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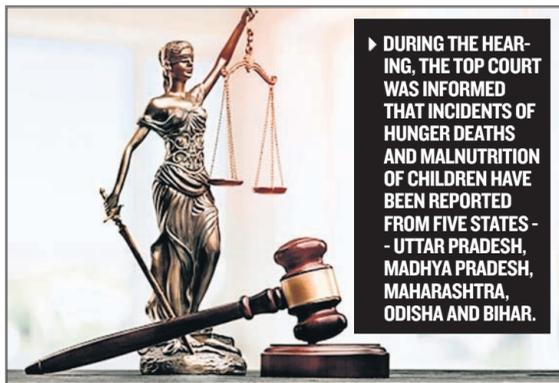
**THE SUPREME COURT DIRECTS CENTRE TO FORMULATE SCHEME ON COMMUNITY KITCHENS**

## 'People are dying due to hunger'

The top court said that it will grant three weeks' time to the Central government to come up with some scheme, which is agreeable to various state governments.

“ See if you want to take care of hunger, no constitution, law or court will say no. My suggestion again is...already we're delaying, so further adjournments won't help... We'll give you the final time of two weeks, please hold that meeting (with state governments to develop a scheme)... ”

**N.V. Ramana,**  
Chief Justice of India



► DURING THE HEARING, THE TOP COURT WAS INFORMED THAT INCIDENTS OF HUNGER DEATHS AND MALNUTRITION OF CHILDREN HAVE BEEN REPORTED FROM FIVE STATES - UTTAR PRADESH, MADHYA PRADESH, MAHARASHTRA, ODISHA AND BIHAR.

The Chief Justice told the Centre that 'people are dying of hunger and malnutrition is a separate issue, and do not mix them', and added that it is not bothered about the international malnutrition index, but it's only aim is to curb the hunger issues in the country. The bench said for any welfare state, the first responsibility is not to allow people to die of hunger.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday noted that people are 'suffering from hunger and dying of it', and directed the Centre to develop a scheme after consulting various state governments for creating community kitchens to take care of hunger deaths or malnutrition of children. The top court was hearing a plea seeking the setting up of community kitchens across the country to address hunger and malnutrition. The Additional Solicitor General, representing the Centre, submitted that the issues which are raised in the

writ petition with regard to creating community kitchens to take care of hunger deaths or malnutrition of children are under active consideration of the Centre, which is awaiting expert reports on the subject. The bench said that unless state governments are involved, it is difficult to implement the scheme, and the Centre should come out with some policy decision to implement the community kitchen scheme after

taking into consideration the other similar schemes relating to community kitchens, which are already in operation in different states. At the beginning of the hearing, the bench, also comprising Justices A.S. Bopanna and Hima Kohli slammed the Centre stating that it appears from the affidavit and submissions of the Centre that it is still in the process of gathering suggestions on the matter. The bench noted, "It looks like the

government is not in a mood to implement the scheme..." The bench noted that if state governments have any objection, it will be taken up in the next hearing. "We direct all states to cooperate with the Government of India in coming up with a scheme..." said the bench. The petition sought subsidised canteens in all states and union territories to ensure food security, in the backdrop of the havoc wreaked by the pandemic.

## CHINA OVERTAKES US AS RICHEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD

Beijing | Agencies

Global wealth tripled over the last two decades, with China leading the way and overtaking the US for the top spot worldwide, Bloomberg reported. A report by McKinsey & Co. that examines the national balance sheets of ten countries representing more than 60 per cent of the world's income. China accounted for almost one-third of gains in global net worth over the past two decades, the report said. "We are now wealthier than we have ever been," Jan Mischke, a partner at the McKinsey Global Institute in Zurich, said in an interview. Net worth worldwide rose to \$514 trillion in 2020, from \$156 trillion in 2000, according to the study. China accounted for almost one-third of the increase. Its wealth skyrocketed to \$120 trillion from a mere \$7 trillion in 2000, the year before it joined



the World Trade Organization, speeding its economic ascent, the report said. The US, held back by more muted increases in property prices, saw its net worth more than double over the period, to \$90 trillion. In both countries -- the world's biggest economies -- more than two-thirds of the wealth is held by the richest 10 per cent of households, and

their share has been increasing, the report said. As computed by McKinsey, 68 per cent of global net worth is stored in real estate. The balance is held in such things as infrastructure, machinery and equipment and, to a much lesser extent, so-called intangibles like intellectual property and patents, it added.

## Pakistan opposes new permanent members of Security Council



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Pakistan on Tuesday reaffirmed its strong opposition to the drive by the Group of Four - India, Brazil, Germany and Japan - for permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Express Tribune reported. Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN,

Ambassador Munir Akram took part in a debate and stated that there is no justification for creating new centres of privilege within the UN. "Any country seeking a more frequent presence on the Security Council should do so by subjecting itself to the democratic process of periodic election by the General Assembly," Munir

maintained, as per the report. Referring to the Italy/Pakistan-led Uniting for Consensus (UFC) group's bid for expansion of the 15-member council in the two-year non-permanent category, Munir stated that the group remains staunchly opposed to proposals for permanent membership for individual member states, the report said.

## BSF to continue guarding borders as mandated by govt

The West Bengal Assembly on Tuesday passed a resolution against the Centre's move to extend BSF's jurisdiction to up to 50 km from the international border in the state. The Punjab Assembly had also passed a similar resolution on November 11.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Following a resolution passed by the West Bengal Assembly against the extension of the jurisdiction of the Border Security Force (BSF) in the state, sources in the force said that it is a border guarding force and will continue to guard the borders as mandated by the government. The sources in the BSF also said that it has nothing to do with Centre-state politics,

and it is bound to follow the government's order. Describing the opposition by West Bengal and Punjab as a sheer "political" move, former BSF DG Prakash Singh recently said that under the new notification, the BSF has been mandated to search and arrest a person or persons only under the Passport Act 1967, Passport (Entry into India) Act 1920 and specified sections of the Criminal Procedure code, which includes any person illegally entering into the Indian territory.

## Centre has no control over CBI, AG to SC



New Delhi: Attorney General K.K. Venugopal told the Supreme Court on Tuesday that the CBI is a statutorily maintained body and the Centre cannot interfere with it regarding the manner in which the probe agency investigates a case. He added that the Union of India has nothing to do with the registration of criminal cases under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act or under Section 6 of the Act. The AG insisted that a suit cannot be filed where the CBI is not the party, but the Centre is a party. He emphasised that the Centre has no control over the CBI in matters relating to the registration of FIRs, adding that the CBI is an autonomous body. The West Bengal government has moved the top court against a Calcutta High Court order directing the CBI to probe the cases of murder and crimes against women during the post-poll violence in the state, which was witnessed after the declaration of Assembly election results earlier this year.

## CBI cracks down on online child abuse, raids 76 sites across 14 states

The FIRs were registered under Section 14 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POSCO) Act and Section 67B of the IT Act.

► As per the initial information collected, there were more than 50 groups having over 5,000 offenders sharing child sexual abuse material. Many of these groups also had the involvement of foreign nationals.

► It was initially learnt that there may have been the involvement of people from around 100 countries spread across various continents.

► Sources said that some of the foreign nationals were from Pakistan, Canada, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Azerbaijan, the UK, Belgium, Yemen etc., adding that 10 suspects have been detained during the raids.

The raids were carried out at around 76 locations, including Tirupati, Kanekal (Andhra Pradesh); Delhi; Konch Jaloun, Mau, Chandauli, Varansi, Ghazipur, Siddharthanagar, Moradabad, Noida, Jhansi, Ghaziabad, Muzaffarnagar (Uttar Pradesh); Junagarh, Bhavnagar, Jamnagar (Gujarat); Sangroor, Malerkotla, Hoshiarpur, Patiala (Punjab); Patna, Siwan (Bihar); Yamuna Nagar, Panipat, Sirsa, Hisar (Haryana); Bhadrak, Jajapur, Dhenkanal (Odisha); Tiruvallur, Coimbatore, Namkkal, Salem, Tiruvannamalai (Tamil Nadu); Ajmer, Jaipur, Jhunjhunu, Nagaur (Rajasthan); Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh); Jalgaon, Salwad, Dhule (Maharashtra); Korba (Chhattisgarh); and Solan (Himachal Pradesh).

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a major crackdown on Tuesday, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) raided 76 locations across 14 states and Union Territories to curb the menace of online child abuse. The agency had registered 23 separate cases against 83 accused persons on November 14, based on allegations related to online sexual abuse and exploitation of children. "The investigation is still on and teams have been deployed at all the 76 places," a senior CBI officer said. The cases were registered based on a source-based information that a syndicate of individuals based in different parts of India and foreign countries is indulging in

circulating, storing and viewing Child Sexual Exploitation Material (CSEM) using various social media platforms and groups. According to the FIR, there was information that 31 members of the aforementioned group were sharing CSEM content in connivance with each other. The premier probe agency said that it is coordinating with its sister agencies through formal and informal channels and searches and development of further leads are underway. Notably, the country is currently observing Child Safety Week from November 14 to November 20. Child Safety Week is a collaborative movement to raise awareness and encourage collective action towards addressing the issues of child sexual abuse.

## TEACHERS NOD WHEN RAJ CM ASKS IF THEY HAVE TO PAY FOR TRANSFERS

Jaipur: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, at a teachers felicitation programme, left one and all shocked when he asked them if they need to pay money for a transfer. The teachers, in surprise, responded with "Yes". Education minister Govind Dotasra was also on stage when Gehlot raised this query. As Rajasthan teachers were left embarrassed after being told by other teachers that they had to pay cash for transfers and new posts, he said, "It's quite unfortunate that teachers need to pay money for transfer. A policy should be made," he added. The video of the CM's interaction is going viral where Gehlot is seen promising to look into the complaint. The teachers meanwhile also accepted that they have had to lobby local MLAs.

## CHHATTISGARH SECURES TOP RANK FOR CLEANLINESS THIRD TIME IN A ROW

Team Absolute | New Delhi

On the occasion of 75th anniversary of independence, Chhattisgarh will be awarded as the 'Cleanest State of India'. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel will be receiving this award from President Ram Nath Kovind at Swachh Amrit Mahotsav to be held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on November 20. Ministry of Housing and

Urban Affairs, Government of India conducts Cleanliness Survey in all the cities and states of the country every year, under which urban cleanliness is assessed and evaluated under various parameters through third-party. These parameters include feedback of citizens, status of door-to-door garbage collection, scientific disposal of waste, open defecation free city, garbage free city etc. Based on this evaluation,

the ranking of states and cities is released and the best performing states and cities are awarded. Chhattisgarh is the only state of the country, where more than 9,000 'Swachhhta Didis' are working towards door-to-door collection of wet and dry garbage and the scientific disposal of this waste. Besides, the Government of India has also declared Chhattisgarh as the first ODF state of the country.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Kartarpur Corridor with Pakistan will reopen from November 17 (Wednesday), just two days ahead of Gururpurab, the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Union Home Minister Amit Shah posted on Twitter. The government's move came after a Sikh delegation on Sunday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and urged him to reopen the corridor. The Sikh pilgrim-

*Kartarpur corridor to reopen from today*

age corridor, connecting the Darbar Singh Sahib Gurudwara in Pakistan from Dera Baba Nanak Sahib in Gurdaspur in Punjab, was closed since March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Kartarpur corridor gives access to the Sikh pilgrims to visit Gurudwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan without a visa. Darbar Sahib is believed to be the final resting place of Guru Nanak Dev ji. The foundation stone for the Kartarpur Sahib corridor was laid on November 26, 2018 and the corridor was completed on the 550th birth anniversary of the Sikh Guru in 2019.



# MODI INAUGURATES UP E-WAY, SLAMS 'PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'

Team Absolute | Sultanpur (Uttar Pradesh)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Tuesday, inaugurated the 341-kilometre long Purvanchal Expressway and termed it as the 'pathway to development of new UP'. He also slammed previous governments for lack of development and lauded the development push given by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that anyone who has any doubts about the capabilities of Uttar Pradesh and its people should come to Sultanpur today to witness their capability. "Three years ago, when I laid the foundation stone of this expressway, there was just plain land here and today, we have this modern expressway where I have landed in an aircraft," he said. He said that the expressway, besides adding a new chapter to connectivity, would give an impetus to industrial development and strengthen the economic backbone of the state.



The Prime Minister said that the country's security was as important as its prosperity.

"The Purvanchal Expressway has now become one more power for the Indian Air Force in cases of emergency. Our fighter planes can land on the expressway," he said.

