sister of Hasrat Jaipuri, that they call him Anu. He shared the story after the comedian, Dr Sanket Bhosale, asked him about his name. Anu Malik revealed: "When I was a kid, Asha Bhosleji had come to our home and she asked my father if she could call me Anu. My mother was also there and she told everyone that because Ashaji has said this. From that day, everyone knows me as Anu Malik. Even my parents have called me Anu."



## KRISHNA BHATT LEARNT FILMMAKING FROM HER FATHER

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**D**irector Krishna Bhatt has opened up about what it was really like working with her father Vikram Bhatt on the web series 'Sanak - Ek Junoon'.

The father-daughter duo has worked together on the series, which has been written by him and directed by her. Talking about working together and learning from her father, Krishna says: "There was something about filmmaking that really intrigued me and an opportunity to work on a film with my dad made me make up my mind. I knew it is what I wanted to do. Since then, I've had several opportunities to work with him."

Known for web series such as 'Untouchables', 'Maaya 2', 'Maaya 3' and 'Twisted 3', Krishna says she owes much to her father: "There's so much that I've learnt from him as a writer and a director, right from managing actors and the crew on the sets to storytelling, getting the little nuances right, to moulding the actors in a way that we want our characters to be. He's very calm and composed, whatever the situation be, and that's something I learn from him every single day."

In addition to Rohit Bose Roy, Aindrita Ray and Pawan Chopra, the film also has Rushad Rana, Rishi Deshpande, Antara Banerjee, Amaara Sangam, Tasneem Ali and Harpreet Jaital in key roles.

## 'SARDAR UDHAM': CINEMATOGRAPHY AND VICKY KAUSHAL SHINE IN ASTUTELY RECREATED PERIOD SAGA

**FILM REVIEW**  
TROY RIBEIRO  
(Streaming on Amazon Prime)  
**Director:** Shoojit Sircar  
**Cast:** Vicky Kaushal, Shaun Scott, Stephen Hogan, Banita Sandhu, Kristi Averton and Amol Parashar.  
**Duration:** 162 minutes.  
**Ratings:** \*\*\*\* (four stars)



**T**he Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar in 1919 may be an incident etched in the memories of all Indians owing to its mention in our history textbooks, but not many know about the valour and sacrifice of Sardar Udham Singh, an ordinary lad from holy city, who witnessed this tragedy up close and personal.

He was haunted by the memories of that traumatic day for 21 years before he took revenge by assassinating Michael O'Dwyer, the then Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, upon whose orders General Dyer opened fire.

How Udham Singh joins Bhagat Singh's Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) and moves to London and there, with the help of others who are a part of the revolutionary movement, including a British woman, Eileen Palmer, eventually manages to shoot O'Dwyer and his trial thereafter, form the crux of this film.

The tale is straightforward, albeit narrat-

ed at a languid pace, but the plot, narrated in a non-linear manner, goes back and forth in time to establish the rationale behind Udham's resolve and provide a glimpse of his early life and his journey as a revolutionary.

The film belongs to Vicky Kaushal, who essays the title role with subtlety and an underlying ferocity, all at once. He is a man with a single-minded mission and never loses focus.

Each year of the wait to achieve his goal is a struggle and he portrays that with brutal honesty -- whether it is seeking refuge under various aliases or doing odd jobs to buy time or hone his skills. His body language, broken English, unbridled confidence and fearlessness, all exude the aura of a revolutionary and freedom fighter.

The screenplay by Shubhendu Bhattacharya is taut and well-researched, throwing light on several historical facts unknown to many. The period is recreated with honesty and one is transported there.

The dialogues are crisp, yet hard-hitting, particularly O'Dwyer's scathing speech at

Caxton Hall before he is shot, reiterating that "It is the right and the duty of the British to rule India". One can feel Udham Singh's anger upon hearing these words, further strengthening his resolve.

The cinematography by Avik Mukhopadhyay is atmospheric and enriches the scenes with unparalleled brilliance. His lens brings alive each frame with candour and the story with it. Particularly noteworthy is the heart-wrenching Jallianwala Bagh massacre scene where the pain and paths of those injured and dying are palpable.

The end of the film, maybe known to us and predictable, but the surge of patriotism and the awe-inspiring feeling for Udham Singh is something Shoojit Sircar manages to arouse in each viewer. The dauntless unremorseful Udham Singh, with Bhagat Singh's photograph in his clenched fist as he lies motionless, becomes an everlasting memory.

Overall, with a runtime of 162 minutes, there are moments when you feel the viewing is a bit tedious.

## Pooja Gor opens up on movie based on her popular show

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**A**ctress Pooja Gor has talked about the movie 'Pratigya Ki Ankahee Dastaan', which is based on the show 'Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya 2' that premiered on March 15 featuring Pooja and Arhaan Behl. But the movie will showcase a new story.



Pooja says: "This Sunday, 'Pratigya Ki Ankahee Dastaan' will retain the essence of the original, but with a fresh storyline that is more relevant in today's time. The character of 'Pratigya' is so well-blended in my blood that it just flows. I can wake up and before I open my eyes, I can be in the character if you say 'action'." The story of 'Pratigya' and 'Krishna' has been shown to the viewers with its drama-packed episodes in Seasons 1 and 2 in the show 'Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya'. The one-time watch movie 'Pratigya Ki Ankahee Dastaan' is produced by Rajan Shahi. It stars Pooja Gor and Arhaan Behl in the respective roles of Pratigya and Krishna.

Talking about her character, Pooja says, "It is a character that is closest to my heart. It will always remain special, and I will always remain 'Pratigya'. This character has given me everything from name to fame. It gave me lessons as an actor, it gave me growth. I urge all the fans of Pratigya to watch us one more time on October 17." 'Pratigya Ki Ankahee Dastaan' will air on October 17 at 9 pm on Star Plus.

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Karishma Tanna