

# absolute india

VOL. 7, ISSUE 117, BHOPAL | TUESDAY, MARCH 08, 2022 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI

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## MODI URGES PUTIN TO HOLD DIRECT TALKS WITH ZELENSKY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a phone call that lasted for about 50 minutes, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to hold direct talks with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky amid the ongoing Moscow-Kiev war, according to sources.

During the conversation, which is the second between Modi and Putin since Russia began its war on February 24, the President briefed the Prime Minister on the status of negotiations between the Ukrainian and Russian teams.

Modi also appreciated the Russian military's announcement earlier in the day to hold fire and open humanitarian corridors in the four Ukrainian cities of Kiev, Kharkov, Sumy and Mariupol.

The Prime Minister further stressed on the importance of the safe evacuation of Indian citizens from Sumy at the earliest, to which Putin assured of all possible cooperation. Also on Monday, the Prime Minister spoke to Zelensky and



expressed deep concern about the ongoing conflict and resultant humanitarian crisis, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

"(The) Prime Minister reiterated his call for immediate cessation of violence and noted that India has

always stood for peaceful resolution of issues and direct dialogue between the two parties," it said.

According to the statement, Modi "thanked Ukrainian authorities for their facilitation in evacuating more than 20,000 Indian citizens from Ukraine", but also expressed deep

concern for the safety and security of Indian students still remaining in the war-torn nation and emphasised the need for their quick and safe evacuation. The first time Modi and Zelensky spoke was on February 26, just two days after Russia launched its military invasion of Ukraine.

## Russia-Ukraine and NATO must engage in sincere negotiations: Congress

► THE CONGRESS ON MONDAY URGED RUSSIA-UKRAINE AND NATO TO ENGAGE IN SINCERE DIALOGUE TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT IN THE REGION WHICH IS CAUSING WIDESPREAD DESTRUCTION AND CLAIMING INNOCENT LIVES.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress on Monday urged Russia-Ukraine and NATO to engage in sincere dialogue to resolve the conflict in the region which is causing widespread destruction and claiming innocent lives. A statement issued by their party said: "The Congress party is alarmed and distressed over the escalation of military conflict in Ukraine. The loss of innocent lives, widespread destruction, mass exodus of people and the aggravated human sufferings is unacceptable."

The party said it remains gravely concerned about the safety of thousands of Indian students and citizens trapped in war zones.

"The Congress party earnestly appeals for an immediate end to all hostilities and the creation of geographically defined humanitarian corridors for safe evacuation respected by both sides. Russia, Ukraine and NATO must engage in sincere negotiations for restoring peace and a lasting resolution of all issues," the statement said.

The party said that is the duty of Government of India to make all efforts to bring back the stranded citizens.

"It is important to remember and recall that India has in the past undertaken successful large-scale operations by its Air Force and Navy to evacuate Indians during Gulf war, Lebanon, Libya and Iraq without indulging in partisan propaganda," it added.

## Biennial elections to 13 Rajya Sabha seats on March 31

New Delhi | Agencies

Biennial election for 13 Rajya Sabha seats, from six states, falling the end of the sitting members' terms in April, will be held on March 31, the Election Commission said on Monday.

According to an EC release, the date of notification for election will be issued on March 14, the last date for nomination will be March 22, the last date for withdrawal of the candidature will be March 24 and the polling will be held on March 31 while the result will be announced on the same day.

Further, the term of office of the members to be elected to the upper house of Parliament from Punjab

shall be subject to the decision of the Supreme Court in SLP(C) No. 17123/2015 (Election Commission of India Vs Devesh Chandra Thakur & Others), it said. The Commission has directed that for the purpose of marking preference(s) on the ballot paper, only integrated violet colour sketch pen(s) of pre-fixed specification, provided by the Returning Officer, shall be used. No other pen shall, under any circumstances, be used in the above said elections.

The poll panel has also directed the Chief Secretaries concerned to depute a senior officer from the state to ensure that the extant instructions regarding Covid-19 containment measures are complied with

while making arrangements for conducting the elections.