The Prime Minister also mounted a blistering attack on the 'previous government' (read SP government) without taking names.

"The politics done in UP, the manner in which govts were run for a long time -- they did not pay attention to the all-round and holistic development. One region of UP and its people were given away to the mafia and poverty. For previous chief ministers, development was limited to their families and where they had their homes. Previous UP government only cared about their family wealth," he said.

"I was anguished to know

that the previous government did not cooperate with us. Their leaders were even hesitant to stand with me. They would welcome me at the airport and then vanish for fear of their vote bank," he said. He said that for years, the partnership of dynastic families crushed Uttar Pradesh's aspirations and did not develop defence infrastructure. The upcoming defence corridor is now a major step in this direction," he said. Continuing his attack

on 'previous government, Modi said that earlier there were no roads but people of UP were looted on highways.

He said that when he was elected from Uttar Pradesh, he decided that as 'Pradhan sevak', it was his duty to transform UP.

"Seeing the situation in UP, 7-8 years ago, I used to wonder what some people are punishing UP for. In 2014, when UP gave me the opportunity to serve the great land of India, I started many developmental works for the development of UP," he said.

The Prime Minister lauded Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for giving a major push to development on the concept of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' and without any consideration of caste, family or region.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath welcomed the Prime Minister and gifted him a model of the Ram Temple being built in Ayodhya. Later, a scintillating air show was held at the venue, displaying the air power of the Indian Air Force.

## 'Falsehood is in power', Rahul attacks govt on National Press Day

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday attacked the central government, saying that it's clear that "falsehood is in power".

National Press Day is celebrated every year on November 16 in honour of the establishment of the Press Council of India (PCI).

Rahul Gandhi tweeted a video saying, "When there's punishment for speaking the truth, it's clear that falsehood is in power."

The video that Rahul Gandhi shared, shows the arrests and attacks on journalists in many places including Tripura along with reports on the incidents.

After two journalists who covered recent incidents of violence in Tripura were detained and later arrested by the police, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Sunday accused the BJP-ruled government of "murdering" journalism. Later both these journalists -- Samridhi Sakuniya and Swarna Jha were given bail by a Tripura court.



## PRIYANKA TO START DIALOGUE WITH WOMEN IN CHITRAKOOT

New Delhi/Chitrakoot: Congress

General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will start a direct dialogue with women - "Ladki hun lad sakti hun" in Chitrakoot on Wednesday at Ramghat. The venue has been chosen to give subtle message as Chitrakoot has religious importance and had its own identity since times immemorial. The first known mention of the place is in the Valmiki's Ramayan, which is believed to be the first ever Mahakavya. Valmiki speaks of Chitrakoot as an eminently holy place. The Congress General Secretary will also visit temple in the area. The Congress is making big promises to the fairer gender and hopes to make inroads in the women vote bank.



## Bihar Dy CM reportedly abused students in Bettiah; video goes viral

PATNA | Agencies

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Renu Devi was in the centre of a controversy for using an abusive word in a public place, as per a video that went viral on Tuesday.

Renu was reacting angrily to students who blocked her way in her home town Bettiah on November 12.

While sitting on the front seat of her car, she was caught on camera angrily saying: "Where is your (expletive) secretary of Arrah? He said that the exam should be held in Muzaffarpur. I told him to conduct examination in Bettiah or Motihari, 'Al could not confirm the video on social media.

In Bettiah, a group of students of MJK college were sitting on dhama to have the exam centre changed from Muzaffarpur to East or West



Champan district. When they learnt that deputy CM Renu Devi was staying in the circuit house, they assembled at its gate.

As soon as she came out from the circuit house on November 12, the students gheraoed Renu's convoy. When contacted, Renu Devi refused to comment on this matter.

## RAJ GOVT SLASHES VAT, PETROL BECOMES CHEAPER BY RS 4, DIESEL BY RS 5

Jaipur: The Rajasthan government on

Tuesday decided to reduce Value-Added Tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel by Rs 4 and Rs 5 per litre respectively. This will be effective from Tuesday midnight, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said. The decision to slash VAT rate on petrol and diesel was taken unanimously in the cabinet meeting held here on Tuesday. The new rates will be applicable from Tuesday midnight, according to which petrol will be cheaper by Rs 4 per litre and diesel will be slashed by Rs 5 per litre. The state will incur a loss of Rs 3,500 crore in its annual revenue with this decision, said Gehlot in his tweet. After the Centre reduced excise on fuel early this month, there was growing pressure on state governments to reciprocate by slashing fuel tax to ease inflation and give the economy a consumption boost.

## Humanity trumps religion as Hindu man offers space for Friday Namaz

GURUGRAM | Agencies

Stories of humanity and brotherhood continue to strengthen society.

One such report was received from Gurugram, where a Hindu man offered the roof of his house for Friday Namaz.

The man, Akshay Rao said: "I offered the land to the Muslim community as it was facing problems post objections raised by right wing outfits."

"The right wing outfits have raised objection to Muslims offering namaz in



open spaces, post which 50 per cent of such prayers could not be held," he claimed. "Such an initiative can help to maintain harmony in the society. I will also provide the roof of my property, where every Friday, some people can comfortably offer prayers," Rao said.

He said: "It is a responsibility of each citizen of India to maintain the law and order situation. It was my little step towards helping people. I welcome Muslim people to offer namaz at my place." More than 25 people can offer prayers at the place offered by Rao. Meanwhile, Muslim representatives have demanded that the district administration should open the 19 mosques under the Waqf Board, which are currently unused, for offering namaz.

Welcoming Rao's initiative, Muslim Ekta Manch chairman Haji Shehzad Khan, said: "It's a good initiative that a Hindu brother nearby gave his place to offer Friday prayers. There is a dispute regarding open Namaz in sector 12 of Gurugram. We are peace-loving people and do not want to disturb law and order."

## MoS Finance Karad's mid-air 'healing touch' to ill flier

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a much-lauded gesture, Union Minister of State for Finance Dr Bhagwat K. Karad, rushed to the help of a co-passenger who took ill on a flight early on Monday.

The incident happened on IndiGo flight 6E171 from New Delhi to Mumbai in the early hours of Monday, around an hour after takeoff. A co-passenger - whose identity is not known - suddenly complained of giddiness and uneasiness, plus he was a patient of hypertension. When the airline crew appealed for any doctor aboard for help, Karad immediately went to the help of the co-passenger. Nipping the potential medical emergency, Karad, a surgeon, provided some primary medical assistance and administered an injection to the patient from the aircraft's med-kit. Later, the recovered passenger appreciated the gesture of



the MoS, a senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader who hails from Aurangabad and served twice as the Mayor of the historic city.

## SP, BSP MLCs set to join BJP in UP

Lucknow | Agencies

About ten members of the Uttar Pradesh legislative council, belonging to the Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party, will be joining the BJP soon.

All of them are Vidhan Parishad members, elected through local bodies, and their terms are coming to an end in March next year.

The names of these ten leaders have been cleared by the newly constituted joining committee of the Uttar Pradesh BJP, according to party sources.

All these leaders wield considerable influence in their respective areas and with support from the BJP, they will manage a comfortable reelection next year.

In the list that has been cleared for induction into the BJP, the most



prominent name is that of Ravi Shankar Singh Pappu who is present-

ly in the Samajwadi Party. He is the nephew of former Prime

Minister late Chandra Shekhar.

It may be recalled that late Chandra Shekhar's son Neeraj Shekhar has already joined the BJP.

Former Minister Markanday Chand's son, C.P. Chand is also joining the BJP.

Akshay Pratap Singh, a cousin of former minister Raghuraj Pratap Singh a.k.a. Raja Bhaiyya, is also quitting the Samajwadi Party to join the BJP. BSP MLC from Jaunpur Brijesh Singh 'Princu' is also changing loyalties to join the BJP. He is considered close to former BSP MP Dhananjay Singh.

Interestingly, most of the leaders joining the BJP belong to the Thakur community.

Their joining the BJP is expected to give a major boost to the ruling party which had faced reverses in the panchayat elections held earlier this year.

## New malware 'SharkBot' attacking banking apps on Android phones

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Cybersecurity researchers have discovered a new Android Trojan that can circumvent multi-factor authentication on banking apps on smartphones, putting users' financial data and money at risk. Called 'SharkBot', the Android malware has been found in attacks across Europe and the US, focused on stealing funds from mobile phones running the Google Android operating system.

"The main goal of SharkBot is to initiate money transfers from the compromised devices via Automatic Transfer Systems (ATS) technique bypassing multi-factor authentication mechanisms," the researchers from cybersecurity firm Cleary said in a statement. "These mecha-



nisms are used to enforce users' identity verification and authentication, and are usually combined with behavioural detection techniques to identify suspicious money transfers," the

team added. 'SharkBot' appears to have a very low detection rate by antivirus solutions since multiple anti-analysis techniques have been implemented. "Once

SharkBot is successfully installed in the victim's device, attackers can obtain sensitive banking information through the abuse of Accessibility Services, such as credentials, personal

information, current balance, etc., but also to perform gestures on the infected device," the researchers informed.

'SharkBot' belongs to a "new" generation of mobile malware, as it is able to perform ATS attacks inside the infected device.

This technique has already been seen recently from other banking trojans, such as Gustuff.

ATS (Automatic Transfer System) is an advanced attack technique (fairly new on Android) which enables attackers to auto-fill fields in legitimate mobile banking apps and initiate money transfers from the compromised devices.

The malicious app is installed on the users' devices using both the side-loading technique and social engineering schemes, the report said.

## MINI GUN FACTORY BUSTED IN BIHAR'S AURANGABAD



PATNA | Agencies

Bihar's Aurangabad Police have busted a mini gun factory in Maoist affected Noaw village under Obra police station, police officials said on Tuesday. Kantesh Kumar Mishra, SP of Aurangabad district, said that the raid was conducted jointly by personnel from the Obra and Goh police stations. A huge cache

of illegal countrymade arms, ammunition and raw materials used to manufacture weapons was seized. "We received a tip-off about a person named Roshan Vishwakarma running a mini gun factory in Noaw village. Accordingly, a team headed by Obra SHO Pankaj Kumar Saini and Goh police station SHO Shamim Ahmed conducted a raid at his house and arrested him," Mishra said. During the

search operation, police recovered 3 revolvers, one country-made pistol, two semi-manufactured countrymade guns, 3 live cartridges, 7 empty cartridges, 35 springs, 1 trigger, 5 trigger guards and other equipment.

"Vishwakarma, during interrogation, revealed that he has been involved in this business for more than 20 years. He also went to jail in 2011 for the same offence," Mishra said.



### VEHICLES OF 'MUKHYA MANTRI RATION AAPKE GRAM YOJANA' SENT OFF

## Food grains will reach the consumers homes in tribal development blocks: CM

Chief Minister took stock of arrangements available in vehicles

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has sent 11 vehicles from



Mantralaya premises to districts for 89 tribal-dominated blocks of the state under Ration Aapke Gram Yojana in the first phase on Tuesday. Such a system is being ensured for all tribal-dominated development blocks by the month of December under the scheme. Chouhan said that with the implementation of this scheme, our tribal brethren will get necessary food grains to their villages and homes without any hassle. Earlier, for ration people had to go to the ration shop. Yesterday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched this important scheme on the occasion of Tribal Pride Day celebrations. This is a new scheme for the welfare of tribals, which is also important from the point of view of saving time, energy and money.

Chouhan said that the youth who are performing the responsibilities under the scheme, have been selected from the tribal class and not from government servants. PM Modi had yesterday handed over the keys of vehicles to Anil Armo of Dindori and Laxmi Narayan of Mandla at the Tribal

Pride Day function held at Jamboori Maidan, Bhopal. In the scheme, arrangements have been made to give loan guarantee and margin money to the youth of the tribal class for the vehicle. Provision of weighing machine and salesmen in the vehicle will surely be in the interest of the consumers. In the scheme, food distribution will be done on a fixed day in each village.

Under the Mukhya Mantri Ration Aapke Gram Yojana, the ration items to be distributed from 4 thousand fair price shops in 20 districts will be delivered to the consumers of the tribal class through vehicles. This arrangement will take 450 vehicles. The number of villages benefited from the scheme is 7 thousand 500. Implementing the scheme, Chouhan today showed the green signal to 12 vehicles for tribal dominated areas. He took stock of the food distribution arrangements and the utility of the vehicle by riding on it with the ministers.

