

# absolute india

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## Real GDP expected to grow at 8-9% YoY in Q2FY22

▶ **IN A REPORT, MOFSL SAID ITS IN-HOUSE ESTIMATES SUGGEST INDIA'S REAL GDP GREW AT 8-9 PER CENT YOY IN Q2FY22, MARGINALLY HIGHER THAN "OUR EXPECTATIONS".**

▶ **THE SECOND QUARTER GDP NUMBERS HAVE NOT YET BEEN RELEASED. THE MACRO-ECONOMIC DATA POINTS ARE SLATED TO BE RELEASED ON NOVEMBER 30.**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India's real GDP is expected to grow at 8-9 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in Q2FY22, Motilal Oswal Financial Services (MOFSL) said. The real GDP is the inflation adjusted figure of all the finished goods and services produced in a country within a specific time period. MOFSL said: "Looking at our EAI estimates, we believe that better growth was largely supported by massive government spending in 2QFY22." Besides, the report said the economic activity for October 2021 appeared promising.



"Most of the indicators - PMI manufacturing, toll collections, e-way or vaahan registrations, mobility indicators, and power generation - improved last month." However, the brokerage house's preliminary estimates indicate that Economic Activity Index (EAI) for India's GVA posted a seven-month low growth of 5.4 per cent YoY in September 2021 versus 11.7 per cent YoY in August 2021. "Consequently, EAI-EVA grew 9.2 per cent YoY in 2QFY22 on account of lower growth in the aFarm and Non-Farm' sectors. This further indicates the favourable base effect is waning off."

Over 11 cr of 60 plus get first job, total coverage tops 108 cr

## INDIA DOING BETTER

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A total of 11,04,55,016 people above the age of 60 years have been administered with the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine in the country so far, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday. However, only 6,78,27,591 people in this age group have been administered with both the doses. India's overall Covid-19 vaccination coverage has exceeded 108 crore as per provisional report. A total of 20,75,942 vaccine doses have been administered in the last 24 hours, said the ministry. In a tweet, the Health Ministry said, "India marches ahead with another achievement in its fight against Covid 19. Total 108 cr Covid vaccine doses administered". The Healthcare Workers have got a total of 1,03,79,530 first dose of vaccines and 92,56,225 as second dose. The Front Line Workers have been administered a total of 1,83,72,402 vaccines as the first dose and 1,60,12,003 as the second dose. Among the age group of 18-44 years, total 42,33,49,812 shots of first dose and 14,89,38,412 of second dose have been administered so far,



as per the health ministry report. A total of 17,60,88,375 vaccines as the first dose and 9,85,40,180 vaccines as the second dose have been administered to the age group of 45-59, till now, said the health ministry on Saturday morning. Around 15.69 crore balance and unutilized Covid vaccine doses are still available with the States and Union Territories (UTs) to be administered, as per the data shared by the Union Health Ministry. Over 116.54 crore vaccine doses have been provided to the states and UTs through Government of India free of cost channel and direct state procurement category, the health ministry report said.

**Suctioning may provide better protection than needles**

**New York:** Delivering Covid-19 vaccines via a suctioning technique may help generate higher antibody levels and provide more protection than traditional needles, suggests a new study. When traditional vaccines are injected into the arm, they are not automatically absorbed by cells. In fact, some of it degrades before it even gets to the cells so the body can mount an immune response. A suctioning vaccine is faster and cheaper to manufacture, and can be more widely distributed than the vaccines currently in use, they explained. In the study, published in the journal Science Advances, the team tested the new type of immunisation for the virus based on the ancient form of medicine known as cupping, in which heated special cups are placed on the skin for a few minutes to create suction, immediately following a Covid shot. They found rodents that were given the vaccine via the suction method generated antibody levels millions of times higher than a traditional injection.

## Nepali peacekeeper named 2021 UN Woman Police Officer of the Year

UNITED NATIONS | Agencies

A Nepalese peacekeeper serving in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was named the recipient of the 2021 UN Woman Police Officer of the Year. Superintendent Sangya Malla with the UN mission in the country, MONUSCO, is chief of its Police Health and Environment Unit, based in the capital, Kinshasa, reports Xinhua news agency. Malla, a medical professional by training, helped establish the unit, which is responsible for implementing policies and procedures concerning the health and well-being of personnel as well as UN Police environmental initiatives. Her contributions have been especially important during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, past Ebola outbreaks, and natural and humanitarian crises such as the volcanic eruption in the city of Goma last May. During that emergency, her unit alerted the local population and UN staff of precautionary measures, according to a press release issued jointly by the UN Department of Global Communications and UN Department of Peace Operations. She will be presented with the award by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres at a virtual ceremony on November 9.



The UN chief praised the "blue helmet" for her work in enhancing the safety and welfare of UN peacekeepers by mitigating their risks from Covid-19 and other threats.

"I am honoured to receive this award, and I hope it will encourage more young women in my country and around the world to pursue careers in policing, which is still too often viewed as 'man's work'."

Sangya Malla

## Examining India's present and future prospects

**Jalan offers a blueprint for the government to launch reforms to reduce corruption and administrative bottlenecks in the delivery of services to the people, such as by:**

- Reducing corruption in the administrative system
- Improving the role of the legislative, executive and judiciary in policymaking
- Improving governance and politics in a resurgent India and
- Strengthening the functioning of the financial and banking sectors.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

At this time of crucial transition, Bimal Jalan, a former Reserve Bank of India Governor and Rajya Sabha MP, examines the country's present and future prospects in "India Reckoning: Politics, Economy, Governance and Beyond" (Bloomsbury). For Jalan, there are two clear priorities for the future: to continue and benefit from the dramatic global changes in technology, trade, and investment over the previous three decades, and to get rid of the deadweight of the past in order to maximize the benefits from our economic and political strength. In nine succinct chapters, Jalan with his characteristic insight and brilliance, discusses a range of political and economic issues



which will help India realize its full potential as one of the fastest-growing, emerging economies in the world.

## CBSE directs schools to demystify OMR sheets for Class X, XII students

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central Board of Secondary Education has asked the school principals to demystify the Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) sheet for students appearing for class X and XII Term-1 examinations. In a letter written to the principals of the schools affiliated to CBSE, the Board said, "You are aware that the CBSE will be using OMR for the first time for assessment of both the classes 10th and 12th in Term I examination. Hence, there is a need that all the students appearing in the Term I examinations and the schools sponsoring these students should have complete knowledge about the OMR sheet". The CBSE has finalised its all new OMR sheets for its Term-



1 exams which will consist of multiple choice questions. A total of 36 lakh class 10 and 12 students will be appearing for the exams this year. The exams will start from November 16. Each paper in the Term I exams will have a maximum of 60 questions with 90 minutes duration. Students have to mark their answers on the OMR sheets only with pens.

Schools may download the OMR sheet in advance as per the schedule given in the guidelines, said the letter. Schools are requested that based on the information provided by the CBSE, practice sessions may be organised for the students, it added. Prior to the practice sessions, teachers must also acquaint themselves well with the OMR.

## 25 more IS militants surrender in East Afghanistan

**Jalalabad (Afghanistan):** A total of 25 militants affiliated with the hardliner Islamic State (IS) laid down arms and surrendered to authorities in Jalalabad on Saturday, head of intelligence agency in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province Mohammad Bashir said. The former militants were active in Spinghar, Pachiragam and Batikot districts, and the security forces would further stabilize the situation in Nangarhar and its vicinity, Xinhua news agency reported quoting Mohammad Bashir. Former militant Ziauddin called upon all insurgents to give up fighting and support peace and security in Afghanistan in his speech at the surrendering ceremony. This is the second IS group that has surrendered to authorities in Nangarhar province. On Friday, 55 IS insurgents surrendered to security authorities in Jalalabad city. The hardliner IS outfit which is active in parts of the Nangarhar province with Jalalabad, 120 km east of Kabul, as its capital, has yet to comment on the development.

## First ever Tibetan-origin mayor in US history

DHARAMSALA | Agencies

Mayor-elect Aftab Pureval, the son of a Tibetan mother and an Indian father, has been appointed the first Tibetan-American to this post in the history of Cincinnati city in Ohio. Elected over his election, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) President Penpa Tsering on Friday tweeted, "Immensely proud to congratulate @AftabPureval, the first-ever Tibetan-origin mayor in the US history. "This historic win reflects your exceptional journey of perseverance and unwavering courage. As the son of Tibetan refugee, your achievement is an inspiration to Tibetans everywhere."



After being elected, Pureval said, "Words can't express how honoured and excited I am to be the next Mayor of Cincinnati". "Tonight, we made history! Let's get to work!" Pureval was elected as Cincinnati's 70th Mayor on November 2. As Mayor, Aftab will rebuild the economy to make sure prosperity is shared in every corner of the city, according to mayorelectaftab.com. He'll reform the police department and invest in public safety so every neighbourhood is safe. And he'll create more affordable housing and improve public transportation, it adds.

## Nations fail to address climate literacy to combat crisis

GLASGOW | Agencies

With COP26 in full swing, now is the critical time for countries to commit to and prioritize formal climate education as a strategy to combat the climate crisis. EARTHDAY.ORG and Education International have both conducted independent research reports that concluded that every country has failed when it comes to thoroughly addressing climate education and/or climate literacy in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The climate crisis is the greatest threat facing humanity and the planet. With little time left to reverse the current course, climate education has the power to prepare students on how to evaluate risk, make responsible consumer decisions and adapt to a rapidly changing economy. EARTHDAY.ORG's Climate Literacy Campaign and Education International's Teach for the Planet Campaign have been working closely together to transform education systems around the globe to ensure that students benefit from high-quality education in order to develop into informed and engaged environmental stewards.

- ▶ "Like any student on the brink of failing a class, this is the time for countries to get their act together. We are in the middle of a climate catastrophe -- no country is safe from its impacts. We cannot afford any country to fail on climate change education. Let's all mobilise, from teachers and students to the international community, so that all countries can make the grade," said Researcher Christina Kuauk.
- ▶ "The time to act is now. The climate crisis is not something we can overcome without education. Governments must ensure quality climate change education that is based on science and empowers all students for climate action and climate justice. To make this happen, teachers must be consulted and involved, and education systems must be transformed. The next COP may very well be too late," said Susan Hopgood, Education International President.
- ▶ "The signs couldn't be more clear. Climate change is posing an existential threat to humanity and exposing how weak of a foundation we have to address this threat. Climate literacy is the glue that can build a new foundation -- one which can bring about a more just and sustainable world."
- ▶ "Now, every country must commit to climate literacy, and everyone must be involved to generate this transformation," said Rachel Weisbrot, Education and Communications Manager, EARTHDAY.ORG.
- ▶ "Climate and environmental literacy is a critical component of the universal fight against climate change. We must instill the next generation with the tools and knowledge to fight environmental degradation and be prepared to build our green economic future. Every country must urgently step up their climate education commitments -- our future depends on it," said Kathleen Rogers, President, EARTHDAY.ORG.



## JAMMU AND KASHMIR ADMINISTRATION TO GRANT SECURITY ALLOWANCE TO SOG, BDS AND POLICE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Jammu and Kashmir Administration has decided to grant security allowances to the Special Operation Group (SOG), Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) and state police personnel.

In a recent order issued on November 1, the combatant operational personnel of SOG, BDS and J&K police will get incentive of 25 per cent of their basic pay while the non-combatant personnel will get 12.5 per cent from now onwards.

The order also said that the hardship allowances to SOG and BDS shall also be the same as given to other police personnel.

According to an official, the J&K government's move came after the high level security meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on October 23 at Srinagar.

He also said that the decision has been taken keeping in mind the security threat prevailing in J&K. During the high level meeting on October 23, Shah, apart from taking stringent actions against the terrorist in the Valley, also asked the state authorities to take steps to boost the morale of the security personnel by granting them some



of the facilities at par with other central forces operative in the Union Territory.