Adequate measures for close monitoring of the election process by appointing observers shall be taken to ensure free and fair election, the EC added.

Rajya Sabha members Ranee Narah and Ripun Bora from Assam, Anand Sharma from Himachal Pradesh, as well as AK Antony, MV Shreyams Kumar, and Soma Prasad K of Kerala, KG Kenya of Nagaland, and Jharna Das Baidya from Tripura will see their terms expire on April 2.

The term of five Rajya Sabha Members from Punjab - Sukhdev Singh, Pratap Singh Bajwa, Shwair Mallik, Naresh Gujral, and Shamsher Singh Dullu will be expiring on April 9.

## PRIYANKA IN JAIPUR, HINTS POST POLL ALLIANCE WITH SP IN UP

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was in Jaipur on Monday where she answered various queries of the media. She did not rule out the possibility of extending support to the Samajwadi Party in UP after the poll results.

Team Absolute | Jaipur

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was in Jaipur on Monday where she answered various queries of the media. She did not rule out the possibility of extending support to the Samajwadi Party in UP after the poll results. When asked about the Rajasthan budget which is getting laurels across the nation, she said, "I have not seen the budget. I have been busy in the UP elections. So I can't say anything about it."

Priyanka said, "In the Uttar Pradesh (UP) assembly elections, the public must have given a lot of thought before voting. Hope people have made the right decision."

However, she added that the decision to extend support to the SP will be taken based on the emerging situation. "Let the results of the election



come first. Only then can something be said."

Will Congress bring new MLAs to Rajasthan to stop poaching? To this, Priyanka Gandhi said, "It is a question of the future. The conditions will

get clear only after the results are out."

Priyanka Gandhi, accompanied with senior leader Rajeev Shukla, reached Sangner airport on Monday afternoon. Chief Minister Ashok

Gehlot, PCC Chief Govind Singh Datasara, Gujarat in-charge Raghu Sharma also reached the airport to receive Priyanka. From here Priyanka proceeded to the Chief Minister's residence.

According to sources, Priyanka Gandhi is here to discuss the issue of poaching of MLAs of the five states which went to the polls. The results will be announced on March 10.

Priyanka Gandhi will participate in a private event related to an NGO in a hotel in Jaipur and shall return to Lucknow on Tuesday morning at 8.30 a.m.

On International Women's Day, on March 8, Priyanka Gandhi will take out a women's march in Lucknow. Apart from women leaders of the Congress, many film personalities will also participate in this march. Women MLAs and ministers of Rajasthan have also been invited.

### HIJAB ROW:

## Prohibitory orders around B'luru schools, colleges

Bengaluru | Agencies

Bengaluru Police Commissioner Kamal Pant on Monday issued prohibitory orders in and around schools and colleges in the city till March 22. The order says that any gathering, agitation or protest of any type within the 200 metre area of schools, PU colleges, degree colleges or other similar education institutions in Bengaluru city has been extended for another two weeks. Noting that in certain parts of the state, in the last few weeks, protests and agitations have been held in connection with the strict enforcement of uniform rules at schools and colleges, he said



that since at many places, the protests have disturbed public peace and order, it is considered very essential to initiate proper security measures to maintain public peace and order in Bengaluru city. The issue is still alive and possibility

of holding protests far and against over the issue cannot be ruled out and hence the order has been issued, the Commissioner of Police said.

Hijab row has surfaced in colleges of Dakshina Kannada, Udipi, and Shivamogga districts. Girl students have objected to college authorities' decision to turn them away from attending exams for wearing hijab.

The hijab row started as a small protest in the Udipi Government Girl's Pre-University College by six girls has turned out to be a major crisis in the state.

Presently, the High Court has completed hearing of arguments and reserved its verdict.

## Covid in wildlife threatens emergence of new virus variant: WHO

Geneva | Agencies

The introduction of SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing Covid-19 infection, to wildlife could result in the establishment of animal reservoirs, which may, in turn, result in the emergence of a new virus variant, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Monday.