## MP TO INSTITUTE AWARD FOR TRIBAL ARTISTES NAMED AFTER 'RAJA SANGRAM SHAH'

Bhopal: After making several announcements on the occasion of 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' that was held here on Monday, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Tuesday that his government will institute a special award for tribal artistes in the state.

During an interaction with over 650 tribal artistes, who had come to perform on 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' at the Jamburi Maidan, Chouhan said that the state government would institute an award after the name of 'Raja Sangram Shah' for tribal artistes.

"Selected tribal artistes of Madhya Pradesh would be honoured with the Raja Sangram Shah award," he said. Raja Sangram Shah was the 48th ruler of Gond dynasty in the Gondwana Kingdom of central India. During his reign, he had conquered 52 forts to strengthen his kingdom. The Chouraghar fort in Narsinghpur district was built in his honour.

Chouhan also announced that each tribal artiste who performed on 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' will be given an incentive of Rs 5,000. On Monday, the Chief Minister had said that food grains given to tribals will now be delivered at their door-steps. In the first phase, the state government has selected 84 tribal dominated villages in 12 districts of the state. He had also announced that all vacant seats reserved for Scheduled Tribes (ST) in various state government departments will be filled soon. Along with these, the state government has also decided to set up as many as 50 'Eklavya' residential schools in the tribal areas.

### CABINET MEETING CHAIRED BY CM

## APPROVAL TO MUKHYAMANTRI UDYAM KRANTI YOJANA TO CONNECT EDUCATED YOUTHS WITH SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the cabinet has given its approval to start Mukhyamantri Udyam Kranti Yojana to connect educated youths of the state with self-employment. The benefit of the scheme will be available to the minimum 12th class pass youths of the state between the ages of 18 to 40 years.

Under the scheme, projects ranging from one lakh to 50 lakh rupees for manufacturing units and one lakh to 25 lakh rupees for service units or retail businesses will be approved. Interest subsidy at the rate of three percent per annum and loan guarantee fee will be given to the beneficiary at the prevailing rate for a maximum of 7 years on the loan disbursed by the state government as financial assistance. The implementation of the scheme will be done through the online portal. Through this scheme, youths who want to set up industry, service or business will get loans at low interest rates through banks. Also, no collateral security will have to be given for bank loans.

In order to promote air connectivity for economic development in the state, the cabinet rationalised the rates of VAT on Aircraft Turbine Fuel (ATF) in Bhopal and Indore, similar to the rate of 4 percent fixed in Gwalior, Khajuraho and Jabalpur. It has been decided to



reduce the current rate of VAT on ATF from 25 percent to 4 percent. With this decision, the tourism and economic activities and hospitality sector will also get a boost due to the availability of air services from one city to another in the state. Also, due to the increase in air services, on the one hand, aeronautical institutions in the state will be attracted to operate air services from the cities of the state, on the other hand, air services will be available to the common people at concessional rates.

The Cabinet has approved plantation policy using CSR/CER and non-government funds through joint/community forest management committees.

Industrial groups, corporate bodies, individuals or voluntary organisations, willing to play a role in the restoration of forest areas

according to the plantation policy using the CSR/CER and non-government funds through joint/community forest management committees can submit their proposal to the Forest Development Agency established at forest division or state level. The civic bodies will be able to select the area for plantation according to their priority. Minimum 10 hectare area will be selected for plantation. Local species will be given priority in plantation. A tripartite agreement will be made between the Forest Committee and the Forest Development Agency, the organisation providing funds for plantation. The organisation providing funds for plantation will not get any right on the forest area or forest produce. The institution will have the right to use carbon credits in lieu of providing the funds.

## Coordinate cultural heritage, knowledge and skills in education system: Governor

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel said that the new education policy has given an opportunity to learn and teach the art of life. The youth of the country can do whatever he wants to become and do in life on the basis of the power of knowledge, can now do it. He said that universities should make efforts to coordinate India's tradition, heritage, cultural values, technical knowledge and skill development in the education system. Patel addressed the second convocation ceremony of Rabindranath Tagore University on Tuesday. Governor Patel said that the university should present the ideal of necessary changes in the education system to enhance the originality of the students. Prepare an

ecosystem in which students get to practice and experience practical knowledge to face problems, challenges and convert them into opportunities. Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has given an opportunity to the youth to make their dreams come true in the form of the new National Education Policy. Patel remembered Rabindranath Tagore. Paying obeisance to him he said, that he made Indian thought and philosophy a reality. His stream of thought encompasses the wealth of Indian knowledge from the Vedas to Vivekananda. In the programme, Governor released the convocation souvenir. Chancellor antosh Choubey presented research skill development booklet to the Governor. Keynote speaker of the



function, Mukul Kanitkar, All India organizing secretary of Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal said that the convocation gives opportunities to give a direction to life. He said that knowledge is the ability to go beyond illusion and recognize the truth. It is the responsibility of the educated people to engage in constructive activity towards building the nation and society. He said that at present the conditions are favourable to establish the

nation as Vishwaguru. He called upon the students to make nation building the goal of their lives. Chairman of Private University Regulatory Commission, Bharat Sharan Singh informed the students about the practical nature of knowledge through various illustrations and said that they should take up the responsibility of the welfare of the country and determine the direction of their future lives.

Illuminate They should make themselves, their family, society and educational institution proud through their good deeds.

University Chancellor, Santosh Choubey informed that 9 Centers of Excellence have been established in the University under the National Education Policy, which are engaged in research work in various subjects. The University is supporting the development of advanced agriculture and small scale industries in Raisen and Harda districts. The Atal Incubation Center is being operated in the University in collaboration with Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra, Deendayal Renewable Energy Center and NITI Aayog. The University also ranks between 100 and 150 in the NIRF rankings.

## TENDULKAR VISITED SOCIAL PROJECTS FOR CHILDREN THAT HE IS SUPPORTING

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Sporting icon Sachin Tendulkar, on Tuesday, visited social projects for children that he is supporting in various parts of Madhya Pradesh. He also took stock of the construction of a school that his foundation is building in association with 'Parivaar', in memory of his late father Professor Ramesh Tendulkar. While there have been various reports of the social work that Tendulkar has been doing - before and during the pandemic - safety restrictions have kept him from physically visiting the projects and beneficiaries. With the situation around COVID-19 easing, he visited children in the remote village of Sewaniya in Madhya Pradesh.

The children get nutritious meals, and an opportunity at complementary education and sports in 'seva kutirs'. Parivaar, an NGO that Tendulkar's foundation supports, runs these seva kutirs for most vulnerable tribal children. The comfort that Sachin and the children had with each other was evident in the heart-warming interactions. He also played some games with them. Encouraging them to chase their dreams and not give up under any circumstances, the Master Blaster

could be seen playing motivator-in-chief for the underprivileged children. As part of his visit, he also stopped at Sandalpur, to oversee the construction status of a school that his foundation is supporting. One learns that the residential school supports free education for tribal girls & boys and will accommodate about 2,300 children over a span of 10 years. Vinayak Lohani, the founder of Parivaar, had the following to say about Tendulkar's visit - "Sachin Tendulkar is supporting our various causes in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal, benefiting thousands of poor tribal children. His visit to our seva kutirs and residential school being built in Madhya Pradesh, encourages us to move forward in our mission to transform the lives of these children and the poor tribal communities. We cherish our association with Sachin and look forward to a long-term fruitful partnership with his Foundation." After the visit, Tendulkar also tweeted this from his social media account -- "Always a privilege to play for #TeamIndia - on the field or off it. Was satisfying to visit our seva kutirs and free residential school we are building with Parivaar. Our children can make this world better and brighter. We just have to ensure all of them get equal opportunities."

## CM plants Kadamba and Neem saplings in Smart Garden



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Kadamba and Neem saplings in Smart Garden today. On this occasion, environment lovers also planted saplings

along with Chouhan and presented him with oxygen enriching jade plant for his environmental love. The members of Natarajan Performing Arts and Welfare Society along with Chouhan planted saplings. This organisation is working in the field of cleanliness, environment and arts. Monika Gandharva, Joy and Anmol of the organisation planted saplings. Kadamba or Kadam tree is considered to be the tree of deities. Kadamba is famous in Ayurveda for its medicinal properties. Its fruits are like lemons. Kadamba flowers have their own importance. The mention of these fragrant flowers is found in ancient Vedas and compositions. Rich in antibiotic elements, neem is known as medicine. Neem may be bitter in taste, but its benefits are like nectar. Neem is also very useful from environmental point of view.

## MAKE THE VACCINATION MAHA ABHIYAN A SUCCESS: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that all the eligible citizens who are left out of the second dose of the vaccine should take advantage of the health safety cycle to protect against corona. The vaccination Maha Abhiyan is going on in the state. On Wednesday, November 17 also, the facility of vaccination will be available at the designated centres.



Chouhan has appealed that such persons, who have not been able to get the second dose of the vaccine so far, should come forward themselves and get the second dose of the vaccine for the safety of their health and life. The target is to get the second dose of vaccine to all the eligible people in the state by December 31. All sections of the society have extended their cooperation in the vaccination mega campaign. The entire vaci-

nation work is to be completed in one and a half months. For this, representatives of all societies, public representatives, religious leaders, members of the Crisis Management Group should find and bring forward those people who have not received the second dose of the vaccine, help in protecting them from Covid.

## BJP, Cong in race to reach out to tribals in MP ahead of 2023 polls

Team Absolute | Bhopal

On the occasion of freedom fighter Birs Munda's birth anniversary on Monday, both the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the opposition Congress in Madhya Pradesh tried to present itself as more sympathetic towards the tribals.

To reach out to them, in view of the next Assembly polls due in 2023, both the parties organised events at different places to celebrate the occasion. While the Shivraj Singh Chouhan led BJP government organised a mega event 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' at Bhopal's largest ground Jamburi Maidan the Congress celebrated the occasion in Jabalpur, around 300 kms from the state capital.

In Bhopal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced several tribal centric schemes. Two Congress leaders and former Chief Ministers of the state Digvijaya Singh (1993 to 2003) and Kamal Nath (December 2018- March 2020) accused the BJP of using the occasion for political gains.

Addressing a gathering of over two lakh people (as estimated by the MP government) at a colourful event in Bhopal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi held the Congress responsible for not giving deserving space for the heroic stories of sacrifices by the tribals and their contribution in developing India.

Naming a dozen tribal heroes, Modi congratulated the gathering announcing that Birs Munda's birth anniversary will be celebrated like that of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and other freedom fighters.

"Tribal cultures are our heritage. Tribals are skilled in the arts but they were not given a marketplace in the last 70 years. Their poor condition was used for just political gains. But, this have started changing since the last 7 years. I have made some changes in policies of forest and mining which create job opportunities for tribals at their places. Handmade crafts of tribals are given



space for business and their arts are in global markets through online."

He said that dozens of schemes introduced by the Chouhan-led BJP government will bring more changes in the lives of tribals in Madhya Pradesh. "I am happy to know that tribals deprived of public services will be getting foodgrains at their doorstep. The Centre has also made some policies which are going to bring changes in tribals' lives," Modi added.

Chouhan has announced distributing foodgrains in tribal areas in several districts at their doorstep. "Our government is committed to provide ample opportunity for tribal children to grow up. All vacant posts for tribals will be filled in all departments soon," Chouhan said while addressing the gathering.

In Jabalpur, Kamal Nath said the BJP has never been for the poor and the tribals. "Shivraj Singh announces a new scheme every day, but they remain on paper only. Why did he (Shivraj Singh) suddenly think of organising the Janjatiya Gaurav Divas after 18 years? Because they know the peo-

ple of Madhya Pradesh are fed up with the BJP government," Nath added.

The BJP government has spent around (as per official announcement) Rs 23 crore, including Rs 12 crore for transportation of tribals from different parts of the state.

The BJP also changed the name of Habibganj Railway Station after tribal queen Rani Kamalapati.

The celebrations in the name of tribal freedom fighters was not limited to just Bhopal and Jabalpur as local leaders of both the parties participated in programmes held in several tribal areas.

Tribals celebrate the birth anniversary of Birs Munda with joy, beating drums and dancing in their traditional attire.

As per the National Crime Record Bureau data, Madhya Pradesh has recorded the highest number of cases of atrocities against Scheduled Tribes at 2,401. In 2019, this figure was 1,922, while in 2018 it was 1,868.

In the last two years, the state reported a 28 per cent increase in atrocities against tribals.