During the security meeting which was attended by Intelligence Bureau chief Arvind Kumar, CRPF DG Kuldeep Singh, BSF DG Pamkaj Singh, DG of National Security Guard M.A. Ganapathy, J&K Police DG Dilbagh Singh, Army commanders and

other officials chalked out a detailed strategy to counter the recent spate of civilian killings in the Valley. The J&K DG made a presentation on the recent terror attacks targeting minorities and non-locals in Kashmir including steps taken to prevent them as well as the security measures in place.

Expressing concern over rising radicalisation and infiltration in

J&K, he asked a slew of measures to improve security situations in the Valley which have resulted in setting up drone grid network, formation of Terror Monitoring Group and creation of specialised team of central agencies to monitor the operation in Jammu and Kashmir to prevent infiltration and pinpointed operations against the ultras.

## Two burnt alive as tanker filled with edible oil catches fire

JAIPURI | Agencies

Two people were burnt alive when a tanker filled with edible oil caught fire after getting overturned on the outskirts of Kudi village in Barmer district of Rajasthan.

Police officials confirmed that a tanker overturned while attempting to save the animal which suddenly appeared in front of the vehicle on the Barmer-Jodhpur Highway near Kudi village.

A fierce fire broke out as soon as the tanker overturned.

The Pachpadra police station team along with fire brigades reached the spot and started efforts to control the blaze.

The fire could be brought under control after two hours.

The deceased have been identified as tanker drivers



Ranveer Singh and Umaid Singh, both residents of Chidwa, Jhunjhunu.

The truck was on way to Punjab from Gujarat, police officials said, adding that the bodies have been kept in the

mortuary of Pachpadra and their relatives have been informed.

The bodies will be handed over to their relatives as soon as they reach here. Further investigation is on.

## Leaving BJP, actor Joy Banerjee tells PM Modi

KOLKATA | Agencies

The exodus from BJP continues in West Bengal. After Rajib Banerjee, it is the turn of actor-turned-politician Joy Banerjee, who wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi informing him of his decision to leave the party.

However, Banerjee didn't make it clear whether he would join Trinamool Congress or not. In a two-page letter written to the Prime Minister, Banerjee said that he has been trying for the last two years to get an appointment but he failed and so he chose to write to him. In his letter, he was critical about the party's decision to nominate Rajib Banerjee



to its National Executive, noting that despite this, Rajib Banerjee left the part.

Wishing the Prime Minister 'Happy Diwali', the actor-turned-politician wrote: "I have been trying for the last two years to meet you but I was not given an appointment. I have asked for medical funds several

times but I did not get anything. In 2016 I was made the National Executive Member but this year I was left out and Rajib Banerjee was included. He (Rajib Banerjee) joined TMC."

"I joined BJP in 2016 and have been working for the party since then. I was even beaten by the goons during my campaign for the party. Unfortunately, despite my efforts, I was treated as an outsider. My security guards were withdrawn and I was neglected. I told you all this at Kalaikunda airport in 2016. Ten days later you made me the National Executive Member. Now I want to leave BJP and so I need your permission. Please allow me to leave."

## Punjab advocate general hits back at Sidhu

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Punjab Advocate General A.P.S. Deol, on Saturday slammed State Congress President Navjot Singh Sidhu, who had demanded his resignation for representing two accused in the sacrilege and police firing case. Deol has alleged that Sidhu is trying to garner political mileage.

Deol said, Sidhu was spreading misinformation to gain political advantage. "Sidhu's repeated utterances seek to derail the efforts of the Punjab government to ensure justice in the drugs matter and the sacrilege case," Deol said in a statement.

Sidhu had objected to the appointment of A.P.S. Deol as state Advocate General and Iqbal Preet Sahota as Director General of Police. Sidhu had cited these as one of the reasons for quitting from his post as party chief but on Friday said he had withdrawn his resignation.

Deol said, "There is a concerted



attempt by vested interests to malign the functioning of Congress Party in view of upcoming elections in Punjab for their selfish political gain by politi-

cising the constitutional office of the Advocate General of Punjab."

Deol had represented former DGP Sumedh Singh Saini, who headed the

state police six years ago during the incidents of sacrilege and a police firing on protesters.

In his resignation letter to party chief Sonia Gandhi, Sidhu has written: "The collapse of man's character stems from the compromise corner. I can never compromise on Punjab's future and the agenda for welfare of Punjab. Therefore, I hereby resign as president of Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee. Will continue to serve the Congress." One of the reasons behind Sidhu's resignation was Congress government appointing Deol as its Advocate General. This led to the government coming under fire from the Opposition, as Deol was till recently counsel for former DGP Sumedh Singh Saini, the police chief during the incidents of sacrilege and police firing on protesters.

Sidhu told the media that the Advocate General and the DGP were two important officers to take the issues of Bargari sacrilege and drugs to a logical conclusion.

## ODISHA SLASHES BUS FARES FOLLOWING REDUCTION OF TAXES ON DIESEL

**Bhubaneswar:** With the reduction in excise duty and VAT on diesel, the Odisha government has reduced the fares of passenger buses.

According to an order issued by the State Transport Authority (STA), the fare of ordinary and express buses has been reduced by 5 paise per km, while it has come down by 10 paise per km in deluxe and AC deluxe buses.

Similarly, the fare of super premium buses has been slashed by 15 paise per km. Bus fares in Odisha were last revised on October 16 following a hike in the diesel price. "Due to decrease in per litre diesel price from Rs 102.34 per litre on October 16, 2021, to Rs 91.61 per litre on Saturday, leading to price reduction by Rs 10.73, the fare for stage carriages other than town buses plying within the state shall be fixed at decreased rate. It will be effective from the date of issue of order," said the STA.

While the fare for ordinary buses has been reduced from 92 paise to 87 paise per km, express buses fare has been slashed from 96 paise to 91 paise per km. Similarly, the fare of deluxe buses has been reduced to Rs 1.25 from Rs 1.35 per km and AC deluxe buses from Rs 1.73 to Rs 1.53 per km. Moreover, travellers in super deluxe will now have to pay Rs 2.38 per km instead of Rs 2.53 per km.

## Heavy rains lash Chennai, surrounding areas

CHENNAI | Agencies

Chennai and its suburbs and adjoining districts Kancheepuram and Chengalpattu received heavy rains on Saturday.

The India Meteorological Department has predicted heavy rains in Tamil Nadu in the coming days.

Due to the heavy rainfall, several low-lying areas in Chennai were inundated since Saturday afternoon.

Peringalpetu in Tamil Nadu received 168 mm rain, making it the city with the highest rainfall in the country. The Regional Meteorological Centre, in a statement, said that an upper air cyclonic circula-



tion lies over southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining equatorial Indian ocean extending up to 4.5 km above mean sea level. It has also predicted a low-pressure area under the influence of the cyclonic circulation over southeast Bay of

Bengal and neighbourhood around November 9, which is likely to be more marked in the next 48 hours.

This would lead to heavy rainfall and squally winds along the Tamil Nadu coast from November 9 to 12.

## One killed, 6 hurt as speeding car mows down pedestrians in Kolkata

KOLKATA | Agencies

One person was killed and six others were injured after a speeding car ploughed into pedestrians and a cyclist at the Chingrighata intersection on Eastern Metropolitan Bypass in the eastern fringes of Kolkata on Saturday evening.

The police have shifted the injured persons to a hospital and arrested the driver of the speeding car. The incident took place at 5 p.m. on Saturday when the speeding car first rammed into a cyclist before losing control and hitting six pedestrians waiting to cross the road one after another.

The traffic police on duty there rushed to the spot and sent the injured persons to the hospital. One person identified as Mustak Ahmed died on the spot while the condition of another is stated to be critical.

According to eye-witnesses, the car was heading towards Ultadanga. It was coming at a normal speed but as the traffic signal turned 'red' before the crossing, the car suddenly accelerated speed, jumped the signal and hit the cyclist before ramming into the pedestrians. Officers from the Bidhannagar police station later identified the vehicle after scanning the



CCTV footage and arrested the rider who was accompanied by his family members in the car.

According to sources in the police, the rider admitted that when the traffic light turned red, instead of applying the brakes he pressed the accelerator and once the vehicle took speed, he got nervous and lost control, resulting in the fatal accident.

## Report says Facebook bad for 360 mn users, Meta denies

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Facebook addiction is hurting sleep, work, relationships and parenting for about 12.5 per cent of users (nearly 360 million), according to the company's internal documents seen by the media.

According to a Wall Street Journal report, Facebook researchers have found that 1 in 8 of its users report are engaged in compulsive use of social media.

Facebook calls this the "problematic use of its platform".

"They were perceived by users to be worse on Facebook than any other major social-media platform, which all seek to keep users coming back, the documents show," the report said late on Friday.

Meta, the parent company of Facebook, denied the report, saying the WSJ "has once again chosen to selectively pick and choose from internal company documents to present a narrative that is sim-



ply wrong about how we use research to address an important issue -- this time about problematic

use".

"Problematic use does not equal addiction. Problematic use has been used to describe people's relationship with lots of technologies, like TVs and smartphones," said Pratiti Raychoudhury, Vice President, Head of Research at Meta. "Since 2018, we have introduced nearly 10 products to better support people's well-being, including problematic use of our apps, and that work continues today," Raychoudhury said in a blog post. The report cited an internal study to find out about how many people on Facebook experience problematic use.

"The app hurts sleep, work, relationships or parenting for about 12.5 per cent of users, who reported they felt Facebook was more of a problem than other social media," the report claimed, citing the internal documents.

"That's irresponsible because, as is noted in the study itself, the research was designed to be as expansive as possible to help us better understand the challenge," Meta replied.

## Protesting SP MLA 'forcefully' admitted to hospital

LUCKNOW | Agencies

Samajwadi Party MLA Rakesh Pratap Singh, who is on a fast-unto-death in the Uttar Pradesh capital, was "forcefully" admitted to Dr Syama Prasad Mookherjee Hospital by the police.

Singh was admitted to a hospital in Lucknow on Friday night after his health started deteriorating.

Police reached the dharna spot at 10 p.m. and asked Singh to break his fast but as he did not budge, he was "forcefully" admitted to hospital.

However, Singh, in a series of tweets, said: "Dictatorship of Uttar Pradesh government. At around 12 a.m., I was forcibly admitted to the civil hospital on fake report of administration and police."

"This hospital lacks even basic facilities," he claimed. "Can an MLA not ask the state govern-



ment for construction of two roads in his constituency," Singh asked. Singh said: "This autocratic government wants to suppress the voice of the people but we will not allow it to happen. Our fight will continue till the last breath."

"I was on hunger strike, and from the very first day, was protesting in a democratic manner, but was forcibly put on a glucose drip," he said. Singh claimed, "Neither me, nor my party members disturbed the social balance. But police forcibly brought me to civil hospital."

Questioning the state gov-

ernment, Singh said: "Is raising a voice for people a crime? Is there no place for public interest in our democracy?"

The leader said that he is protesting against the working style of the state government. "My fast-unto-death will continue till our demands are met," he claimed. The SP leader had on October 31 submitted a memorandum to the government, saying that if work for construction of roads in his constituency is not started, he will resign. He accused the Uttar Pradesh government of not fulfilling promises made in the poll manifesto for the 2017 Assembly elections.

Singh, a two-time MLA from Gauriganj, had resigned from the Assembly as he was miffed with the state government over non-construction of two roads in his constituency. The leader sat on protest at GPO thereafter.

# absolute india

"Half the harm that is done in this world is due to people who want to feel important... They justify it because they are absorbed in the endless struggle to think well of themselves."