The WHO made the statement jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). It called for prioritising monitoring of SARS-CoV-2 infection in wildlife and preventing the formation of animal reservoirs.

Although the Covid pandemic is driven by human-to-human transmission, the SARS-CoV-2 virus is also known to infect animal species. Current knowledge also indicates that wildlife does not play a significant role in the spread of SARS-CoV-2 in humans, but spread in animal populations can affect the health of these populations and may facilitate the emergence of new virus variants.

But, besides domestic animals, free-ranging, captive or farmed wild animals such as big cats, minks, ferrets, North American white-tailed deer, and great apes have been observed to be infected with SARS-CoV-2. In addition,

farmed mink and pet hamsters have shown to be capable of infecting humans with the Covid while a potential case of transmission between white-tailed deer and a human is currently under review. The FAO, OIE and WHO called on all countries to take steps to reduce the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission between humans and wildlife "with the aim of reducing the risk of variant emergence and for protecting both humans and wildlife." The organisations urged authorities to adopt relevant regulations and recommend personnel working closely with wildlife to be trained to implement measures that reduce the risk of

transmission between people and between people and animals. The guidelines include the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and good hygiene practices around animals, including good hygiene practices for hunters and butchers. While there is no evidence to back that eating meat can cause Covid, hunters should not track animals that appear sick or harvest those that are found dead, the statement read. "Appropriate butchering and food preparing techniques, including proper hygiene practices, can limit transmission of coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV-2, and other zoonotic pathogens," it added.

## BJP Scores UP Again, AAP Scoops Punjab - Poll Of Exit Polls

The poll of exit polls also foresees a neck-and-neck verdict in Goa, with the BJP and the Congress both tipped to win 16 of the state's 40 seats.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will sweep Punjab and Uttar Pradesh will stay firmly with the BJP, a poll of exit polls predicted on Monday after voting ended for state elections that are seen to be the semi-final ahead of the 2024 national election. In Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP is likely to win another term by a landslide, signal six exit polls. An aggregate of exit polls gives the BJP and its allies 241 of the state's 403 seats - the majority-mark is at 202 - with Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party finishing second with 142 seats.

An average of 10 polls predicts a remarkable win for AAP in its first major state, Punjab. The exit polls give AAP 63 seats in 117-seat Punjab, with the majority mark at 59. If this happens, AAP will take power in the first full state; Delhi, where it has been in

### POLL OF POLLS

	SEATS	MAJORITY	SINGLE LARGEST	POLL OF POLLS
UTTAR PRADESH	403	202	BJP+	242
PUNJAB	117	59	AAP	63
GOA	40	21	BJP/Cong+	16
MANIPUR	60	31	BJP	30
UTTARAKHAND	70	36	BJP	35

power since 2015, is partly under the Centre.

The ruling Congress is set to finish second with 28 seats in the assembly, the polls say, indicating that the party may pay the price for intense infighting in the months preceding the vote, Navjot Singh Sidhu bickered with veteran Amarinder Singh as well as the man who replaced him, Charanjit Singh Channi.

The BJP, which joined hands with Amarinder Singh, may remain a minor player in Punjab, with its former ally, Akali Dal, predicted to win 19 seats.

For Uttarakhand, a poll of 11 exit polls predicts a close fight, with the BJP marginally ahead but both the ruling party and the Congress within striking distance of power. The BJP could win 35 seats and the Congress 32, say exit polls. AAP could land one seat, the polls say.

The poll of exit polls also foresees a

neck-and-neck fight in Goa, with the BJP and the Congress both tipped to win 16 of the state's 40 seats - well below the majority mark of 21. Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool is given three seats by 10 exit polls, which suggests that it could end up playing the king-maker in a fight for majority. The 2017 election saw the Congress failing to take power despite emerging the single-largest, thanks to key crossovers.