## EDITOR'S SPECS

## BJP to select candidates for Assembly polls

The BJP is likely to begin the process of selecting its candidates from December for the upcoming Assembly polls in five states. A senior BJP leader associated with the party's election management said that while selecting the party candidates, the BJP will take into account the strength of the opposition parties on a particular Assembly seat as well as consider all caste equations. The BJP will select the candidates by adopting a two-pronged strategy. The BJP leader said that while on many seats there will be a direct fight with the opposition parties, on many seats the contest will be triangular or multi-cornered. On the basis of the analysis of these situations, the BJP will choose its candidates and decide whether to give tickets to the sitting MLAs again or not. While adopting the party's mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas', the BJP would keep in view the social engineering equations of the particular region during the selection of candidates. In Uttar Pradesh, on the basis of the current caste equations, it is expected that there will be a direct political fight between the BJP and the Samajwadi Party (SP) on the majority of seats in the state. The BJP candidates must get 40 to 45 per cent votes to win these seats. In seats where the BJP will compete with the candidates of SP, Bahujan Samaj Party, Congress or other opposition parties, its candidates can win even by securing 30 to 35 per cent votes. In Goa, the BJP will be involved in a direct fight with the Congress, although regional parties such as the Goa Forward Party and the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party will pose a tough political challenge to the BJP on some Assembly seats. Despite the entry of the AAP in Uttarakhand, the BJP is assuming that it will have a direct fight with the Congress in the state.

# Old foes poised against each other again

Asad Mirza

India and Pakistan are poised against each other, to play a more proactive and constructive role in Afghanistan's redevelopment, trying to negate each other's initiatives.

The ascendancy of Taliban to power in Afghanistan almost two-and-a-half months ago, after the hasty and chaotic withdrawal of the US forces from the country had raised hopes that Afghanistan may see the dawn of a peaceful era and the Taliban 2.0 might be able to establish a stable and secure government in the country.

Since August, a lot of regional and multilateral meetings and conferences have been hosted to find a roadmap to lead Afghanistan to peace and stability, besides various country's representatives meeting Taliban representatives in Doha.

Countries that have a lot of stake in Kabul and are affected by the Afghanistan affairs both internally and externally have taken most of these initiatives.

### MEETINGS ON AFGHANISTAN

Russia hosted the first regional conference titled Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan in which all the Central Asian republics, China, Iran, Pakistan and India and a high-level Taliban delegation also participated.

Its objective was to find "a regional consensus" amongst the participants regarding the Taliban 2.0. But the primary objective was to get the Taliban to form a broad-based government in Kabul, reflecting the country's ethnic and religious diversity, ensure basic human rights of all Afghans, particularly the women and children, and get an assurance from the Taliban that Afghan territory will not be allowed to be used as a launchpad for terrorist attacks on other countries.

Soon after, Tehran hosted a similar conference of regional and neighbouring states to discuss how to deal with the Taliban. Once again, the de facto objective was to find a regional consensus and to pressurise the Taliban to adhere to its commitments. Its additional

aim was to ensure the welfare and safety of the Hazara community and other Shias of Afghanistan.

### DRSD AND T+ MEETINGS

However, the most curious meetings were hosted by India and Pakistan on 10 and 11 November in New Delhi- called Delhi Regional Security Dialogue and Islamabad-called Troika Plus, respectively. It seems as if the two regional foes wanted to establish their supremacy over each other, in order to play a crucial role in the redevelopment of Afghanistan.

But more curious play out during these meetings was that no Taliban representative was present at either of the two, though the acting foreign minister of the Taliban government, Amir Khan Muttaqi was present in Islamabad from 10 to 12 November. He had to contend with meeting the participating special representatives of Pakistan, US, Russia and China and Pakistan prime minister and foreign minister separately.

In yet another twist Russia, issued a statement of its own after the release of the Delhi Declaration, based on a twist of words and technicalities, but this is uncalled for in diplomatic circles.

Pakistan and China didn't attend the DRSD, Pakistan's NSA Moeed Yusuf said he would not attend the New Delhi meeting saying "spoiler can't be a peace-maker". India called Pakistan's decision unfortunate and said it reflects its mind-set of viewing Afghanistan as its protectorate. Its comments against India are an unsuccessful attempt to deflect attention from its pernicious role in Afghanistan.

On China skipping the dialogue, sources said that though it is not attending the conclave because of the scheduling difficulties, it has conveyed its readiness to maintain contacts with India on Afghanistan through bilateral and multilateral channels.

### WHY SO MUCH WORRY ABOUT AFGHANISTAN?

Now the question that arises is why are different regional and international players so interested



in Afghanistan? The US which entered Afghanistan twenty years back, following the traces of its one time prodigy in the name of War on Terror, is also seen kowtowing to the same Taliban with which it fought for twenty long years.

The underlying reason seems to be based on reports, which originated at different times during the last twenty years, but were described as controversy theories and were brushed under the carpet. But now the turn of events shows that they indeed were true.

According to reports published by Afghanistan's Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, the country possesses at least \$1 trillion of untapped mineral resources. A country of 38 million people is estimated to hold more than 2.2 billion tonnes of iron ore, 1.3 billion tonnes of marble and 1.4 million tonnes of rare earth minerals like Lithium, Chromite, Aluminium etc. besides Gold and Silver.

According to geologist Scott Montgomery, a minimum of seven to 10 years is required to develop large-scale mining in Afghanistan, to become a major source of revenue for the poor country. On September 2, the

Taliban said that the group would rely primarily on financing from China, which already holds several long-term mining leases around the country.

So one can deduce that this newfound love for Afghans and Afghanistan is based on the hunger for these minerals. During the last twenty years the American geologists might have identified the key areas and processes to be adopted to mine these resources, yet the US based on experience understands very well that to commercially exploit this natural wealth of Afghanistan, a peaceful and business conducive atmosphere is needed, otherwise in a war ravaged country the cost of mineral commercialisation may shoot up very high. That's why it seems to have propped up Taliban 2.0, ensuring that they are able to establish their government and promising them to give a small percentage of the revenues back to it as Developmental Aid and pocket the big chunk of revenue and utilising the rare minerals for

tional community too seems to be following on this blueprint. A classic case of present day economic imperialism.

As far as India is concerned, it wants to play a constructive role in Afghanistan, so as to ensure that the still present rogue terrorist elements in Afghanistan do not find their way to Indian Kashmir. Though it established contacts with Taliban last, but was seen as lagging behind to pursue them proactively, perhaps because of internal political dynamics. But it will have to take a calculated risk to engage with Taliban with foresight, so as to manage Pakistan's rude attitude on the issue, which considers Afghanistan as its protectorate and can't tolerate any Indian play. Only then India could claim to be a regional power.

(Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He writes on Muslims, educational, international affairs, interfaith and current affairs. Views expressed are personal)

## international

## Libyan election laws designed to obstruct polls: Prime Minister

Tripoli | Agencies

Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah said the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections face a major problem of "laws that are designed to obstruct the electoral process".

"The elections are going through a very big problem. The demand for the Libyan people to elect cannot be waived," Dbeibah addressed the gathering of youth and student organisations in the capital Tripoli.

He accused the House of Representatives (Parliament), which drafted the election laws, of obstructing the electoral process.

The prime minister stressed the need to hold elections based on "constitutional base and laws agreed upon by all". Libya plans to hold general elections on December 24 this year, as part of a roadmap adopted by the UN-



sponsored Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) with the aim to bring stability to Libya.

The House of Representatives in September approved the presidential election law, and approved the parliamentary election law in October.

However, the two laws spark controversy among some political parties that claim the laws were passed without

"consensus" among the parties. Candidates in the fray for the presidential election include Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, son of the late ousted Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi; warlord Khalifa Haftar, who previously led an insurgency from his eastern base against the UN-backed government in Tripoli; Prime Minister al-Dbeibah and Parliament Speaker Aguila Saleh.

## United State hid airstrike that killed dozens of civilians in Syria: Report

Washington | Agencies

A media outlet report has claimed that the US military concealed an airstrike in Syria in 2019 that led to the deaths of dozens of civilians, including women and children.

The New York Times report, based on a recent investigation carried out by the newspaper, said the strike next to a town called Baghuz, was one of the largest civilian casualty incidents of the war against the Islamic State (IS) terror group, Xinhua news agency reported. But the US military never publicly acknowledged it, said The New York Times report.

The newspaper found out that after the strike, an initial battle damage assessment quickly found that the number of fatalities was actually about 70, including dozens of women and children, and the death toll was immediately reported



to military officials.

A legal officer flagged the strike as a possible war crime that required an investigation. But the military made moves that concealed the catastrophic strike at nearly every step, according to the report.

"The death toll was downplayed. Reports were delayed, sanitized and classified. United States-led coalition forces bulldozed the blast site. And top leaders were not notified," it added.

During a press briefing at the Pentagon on Monday,

spokesman John Kirby said that Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has asked the commander of US Central Command, Gen. Frank McKenzie for a briefing on the 2019 airstrike. McKenzie had taken over Central Command days after the strike, CNN reported. "No military in the world works as hard as we do to avoid civilian casualties," Kirby said. "Doesn't mean that we don't always get it right, we don't, but we work hard to avoid civilian harm."

## Japanese lawmakers will be made to donate monthly allowance

Tokyo | Agencies

Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said on Tuesday that the newly-elected lower house members will be made to donate the 1 million yen (\$8,800) monthly transportation and communication allowance, which was received for October although they were elected on the last day of the month.

The new policy comes as criticism is rising over the full payment from the national coffers to those who won seats in the House of Representatives in the October 31 general election, after the opposition party took similar action, reports Xinhua news agency.

Toshimitsu Motegi, Secretary General of the LDP, said at a press conference that he believes it is "strange" for lawmakers to receive such an amount for just one day of service in the month, suggesting the party will discuss where should the money be donated,

as it technically cannot be returned to the state coffers. "We would like to take an appropriate response to avoid a situation that raises questions among the people," Motegi said.

On Monday, Ichiro Matsui, who is the Osaka Mayor as well as the leader of the Japan Innovation Party, criticised the payment and indicated the conservative opposition party will collect the allowance from its new Diet members and donate the money to disaster-hit areas. Tetsuro Fukuyama, secretary-general of Japan's main opposition Constitutional Democratic Party, said his party will seek to submit a bill that makes the payment of allowances on a daily rather than monthly basis.

The issue will be discussed in an extraordinary Diet session which might be convened on December 6, he added. Natsuo Yamaguchi, head of the LDP's coalition partner Komeito, said he will consider a response to the issue.

## IAEA chief to visit Iran 'soon'

Tehran | Agencies

Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), will make an official visit to Tehran soon, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh announced.

The Iranian spokesman said that Tehran is awaiting Grossi's response to its invitation, reports Xinhua news agency. Technical relations between Iran and the IAEA are going in a good direction, he said.

"Grossi has very close relations with both our atomic energy organization and our friends at the Iranian embassy in Vienna"

In his next trip, the IAEA chief will meet the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) as well as Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, said Khatibzadeh.

During a meeting between Grossi and Mohammad

Esلمي, vice president and the head of the AEOL, in Tehran in September, IAEA inspectors were permitted to service the identified monitoring equipment, installed in Iran's nuclear facilities, and replace their storage media which would be kept in seals.

On February 23, Iran stopped the implementation of voluntary measures envisaged in the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal, in a reaction to the former US President Donald Trump's unilateral withdrawal from the agreement and re-imposition of sanctions against Tehran.

Iran and the remaining parties to the JCPOA are set to meet in the Austrian capital of Vienna on November 29 to resume the negotiations which were paused in June due to Iran's presidential election and the subsequent alteration in the administration.

## Dosti bus service to resume between Pakistan and Afghanistan

Islamabad | Agencies

Pakistan and Afghanistan have agreed to resume the Dosti bus service between the two countries, a step being seen as a first positive move towards resumption of frequent movement of locals on both sides of the border.

The decision to resume the Dosti bus service was materialised during the visit of Afghanistan's interim Foreign Minister Ameer Khan Muttaqi, who came to Islamabad to participate in the Troika plus meeting on the current situation in Afghanistan.

As per the details of mutual agreement, the Dosti bus service would be running from Peshawar's Karkhano market to Jalalabad in Afghanistan. The bus service would be a big support for thousands of Afghan refugee families, traders and work related locals from both sides, to use the

bus for their frequent movements across the Torkham border.



his visit to Islamabad. The final nod, however, for resume by the start of the next year," said a Pakistani official confirming the agreement reached by both sides.