T.S. Elliot

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## Joblessness top concern of urban Indians in Oct 2021, says Survey

# WORRISOME SITUATION

Among the Indians, the urban citizens are more concerned about unemployment (42 per cent), coronavirus (35), financial & political corruption (30 per cent), poverty and social inequality (26 per cent), crime and violence (24 per cent), education (20 per cent), among others.

For global citizens, the top concerns included, poverty and social inequality (33 per cent), unemployment (30 per cent), coronavirus (29 per cent), financial and political corruption (29 per cent), crime and violence (27 per cent), etc.



inequality, Ipsos What Worries the World global monthly survey has said. According to the survey, unlike earlier, concern around Covid-19 has receded both for global citizens and Urban Indians. It sat on top as the top worry of global citizens (28 marks including India) for 18 months.

The survey shows that the majority of Urban Indians (68 per cent) believe India is second in pecking order in optimism, Saudi Arabia remains most optimistic (83 per cent).

Global citizens stay circumspect with 64 per cent believing their country is on the wrong track. And the

markets most downbeat were Colombia (90 per cent), Peru (83 per cent) and Argentina (82%).

"The biggest upside of Urban Indians is their never say die attitude. Despite the worries and hardships, they always believe the tide will turn, and it does. They do not give up midway," added Adarkar. Ipsos' What Worries the World survey is conducted in 28 countries around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system.

A total of 21,516 online interviews were conducted between September 24 to October 8 among adults aged 18-74 in the US, South Africa, Turkey, Israel and Canada and age 16-74 in all other countries. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population.

"Our biggest issue is of joblessness and it remains a major area of concern for most Urban Indians. Job creation and job openings need to keep pace with expectations. Right now, there is a disconnect. But there is this happy tiding in the form of worry around the coronavirus receding which could lead to more return to normalcy and for the job market to look up. Graft and social inequality are other concerns for citizens."

Amit Adarkar, CEO, Ipsos India.

## 'Bhai-Dooj' horror

# Maha hospital fire leaves 11 dead, probe ordered

AHMEDNAGAR | Agencies

In a horrific incident, at least 11 people, mostly Covid patients, were killed, and six others injured, some seriously, as fire swept through the ICU of Ahmednagar Civil Hospital on the auspicious 'Bhai-Dooj' day on Saturday, officials said.

The massive blaze engulfed the hospital in the morning, creating a huge panic among patients and staffers, as thick black smoke emanated from the ward. As the flames quickly spread to different wards, the hospital authorities, aided by locals and rescue teams, managed to shift many patients to safer locations as a precaution, Bhosale added. He said the victims' bodies have been sent for autopsy to determine the exact causes of their death and further procedures will be followed thereafter. A grim Chief Minister Uddhav



Thackeray ordered a probe into the incident and has directed the district authorities to submit their preliminary report within a week. He also announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the kin of each deceased - a majority of whom were Covid-19 patients. Ahmednagar Guardian Minister Hasan Mushrif and Health Minister Rajesh Tope said a detailed probe has been ordered into the tragedy and warned that those responsible for the lapses would not be spared.

At the time of the incident, there were at least 17 patients, the majority said to be senior

citizens, undergoing Covid-19 treatment in the ICU, and scores of anxious relatives rushed to the hospital for details on their near and dear ones, with police struggling to control them. After the flames were tamed and cooling operations launched, the horrific effects were visible with the entire ICU wards and surroundings reduced to a heap of burnt rubble. Though the prime cause of the fire is not clear, preliminary investigations point to a suspected short-circuit.

President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis and others expressed grief over the tragedy, while Union Minister of State for Health Bharati P. Pawar is visiting Ahmednagar for a spot assessment of the situation.

"The fire broke out around 10 a.m. Of the 17 patients undergoing treatment in the ICU ward, 10 have died and the rest are injured."

Dr. Rajendra B. Bhosale, District Collector

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Joblessness is the top concern of Urban Indians in October 2021 while global citizens are more worried about poverty and social

## BJP seeks review of liquor ban in Bihar; JD(U) says prohibition to stay

PATNA | Agencies

Following mass demonstrations in the past four days, the BJP in Bihar, which is an ally of the ruling JD(U), said on Saturday that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar should review the liquor ban in the state.

On November 26, 2015, Nitish Kumar had announced that alcohol would be banned in the state from April 1, 2016. Kumar officially declared the total ban on April 5, 2016.

"The liquor prohibition law has completely failed across the state. Liquor mafias are running their illegal operations with the help of the local police. The incidents of hooch tragedy are taking place only in those villages where liquor mafias are secretly operating without any support of the local police," said Sanjay Jaiswal, BJP state president and Rajya Sabha MP. "The situation in my constituency (West Champaran) is extremely bad. Liquor manufacturing

and sales are taking place in every village. The local police are fully aware of it, but they are hand-in-glove with the entire nexus of manufacturing, sale and transportation of liquor," Jaiswal said. His statement came after 15 persons died in Bettiah in West Champaran after consuming spurious liquor since Diwali. Ten deaths each have also been reported from Muzaffarpur and Gopalganj. On Saturday, four persons died in Samastipur as well after consuming spurious liquor. "The liquor prohibition law has completely failed in the state. It was imposed in April 2016, and five-and-a-half years have gone by since then. Hence, the Chief Minister should review the law and analyse its positive and negative impacts and take a decision accordingly," Jaiswal said. Earlier on Saturday, JD(U) national president Lalan Singh had said that the state government will not roll back the liquor ban law.

## RUSSIA REPORTS RECORD NUMBER OF COVID CASES IN A DAY



Moscow: Russia reported a record daily Covid-19 cases of 41,335 over the past 24 hours, taking the national tally to 8,755,930, the official monitoring and response centre said on Saturday. The nationwide Covid death toll grew by 1,188 to 245,635, while the recoveries increased by 29,201 to 7,535,172. The capital city of Moscow reported 6,880 new cases in the last 24 hours, taking the capital's caseload to 1,856,649, Xinhua news agency reported. Over 60 million Russian citizens had received at least one dose of vaccine as of Friday and over 57 million of them had been fully vaccinated. The level of herd immunity in the country stands at 48 per cent, data released on Friday showed.

# Cong cites Pentagon report, says China intruded 4.5 km into Arunachal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Citing reports, the Congress on Saturday said that China has intruded into Indian territory but the government is in denial mode.

Addressing a press conference on Saturday, Pawan Khera, party spokesperson said, "It has now been confirmed by an annual report by the Pentagon to the US Congress. The report -- 'Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China, 2021' confirms that China has intruded 4.5 km deep inside the Arunachal Pradesh Territory in our area."

Khera said China has constructed a village across the LAC, they have constructed several villages and these are dual purpose villages, dual use villages. What is a dual use village? It not only has civilian population residing there, but, these villages can also act as cantonments for the Chinese army.

The Congress Spokesperson said, as per the Pentagon report, about 4.5 km within our territory China has constructed 101 structures, some of them multi storey structures and this is a very serious issue.

"The Prime Minister must withdraw that clean chit first of all and give a deadline to the nation, when will the status-quo-ante of April, 2020 be



restored across all our borders with China? Whether it's Depsang, whether it's Gogra Hot

spring, or the DOB sector, whether it's Arunachal Pradesh, we need answers, we need deadlines, we need dates and we need an apology for misleading the world that China has not entered our territory," Khera said.

Pawan Khera said, in June, 2020, BJP Member of the Lok Sabha from Arunachal Pradesh (East) Tapir Gao had written to the Prime Minister, to the Defence Minister, to the Foreign Minister on the issue. He also raised this issue in the Parliament warning the Government, warning the entire country about transgressions made by China into Arunachal Pradesh territory. He kept warning them. They issued a clarification, they denied any such transgression. The Congress said it has been 17 months since the Prime Minister gave a clean chit to China. That clean chit is a dark chapter in our history, because that clean chit was issued, is being used by China across the world, because that clean chit came from none other than the Prime Minister of India, whose territories are being transgressed by China and China got emboldened by this clean chit.

Not just in Arunachal Pradesh, not just in Ladakh, not just in Gogra-Hot Springs, not just in Depsang, also Uttarakhand, as we had discussed last month during a press conference, the PLA entered, destroyed our infrastructure and left.

## Lakshadweep to become first in India to achieve full vaccination



New Delhi: Union Territory Lakshadweep is likely to achieve complete Covid vaccination of its eligible population soon. Lakshadweep may become the first among states and Union Territories to achieve complete vaccination coverage of its eligible population. A source said that the UT has vaccinated 99.2 per cent of the eligible population with both doses. As per the Health Ministry's statewide Covid vaccination data, a total of 1,01,759 doses of vaccines have been administered in the UT so far. It includes 55,144 shots as the first dose and 46,615 as the second dose. Meanwhile, India's mass vaccination drive has crossed the 108 cr landmark achieving 108,18,66,715 vaccinations on Saturday. The cumulative number of the first dose administered in India so far stands at 73,93,22,908, while the total number of the second dose stands at 34,25,43,807, as per the health ministry report.

# Why cold leads to increase in air pollution in Indo-Gangetic plains?

The seasonal factors of firecrackers and stubble burning have, as usual, added to the problem, as the peak of crop residue burning incidents coincided with Diwali. Scientists said that it has been clearly established that the winter season favours increase in pollution as cold air frequently settles over northern India and gets trapped under a layer of warm air.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With temperature dropping -- and other meteorological factors such as wind speed slowing down, wind direction changing, haze setting in, pollution levels are again in the "very poor" and "hazardous" categories in most cities across the Indo-Gangetic plains.

In this phenomenon, the haze seen in the winter months is the result of a temperature inversion mostly. Since the cold air cannot rise above the warm air, pollution builds in the cold air as long as the inversion lasts. On other occasions, the air, high in the atmosphere, is cooler than air near Earth's surface. Warmer air near the surface rises, allowing pollutants from the surface to disperse



in the atmosphere. More the number of colder days in the season, more would be the number of "poor" to "severe" air quality days ahead for the entire Indo-Gangetic Plains. It is a vicious smog circle as

consecutive days of bad air quality would persist. Scientists have further warned of extra caution this season as weather and/or meteorological factors are beyond the control of humans and thus, focus still remains on curtailing local emissions.

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Prof. S.N. Tripathi, HoD, Civil Engineering, IIT-Kanpur

## FARMERS' PROTEST: FIRE BREAKS OUT IN TENT INSTALLED AT DELHI'S SINGHU BORDER



New Delhi: Amid the ongoing farmers' protest at various borders of the national capital against the three Central farm laws, a fire broke out in a tent installed at the Singhu border. However, there has been no loss of human lives reported due to the fire. According to official information, the fire broke out at the Singhu border around 8 p.m. However, the reason for the fire is not yet known. The local people present in the tent immediately doused the fire themselves.

Sharing this information through social media, the protesting farmers said, "The news reports of fire breaking out inside a tent at the Singhu border are true, but there has been no loss of human life. All farmers are safe. The situation was brought under control immediately by them." The farmers organisations have been continuously protesting against the three contentious farm laws. Although there have been reports of such fire incidents at various borders in Delhi before but no major incident has occurred till now.



## LOCAL YOUTH SHOULD GET EMPLOYMENT IN INDUSTRIES: CM SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

### CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan issues instructions in meeting of development works

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the district administration should increase its efforts for placement of local youth in various industrial institutions. Youth should also be linked with various employment schemes through employment fairs. The Collector should also constantly review the efforts of adding unemployed youth in small, medium and micro industrial units.

Chouhan was discussing about the development works of Budhni region of Sehore with officials at his residence on Saturday. Chouhan directed to promote the business of wooden toys, provide benefits to small businessmen, remove the difficulties of their business and speed up the development of toy clusters in Budhni region.