The BJP is set to emerge as the largest party in Manipur, says an average of six exit polls. The BJP is likely to win 30 seats in the 60-seat assembly, the exit polls say - just one below the majority mark. The Congress may win 13 seats, they say.

The last round of voting in Uttar Pradesh today wrapped month-long polling in UP, Punjab, Goa, Manipur and Uttarakhand.

The counting of votes will take place on Thursday (March 10).



# DHANKHAR UNABLE TO DELIVER SPEECH IN ASSEMBLY AS BJP CREATES BEDLAM

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar failed to deliver his budget speech in the Assembly on Monday following continuous protests by the MLAs of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Kolkata | Agencies

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar failed to deliver his budget speech in the Assembly on Monday following continuous protests by the MLAs of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP MLAs, led by Suwendu Adhikari, were protesting against the violence during the recently-concluded civic polls.



Dhankhar, who arrived at the Assembly at 2 p.m. to deliver the inaugural address, could not do it as BJP legislators, carrying posters and photographs of alleged victims of civic poll violence, came down to the well of the house to stage a protest. The Governor requested the BJP MLAs to let the proceedings begin but they remained adamant, and

raised 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' slogans. As the Governor was about to leave the House, ruling party MLAs including Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee requested him to stay, following which Dhankhar again urged the BJP lawmakers to calm down but it was in vain as the BJP MLAs started giving slogans with a renewed

vigour.

However, Dhankhar read the first and the last line of the budget speech and left the Assembly.

Chief Minister Banerjee termed the BJP MLAs' protest as a "shame for democracy."

"What the BJP did today in the Bengal Assembly is a shame for democracy. We urged the Governor to read at least one line from his speech and table it in the House, he accepted our request," she said. "BJP wanted to create a constitutional crisis," she added.

Later in the day the Governor asked both BJP and Trinamool Congress to go for "self-introspection."

"This kind of thing is not good for democracy and it would have been better if it didn't happen," he said, also alleging the ruling Trinamool Congress of physically and verbally obstructing him.

# Want regulation, not closure, Environment Minister on air pollution

Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupender Yadav on Monday said his ministry wants regulation and not closure of polluting units to ensure citizens in the Delhi-NCR get clean air.

Gurugram | Agencies

Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupender Yadav on Monday said his ministry wants regulation and not closure of polluting units to ensure citizens in the Delhi-NCR get clean air.

"There is a common misconception among the general public that 'environment' means the closure of everything impacting Mother Nature. We don't want closure, we want regulation," he said after inaugurating a 'Dialogue Towards Clean Air' here.

The Dialogue, an interactive session, was organized by the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR & Adjoining Areas (CAQM) in association with the Ministry to deliberate upon the various factors impacting the air quality in the entire NCR.

"Our team, including the Members of the Commission, is committed to working towards providing a healthy and pollution-free atmosphere to the citizens of the entire

NCR," the Minister said, adding, "PM2.5 and PM10 dust particles present in the air go into our lungs. So, if we, as citizens of India, don't work towards enhancement of the environment, who else will?"

Yadav appreciated the concerted efforts of CAQM towards the abatement of the air pollution menace in the entire NCR. "Persistent efforts of the Commission supplemented with close monitoring and inspection drives in various sectors contributing to air pollution has shown remarkable improvement in air quality in the NCR," he claimed.

The two-day interactive session involved stakeholders from the Central government, state governments, Pollution Control Boards, municipal bodies, NGOs, private sector, academia, and industry associations.

About 20 NGOs working in the field of air pollution participated in the dialogue. The Commission and the Ministry assured continued support and cooperation to all the stakeholders in a joint fight against the air pollution menace in the NCR.

# PMK urges Stalin to call all-party meet on Mekedatu dam issue

Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) Youth Wing leader and former Union Minister Anbumani Ramadoss has urged Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin to convene an all-party meet with immediate effect to discuss the Mekedatu dam issue. This is following Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai's recent statement of his efforts to construct a dam at Mekedatu at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore.