The Dosti bus service between Afghanistan and Pakistan was suspended in 2016 after the afghanistan-Pakistan border became a hot bed for terror activities, with both sides accusing each other of terrorist infiltration.

resumption of bus service will come after going through a scrutiny of security measures in place in both sides, which is expected to be met in the coming weeks.

"The Pakistani side welcomes Muttaqi's request for resumption of Dosti bus service and has assured that the service will

resume by the start of the next year," said a Pakistani official confirming the agreement reached by both sides.

The Dosti bus service between Afghanistan and Pakistan was suspended in 2016 after the afghanistan-Pakistan border became a hot bed for terror activities, with both sides accusing each other of terrorist infiltration.

The resumption of service is a positive step as it would mitigate pedestrian traffic at the Torkham border, besides providing support in facilitating divided families living on both sides of the border, stretching up to Jalalabad. Pakistan has been facilitating the movement of Afghan students and has also allowed tax free import of fresh fruits from the neighbouring country. Pakistan is also positively considering importing wheat to Afghanistan from India via its road route.

## S Korean Prez invited to Biden-led democracy summit

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea has received an invitation from the US for a virtual summit on democracy, which is expected to be attended by over 100 world leaders next month, officials in Seoul said on Tuesday.

US President Joe Biden is preparing to host the session on democracy on December 9 and 10 to address challenges to democracies and human rights, a move widely seen as part of efforts to counter China's growing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific Region, reports Yonhap News Agency.



The Foreign Ministry received the invitation earlier this week and has been preparing for President Moon Jae-in's attendance, officials said. "We are considering the matter under the premise of President (Moon)'s attendance at the virtual summit," a Ministry official said. "South Korea and the US have been in close consultations over the matter and will continue the coordination."

According to a tentative list revealed by the US media, China and Russia were not invited to the gathering, while its Asian allies, including South Korea, Japan and Taiwan, were included on the list.



WANKHEDE, KASHIFF KHAN LINKED WITH RUSSIAN DRUGS MAFIA IN GOA: NAWAB MALIK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra NCP Minister Nawab Malik on Tuesday accused the Narcotics Control Bureau Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede and FTV head Kashiff Khan of alleged links with the Russian drugs mafia operating in Goa and demanded answers from the drugs probe agency.

Army' and he is now being shielded... He has many cases lodged against him and is also declared an 'absconder' by a court," Malik said. Wankhede who is facing several allegations in the past few weeks has not reacted to the latest salvo unleashed by the Nationalist Congress Party Minister.

Khan not detained or questioned or nabbed, what is the reason for protecting him... the NCB will have to reply," Malik said. Malik also tweeted purported chats of NCB witness K P Gosavi and an "informer" from Delhi, which, he said, shows "they were planning to trap people who were going to attend the party on the Cordelia Cruise."

cases, but why Wankhede has not summoned him for probe and demanded that the call detail records of all of them should be checked by the NCB. The NCP leader's latest volley came as a part of his crusade after the NCB's raid on the Cordelia Cruise, which he has repeatedly labelled as 'farji' (fraudulent) and demanded a thorough probe into it.

Prioritise booster dose to healthcare workers: Maha to Centre

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Facing the prospects of a probable Third Covid-19 wave, Maharashtra on Tuesday urged the Centre to prioritise a booster dose of Covid vaccine to all healthcare workers. Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope made the suggestion to Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya at their meeting in the capital.

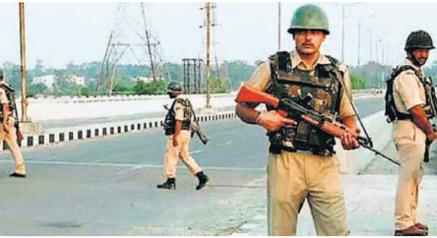


National Health Mission to prepare for the likely Third Wave. Tope also sought clearance for the proposal to set up Cath Labs under the supplementary PIP of NHM, which had earlier been rejected, at his meeting with Mandaviya. While Maharashtra has shown a declining graph of Covid-19 new cases and fresh fatalities, the state government is not taking any chances and is on high alert to tackle the potential Third Wave if it strikes.

Gadchiroli Maoist encounter toll climbs to 27

Team Absolute | Gadchiroli

The death toll in the Gadchiroli encounter of November 13 climbed to 27 with the recovery of the body of a slain Maoist from the forests, a top official said here on Tuesday. "The body of a Maoist killed in the encounter has been recovered by the local police. The deceased has been identified as Sukhlal Parchaki (33)," Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police Ankit Goyal confirmed with IANS.



Local police sources said that Parchaki was a resident of Kosami near the Sawargaon outpost, and his body was found in the wilderness around the encounter spot. On November 13, the Gadchiroli police and its elite C-60 commandos gunned down a total of 27 Maoists, including 6 women, with a collective reward of Rs 1.38 crore on their scalps, and recovered a large cache of sophis-

"Uddhav Thackeray Part-Time Chief Minister:" BJP's Poll Dare To Shiv Sena

Maharashtra BJP in-charge C T Ravi said Shiv Sena betrayed BJP and people of Maharashtra by joining hands with NCP and Congress to come to power

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra BJP in-charge C T Ravi today said Uddhav Thackeray is a "part-time" chief minister and dared the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government to dissolve the Legislative Assembly and hold fresh polls, which he said would prove BJP's strength. Speaking at the BJP state executive meeting here, Mr Ravi said Shiv Sena had betrayed BJP and the people of Maharashtra by joining hands with NCP and Congress to come to power.



after the 2019 Maharashtra assembly elections, accusing the latter of not honouring the promise of sharing the post of Chief Minister with the Uddhav Thackeray-led party. The Sena then joined hands with the NCP and Congress to form a government in November 2019. "Uddhav Thackeray is a part-time

chief minister of Maharashtra. The state needs a full-time CM like Devendra Fadnis. By joining hands with the NCP and Congress, the Shiv Sena has not only betrayed the BJP but also the people of this state," Mr Ravi said while addressing the BJP meeting, which is being held ahead of elections to the Mumbai civic body

and other municipal corporations next year. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the BJP often accused Mr Thackeray of running the affairs of the state from the comfort of his residence and not stepping out to understand the issues of the common people. NCP chief Sharad Pawar had defended Mr Thackeray, who heads Shiv Sena. "I dare the state government to dissolve the Legislative Assembly and hold fresh elections. They will then come to know which party gets the majority," Mr Ravi said. The BJP state executive meeting is attended by opposition leader Devendra Fadnis, state BJP chief Chandrakant Patil and other office-bearers. In the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly polls, the BJP had won the highest 105 seats in the 288-member House. The Shiv Sena had won 56 seats, Nationalist Congress Party 54, and Congress 44.

COVID-19:

Maharashtra records 886 new cases, 34 deaths, 948 recoveries on Tuesday

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra on Tuesday, November 16, recorded 886 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the number of active cases to 11,847. Besides, 34 COVID-19 deaths were reported in the day, taking the number of total fatalities to 1,40,636. 948 patients were discharged in the day, taking the tally to 64,69,739. The recovery rate in the state is 97.64%. The case fatality rate in the state is 2.12%. Currently, 98,703 people are in home quarantine and 1,024 people are in institutional quarantine. The Mumbai circle--which consists of

MCGM, Thane, TMC, Navi Mumbai, KDMC, Ulhasnagar MC, Bhivandi Nijampur MC, Mira Bhayandar MC, Palghar, Vasai Virar MC, Raigad, Panvel MC--recorded 393 new cases. The Nashik circle--which consists of Nashik, Nashik MC, Malegaon MC, Ahmednagar, Ahmednagar MC, Dhule, Dhule MC, Jalgaon, Jalgaon MC, Nandurbar--reported 144 fresh COVID-19 cases. The Pune circle--which includes Pune, PMC, PCMC, Solapur, Solapur MC, Satara--recorded 234 new cases. The Kolhapur circle--which includes Kolhapur, Kolhapur MC, Sangli, Sangli MC, Sindhudurg,

Ratnagiri-- reported 24 new cases. The Aurangabad circle--which consists of Aurangabad, Aurangabad MC, Jalna, Hingoli, Parbhani, Parbhani MC-- reported 34 fresh cases. The Latur circle--which consists of Latur, Latur MC, Osmanabad, Beed, Nanded, Nanded MC--recorded 37 fresh cases. The Akola circle--which includes Akola, Akola MC, Amaravati, Amaravati MC, Yawatmal, Buldhana, Washim-- recorded 4 fresh cases. Nagpur circle--which includes Nagpur, Nagpur MC, Wardha, Bhandara, Gondia, Chandrapur, Chandrapur MC, Gadchiroli --reported 16 fresh cases.

Maha Governor remembers first CM of Uttarakhand Nityanand Swami

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari on Tuesday paid rich tributes to the first Chief Minister of Uttarakhand late Nityanand Swami as part of the 21st anniversary of the founding of the Himalayan state. Addressing a cultural programme, 'Apnu Uttarakhand' organised by the "Shri Nityanand Swami Janaseva Samiti" (SNSJS), the Governor said that when he was the minister of Energy & Irrigation in Uttarakhand, he could complete the massive Tehri Garhwal project owing to the complete freedom given by the then Chief Minister Swami. "He was a fighter leader and a dedicated social worker. Despite the rough and tumble of politics, he gave me the

affection of an elder brother. I had the honour of working with him closely," Koshyari said. Swami, who passed away in December 2012 aged 84, was a successful lawyer who climbed the political rung by dint of his affable nature and humility. The cultural programme saw a folk music performance by a group from Uttarakhand, comprising Basanti Devi Bisht, Padma Shri awardee, and Vikas Bharadwaj, Shristi Kala and Aman Raturi. Later, the Governor felicitated the folk singers in the presence of the SNSJS Chairman RK Bakshi, Vice-Chairperson Jyotsna Sharma with Vinayak Sharma Swami and Shaina NC present along with film personalities like Himani Shivpuri, Chitrakshi Tiwari, Shruti Panwar and Deepak Dobriyal.

Mumbai AQI rises, rains may bring slight relief tomorrow

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai's air quality fell further in the last 24 hours with the city registering 280 on the Air Quality Index (AQI), this season's highest. An AQI between 201 and 300 is categorised as poor, according to the System of Air Quality Forecasting And Research (SAFAR). The AQI on Monday was 245, which also falls in the poor category. From November 1, there has been a steady rise in the city's pollution levels. While the overall AQI fell in the poor category, Colaba in South Mumbai was the most polluted location in the city, with an AQI of 345 on Tuesday. With the forecast showing thundershowers and rain in the city from Wednesday, the pollution levels are expected to slightly drop in the next 24 hours. As per the AQI forecast issued by SAFAR, the AQI is likely to be 266. Other locations which recorded high AQI on Tuesday were- Mazgaon (325), BKC

With the forecast showing thundershowers and rain in the city from Wednesday, the pollution levels are expected to slightly drop in the next 24 hours.

(314), Malad (306). Experts have said slower wind speeds have contributed to the rising pollution levels in the city post-monsoon. The spike in pollution levels since Monday is attributed to the incursion of moisture after the formation of a low-pressure area in the Arabian Sea. Due to weather systems, the humidity levels are have also increased in the city. An increase in temperatures has also been recorded over the past three days. The minimum temperature recorded on Tuesday was 25.4 degrees Celsius, which is 4 degrees above normal.

Man held for posing as cop to extort money from Shiv Sena MLA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Kurar Police arrested a 36-year-old man for allegedly posing as a police inspector from Gujarat and trying to extort money from Shiv Sena MLA Sunil Prabhu. The police said the impostor has been identified as Nishant alias Sunny Parmar and he was arrested from his residence in Beed. Officials said Parmar has more than 35 cases registered against him and in majority of the cases, he posed as a police official to blackmail and extort money from businessmen or politicians. The recent incident in which Parmar was arrested took place on October 28 when Kurar Police received a call from a person who introduced himself as Police Inspector Ramesh Singh Chauhan from Sanjan police station in Gujarat and needed information

about a case that he was investigating. When Police Inspector Manoj Chalke, a complainant in the case, called him back, the man claimed that he had arrested a person with illegal firearms who had also confessed to a murder. "The man said he had arrested a man who was claiming that he had committed a murder at Maharashtra MLA Sunil Prabhu's behest," Chalke said in his statement. He then asked the police inspector from Kurar Police Station to provide him with Prabhu's contact and whereabouts. Parmar then called up Prabhu and demanded money from him to avoid unnecessary harassment. "He demanded Rs 5 lakh from Prabhu and the latter refused to pay the amount. The caller then went on to say that if action is taken against him then he will have to face questions raised by the Opposition in the forthcoming Mumbai Municipal

Corporation election. Prabhu then agreed to pay Rs two lakh and asked him to send over his person to collect the money. The caller, however, insisted Prabhu pay the amount through GPay," the statement read. The incident came to light when Prabhu reached out to Kurar Police who had by then started their own investigation. "While the impostor was demanding money from Prabhu, Chalke had reached out to Sanjan police station in Gujarat's Valsad and learnt that a person named Ramesh Singh Chauhan was not working there," said an officer. Chalke's statement was subsequently recorded after which a case was registered. Parmar has been booked under Sections 170 (personating a public servant), 385 (extortion) and 389 (putting person in fear of accusation of offence, in order to commit extortion) of the Indian Penal Code.