Provide benefits in Mukhya



Mantri Udyam Kranti Yojana, Mudra Yojana and Street Vendors Scheme. Chouhan directed to give benefit to the unemployed persons under Mukhyamantri Udyam Kranti Yojna, Mudra Yojana as well as Street

Vendors Welfare Scheme. He said that survey work has been done for the economic upliftment of street vendors in rural areas. Eligible beneficiaries should be benefited. Chouhan directed the officers of

Panchayat and Rural Development Department to link women self-help groups with various livelihood activities. Necessary facilities should be made available to the groups as per provision. Chouhan said that communication, electricity and road facilities should be developed in rural areas. Action should be taken to implement the proposals received for setting up towers of various communication companies and setting up new power sub-stations. The way in which damaged roads are being repaired in urban areas, during the rainy season the same way works in rural areas must also be completed.

Chouhan reviewed the proposal of construction of water tank, construction of bypass roads. He also reviewed the proposal of CM Rise Schools, community hall, development of Narmada Ghat and construction of additional rooms in Panchayat Bhawan.

## Enough stock of fertilisers in MP: Kamal Patel

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Agriculture Minister Kamal Patel on Saturday claimed that the state has adequate stock of fertilisers.

Patel said that the state government has procured enough stock to provide to farmers in the state. He informed that up to 75 per cent fertiliser has been stocked at government-run shops (Sahkari Samiti), while 25 per cent has been given to vendors so that farmers can avail it on their own.

"There has been some shortage of fertilisers, but now we have enough stock. We have taken punitive action against those found involved in black marketing of fertilisers," Patel said on Saturday.

It would be a great relief for the farmers in the state who have been struggling to get fertilisers for their crops. Also, the crisis of fertiliser had created a political controversy between the BJP and the Congress.

Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath had last week written to Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan accusing Agriculture Minister Kamal Patel of indulging in black-marketing of fertilisers.

The opposition's relentless attack has prompted Shivraj Singh Chouhan to intervene in the matter and announced that the fertilisers will be available to the farmers by the end



of October.

In fact, Chouhan has warned that people found involved in black-marketing of fertilisers will be booked under the National Security Act (NSA).

For the last few weeks, farmers in various regions in Madhya Pradesh have been protesting against the approach of the state government and not providing fertiliser. A couple of farmers had even allegedly committed suicide due to unavailability of fertilisers.

## 'My own district not getting water', miffed MP CM warns officials

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Miffed with flood of complaints for water shortage, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday warned officials to resolve matter within next 15 days or face action.

Chief Minister's remark came during a visit to Sehore district, his home turf, on Saturday where he held a meeting with locals in a village. During the meeting, people complained that they are not getting water supply at their homes.

A bunch of complaints on the same issue prompted Chouhan to warn officials to resolve it in 15 days or face action.

"Is it the job of the Chief Minister to check kitchen's



tab to know if water is coming or not? Enough is enough. I am giving you 15 days time to fix the problem, otherwise you will not be here," Chouhan was heard saying during the meeting.

"People are not getting water in my own constituency. District collector and Commissioner will examine the matter and will submit a report to me in 15 days," Chouhan added.

## WOMAN VILLAGE HEAD KILLED, SIX INJURED IN CLASH

Bhopal: A grampanchayat head (sarpanch) was allegedly killed and over a half-dozen people got injured in a clash between two groups at village.

As per the police, the incident was reported in Damoh district where a clash broke out between two groups late on Friday night. Deceased identified as Genda Bai Lodhi (village head), who had received injuries and was admitted in government hospital during the treatment on Saturday, police said. "Two groups clashed violently in Ganj Barkheda village in Damoh district. One woman who was critically injured during the clash died on Saturday at hospital," said a senior police in Damoh district.

Lodhi's 24-year-old son along with five others involved in clash and have received injured are admitted at hospital, police added. "Both families had some old enmity. Heated argument turned to violence. Matter is under investigation," police official added.

A case has been registered and the police are on the look out for absconding accused involved in the clash, police said.

## Kamal Nath meets Sonia Gandhi, discusses by-poll results

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Madhya Pradesh Congress Chief Kamal Nath called on Sonia Gandhi on Saturday to discuss political situation and issues pertaining to Madhya Pradesh. The meeting gains significance after the bypoll results in which the party has performed well in some states.

Ahead of assembly elections in five states early next year, the Congress is trying to put its house in order in Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa, Manipur and UP. The party is trying to put up a serious challenge against the BJP and the SP in Uttar Pradesh.

The Congress has asked all the chiefs of its units/in-charges in states where bypolls were held on October 30 to send a report on the party's performance.

The Congress has sought detailed analysis of the results of the by-elections in the states and also the reasons for the victory and defeat. Congress General Secretary, Organisation, KC Venugopal issued the letter on Friday.

The Congress has swept bypolls in Himachal Pradesh winning three Assembly seats and one



Parliamentary seat; two Assembly bypolls in Rajasthan, and one Assembly bypoll in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. However, it lost all the Assembly bypolls in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Bihar, West Bengal, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. It also lost the Parliamentary bypolls in Madhya Pradesh and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

## Local MP BJP leaders differ with top brass on Raigaon seat loss

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Though the top BJP leadership in Madhya Pradesh is thumping its own back after snatching two Congress-held assembly seats in bypolls, the loss of Raigaon seat is a clear indication of differences within the party rank in Vindhya region.

Before the by-polls, the BJP had won five consecutive elections in Raigaon since 1993 and lost once to the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in 2013, and thus making the seat a BJP stronghold, like Prithvipur and Jobat where Congress was dominant.

In the post-bypoll analysis, the top BJP leadership in the state claimed it lost Raigaon because the BSP did not field its candidate, though regional party leaders of Vindhya region differ and point out groupism at the local level.

A senior BJP leader in Vidhya region, who was one of the election in-charge for Raigaon Assembly seat said the groupism among local leaders and selection of candidate were the main



reasons behind the party's defeat in Raigaon. "A wrong candidate, who had no credibility, was selected. She was a dummy, whereas the election was fought between two Kshatriya leaders of Vidhya regions," said the senior BJP leader who did not want to be identified.

Another BJP MLA of Vindhya region told IANS that the people were not happy with Satna MP Ganesh Singh under whom leadership the Raigaon by-poll was fought. "There were differ-

ences among the party leaders. Also, there was lack of coordination among those entrusted with the Raigaon seat. Top leadership may give some or the other reason for the loss, but the fact that party leaders who were in-charge to oversee the by-poll were stopped from visiting Raigaon," said the BJP MLA from Satna district.

Among three Assembly constituencies and one Lok Sabha seat that went for bypolls on October 30, Raigaon was the only seat where both parties (BJP and Congress) had fielded women candidates.

BJP's Pratima Bagari lost to Congress' Kalpana Verma by a margin of 12,290 votes. The Congress managed to win Raigaon after three decades.

Some other BJP leaders said that Raigaon by-election was fought between Satna MP (BJP) Ganesh Singh and senior Congress leader Ajay Singh.

Out of the three Assembly constituencies that went for by-polls, BJP won Prithvipur and Jobat, while the Congress won Raigaon. The BJP also retained Khandwa Lok Sabha seat.

## CM PLANTS KADAMBA SAPLING

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday planted a Kadamba sapling in the Smart city park located at Shyamla Hills, Bhopal. Along with planting saplings, Chouhan also did Shramdaan. It is worth mentioning that Chouhan plants saplings every day in fulfillment of his resolve. Kadamba or Kadam tree is considered to be a tree of deities. Kadamba is very famous in Ayurveda for its medicinal properties. The health-boosting properties of Kadamba are used in the treatment of many diseases. A special thing about Kadamba is that its leaves are very big and gum comes out of them. Its fruits are like lemons. Kadam flowers have their distinct importance. The mention of these fragrant flowers is also found in ancient Vedas and compositions.



## Digvijay demands Centre to cut excise duty on fuel prices to 2014 level

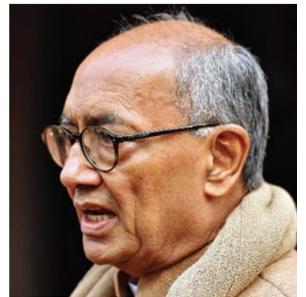
Singh demanded that the Centre should further cut the excise duty on fuel to what it was during the Congress regime in 2014, adding that the move will bring the prices further down by Rs 18

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh on Friday demanded that the Central government should further cut the excise duty on fuel to what it was during the Congress regime in 2014, adding that the move will bring the prices further down by Rs 18.

He further took a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said that he would reduce the fuel prices to what it was back in 2014 after losing elections in Uttar Pradesh.

"If Modi ji really wants to give relief to the people by reducing the prices of petrol and diesel, then he should reduce the Central Excise Duty as it was during the Congress regime in 2014. Petrol Rs 18 and diesel Rs 18 per litre will be further reduced. Maybe if he loses the elections in UP, then Modi ji will reduce the rate as it was in 2014."



Singh said in a tweet. In a relief to consumers, the Finance Ministry on Wednesday announced a Rs 5 per litre cut in excise duty on petrol and a Rs 10 per litre cut in excise duty on diesel. Amid record-high fuel prices, this is the first cut in central excise duties in over three years.

## Bhopal gas victims seek answers from BMHRC and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

"It is pathetic that the Health Ministry of Indian Government has not found time or will to set up these crucial departments, despite findings of the government's own research agency (ICMR) which has shown adverse health impact on women and children's health due to exposure of toxic gases in 1984," said Rashida Bee

(ICMR). They asked, "Why doesn't the Bhopal Memorial Hospital & Research Centre have a Gynaecology, Paediatrics, General Medicine departments till today?"

Studies carried out by ICMR and independent agencies have revealed that woman exposed to toxic gases have higher incidence of menstrual irregularity, spontaneous abortions even 5 years after the disaster, stillbirths and Pelvic Inflammatory diseases. Similarly several studies carried out on the health impact of toxic gas exposure on children and on children born to gas exposed parents revealed that children were the most vulnerable group and needed special attention and care. A study of ICMR, carried out by the Head of Dept of Pediatrics in 1990 revealed that there was a higher incidence of stunted growth and delay in gross motor and language development skills among children being born to gas-exposed parents when compared to children born to

unexposed parents. "It is pathetic that the Health Ministry of Indian Government has not found time or will to set up these crucial departments, despite findings of the government's own research agency (ICMR) which has shown adverse health impact on women and children's health due to exposure of toxic gases in 1984," said Rashida Bee, President of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationary Karmchhari Sangh

The ICMR's epidemiological survey of 1994 revealed high incidence of multi organ symptoms of those exposed to toxic gases. Despite these findings, BMHRC has yet to set up the Dept of General Medicine. "While the High Powered Committee and the Supreme Court Monitoring Committee have recommended setting up of a General Medicine department, it is yet to be established. It is routine for BMHRC to refuse treatment to several gas victims due to lack of this depart-

ment," said Rachna Dhingra of Bhopal Group for Information & Action. While the Supreme Court in its 2012 on medical care of gas victims had observed "In terms of Article 21 of the Constitution, all the gas victims are entitled to greater extent of multi-dimensional health care, as their sufferings are in no way, directly or indirectly, attributable to them. Even this order of the court could not get BMHRC to set up these crucial departments in its hospital meant for treatment of gas victims & their children," said Shezadi Bee of Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangharsh Morcha

Through the Campaign - "Bhopal Disaster : 37 years ; 37 questions" - the organizations wish to highlight urgent concerns regarding compensation, criminal justice, medical, economic and social rehabilitation and environmental remediation of polluted lands that need to be addressed to stop the on-going disaster.

## 3 CHARRED TO DEATH AS VEHICLE CATCHES FIRE

Guna: Three persons were burnt to death while four others suffered injuries on Friday when their vehicle caught fire after ramming into a stationary tanker near Barkheda.

Sub Divisional Officer of Police Munish Rajoria said the incident took place when a minibus was going towards Mathura from Indore. According to police, efforts were made to rescue the passengers but three of them succumbed to their injuries on the spot.