Chennai | Agencies

Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) Youth Wing leader and former Union Minister Anbumani Ramadoss has urged Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin to convene an all-party meet with immediate effect to discuss the Mekedatu dam issue. This is following Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai's recent statement of his efforts to construct a dam at Mekedatu at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore. Ramadoss in a statement said that the Karnataka Chief Minister had already issued a statement that he was travelling to New Delhi to meet Union Water Resources Minister Gajendra Shekhawat in this regard and get approval for the project.

Ramadoss said that the statements of Karnataka Chief Minister Bommai and that of Union Water Resources Minister in the past few days mean that some moves have

been made regarding the Mekedatu dam.

He also said that even as the Mekedatu Dam issue is under consideration of the Supreme Court of India, the statements of Karnataka Chief Minister and Union Water Resources Minister are not in the right spirit. He called upon the Tamil Nadu government to take cognizance of the matter.

The former Union Minister also cited the example of Karnataka constructing a dam across 'Thenpennai river' even though they did not have the right to do so.

The construction of a dam across Cauvery river at Mekedatu has been a bone of contention between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka with the former moving the Supreme Court against the proposed construction. An all-party delegation led by Tamil Nadu Water Resources minister, S Duraimurugan had met Union Minister for Water Resources Gajendra Singh Shekhawat against the proposed dam.

# Mediation proposal by Centre on Mekedatu puts K'taka BJP in a fix

Union Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat's statement to facilitate talks between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over the Mekedatu dam, has led to a war of words among the BJP, Congress and the JD(S) in Karnataka.

Bengaluru | Agencies

Union Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat's statement to facilitate talks between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over the Mekedatu dam, has led to a war of words among the BJP, Congress and the JD(S) in Karnataka.

The BJP, which announced Rs 1,000 crore for the project, has not only suffered a setback but has come under attack by the opposition parties. BJP sources have said that



Shekhawat's comment would prove detrimental to the interest of the party in the state. The Congress has recently ended a 'padayatra', demanding immediate start of the project. Karnataka Congress President, DK Shivakumar on Monday said Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai must show his commitment to the implementation of the Mekedatu project along with Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. "Why did

you bring the Union Minister (Shekhawat) on board on the Mekedatu issue? The Chief Minister should have told Shekhawat that receiving water from the Mekedatu dam is our right and it is our water. As you have allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the Mekedatu project, start the work immediately," Shivakumar asked. "Bommai should break his silence on Shekhawat's statement to intervene on the Mekedatu project between

Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, or he should resign," he said. "Let Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have a face-to-face dialogue, we do not have any problem," the Karnataka Congress Chief added. Former Chief Minister umaraswamy said both the BJP and Congress are doing politics over the project. The consent for the ekedatu project should be taken by putting pressure on the Central government, umaraswamy said. The opposition parties like Congress and JD(S) are saying that granting consent to the Mekedatu project falls under the jurisdiction of the Union government and it is not. They also say it is to the interests of the state. The BJP government has said barring environment clearance, there is no impediment from any corner for the implementation of the Mekedatu project and it will utilise the state's portion of water which is flowing into the sea. The BJP government claims that Tamil Nadu will also benefit from the project implemented by Karnataka.

# FEMALE BENGAL TIGRESS STRAYS IN UP VILLAGE, RESCUED

The Nagla Samal village in Uttar Pradesh's Etah district had an unexpected visitor that kept the villagers on tenterhooks for almost eight hours.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Nagla Samal village in Uttar Pradesh's Etah district had an unexpected visitor that kept the villagers on tenterhooks for almost eight hours.

An adult Bengal Tigress had strayed into the residential area on Sunday when the villagers spotted it atop a cattle shed. Fearing for their lives, the residents quickly contacted the state Forest Department.

Conservator of Forest, Aligarh Circle, Aditi Sharma said, "Spotting a tiger in this area is very unusual. To ensure we could safely rescue the ani-



mal, we called in Wildlife SOS, Etawah Lion Safari personnel, senior veterinary officer, Dr R.K. Singh, and the police."