MUMBAI POLICE MAY ISSUE THIRD SUMMON TO SRK'S MANAGER POOJA DADLANI



Mumbai: The Mumbai Police have informed that it may issue third summons to Bollywood actor Shahrukh Khan's manager Pooja Dadlani. Second summons was issued to her in which she had sought more time. "Now, there could be the issuance of a third summons too. So far 20 people have recorded their statements in the drugs-on-cruise extortion case," said the Mumbai Police. Last week, Dadlani skipped the Mumbai Police's summons for questioning in the alleged extortion case that came up during probe on cruise drugs bust case. After skipping the first one, Shah Rukh Khan's manager Pooja Dadlani has been issued a summons by the Mumbai Police SIT, a second time in the Aryan Khan drugs case. However, Pooja has sought more time to appear in front of Mumbai Police for questioning. According to sources, 'the second summons was issued to Dadlani in which she had sought more time. Now, there could be the issuance of a third summons too. So far 20 people have recorded their statements in the drugs-on-cruise extortion case.' Earlier, Pooja had skipped Mumbai police's summons for questioning on November 8 citing health issues. The police believe that 'her statement is important for the SIT in the case' and therefore when needed they will summon her again. The SIT of Mumbai Police is probing the extortion allegations against the Narcotics Control Bureau's team in the Aryan Khan drug case. Earlier on November 15th, Sam D'Souza also appeared before the SIT. According to NCB's witnesses, Prabhakar Sail and Sam D'Souza money was demanded from Pooja Dadlani for Aryan Khan's release from the anti-drug agency's detention on October 3 post it's a raid on a cruise ship. Reports say that they contacted Chunkey Panday's brother Chikki Panday and got Pooja and her husband's contact details.

EXTORTION CASE:

Two accused Mumbai cops sent to judicial custody

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Court here on Tuesday remanded two Mumbai police officers, arrested in connection with an extortion case registered at the Marine Drive police station here, to 14-day judicial custody. The court rejected police plea seeking extension of the duo's custody in the case in which former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh is also an

accused. The two arrested officers, inspectors Nandkumar Gopale and Asha Korke, were previously posted in the Mumbai crime branch. The duo was arrested last week on the basis of an extortion complaint filed by real estate developer Shyamunder Agrawal at the Marine Drive police station in July. On Tuesday, the accused were produced before additional chief metropolitan magistrate R M Netlikar at the end of their earlier police

custody. The police prayed for further custody of the accused on the ground they have lead about the duo receiving Rs 50 lakh in extortion money. The probe agency said they are gathering forensic evidence and since Gopale and Korke were not cooperating in the investigation, their further custody was required to get to the root of the matter. However, advocate Aniket Nikkam, appearing of Gopale, opposed the

remand extension plea, arguing custody is not meant for extraction of information from an accused. He submitted that the accused has been in police custody for the last seven days and an extension of remand was not required. The application for extension of police custody was also opposed by Korke's lawyer. The court, after hearing arguments of both sides, rejected the remand extension plea and sent the duo to jail under judicial custody.

The FIR in the case has named Param Bir Singh and seven others, including five Mumbai police officers, as accused. The five cops named in the FIR are DCP (crime branch) Akbar Pathan, assistant commissioner of Police Shrikant Shinde, ACP Sanjay Patil, the arrested duo Korke and Gopale. During the investigation, the police had arrested Agarwal's former business partner Sanjay Punamia and his associate



## DIRECTING 'BRUISED' WAS MY TOUGHEST CHALLENGE: HALLE BERRY

Los Angeles | Agencies

Oscar-winning star Halle Berry, who has gone behind the camera for the first time with 'Bruised', has revealed that directing the upcoming film was her toughest challenge.

Berry also plays a disgraced MMA fighter who decides to return for an unsanctioned bout in the movie, reports female-first.co.uk.

Talking about it at a Hollywood screening, Berry told The Hollywood Reporter: "I don't know how I did it. I was on some adrenaline, I was on a high. I had to get this out of my body and so I had to do it, I just had to keep going day after day and I was energised by it, I was ignited by and I was refusing to be told 'no'."

She had been despairing that no filmmaker could match her vision for the project until a producer suggest-

ed that she should take the bold step of directing the film herself.

"All of the filmmakers that I spoke to, they didn't see the story that I saw in my head, they couldn't quite understand all the elements of this," she said.

The actress added: "I finally went home one night and I was pretty distraught because I was like, 'Oh god, I can't seem to get a filmmaker to make this story.' And then my dear friend, (producer) Elaine Goldsmith-Thomas said to me, 'Why don't you direct?' And I said, 'Me? I've never directed a movie before, this is too big of a role to play. I can't do that.'

"She said, 'You absolutely can, you love it like I've never seen anybody love anything.' She suggested that she is determined to continue directing projects.

Berry shared: "It's hard to say what will actually be in my future but I will say this I know that women of colour have to keep telling their stories because we have a definitive point of view."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Less than 24 hours after teasing their collaboration, singer Taylor Swift and actress Blake Lively have dropped the much talked about music video for 'I Bet You Think About Me'.

The visual, from Swift's 'Red (Taylor's Version)' re-recorded album, dramatises one of the 'From the Vault' tracks that didn't make Swift's original 2012 album.

Actor Miles Teller plays Swift's ex, who has flashbacks to their failed relationship on his wedding day. At the ceremony, a mischievous Swift knocks over the groom figurine on top of the cake, chugs wine after giving a toast, and goofs off with younger guests, reports

**Taylor Swift, Blake Lively drop debut 'I Bet You Think About Me' music video**

variety.com.

At one point, Teller's character envisions Swift as the bride as she sings "Does it make you feel sad that the love that you're looking for is the love that you had?"

The six-minute music video marks the first time that Lively, the actress most recognizable from 'Gossip Girl' and 'A Simple

Favor', has stepped behind the camera.

Matthew Libatique, the Oscar-nominated cinematographer of 'Black Swan' and 'A Star Is Born', served as director of photography on the music video, while country music star Chris Stapleton lent his voice to harmonies.

## 'The British are coming', alerts 'Downton Abbey' sequel trailer

Los Angeles: Just over two years after the first 'Downton Abbey' feature film hit cinema screens and became a box office hit, its makers have unveiled the first glimpses of its sequel.

The trailer for 'Downton Abbey: A New Era', which is being given its debut in the US ahead of screenings of Kenneth Branagh's Belfast sees the Downton residents returning to their usual upper-class high jinx. There's a wedding (driver-turned-heir Tom Branson's second following the death of his beloved Sybil) and a seafaring adventure that takes the family to the French Riviera after a big reveal from the Dowager Countess, played by Maggie Smith, reports hollywoodreporter.com.

"Years ago, before you were born, I met a man. And now I've come into the possession of a villa in the South of France," the matriarch of the family explains, to which Mary (Michelle Dockery) responds in shock, "What?"

Written by creator Julian Fellowes and with Simon Curtis taking over as the director, the second movie in the franchise has somehow assembled the impressive star cast of 'Downton Abbey' once again.

Returning castmembers include Hugh Bonneville, Laura Carmichael, Jim Carter, Brendan Coyle, Dockery, Kevin Doyle, Joanne Froggatt, Harry Hadden-Paton, Robert James-Collier, Allen Leech, Phyllis Logan, Elizabeth McGovern, Sophie McShera, Tuppence Middleton, Lesley Nicol, Imelda Staunton, Penelope Wilton and Smith.



## 52nd IFFI to play special tribute to Sean Connery

Los Angeles | Agencies

The 52nd International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will pay special tribute to Hollywood legend Sean Connery, the first actor to portray iconic British spy James Bond, by screening five of his most loved films.

The five films that are to be screened as part of the special tribute to the legend are - 'From Russia with Love' (1963), 'Goldfinger' (1964), 'You Only Live Twice' (1967), 'The Hunt For Red October' (1990), and 'The Untouchables' (1987) which won him an Oscar in 1988.

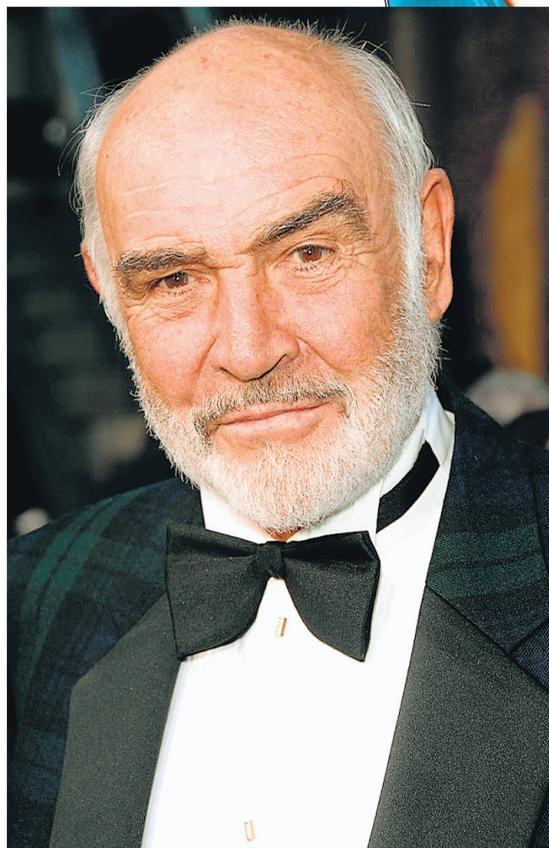
The Scottish actor who was known for his portrayal of 007, passed away in his sleep late last year.

Connery, who is remembered as the original James Bond, was the first to utter one of the classic movie catchphrases of all time - 'the name's Bond... James Bond'. His acting career spanned seven decades during which he appeared in seven of the Bond films.

His definitive performance as Agent 007 in Ian Fleming's Bond movies cemented his position as one of the most confident actors in Hollywood.

'Dr. No' (1962), 'Goldfinger' (1964), 'From Russia with Love' (1964), 'Thunderball' (1965), 'You Only Live Twice' (1967) and 'Diamonds are Forever' (1971) and 'Never Say Never Again' (1983) still command a legion of fans.

Connery is also known for his performances in 'Murder on the Orient Express' (1974); 'The Man Who Would Be King' (1975), 'Outland' (1981), 1993's 'Rising Sun', 'Dragonheart' (1996) and 'The Rock' (1996). In 1999, Connery starred in and produced 'Entrapment'.



## EU Film Festival puts a spotlight on Cinema and its various aspects

Los Angeles | Agencies

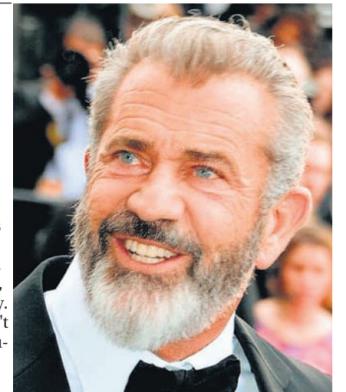
In addition to an eclectic lineup of 60 films in 37 languages, the 26th edition of the European Union Film Festival (EUFF) will also be hosting seven specially curated online side events, keeping with the festival's ethos of popularizing the craft of cinema, while furthering film education. These events have been curated to also further the Europe-India exchange on Cinema.

The month-long festival got underway on November 1st in digital mode, its second year in virtual avatar due to covid social distancing norms. It is organized by the Delegation of the European Union to India with the Member States and Partner Countries, to strengthen EU-India cultural and people-to-people ties through cinema, by presenting critically acclaimed films from the continent, spanning multiple genres and languages.