The deceased were identified as Durga (13), Rohit Sharma (19), Madho (20).

The injured were undergoing treatment at a hospital.

## By-poll results likely to delay change of guard in state

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh bypoll results came as a breather for Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan amid strong speculation of a change of guard in the state. Many senior BJP leaders believe that Madhya Pradesh bypoll results are now likely to delay any possible leadership change in the state government, at least for some time. Retaining Khandwa Lok Sabha and winning two assembly constituencies out of three has consolidated Chief Minister Chouhan's position in the party and in the state. Sources in the saffron party said that after favourable results in bypolls, Chouhan will not be removed immediately as he worked hard and delivered. "Chief Minister Chouhan is undoubtedly the most popular leader or face of BJP in Madhya Pradesh. Chouhan, knowing that the bypolls will be crucial and will



play decisive role for his continuation as the chief minister, put extra efforts in these constituencies. And results show his popularity and hard work," they said. A senior party functionary said that the bypoll results have extended the term of the Chief Minister when there was strong buzz of his removal after the party replaced Tirath Singh Rawat in Uttarakhand and Vijay Rupani in Gujarat. "It seems that no change of guard in the Madhya Pradesh government is going to take place soon," he said. The BJP has won two out of three Assembly constituencies and the lone Khandwa Lok Sabha seat in state which went for bypolls on October 30 and counting of votes took place on November 2.



# CM THACKERAY ORDERS PROBE INTO AHMEDNAGAR HOSPITAL FIRE TRAGEDY

Maharashtra government has also announced Rs 5 lakh each compensation to the kin of the deceased.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has ordered a probe into the fire incident in Ahmednagar district hospital that left 10 people dead, the Chief Minister's office (CMO) said on Saturday.

Uddhav Thackeray directed to conduct a thorough inquiry into the matter and take stern action against those responsible for the negligence, the CM office said.

The chief minister has also expressed condolences over the incident. Maharashtra government has announced Rs. 5 lakh each compensation to the kin of the deceased.

The blaze erupted in the ICU of the Ahmednagar hospital around 11 am on Saturday and killed 10 patients, who were undergoing treatment against coronavirus.

The incident is the latest in a series of such fires, some blamed on short circuits in electronic equipment, that have killed dozens of patients this year, including some in the richest



state of Maharashtra, home to Ahmednagar. On learning about the incident, Thackeray spoke to district Guardian Minister Hasan Mushrif and Chief

Secretary Sitaram Kunte and asked them to ensure that the victims should not face any problems in getting treatment. Ahmednagar District Collector

Rajendra Bhosale said a total of 10 people died in a fire incident at Ahmednagar Civil hospital today.

Maharashtra health minister Rajesh Tope said Collector was ordered to conduct the enquiry of the incident and to submit the report in a week's time. There were 17 patients admitted in Covid-19 ICU centre of Ahmednagar civil hospital when the fire broke out around 10.30 a.m. in the building due to a short circuit, said the official.

"The process to shift these 17 patients was going on but unfortunately 10 patients have lost their lives and one is still critical," Bhosale said.

"Fire audit of the hospital was done just after the Nashik hospital fire incident. But now based on several complaints from relatives a fire brigade officer has been asked to conduct the enquiry," he added. On Twitter, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish over the deaths, and offered condolences to the bereaved, adding, "May the injured recover at the earliest."

# NCP-linked Sunil Patil 'mastermind' of cruise party raid: BJP activist

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In yet another twist to the Cordelia Cruiser raid, a BJP activist on Saturday claimed that Sunil Patil, who is linked with NCP leaders, is the alleged "mastermind" of the sensational case in which Aryan Khan, son of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, was arrested.

Talking to media persons, Bharatiya Janata Party activist Mohit Kamboj-Bharatiya said that Patil, who hails from Dhule, has close connections with all the top Nationalist Congress Party leaders and ministers and had prior knowledge of the rave party that was scheduled on the cruiser, which was raided by Narcotics Control Bureau's Mumbai Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede, on October 2. According to Bharatiya, Patil, who is a friend of former state minister Anil Deshmukh's son Hrishikesh Deshmukh, boasted of his strong relations with the NCP leaders and how Anil Deshmukh had once allegedly met drug peddler, Chinku Pathan, an aide of the mafia don Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar, at a government guest house during the lockdown. NCP national spokesperson and Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik rubbished Bharatiya's claims, terming it as an unsuccessful attempt "by a member of Wankhede's private army to misguide and divert attention from the truth".

Elaborating, Bharatiya claimed that Patil is also linked with the others whose names have cropped up in recent weeks like Sam D'Souza, Kiran Gosavi, Prabhakar Sail and Manish Bhanushali and "they work as a syn-



dicate". He alleged that they tried to extort money and are involved in transfers and posting of officials, and charged Malik of "scripting a false narrative to defame the BJP, the NCB and its officers". Bharatiya demanded to know what is the relationship of Patil with Malik and other senior NCP leaders and ministers with whom he (Patil) enjoys close rapport. "Patil has a suit booked in Hotel Lalit for months. There were big parties with 'sharab, shabab and kebabs' there for those attending them... I will reveal more," he warned.

The BJP activist said that Patil had advance knowledge of the cruise rave party and wanted some link who could put him in touch with the NCB and was referred to Gosavi.

"They are all (Gosavi, D'Souza, Bhanushali) Patil's associates. I have been sent audio-video clips and WhatsApp messages of theirs from someone and I have forwarded them to the probe agencies," Bharatiya said. Meanwhile, Malik said that he will reveal more on the Hotel Lalit episode on Sunday, even as some BJP leaders advised him to keep off the NCB and let the agency do its work.

# NCB DDG Sanjay Singh starts probe in Aryan Khan drug case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The newly constituted Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by Narcotics Control Bureau Deputy Director General Sanjay Singh on Saturday started probe in six drug cases including of Aryan Khan lodged with Mumbai Zonal office.

Singh, a 1996 batch IPS officer, will take over the investigation of all six cases which were headed earlier by Zonal Director Sammer Wankhede including the sensational cruise ship party raid of October 2 in which Aryan Khan, son of Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan, was arrested.

On Friday, the NCB constituted an SIT headed by Singh to probe into these cases and removed Wankhede from the investigating team a week after the agency initiated probe into the alleged allegations of bribery and extortion against him. The NCB statement issued on Friday said that an SIT comprising officers from Operations Branch of NCB headquarters has been constituted by the Director General, NCB to take over a total of six cases from NCB Mumbai Zonal Unit which have national and international ramifications, in order to



conduct deeper investigation to find out forward and backward linkages.

The statement also said that no officer or officers have been removed from their present roles and they will continue to assist the Operations Branch investigation as required until any specific orders are issued to the contrary.

It is reiterated that the NCB functions across India as a single integrated agency. However, Wankhede denied that he has been removed from the case and said, "I have not been removed from the investigation. It was my writ petition in the court that the matter be probed by

a central agency. So Aryan Khan Case and Sameer Khan Case are being probed by Delhi Special Investigation Team. It is coordination between NCB teams of Delhi and Mumbai."

He has been under a cloud for a variety of reasons including allegations of corruption, fake caste certificate, a lavish lifestyle, and targeting high-profile individuals, especially from Bollywood and glamour industry with comparatively insignificant drug seizures, etc.

Maharashtra Cabinet Minister Nawab Malik and Wankhede have been engaged in an unprecedented war of words for the past one month, with the NCP leader making a series of shocking exposes on the NCB Mumbai head, besides an affidavit by a witness accusing him of extortion, allegations of Bharatiya Janata Party politicians and wanted criminals being roped in during the ship raid, etc. The embattled Wankhede has been running from pillar to post to politicians to statutory panels to the courts seeking protection from action against him, and has been recently given relief in the form of three working days' notice in case of arrest by the police.

# DESHMUKH SENT TO 14-DAY JUDICIAL CUSTODY



Mumbai: Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the early hours of Tuesday (November 2).

Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh remanded to 14-day judicial custody by a special holiday court in Mumbai. He was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the early hours of Tuesday (November 2) in connection with the alleged Rs 100-crore extortion and money laundering case. Now, today that is Saturday, November 6, Deshmukh was remanded to 14-day judicial custody by a special holiday court in Mumbai. While the Enforcement Directorate (ED) sought his remand for nine more days, the Mumbai court rejected ED's plea and sent Deshmukh to judicial custody.

# I-T searches carried out at Maharashtra based Urban Credit Cooperative Bank

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre on Saturday said that Income Tax (I-T) Department recently carried out search and seizure operations at locations associated with an Urban Credit Cooperative Bank located in Maharashtra.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the operation was carried out on October 27 at the bank's Headquarter and one of the branches. Besides, the residence of the bank's Chairman and one of its directors were also covered.

"The analysis of bank data on 'Core Banking Solutions' (CBS) and the statements of key persons recorded during the search action has revealed the glaring irregularities in opening the bank accounts."

"More than 1,200 new bank accounts were opened in the said branch without PAN. The investigations have revealed that these bank accounts were opened without following KYC norms and all account opening forms are filled in by the bank staff and they have put their signature or thumb impressions."

As per the statement, in all these accounts, multiple cash deposits of exact denomination of Rs 1.9 lakh, were made totalling to Rs 53.72 crore. "Out of these, more than 700 bank accounts have been identified which were opened in series, where cash deposits of more than Rs 34.10 crore were made immediately within 7 days of opening of bank accounts mainly during the period August 2020 to May 2021." "These deposits have been structured to avoid mandatory PAN requirement for cash deposits over Rs 2 lakh. The money has been subsequently converted into fixed deposits in the same branch." Furthermore, upon local enquiries in few cases of such account holders, it was demonstrated that these persons are not aware of cash deposits in the bank and categorically denied any knowledge of such bank accounts or even the fixed deposits. "The Chairman, CMD and the manager of the branch, could not explain the source of cash deposits and accepted that these were done at the behest of one of the directors of the bank, who is a prominent local businessman engaged in trading of grains."

# Maharashtra may witness 1.2 million active Covid cases in third wave, State govt begins preparations

The development comes as the Covid Task Force has cautioned about a third wave of the pandemic post the Diwali season. Maharashtra's peak active caseload - 698,354 - was recorded on April 25 this year



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra which is the worst affected state due to covid-19 in both the first and the second wave has begun preparing for the anticipated third wave of the pandemic.

Moreover, to strengthen health care services, the Thackeray government is setting up 531 oxygen generation plants and processing tenders to replenish the stock of eight antiviral medicines used to treat COVID-19 patients. The development comes as the Covid Task Force has cautioned about a third wave of the pandemic post the Diwali season.

According to the projections made by the Centre and shared with the state, the active caseload of Covid-19 disease can reach upto 1.2 million during the peak of the third wave. The projections are based on Maharashtra's

highest active cases recorded during the second wave and district-wise peaks recorded between March and June this year.

The state's peak active caseload 698,354 was recorded on April 25 this year.

"We are preparing for 1.2 million active cases in the third wave," said N Ramaswami, commissioner, National Health Mission, Maharashtra, a vertical of the union health ministry that works closely with the state.

Earlier Maharashtra's health minister Rajesh Tope said that the COVID Task Force has cautioned about a third wave of the pandemic post the Diwali season. "The second wave of the pandemic is not over yet. But there is no favourable condition for a third wave as of now. The state task force has cautioned of a third wave post the Diwali season. We are assessing the situation," he said.

# Mumbai NCB head Sameer Wankhede deboarded from cruise ship case probe

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a significant development, the Narcotics Control Bureau's controversial Mumbai Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede was on Friday shifted out from the investigations into the sensational cruise ship party raid of October 2 in which Aryan Khan, son of Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan, was arrested.