A seven-member team from the Wildlife SOS Rapid Response Unit led by Deputy Director (Veterinary Services), Ilayaraja Selvaraj was immediately dispatched from Agra to assist in the rescue operation.

When the team reached the village,

it was found that the tigress had made its way inside the cattle shed through a gap in the tin roof. The rescue team immediately secured every corner of the shed and set up a safety net at the main exit point.

However, by that time, a crowd of over 3,000 people had gathered around the site to get a glimpse of the tigress. "Stringent crowd control measures were implemented to

ensure the safety of the animal as well as the people," said Kartick Satyanarayan, co-founder & CEO of Wildlife SOS, a non-profit working with the primary aim of rescuing and rehabilitating wildlife in distress across India.

Bricks from the shed wall were removed to tranquilise the animal from a safe distance and the tigress was swiftly immobilised. Following all safety protocols, the tigress was carefully shifted into a transportation cage. A medical examination revealed that the tigress had sustained a minor injury on tail. "Once stabilized and given the on-site necessary treatment, the tigress was transported to Etawah Safari for further treatment," a release from the Wildlife SOS said.

Ilayaraja said: "This was quite a challenging operation as the tigress was stuck inside a shed and we could not get a clear view of her. It took us several attempts before the tigress was safely immobilised."

# Bhagalpur blast prime accused surrenders in court

Four days after the blast in Bihar's Bhagalpur, the prime accused surrendered in a district court on Monday.

Patna | Agencies

Four days after the blast in Bihar's Bhagalpur, the prime accused surrendered in a district court on Monday.

Mohammad Azad owned the house in which the blast took place in the forenoon of March 3, leaving 15 persons, including co-accused Leelawati Devi, dead.

Bhagalpur's Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Babu Lal said Azad is the person responsible for supplying explosives to Leelawati to manufacture crackers.

In a confessional statement, the prime accused claimed that he obtained explosives from a handler in Jharkhand's Sahibganj district and supplied it to Leelawati in Kajwali village under Tatarpur

police station in Bhagalpur district.

"Leelawati and Mohammad Azad are jointly involved in illegal manufacturing of crackers. Besides them, Mukesh Mandal is the other accused," Babu Lal said.

The police officer said the Bihar Anti-Terrorism Squad is also investigating this incident to find out any terror link related to the explosion and Azad is being questioned about it. A massive explosion took place in Bhagalpur on Thursday evening in which 15 persons died and 10 others were injured.

The injured persons are currently admitted in the Mayaganj medical college and hospital, and some of them are reportedly in critical condition. The intensity of the explosion was such that four buildings were completely destroyed.

# Akhilesh is coming to power in Uttar Pradesh, says Tejashwi

With voting for the last phase of the Assembly polls currently underway in Uttar Pradesh on Monday, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav claimed that SP leader Akhilesh Yadav is going to form the government in the state.

Patna | Agencies

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Tejashwi Yadav's family has family relations with



Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav and the RJD openly supported Akhilesh Yadav and Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh. "The voters of Uttar Pradesh have been doing one-sided voting in favour of the Akhilesh-Yadav led Samajwadi party and its alliance. The people of Uttar Pradesh completely denied the BJP and Modi-Yogi combination in the state. Hence, there is no doubt the result will come in favour of Akhilesh Yadav on March 10.

"The leaders of the BJP are facing an uncomfortable situation due to one-sided voting in favour of Uttar Pradesh and they are looking for an option. It is also an indication of the BJP losing the battle of Uttar Pradesh," Tejashwi Yadav said. Meanwhile, in a related incident, Industry minister S. Shahnawaz Hussain, of the BJP, pointed out the importance of coalition allyVIP and its leader Mukesh Sahani in the context of running the state gov-

ernment in Bihar. As he spoke in the Legislative Council on Monday, Hussain had Sahani sitting behind him. "Bihar government will run smoothly as the Banda of Allah (Himself) is on the front and the son of Mullah (Mukesh Sahani) is in the back. Everything is alright in Bihar NDA," Hussain said. Hussain's statement assumes importance as Sahani returned to Bihar after a long election campaign of his party in Uttar Pradesh, where he openly challenged Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and appealed to the voters especially from Nishad community to avoid giving vote to the BJP. After returning to Patna on Sunday evening, Sahani said that his party is playing a key role in running the state government in Bihar, and hence, he is not staying on the mercy of any leader or political parties.