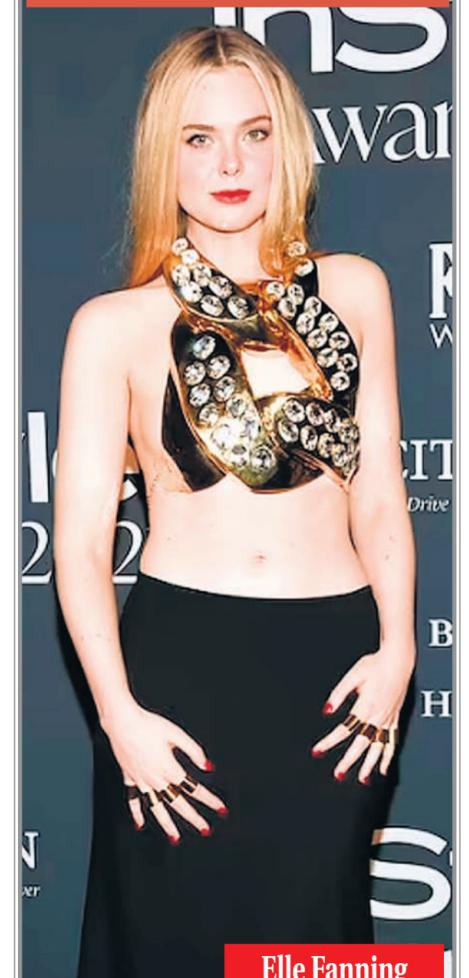
The special events will bring together over a dozen unique speakers from Europe and India, through sessions focused on the different facets of filmmaking including direction, production, scriptwriting, acting while dis-

actor Mel Gibson will be starring in and directing the fifth installment of 'Lethal Weapon'. Gibson, who appears as Martin Riggs in the franchise, announced his involvement in the project at an event in London, according to Britain's The Sun newspaper after paying tribute to the filmmaker who had previously helmed the franchise, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"The man who directed all the Lethal films, Richard Donner, was a big guy. (Donner) was developing the screenplay and he got pretty far along with it. And he said to me one day, 'Listen kid, if I kick the bucket you will do it.' And I said, 'Shut up.' He said: "But he did indeed pass away. But he did ask me to do it and at the time I didn't say anything. He said it to his wife and to the studio and the producer. So I will be directing the fifth one." The film is expected to enter the production sometime in 2022. Sources said: "As well as stepping up to direct Lethal Weapon 5 Mel is going to be starring in it." "Fans of Riggs will be pleased to see him back on screen - older but not necessarily wiser. It is hoped Danny Glover will come back to and reprise his role of Roger Murtaugh." Gibson has had a number of film under his directing belt. The 65-year-old won an Oscar for best director for 'Braveheart', and his other notable works include 'The Passion of the Christ', 'Apocalypto' and 'Hacksaw Ridge'.



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Elle Fanning



## India to host three ICC events in 2024-31 cycle, Pakistan gets 2025 Champions Trophy

▶ THE BCCI WILL HOST THE 2026 T20 WORLD CUP (WITH SRI LANKA), THE 2029 CHAMPIONS TROPHY AS WELL AS THE 2031 ODI WORLD CUP (WITH BANGLADESH) WHILE A GLOBAL CRICKET EVENT WILL RETURN TO PAKISTAN AFTER MORE THAN TWO DECADES.

▶ NOTABLY, PAKISTAN WOULD BE STAGING AN ICC EVENT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE CO-HOSTING THE 1996 ODI WORLD CUP ALONG WITH INDIA AND SRI LANKA. THE COUNTRY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO HOST MANY INTERNATIONAL GAMES SINCE THE 2009 TERRORIST ATTACK ON THE SRI LANKAN TEAM.



the host agreements and the ICC will now work closely with the members to finalise arrangements. In all, 17 Members submitted a total of 28 proposals to host the eight ICC Men's white ball events scheduled in the cycle. "We are delighted to have concluded this competitive bidding

process for the first time for ICC events. To have 14 members hosting 8 events is a reflection of the truly global nature of our sport and I'd like to thank every Member that submitted a bid and offer our congratulations to the successful bidders," said ICC Chair Greg Barclay.

### Seven host cities for 2022 T20 World Cup; final in MCG

**Dubai:** The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced seven host cities for the 2022 edition of the T20 World Cup, scheduled to be played in Australia between October 16 and November 13. The event next year will see a total of 45 matches being hosted across Adelaide, Brisbane, Geelong, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. The T20 World Cup final will be hosted under lights at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on November 13, 2022. The semifinals will be hosted at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) and Adelaide Oval on November 9 and 10, respectively. The men's 2021 T20 World Cup champions Australia and runners-up New Zealand besides Afghanistan, Bangladesh, England, India, Pakistan and South Africa, as the next highest-ranked teams, will gain direct entry into the 'Super 12' stage of the Men's T20 World Cup 2022. Namibia, Scotland, Sri Lanka and the West Indies will play in Round 1. The four remaining spots at Australia 2022 will be filled via the ongoing qualification pathway, culminating in two global qualifying tournaments, one to take place in Oman in February and the other in Zimbabwe in June/July.

Dubai | Agencies

India will host three ICC events in 2024-31 cycle while Pakistan has been awarded the hosting rights of the 2025 Champions Trophy. The International Cricket Council (ICC) Board on Tuesday confirmed the 14 host countries of the global men's white ball events from 2024-2031 and 11 full members and three associate members have been selected to host two ODI World

Cups, four T20 World Cups and two ICC Champions Trophy events. Meanwhile, the USA and Namibia will host an ICC World Cup event for the first time. Countries like Australia, Bangladesh, England, Ireland, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Scotland, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies and Zimbabwe have previously staged major events and will do so again over the next decade. The ICC also said that the hosting rights are subject to completion of

### 2024-2031 Tournament host summary

- 2024 T20 World Cup -- USA and West Indies in June
- 2025 Champions Trophy -- Pakistan in February
- 2026 T20 World Cup -- India and Sri Lanka in February
- 2027 World Cup -- South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia in October/November
- 2028 T20 World Cup -- Australia and New Zealand - October
- 2029 Champions Trophy -- India - October
- 2030 T20 World Cup -- England, Ireland and Scotland - June
- 2031 World Cup -- India and Bangladesh - October/November

## World Cup qualifiers Hungary stun Poland, England qualify with 10-0 win



Warsaw | Agencies

Andreas Schafer and Daniel Gazdar led Hungary to a 2-1 victory over Poland in the FIFA World Cup qualifiers here, ending Poland's unbeaten record at the National Stadium in Warsaw since 2014. England, thanks to Harry Kane's four goals, thrashed San Marino 10-0 to secure a World Cup 2022 berth late on Monday. However, the guests had the last word in the game. The team coached by Marco Rossi regained the advantage thanks to Gazdar's stunning shot with 10 minutes to go. Poland tried to find an equaliser in the closing stages, but were unable to threaten Dibusz's goal without their captain Robert Lewandowski, who was given a break by coach Paulo Sousa.

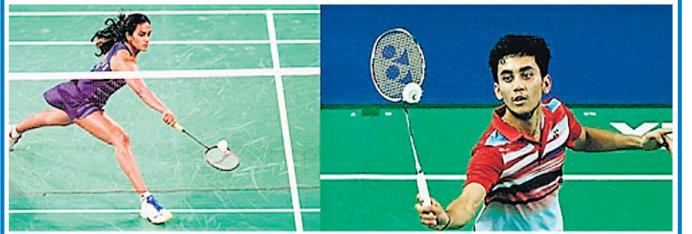
The Polish side will play in the play-offs of the FIFA World Cup qualification as they finished second in Group I. Hungary are fourth. Meanwhile, England and Switzerland have become the latest teams to qualify for the 2022 World Cup. The Gareth Southgate coached England, requiring only a draw to secure qualification to the 2022 World Cup, secured all three, crushing San Marino 10-0. The verdict was the first time England scored 10 in a single game since 1964, when Roger Hunt pumped in four against the United States in New York. This is only the seventh time that England have ever scored more than 10 goals in a game, according to marca.com. Following are the teams which have qualified so far for the 32-team World Cup in Qatar from November 18-December 18, 2022.

## Sindhu, Lakshya advance to second round of Indonesia Masters

Bali | Agencies

India's double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and in-form Lakshya Sen entered the second round of the 2021 Indonesia Masters badminton tournament after registering victories in their respective matches, here on Tuesday. Sindhu, who was last seen in action at the French Open semifinals, beat Thailand's Supanida Katchongthong 21-15, 21-19 in a women's singles match, which lasted 43 minutes. Up against the world No 33 Supanida in the round of 32, the ace Indian shuttler started well and raced to an 11-5 lead. The Thai shuttler then fought back and clawed the score back to 16-13, however, Sindhu used her experience to close out the first game 21-15. In the second game, Sindhu faced a stiff chal-

enge. With Supanida fighting tooth and nail for every point, the Indian needed to be on her toes in order to edge it 21-19. Reigning world champion Sindhu will now face world No 47 Clara Azurmendi of Spain in the round of 16. Azurmendi defeated Indonesia's Fitriani Fitriani 21-18, 21-14 in her first round clash. In men's singles, Lakshya Sen edged out world No 10 Japan's Kanta Tsuneyama in the first-round clash. The youngster, who had reached the semifinals at Hylo Open Super 500 and final of Dutch Open, displayed great determination to register a 21-17, 18-21, 21-17 win over Kanta in an hour and 8 minutes match. In the next match, Lakshya will face top seed and two-time world champion Kento Momota of Japan.



## Kane Williamson to miss T20I series vs India

Jaipur | Agencies

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson will miss this week's three-game T20I series against India as he prioritises preparing for the Test series starting on November 25 in Kanpur. The second Test starts in Mumbai on December 3. Less than 24 hours after losing to Australia in the ICC T20 World Cup final in Dubai, Williamson and the 15-strong T20 squad arrived in Jaipur on Monday evening ahead of the GJ Gardner homes tour of India. With the opening game of the T20 series on Wednesday evening, followed by games on Friday (November 19) and Sunday



(November 21), the decision was made for Williamson to join the Test specialist group already training in Jaipur as they focus on red-ball preparation. Williamson had also spoken about an elbow injury during the T20 World Cup, which has been a bit of a challenge for him and he has been refraining himself from over-hitting at the nets.

### New Zealand T20 squad:

Todd Astle, Trent Boult, Mark Chapman, Lockie Ferguson, Martin Guptill, Kyle Jamieson, Adam Milne, Daryl Mitchell, Jimmy Neesham, Glenn Phillips; Mitchell Santner, Tim Seifert (wk), Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee, Kane Williamson.

## India's template in focus as New Zealand try to bounce back from Dubai heartbreak

Jaipur | Agencies

India's template in the shortest format of the game will be in focus as the hosts begin their road for 2022 Men's T20 World Cup with the first of the three T20Is against New Zealand at the Saiwai Man Singh Stadium here on Wednesday. With just eleven months left to go for the next edition of the ICC T20 World Cup in Australia, new captain Rohit Sharma and head coach Rahul Dravid have a resurrection job at their hands.

The disappointment in the recently-concluded Men's T20 World Cup for India means that there will be auditions and look-ins for youngsters when players like Virat Kohli, Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah are rested. At the same time, Sharma and Dravid have to ensure that the refreshed and original template of India in T20Is is in tune with the ever-evolving times in the T20 world, something which the newly-appointed skipper had mentioned about in the pre-match press conference.



Squads

**India:** Rohit Sharma (captain), KL Rahul, Rituraj Gaikwad, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (wicketkeeper), Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper), Venkatesh Iyer, Yuzvendra Chahal, Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Avesh Khan, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Deepak Chahar, Harshal Patel and Mohammad Siraj.

## Sportz Village Foundation launches a unique platform called "Sport for Change Dialogues"

Aims to initiate discussions around development and sustainability for change

▶ SPORT FOR CHANGE DIALOGUES IS A UNIQUE PLATFORM AIMED AT INITIATING DIALOGUES WITH LEADERS AND CHANGE-MAKERS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY SPACE WHO ARE DRIVING THE CHANGE IN THE AREAS OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH - THROUGH SPORT.

Mumbai | Agencies

Sportz Village Foundation (SVF), India's largest sports education organisation which is empowering communities through the power of sports, has recently launched a unique platform called "Sport for Change Dialogues". The inaugural session was hosted by Parminder Gill - Co-founder and Head, Sportz Village Foundation & Chief Business Officer Corporate and the guest was Annie George, Sustainable Development Leader - Decathlon. The key discussion pointers of

the first episode were around the corporate approach to sustainability, community strategy, and challenges as well as learnings from Covid.