The NCB directorate on late Friday issued a statement saying that a Special Investigation Team (SIT) comprising officers from Operations Branch of the NCB Headquarters has been constituted by the Director General, NCB to take over a total of six cases from NCB Mumbai Zonal Unit which have national and international ramifications, in order to conduct deeper investigation to find out forward and backward linkages.

Questioned by media in Mumbai, Wankhede denied that he has been removed from the case.

"I have not been removed from the investigation. It was my writ petition in the court that the matter be probed by a central agency. So, the Aryan Khan case and Sameer Khan case are being probed by Delhi Special Investigation Team. It is coordination between NCB teams of Delhi and Mumbai."

The NCB statement also said that no officer or



officers have been removed from their present roles and they will continue to assist the Operations Branch investigation as required until any specific orders are issued to the contrary. It is reiterated that the NCB functions across India as a single integrated agency.

Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik said that Wankhede has been removed from a total of five cases, including the Cordelia Cruise case.

"This is just the beginning. A lot more has to be

done to clean this system and we will do it," he asserted, adding that there are a total 26 cases that need to be probed.

Wankhede has been under a cloud for a variety of reasons including allegations of corruption, fake caste certificate, a lavish lifestyle, and targeting high-profile individuals, especially from Bollywood and glamour industry with comparatively insignificant drug seizures, etc.

Malik and Wankhede have been engaged in an unprecedented war of words for the past one month, with the NCP leader making a series of shocking exposes on the NCB Mumbai head, besides an affidavit by a witness accusing him of extortion, allegations of Bharatiya Janata Party politicians and wanted criminals being roped in during the ship raid, etc. The embattled Wankhede has been running from pillar to post to politicians to statutory panels to the courts seeking protection from action against him, and has been recently given relief in the form of three working days' notice in case of arrest by the police. On the raid on an alleged rave party aboard the Cordelia Cruise ship, Wankhede had made a big catch of Aryan Khan and seven others, and later another 12 were arrested in the case which has hogged national attention for a month.

# Heavy Rainfall Forecast Over Maharashtra Districts for 2 Days; Yellow Alert Issued in Pune, Nashik

Heavy rains with thunderstorms are expected in some districts in the next few hours, along with strong winds of speed upto 30 to 40 kmph.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Heavy rainfall may be witnessed over several areas in Maharashtra on Saturday and Sunday due to a low pressure area in the Arabian Sea, which is likely to intensify within the next 24 hours.

While the low pressure area is moving away from the Indian coast, there is a possibility of it bringing heavy down-pour over areas in the state. According to the meteorological department, torrential to very torrential rains in many districts of western Maharashtra, Konkan and central Maharashtra may be witnessed on Saturday.

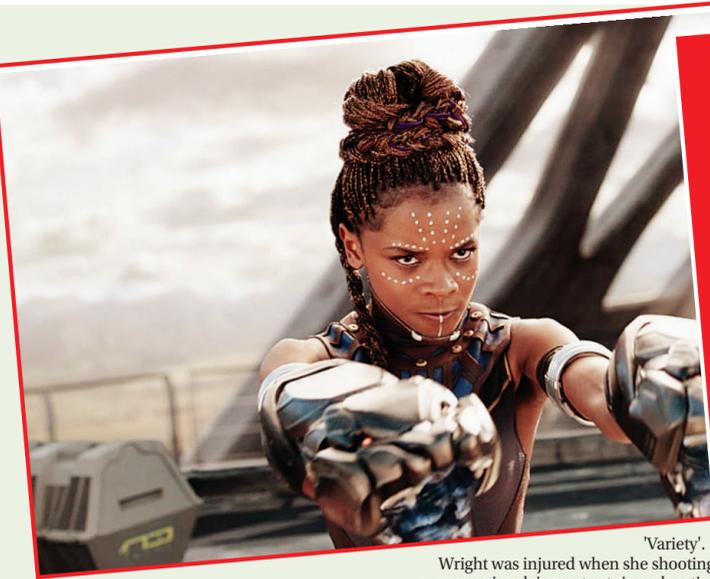


A yellow alert was issued on Saturday in ten districts including Pune, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Satara, Sangli, Thane, Kolhapur, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg.

Heavy to very heavy rains with thunderstorms are expected in these districts in the next few hours, along with strong winds with speed upto 30 to 40 kmph. Citizens have been warned to avoid long journeys.

Rains are also expected in Mumbai, Palghar, Beed, Latur, Solapur and Osmanabad districts. Cloudy weather has been recorded in these districts since this morning and 10 mm of rain has been recorded in Mumbai in the last 24 hours.

Dry weather is expected in the state after Monday. Meanwhile, the Indian Meteorological Department said that heavy rainfall and thunderstorm may be witnessed from Saturday to November 10 over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karikal. It said Kerala and Mahe may see rains on Monday, while coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam may experience showers on Monday and Tuesday.



## 'Black Panther 2' to resume shooting in early 2022

Los Angeles | Agencies

Even as Letitia Wright, who plays the genius inventor Shuri, recovers from an on-set injury she had suffered in late August, Marvel's 'Black Panther: Wakanda Forever' will temporarily shut down production, which will resume in early 2022, reports

Wright joined the Marvel Cinematic Universe as Shuri, the younger sister of the late Chadwick Boseman's character T'Challa in triple Oscar-winning 'Black Panther' (2018). Not much is known about the plot of 'Black Panther: Wakanda Forever', but Shuri is expected to take on a larger role following Boseman's death due to cancer in August 2020. The other 'Black Panther' cast members include Danai Gurira, Daniel Kaluuya, Winston Duke, Lupita Nyong'o, Florence Kasumba and Angela Bassett.

November 11, 2022.

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The other 'Black Panther' cast members include Danai Gurira, Daniel Kaluuya, Winston Duke, Lupita Nyong'o, Florence Kasumba and Angela Bassett.



Los Angeles | Agencies

## Dwayne Johnson believes he will 'forever be Sexiest Man Alive'

Hollywood star Dwayne Johnson received People magazine's annual 'Sexiest Man Alive' accolade in 2016 and although the title has subsequently been passed on to Blake Shelton, Idris Elba, John Legend and Michael B. Jordan, he says it isn't an honour he's ever giving up.

Speaking on 'People (The TV Show)', he said: "I am and will forever be Sexiest Man Alive. Listen, my Sexiest Man Alive title is in perpetuity. It's for life. Right? I don't give it up."

Although the publication will unveil 2021's Sexiest Man Alive this month, the 'Moana' star said it doesn't matter who is singled out, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

He said: "That means whoever you put on the cover, it

doesn't matter because I'm always going to be the Sexiest Man Alive." Johnson's 'Red Notice' co-star Ryan Reynolds has also held the title in the past, but the former wrestler refused to say who he thought was the "sexier" star.

He said: "Well, I mean, really that's up to the eye of the beholder, right? And it's all like interpretive. It's like when you read the Bible, you read different verses in a different way."

Johnson, who has Simone, 20, with former wife Dany Garcia, and Jasmine, five, and Tiana, three, with wife Lauren Hashian, previously joked he had "reached the pinnacle" when he was named Sexiest Man Alive.

The 'Jumanji' star thought it was his "sense of humour" that fans found sexy.

## George Clooney's 'biggest problem' is his daughter

London | Agencies

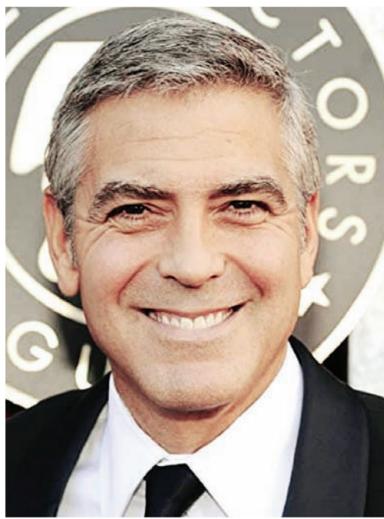
Actor-filmmaker George Clooney says that his daughter Ella is a "mystery" to him as he talks about how easy it is to entertain his son Alexander, both of whom he shares with wife Amal. Speaking to the Daily Mail newspaper columnist Baz Bamigboye, Clooney said: "Here's my biggest problem in life. That's my daughter Ella."

"Boys at this age are easy. Give them a stick and they start banging on things. They're fine. Ella woke up this morning with a sad face. I said, 'Are you OK, Ella?' It turns out that her doll was missing a shoe. "It was a very tragic morning for us and believe me, all you want in life is to find that shoe."

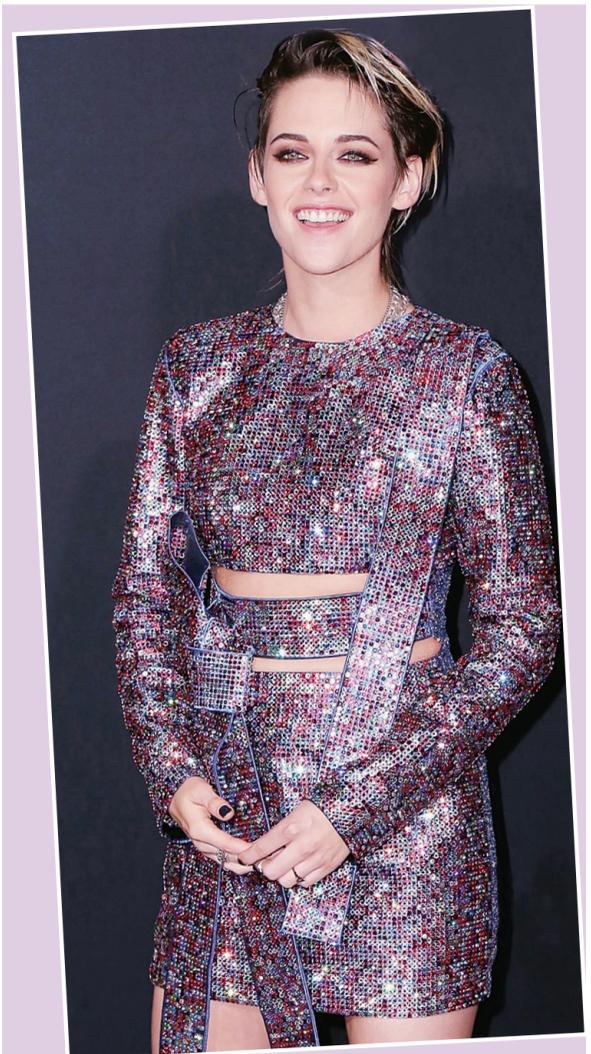
The 'Ocean's Eleven' star enjoyed spending more time with his children during lockdown because there were no academic pressures, and he embraced doing domestic tasks, including cooking because his lawyer wife isn't so adept in the kitchen.

He said: "They weren't old enough that I had to relearn trigonometry. (I was doing) six loads of laundry a day and I was doing the food, because my wife doesn't cook."

"The Tender Bar" is adapted from a memoir by American Pulitzer-prize winning journalist J.R. Moehringer, and tells the story of the author's mother relocating the family to his grandparents' Long Island pub, which was brimming with intellectuals and criminals.



Clooney quipped if his children could not handle being in such an establishment, he had "failed" as a father, reports femalefirst.co.uk.



## Kristen Stewart wants to play James Bond villain

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Kristen Stewart has revealed that she would love to star in a 007 movie and suggested that she could combine the roles of Bond girl and Bond villain.

Stewart told the Daily Mail newspaper's Baz Bamigboye column: "I would do a Bond movie, oh yeah! (I would play) the Bond girl who is the bad girl... who is the villain! I could play both parts. I haven't done a baddie, yet."

"I do like playing the good guy... but maybe I need to cross to the other side."

Stewart explained that she enjoyed the latest Bond movie as it

stars her friend Lea Seydoux - who she has worked with on the upcoming horror flick 'Crimes of the Future' as 007's love interest Madeleine Swann, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The 31-year-old actress said: "Lea is one of the coolest people I've ever met."