# Yemen court nixes Kerala nurse's appeal in murder case

A Yemen court on Monday dismissed the appeal of a Keralaite nurse Nimisha Priyain in a murder case in which she, along with another person, is the prime accused.

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

A Yemen court on Monday dismissed the appeal of a Keralaite nurse Nimisha Priyain in a murder case in which she, along with another person, is the prime accused. The two have been sentenced to death for the murder of a Yemeni national in 2017. Hailing from Palakkad, Nimisha a nurse by profession, reached Yemen in 2017 with her husband Soon, differences cropped up between her and Mahdi and she accused him of torturing her and taking away her passport, making her trip back to her home state impossible. On July 25, 2017, she injected Talal with sedatives with the aim of sedating him and take her passport back and flee. Realising that Mahdi has

died, with another's person help, she disposed of his body, which was cut into pieces in a water tank. Four days later, the crime surfaced and both were arrested and while Nimisha was sentenced to death, the other person was sentenced to life. Nimisha handed over a letter to him stating the entire incident. According to a local advocate, the only possibility of any reprieve for Nimisha is if the family of Talal pardons her for blood money and perhaps a diplomatic intervention. "That looks a very remote possibility as there is no likelihood of it," he said. Meanwhile, Nimisha's mother presently works in Kochi and has refused to meet the media, so her has her husband who also lives with their child.

## CHANGE OF NAME

I No. 14832372W SEP GAJANAND SAINI Father of VEENA KUMARI SAINI presently residing at bharampur, Doroli, Alwar, RAJASTHAN Pin-321606 have changed my Daughter's name from VEENA KUMARI to VEENA KUMARI SAINI Vide Affidavit No. 74AA313937 and date 04/03/2022

## CHANGE OF NAME

I, No. 4578088H NK PATEL PRAKASH KUMAR NARAN BHAI Father of PATEL SONAKSHI BEN presently residing at Vill Narnamuvada Tehsil Kapadwanj, district Kheda state Gujarat Pin-387620 have changed my Daughter's name from PATEL SONAKSHI PRAKASH KUMAR to PATEL SONAKSHI BEN And Dob from 05/06/2014 to 05/01/2014 vide Affidavit No 74AA313939 and date 04/03/2022.

## CHANGE OF NAME

I PATEL RADHABEN is legally wedded spouse of No. 4578088H NK PATEL PRAKASH KUMAR NARAN BHAI presently residing at Vill Narnamuvada Tehsil Kapadwanj district Kheda state Gujarat Pin-387620 have changed my name from RADHA BEN PRAKASH KUMAR to PATEL RADHABEN vide affidavit No. 74AA313940 and date 04/03/2022

## CHANGE OF NAME

I LAXMI SAINI is legally wedded spouse of No. 14832372W SEP GAJANAND SAINI presently residing at bharampur, Doroli, Alwar, RAJASTHAN Pin-321606 have changed my name from LAKSHMI KUMARI to LAXMI SAINI vide Affidavit No. 74AA313938 and date 04/03/2022.