In the recent past, SVF has conducted impact evaluation studies for Decathlon's school-based community program to evaluate the opportunities to strengthen the program further. Under its Sport for Change platform, Sportz Village Foundation has also created a unique sports education curriculum designed to build the social-emotional and leadership skills of children through sports and physical activity. This program will get rolled out to all the schools supported by Decathlon in the country by next year.

## Players not machines, workload management a must: Dravid

Jaipur | Agencies

India T20I captain Rohit Sharma said that the team needs to get the template right in the format. He added that India needs to form its own template rather than following some other team's formula. Sharma and head coach Rahul Dravid addressed the pre-match press conference ahead of the first T20I against New Zealand on Wednesday. "We just need to set the template right, and we have got some time to do that. India have been brilliant in T20Is but it's just that we haven't won an ICC tournament. We

have played and performed well as the team. We will be looking to fill some holes in the team. I'm not saying we should follow certain team's template. We should set our own template, which suits the best for us," said Sharma. Sharma insisted Kane Williamson's absence from the series won't affect their planning against other New Zealand players. "We have to focus on every New Zealand player. They had different players who performed during the T20 World Cup. Kane Williamson will be missed by them but they have other match-winning players."

## Taylor, Matthews move up in ICC Women's ODI Player Rankings

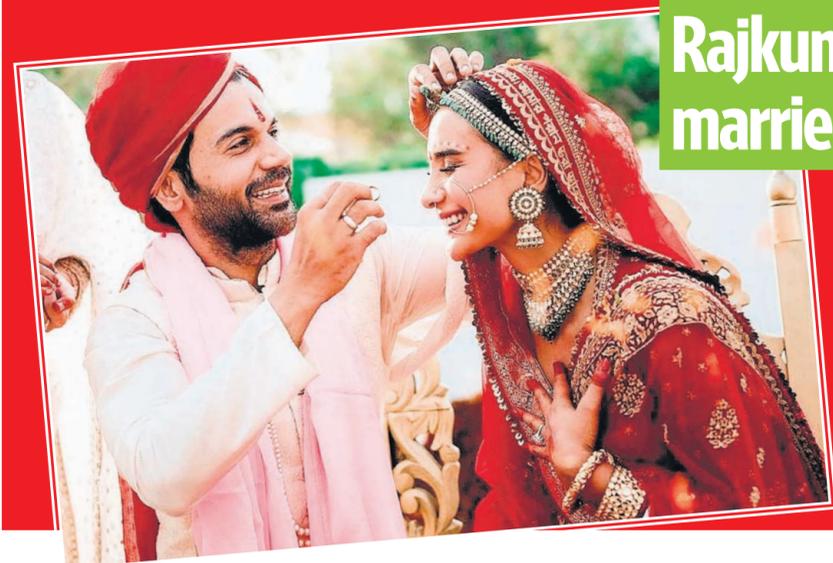
Dubai | Agencies

All-round performance in the recently concluded series against Pakistan sees West Indies' Hayley Matthews make gains in the latest ICC Women's ODI Rankings across all departments released on Tuesday. The all-rounder jumped to the 10th spot in the latest ICC Women's ODI Rankings for all-rounders. The latest update that takes into account the last two ODIs between Pakistan and West Indies saw Matthews return with scores of 26 and 49 to go with a four-wicket haul in the second ODI. Windies completed a clean sweep over Pakistan heading into the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifiers. Finishing as second-highest run-scorer in the series, Matthews also moved up four spots to 25th in rankings for batters and up three spots to 20th in bowlers.

West Indies captain Stafanie Taylor's innings of 102 not out in the final ODI helped her jump two spots to 12th in rankings for batters.



## Rajkummar Rao : Got married to my everything



Team Absolute | Mumbai

**B**ollywood actors Rajkummar Rao and Patralekhaa are now a married couple after dating each other for over a decade. The two lovebirds tied-the-knot in Chandigarh on Monday and Rajkummar said that he got married to his everything.

The actor shared a picture on Instagram on Monday evening after the wedding rituals took place. Sharing the first photos from their wedding, which currently has 2.2 million likes on the photo-sharing website, Rajkummar wrote: "Finally after 11 years of love, romance, friendship and fun, I got married to my everything today, my soulmate, my best friend, my family. Today there is no greater happiness for me than being called your husband @patralekhaa Here's to forever .. and beyond." Patralekhaa too shared a few pictures from the wedding. "I got married to my everything today; my boyfriend, my partner in crime, my family, my soulmate...My best friend for the last 11 years! There is no greater feeling than to be your wife! Here's to our forever," she wrote. The couple have been in a relationship for 11 years. Recently, a video of Rajkummar going down on one knee and asking his ladylove to marry him went viral. Their wedding invite too took over social media. Rajkummar and Patralekhaa, who are all set to get married this month, have together worked in films such as 'Citylights' and the web show 'Bose: Dead/Alive'.



I couldn't have asked for a bigger debut: Manushi Chhillar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**T**he freshly released teaser of Yash Raj Films' first historical epic action drama 'Prithviraj' has grabbed eyeballs. The film based on the life and valour of the fearless and mighty Rajput king Prithviraj Chauhan stars Akshay Kumar in the titular role alongside Miss World 2017 Manushi Chhillar as Princess Sanyogita. The actress is over the moon as she gears up for her debut with one of India's premier studios.

The debutante expressed her gratitude as she said, "I'm eternally grateful to YRF and my director Dr Chandraprakash Dwivedi for not only believing in me but also for making me believe that I could play the role of the legendary princess Sanyogita. I couldn't have

asked for a bigger debut and I'm deeply honoured that I could play her on screen." Talking about her character, Manushi says, "Her life, her values, her resilience, her courage, her honour is what legends are made of and I'm so fortunate that I got to know so much about her in the process of prepping and portraying princess Sanyogita on screen. I hope I have done justice to her and what she stood for. I'm excited for everyone to see her story."

## How Nushratt acclimatised to 'pregnant' body suit for 'Chhorii'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**N**ushratt, who plays a pregnant woman in the film, started her prep well in advance for the film. For her part, the actress started wearing the 'pregnant' body suit three weeks prior to the shoot.

Talking about the same, Nushratt said, "As I'm not actually going to become pregnant for now in reality, I had them make that body suit for me to feel what a woman bearing child actually goes through. I was wearing it 20-25 days before the film's shoot started, and literally did all of my chores including eating, sleeping, going to the bathroom, roaming around and everything else to understand the restrictions that it comes with."

She adds, "I had to put myself in it to be able to self-learn everything that's related to pregnancy, and then bring them on set with a more realistic facet that the masses can connect to. Though, it wasn't a prop for me but a part of me, I became so used to it that when the shooting began, I felt more comfortable while resting in between the rehearsals in the body suit."

Sharing her thoughts on the aspects of cinematic evolution, the actress states, "Since we've moved to very realistic cinema, we don't need to spoonfeed things to the audience. It needs to be so subtle and subliminal that the audience at a subconscious level are convinced to assume

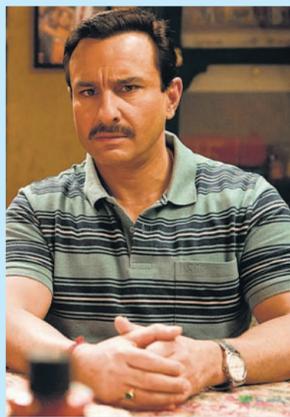
you're

'CHHORII', THE UPCOMING HORROR FILM STARRING NUSHRATT BHARUCCHA HAS PIQUED THE AUDIENCE WITH ITS TEASER.

pregnant without you actually telling them through conventional actions." 'Chhorii' directed by Vishal Furia, follows the

life of Sakshi as she moves from the city to a secluded village, where she experiences all things paranormal. The film produced by T-Series, Crypt TV, and Abundantia Entertainmentslated will stream on Prime Video from November 26.

## SAIF UNDERWENT TWO MONTHS OF DICTION TRAINING FOR BUNTY AUR BABLI 2

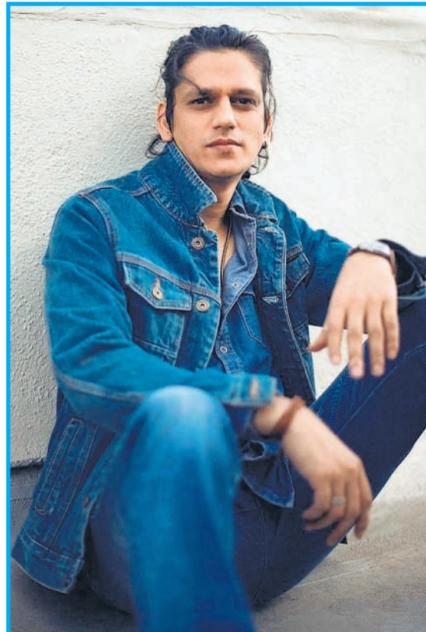


Team Absolute | Mumbai

**B**ollywood star Saif Ali Khan has always found an appreciation for characters that are based in the heartland of India. He was brilliant in projects like Omkara and Aarakshan in which he nailed the diction too! Saif is again revisiting this space with the laugh-out-loud comedy, *Bunty Aur Babli 2*, in which he plays a retired con-artist turned railway ticket collector of Fursatgunj. He reveals he intermittently did diction training for two months to nail his character on screen.

Saif says, "I have always been fascinated by the heartland of India. The characters that come out of these places are endearing, interesting, multi-layered, and most importantly quite real. I have been fortunate to have found success in projects that have been set in this belt like Omkara, Aarakshan, and even Tandav and I hope

people love my effort in *Bunty Aur Babli 2* in which I play a retired con-man who is trying to be happy being a ticket collector in the sleepy town of Fursatgunj." Yash Raj Films' *Bunty Aur Babli 2*, which releases on November 19, is an out-and-out comedy that will pit two sets of con-artists called Bunty and Babli, from different generations, against each other! Saif Ali Khan and Rani Mukerji play the OG Bunty Babli while Gully Boy hunk Siddhant Chaturvedi and the gorgeous debutant Sharvari, play the new Bunty Babli. It has been directed by Varun V. Sharma, who has worked as an Assistant Director in YRF's biggest blockbusters *Sultan* and *Tiger Zinda Hai*.



Vijay Varma's 'sneak' preview of his 'vanity'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**V**ijay Varma, who impressed with his stellar performance in Zoya Akhtar's 'Gully Boy', has

all his fingers in the pie this year. The actor had eight releases amidst the pandemic and the road ahead seems to be lined with projects. Rounding out the year, the actor shared fun selfies from his vanity van saying how the van has turned into his home since he has been shooting round the clock and spends most of the downtime in his van.

Taking to his social media, he shared a collection of his attire that he wore post June and his style is just stunning. He wrote, "I've spent more time in my van this year than in my house. Here's an account from June (post lockdown) till now. Also.. serving some fits?? #nofilter #sneakersaddict #morningface." The actor is a sneaker aficionado, talking about his love for them, he says "I enjoy wearing my sneakers to the shoot and going to the sets a little dressed up, and start my day on this happy note."

Hyderabad:

**B**illed as the sequel to super-hit crime thriller 'Drushyam', Venkatesh Daggubati's upcoming movie 'Drushyam 2' is all set to enthrall the audience. Prime Video, on Monday, launched the theatrical trailer for its Telugu crime thriller 'Drushyam 2'.

'Drushyam 2' will premiere on November 25 on Prime Video in India and more than 240 countries and territories worldwide. With this, the makers kickstarted their promotions, and the theatrical trailer launch hypes the movie as an edge-of-the-seat family thriller.

Rambabu (Venkatesh) trying to protect his family, brings an intense and gripping tale. How the lives of the fami-

ly members were altered irrevocably following the events of that one fateful night six years ago, forms the narrative.

Venkatesh plays the family man, who covers up a mystery and leaves no stone unturned to protect his family.

The 'Drushyam 2' trailer hints at the mystery and drama in the subject, with the main leads sticking to their well-written roles.

The Jeethu Joseph directorial has an ensemble of a cast that includes Meena, Kruthika, Esther Anil, Sampath Raj, and Poorna. Jointly produced by D. Suresh Babu, Antony Perumbavoor, and Rajkumar Sethupathy of Suresh Productions, Max Movies, and Rajkumar Theatres, it is an Amazon Original movie.



Pooja Hegde