Meanwhile, Stewart recently confessed that she thinks that she has only made five "really good" films, despite having starred in dozens of projects. The 'Twilight' star said: "It's a total c\*\*\*shoot. I've probably made five really good films, out of 45 or 50 films? Ones that I go, 'Wow, that person made a top-to-bottom beautiful piece of work.'"

## 'Wonder Woman 3'



## Wonder Woman' actress Gal Gadot has given an update on the upcoming third movie in the series and revealed a script is being worked on.

Los Angeles | Agencies

The 37-year-old star has played Diana Prince and her superhero alter ego in 2017's 'Wonder Woman' and last year's sequel 'Wonder Woman 1984', as well as 'Justice League', reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She told Variety: "I can't tell you yet, but we're working on the script."

Gadot said she couldn't reveal any potential plot points yet, with everything being kept firmly under wraps.

On what would happen if she did let anything slip, she quipped: "People will come off the roof and take me away."

'Wonder Woman 1984' director Patty Jenkins recently said everyone involved is "super excited" for the upcoming blockbuster. Gadot has suggested there could be some cute cameos in the upcoming third instalment after her brood and her husband, Yaron Versano, made appearances in the previous film. She said: "Well, we might. They can get used to it. It's a nice souvenir in each movie they're going to be older and older."



## JENNIFER HUDSON PITCHING TALK SHOW WITH ELLEN DEGENERES TEAM

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-actress Jennifer Hudson is reportedly pitching a talk show that will use the team from 'The Ellen DeGeneres Show' after it wraps filming next year.

According to Variety magazine, Hudson has already shot a test show with 'Ellen' executive producers Andy Lassner and Mary Connelly serving as the showrunners, and the test show was even shot on the 'Ellen' stage, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Hudson's new show would not be billed as a continuation of 'Ellen' and is being shopped as an "entirely new series", although it's considered to be Warner Bros TV's new flagship daytime talk show once 'Ellen' ends.

Variety stated: "Meetings are taking place this week and appear to be going well so far; the show has been developed as a first-run syndicated broadcast TV daily strip, and there are currently no plans to pitch to other platforms, including streamers."

Ellen DeGeneres' talk show is set to come to an end next year after 19 years on air, and DeGeneres recently said she will be emotional when her show ends.



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

## Alessandra Ambrosio



## T20 World Cup

### UNBEATEN WARNER LEADS AUSTRALIA'S EIGHT-WICKET WIN OVER WEST INDIES

Abu Dhabi | Agencies

David Warner smashed an unbeaten 89 off 56 balls to lead Australia to an eight-wicket win over West Indies in their final Super 12 match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium here on Saturday.

Warner's knock, laced with nine fours and four sixes, along with Mitchell Marsh's 53 off 32 balls, was instrumental in Australia chasing down 158 with 22 balls remaining, giving a big boost to their net run rate in Group 1 standings.

Warner and Aaron Finch (9) gave Australia a flying start with 33 runs in the first three overs. Left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein gave West Indies their first breakthrough, with Finch inside-edging to his stumps in the fourth over. Warner continued his good show, welcoming Dwayne Bravo with a loft over mid-off. He then went on to hit Hosein for two boundaries in the final over of power-play.

Post Power-play, Mitchell Marsh joined the party, smacking Hayden Walsh Jr



and Hosein for a boundary each. Walsh Jr was taken for six more by Warner, who sprinted for a brace on the next ball to reach his 20th half-century in T20Is. Marsh treated Andre Russell with disdain, slamming him for a hat-trick of boundaries in the tenth over.

From there onwards, it was just one-way traffic as Warner and Marsh continued to find boundaries. After striking Jason Holder for successive boundaries in the 14th over, Marsh reached his half-century with a single to long-on, also bringing the century of the partnership between him and Warner. Warner took 11 runs off Bravo's last three balls in T20Is, including a four and six to help Australia inch closer to the target. Chris Gayle broke the 124-run partnership as Marsh drove straight to mid-off. Warner finished off the chase with a flick wide of slip on the bowling of Roston Chase.

#### Brief scores

West Indies 157/7 in 20 overs (Kieron Pollard 44, Evin Lewis 29, Josh Hazlewood 4/39, Adam Zampa 1/20) against Australia 161/2 in 16.2 overs (David Warner 89 not out, Mitchell Marsh 53, Chris Gayle 1/7, Akeal Hosein 1/29) by eight

### RUSSELL HITS STARC FOR 111-METRE SIX

Abu Dhabi: West Indies power hitter Andre Russell on Saturday smashed a massive 111-metre six in his short but stormy innings against Australia in the ICC T20 World Cup here.

It was the biggest six of the 2021 T20 World Cup so far. Russell provided the much-needed impetus for West Indies in the last few overs as he scored 18 off just seven balls.

The all-rounder, who came to bat in the 18th over, was delivered a sharp short ball by fast bowler Mitchell Starc in the 20th over, on which he played a magnificent pull shot towards deep mid-wicket.

Earlier, Australian captain Aaron Finch won the toss and opted to bowl first against West Indies in the 38th match of the ICC T20 World Cup 2021. This match is being played at Sheikh Zayed Stadium, Abu Dhabi.

### Van der Dussen, Rabada guide South Africa to 10 run win over England

Sharjah | Agencies

Rassie van der Dussen's unbeaten fifty and Kagiso Rabada's hat-trick (3/48) guided South Africa to a 10-run win over England in the final Group 1 Super 12 match of the 2021 ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium, here on Saturday.

Despite the win, the Proteas couldn't qualify for the semi-final of the tournament. They needed to keep England inside 131 but the Bavuma-led team failed to do so. On the other hand, England needed to pass 87 to guarantee qualification to the semi-finals and they sealed that spot inside 11 overs of the chase.

Fantastic unbeaten fifties by Rassie van der Dussen (94\* off 60) and Aiden Markram (52\* off 25) powered South Africa to 189-2 in 20 overs. Along with Dussen and Markram, Quinton de Kock also played a vital knock (34 off 27) for South Africa while Moeen Ali (1/27) was the most economical bowler for England.

Chasing a big total, in-form openers Jos Buttler and Jos Buttler gave England a flying start, racing to 37 without loss after four overs.

But, Eoin Morgan's side suffered a huge setback when Roy pulled up while attempting a single off the first ball of the fifth over, collapsing to the turf and being forced to leave the field. Soon, Jos Buttler was also dismissed for only the second time in the tournament, caught by Bavuma off Anrich Nortje for 26 off 15, leaving England to 58-1 after 5.3 overs.

Jonny Bairstow, who came to bat next, couldn't do much and was trapped in front by Tabraiz Shamsi. From there, the left-handed pair of Malan and Moeen



built the recovery after the quick wickets of Buttler and Bairstow.

Ali unleashed against the spinners, hitting Shamsi out of the stadium with one monster maximum to take him to 37 off 26 balls. But Shamsi had his revenge off the next delivery as Ali miscued another attempted six to David Miller in the deep.

Liam Livingstone's hat-trick of sixes off Kagiso Rabada knocked South Africa out of the tournament and gave England great impetus in their chase of 190. Livingstone tried to hit another maximum but he failed with Miller taking a catch on the boundary to send the big-hitting Englishman back to the hutch for 28 off 17.

In the end, England's attempt to go for the win got derailed as three catches in the deep in succession gave Rabada a hat-trick in the final over as South Africa defended 14 off the last six balls to end their tournament on a high.

Earlier, batting first, South Africa lost the wicket of Reeza Hendricks (2) in the third over of the innings. Hendricks went down on a knee and attempted to sweep the ball towards square but he completely missed the line and was cleaned bowled by Moeen Ali.

De Kock and Van der Dussen then joined hands and took South Africa to 40/1 after six overs. Both batters cleverly chose

attacking strokes and kept on hitting occasional boundaries to keep the scoreboard ticking.

The solid 71-run stand for the second-wicket was finally broken by Adil Rashid in the 12th over as De Kock (34) looked to go big against the spinner but he didn't get the timing right and was caught at long-off, leaving South Africa to 86/2 after 11.2 overs.

The wicket didn't affect Proteas' momentum as new batsman Markram and van der Dussen kept the run-counter ticking at an impressive rate. While Dussen brought South Africa's 100 with a gigantic six against Wood in the 13th over, Markram joined the party by hitting a six against Rashid. The pair went particularly hard after England's seamers in the middle overs, targeting the returning Mark Wood, who was playing in the tournament for the first time after replacing the injured Tymal Mills. Wood finished with figures of 0/47 off his four overs, with Chris Woakes faring a little better with 0/43, as England's seamers struggled in Sharjah.

#### Brief scores:

South Africa 189 for 2 in 20 overs (Rassie van der Dussen 94, Aiden Markram 52; Moeen Ali 1/27) against England (Moeen Ali 37, David Malan 33; Kagiso Rabada 3/48)

### WTT Contender Lasko: Manika Batra reaches singles semis; final in doubles

Lasko (Slovenia) | Agencies

India's Manika Batra remained on course for a grand double at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Contender event in Lasko, Slovenia, reaching the semi-finals in the women's singles and the final in women's doubles with compatriot Archana Girish Kamath. In the women's singles quarter-final played on Saturday, Manika overcame a tough challenge from Romania's Bernadette Szocs, beating her rival 3-2, coming back from 1-2 deficit in a well-fought encounter. Manika eventually won the match 11-8, 4-11, 5-11, 11-8, 11-7 to seal a place in the last-four stage at the Sports Hall Tri Lillje.

Manika, ranked 58th in the World, started well on Saturday afternoon and won the first game but lost the next two games 4-11 and 5-11, and was staring at defeat.

However, the Indian star, a gold medalist at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, came back strongly in the fourth game and from 4-4, surged ahead to win the game at 11-8, overcoming a stiff challenge from the Romanian opponent.

In the decider, Manika, who represented the country in the Tokyo Olympics, opened a small lead at 6-4 and slowly build on it to extend it to 10-7 before clinching the issue on the first match point for a morale-boosting 3-2 win and a place in the semi-finals. She will next meet China's World No. 11 Wang Yidi in the semi-final. The other semi-final will pit Germany's Sabine Winter and China's Liu Weishan.

Earlier on Friday night, Manika and Archana upset China's Liu Weishan and Wang Zidi 3-2 (11-8, 8-11, 11-6, 5-11, 11-8) in the women's

doubles semi-finals.

The two pairs traded games as the Indians won the first and third while the Chinese levelled scores twice by winning the second and fourth games. In the decider, Manika and Archana conceded an early lead and were forced to take a time-out at 0-3 down. Things did not improve much as the Chinese stretched the lead to 7-2 when the Indians launched a brilliant comeback. They levelled the score at 7-7 and took lead at 8-7, forcing their opponents to commit mistakes. The Chinese duo levelled scores at 8-8 but Manika and Archana won the next three points to seal victory and a place in the final. They will meet Puerto Rican sisters Melanie and Adriana Diaz, who defeated Singapore's Lin Ye and Zeng Jian 3-1 (11-8, 8-11, 11-5, 11-3) to seal a place in Sunday's final.

### SCOTLAND PLAYERS VISIT INDIA DRESSING ROOM AFTER T20 WORLD CUP MATCH



New Delhi: Indian skipper Virat Kohli along with his teammates interacted with the Scotland players following their ICC T20 World Cup match in Dubai, and the gesture prompted a lot of appreciation from cricket fans.

The Board of Cricket Control India (BCCI) uploaded a video on their Twitter handle which showed players from both the teams interacting in the dressing room. According to the caption of the tweet, the Scotland cricket team wanted to meet the Indian side, and "our boys made them feel at home". Whereas, Cricket Scotland tweeted, "Huge respect to @imVkohli and co. for taking the time. Priceless."

### Djokovic stays on course for sixth Paris Masters title

Paris | Agencies

Serbian world No. 1 Novak Djokovic continued his quest for a record 37th ATP Masters 1000 crown, overcoming the early resistance of American Taylor Fritz to reach the Rolex Paris Masters semifinals with a 6-4, 6-3 win in 74 minutes here.

The 34-year-old Djokovic will now meet seventh seed from Poland Hubert Hurkacz for a place in the Paris Masters final, a title he has won five times. Djokovic is currently tied with Spain's Rafael Nadal on 36 Masters 1000 trophies.

Hurkacz booked a place in the Paris Masters last-4 beat-



ing first-time ATP Masters 1000 quarter-finalist James Duckworth 6-2, 6-7(4), 7-5 in two hours and 13 minutes.

Djokovic's athleticism helped him land a blow at 3-4 in the first set, and while Fritz's shot-making helped him break back immediately, greater depth of stroke from the Serbian clinched the 38-minute opener.

### Bhaker-Foroughi pair wins Air Pistol Mixed Team gold in President's Cup

Wroclaw (Poland) | Agencies

India's woman pistol ace Manu Bhaker and Irans reigning Olympic champion Javad Foroughi, won the 10m air pistol mixed team gold at the ongoing ISSF President's Cup Rifle/Pistol here.

The Indo-Iranian pair got the better of the French-Russian duo of Mathilde Lamolle and Artem Chernousov 16-8 in the gold medal match, in a late-evening match on Friday.

Manu and Javad were placed third in qualification with a combined 582/600 to qualify for the first semifinal where they topped the field of four pairs to make it to the final. Lamolle and Artem came through by winning the second semifinal.

Among the other Indians in the field, Abhishek Verma paired with Ukrainian Olena Kostevych to finish sixth, while the pairing of Saurabh Chaudhary and Swiss Heidi Gerber Diethelm also made it among the top-eight semifinalists to finish seventh.



Yashaswini Deswal, the fourth Indian in the fray, who was paired with Slovakian Juraj Tuzinsky, ended 10th among the 12 teams in the competition.

International Mixed Teams were formed by the ISSF randomly in accordance with the draw. In the day's other medal event, China's Lihao Sheng and Romania's Laura-Georgeta Iile won the 10m air rifle mixed team competition.

The inaugural ISSF President's Cup is a rechristened version of the ISSF World Cup Finals, where the year's top-12 athletes according to world ranking are invited to determine the best individual athletes of the year in the respective Olympic events. Individual winners will be awarded 'The Golden Target' along with prize money.

Cash awards will also be awarded to all athletes in the individual competitions.

Saturday, day three of competitions, has the first of four individual finals on schedule. Indian interests lie in the men's and women's 10m air pistol competitions where Manu has made it to the semifinals along with both Saurabh and Abhishek in the men's competition.

### Dwayne Bravo represents West Indies for last time, Gayle also hints same

Abu Dhabi | Agencies

All-rounder Dwayne Bravo received a standing ovation from his teammates, opposition players, and fans at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium after playing the final match of his international career for West Indies, here on Saturday.

Playing in his last game, Bravo hit a six and scored 10 runs against Australia in a super 12 match of the ongoing T20 World Cup in Abu Dhabi, drawing curtains on a stellar international career with the West Indies.

After his last innings for West Indies, the star all-rounder walked off to applause from the audience, hugs from his teammates, and



respect from the opposition. In bowling, Bravo remained wicketless and conceded 36 runs in his

quota of four overs.

Following his side's loss to Sri Lanka on Thursday, Bravo had

confirmed he would be hanging up his boots. Meanwhile, Bravo's teammate Chris Gayle also hinted that he might have played his last game for West Indies. The attacking batsman, who turned 42 in September, opened the West Indies innings and played an entertaining knock of 15 runs. Unlike Bravo, who had clarified that this match would serve as his last outing in maroon, Gayle had not made clear his plans for international retirement. Yet, when the West Indies legend walked off the field after a short innings, raising his bat to the crowd, congratulated by his colleagues, and soaking in the well-earned admiration, it suggested this was his farewell match too.

### Noted cricket coach Tarak Sinha passes away

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Dronacharya Awardee and renowned cricket coach Tarak Sinha died here on Saturday morning after a prolonged illness. He was 71.

Sinha, the soul of Sonnet Cricket Club which has given India and Delhi cricket so many gems, was battling lung cancer for a while, and recently, he had a multi-organ failure. He was a bachelor and is survived by his sister and hundreds of students.

"It is with heavy heart we have to share this tragic news of Shri Tarak Sinha, the founder of Sonnet Club, has left us for heavenly abode at 3 am on Saturday after a brave battle with lung cancer for two months," the Sonnet Club said in a statement. Affectionately known as 'Ustaad ji', Sinha trained cricketers across generations at The Sonnet Club which acted as Delhi's supply line. He identified talent and turned them into international cricketers. The revered coach has produced cricketers like,



Surender Khanna, Randhir Singh, Raman Lamba, Manoj Prabhakar, Ajay Sharma, KP Bhaskar, Atul Wassan, Ashish Nehra, Sanjeev Sharma, Aakash Chopra, Shikhar Dhawan, Anjum Chopra and Rishabh Pant.

He was the fifth cricket coach, after Desh Prem Azad, Gurcharan Singh, Ramakant Achrekar and Sunita Sharma, to get the Dronacharya award.



## ALWAYS WISHED TO DO A FILM WITH RANVEER: SHARVARI

Team

Absolute | Mumbai

Debutante Sharvari, who was an assistant director on the sets of 'Bajirao Mastani', was thrilled to be on the quiz show that actor Ranveer Singh is currently hosting. She says Ranveer inspired him and that she always wished for the day she

would do a film with the livewire star. Sharvari said: "Promoting my debut film 'Bunty Aur Babli 2' on 'The Big Picture' was a surreal moment not only because it was one of my first Television integrations but also the fact that I was on the same screen as Ranveer Singh." In 2015, I was an AD on one of Ranveer's most iconic films 'Bajirao Mastani'. I was a clap AD on the action unit and got to witness his mind boggling performance so closely. He absolutely inspired me and everyday was a learning being able to watch him in his element. I always wished for the day I would do a film with Ranveer Singh."

Sharvari, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming comedy heist film 'Bunty Aur Babli 2', hopes that her dream of sharing screen space with Ranveer comes true someday. "But, for now, I am super happy and excited that I got to be on his show and share screen space with him! So, this journey from being an assistant director to being able to stand on the same platform with him was definitely a part of my big picture." Sharvari has been paired with Siddhant Chaturvedi, who plays the big city conman aka the new Bunty in the second installment of the film. 'Bunty Aur Babli 2' also features Saif Ali Khan and Rani Mukerji. It is slated to release on November

## Athiya Shetty, KL Rahul make relationship public



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On actress Athiya Shetty's 29th birthday, cricketer KL Rahul made their relationship Instagram official with a loved-up post.

Rahul shared two pictures posing with Athiya. In the image, the two are seen making a goofy face while in the second photo they are smiling at the camera.

"Happy birthday my (love

emoji) @athiyashetty," Rahul captioned the pictures, which currently has 1.9 million likes.

Athiya and Rahul have often been spotted together. However they have always remained tight-lipped about their relationship.

Speaking about her work, Athiya was last seen on screen in 'Motichoor Chaknachoor' with Nawazuddin Siddiqui.

## Taapsee prepares for Mithali Raj biopic

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Fresh from the release of 'Rashmi Rocket', Taapsee Pannu took to Instagram to express her love for London. Posting pictures of her at the iconic St James's Court hotel, she wrote in the caption: "Miss my hot coffee in cold London mornings with a home away from home to come back to. Already sure I'm gonna be back soon."

It's pretty much an established fact that Tapsee loves to travel. The actress works hard, but always makes it a point to find some time to unwind before setting off on a new film's journey. After working through a packed schedule of back-to-back films, Tapsee was recently in London for her vacation where she shopped,

roamed around and soaked up the city's flavours to her heart's content. Some time back, the actress had shared pictures and stories from her last trip to London. She also visited the Lord's and posted a picture of herself donning the jersey of Mithali Raj, looking super impressed by the memorabilia of the Indian's women's cricket captain. Tapsee will be next seen essaying the role of Mithali Raj in the upcoming biopic 'Shabaash Mithu', directed by Srijit Mukherjee. She has a number of other interesting projects lined up, such as the Telugu film 'Mishan Impossible', whose poster she shared on Diwali, the 'Run Lola Run' adaptation 'Loop Lapeta', Anurag Kashyap's 'Dobaaraa', and 'Blurr', the Hindi remake of the Spanish 'Julia's Eyes'.



## 'Sooryavanshi' collects Rs 26.29 cr on Day 1



"#Sooryavanshi ROARS on Day 1... REVIVES biz... Records EXCELLENT numbers, despite 50% occupancy in the largest market [#Maharashtra]... Day 2 is SUPER-STRONG... Has potential to grow over the weekend... CINEMAS AND CINEGOERS ARE BACK... Fri Rs 26.29 cr. #India biz." The Rohit Shetty directorial released on Thursday.

'Sooryavanshi' marks the fourth installment of filmmaker Shetty's cop universe after 'Singham' franchise and 'Simmba'. The film stars Akshay as Anti-Terrorism Squad chief DCP Veer Sooryavanshi and also features Katrina Kaif and Jackie Shroff. The film revolves around Veer Sooryavanshi, the chief of the Mumbai Anti-Terrorism Squad and his team who join forces with

inspector Sangram Bhalerao and DCP Bajirao Singham to stop a terrorist group planning to attack Mumbai.

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Akshay Kumar-starrer 'Sooryavanshi' has received a roaring response on day one of its release. The film has minted Rs 26.29 crore, so far. Trade analyst Taran Adarsh tweeted:

## Bullying is traumatic for every person: Ayushmann Khurrana

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Actor Ayushmann Khurrana, who is UNICEF's Celebrity Advocate for their global campaign Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC), shares his thoughts on creating a safe space for kids on the internet to mark the International Day against Violence and Bullying at School including Cyberbullying.

Ayushmann said: "Bullying is traumatic for every person, and in the present day it also happens online. In the



case of cyberbullying, children are often not sure of how and where to access

help, whether the bullying originates from people they know in school, in their communities or strangers on the internet." The International Day was marked with the theme: "Tackling cyberbullying and other forms of online violence involving children and young people." Ayushmann added: "As parents, teachers and family members, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that all children are aware of how to stay safe online, to create a safe space where children who experience online violence do not hesitate to seek help."

## GEETA KAPUR CALLS FARAH KHAN KUNDER HER MOTHER

Choreographer and television personality Geeta Kapur shares the reason for calling Farah Khan Kunder her mother on the finale episode of 'Zee Comedy Show'

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Geeta said that during work related tours Farah took care of her like her own mother and she always stood with her

She said: "Whenever I used to go for any work, shoot or event, my mother used to travel with me. However, after I started working with Farah Khan, we had to travel abroad a lot and my mother couldn't travel with me all the time. But Farah took

care of me like a mother and I felt that maternal love and protection, since then I started calling her mummy."

But at times this turned out to be embarrassing for Farah. In fact, she recalls one moment at the airport when everyone around Farah started noticing her, when Geeta started calling her "mummy". Farah said: "At that time, Geeta and I were hot and happening, so whenever she used to call me mummy, we would see hilarious

reactions. In fact, one time, at the airport, I was looking very pretty wearing these denim shorts and top. But she came in screaming mummy, mummy from behind, leaving everyone shocked. An airhostess even came up and told me you're too young to be a mother to such a big woman. It was embarrassing." But Geeta is like my daughter, we share a wonderful bond and it'll be the same for life," Farah concludes. 'Zee Comedy Show' airs on Zee TV.



Ankita Sharma