# MP GOVT WORKING TO BECOME SELF-RELIANT: GOVERNOR

**The Budget session of the Madhya Pradesh assembly began on Monday with the address of Governor Mangubhai Patel who highlighted the achievements of the government and its initiatives taken for various development projects.**

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

The Budget session of the Madhya Pradesh assembly began on Monday with the address of Governor Mangubhai Patel who highlighted the achievements of the government and its initiatives taken for various development projects. The Governor appreciated the Shivraj Singh Chouhan led BJP government for efficient handling of the Covid-19 situation in the state. He said that the government is bound for the upliftment of people belonging to the OBC category. He said the government has put facts before the court for



reservation of OBCs, strongly. Meanwhile, the Governor also informed the House that the state government has decided to introduce a special budget for children in this financial year. He told the assembly that the government will present a budget for children separately. "It would be a first of its kind initiative when a special budget will be presented for children," Patel said. The Governor said the Madhya Pradesh government is endlessly making its efforts to make the state self-reliant (Atmanirbhar MP). "The state has witnessed tremen-

dous growth in various sectors. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and Mukhyamantri Sadak Yojna together have changed the face of the state in the last few years. This is the time when we have to bring in more initiatives to ensure the development of the state," Patel added. The audience gallery in the state assembly which was shut for the last two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic has been reopened for the general public this time. The Budget session will continue till March 25. There will be 13 sittings of the House in the 19-day session.

## State Government Positive for Initiatives in Employment Oriented Education: CM

**Bhopal:** The founder of Sitare School of Computing Amit Singhal met Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in the Chief Minister's Chamber in the Vidhan Sabha. Chouhan said that the State Government is positive for every initiative taken in the field of employment oriented education. Principal Secretary Energy and New and Renewable Energy Sanjay Dubey was present. Singhal informed that Sitare School of Computing is committed to produce 1000 high quality computer science graduates per year in the country by providing free world class computer science education to the economically weaker and talented students. Beside the organisation is keen to establish a university in Madhya Pradesh based on future technology and requirements like artificial intelligence and machine learning. The world's best faculty in the field of computing will be affiliated to the university.

# Kamal Nath disagrees with Cong MLA who boycotted MP Gov's speech

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

The Budget session of Madhya Pradesh Assembly began here on Monday with speech of Governor Mangubhai Patel. Soon after the Governor's speech, leader of the House and state Home Minister Narottam Mishra sought attention of the Members on a tweet of Congress leader Jitu Patwari. About two hours before the budget session started, former minister and Congress MLA Patwari tweeted that he will boycott the Governor's address. "I am boycotting the Governor's address in public/state interest because, it is necessary to wake up the BJP government that went into a perpetual sleep," Patwari's tweet read. Objecting to the manner in which Congress MLA announced to boycott Governor's address, Mishra said, "The act of the Congress MLA (Patwari) should be condemned. I believe that the leader of opposition would also agree with me. Without knowing what is going to be announced in the budget, how can an MLA know what is the Governor going to say? He has set a wrong precedent in the functioning of the assembly." Mishra was joined by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan who also condemned the act of the Congress MLA. Distancing himself from Patwari's tweet, former Chief Minister and Leader of the



Opposition (LOP) Kamal Nath agreed with the leader of the House saying, "I disagree with the act of the MLA (Jitu Patwari). I would also like to make it clear that this was not the party's stand. As a leader of opposition, I do not agree with such kind of practice." Meanwhile, Speaker Girish Goutam said that an elected MLA should present his/her views on any issue in the assembly. Making such an announcement on social media will set a wrong precedent in the functioning of the assembly. "Jitu Patwari's act is highly condemnable and I believe that such act should not be repeated in the future," Speaker said, adding that the Assembly committee will look into this matter.



## WOMEN COPS TO MANAGE TRAFFIC ON WOMEN'S DAY

**Bhopal:** On the International Women's Day on Tuesday, women police personnel will handle the traffic management across Madhya Pradesh along with the male cops, state Home Minister Narottam Mishra said on Monday. The initiative is aimed at boosting the confidence and self-esteem of women and to convey the message that they can work shoulder-to-shoulder with men, Dr Mishra told reporters. "Tomorrow is Women's Day and in Madhya Pradesh, our daughters who are serving in the police force will handle the traffic man-

*The initiative is aimed at boosting the confidence and self-esteem of women and to convey the message that they can work shoulder-to-shoulder with men, state Home Minister Narottam Mishra told reporters.*

agement in the entire state along with their male counterparts. A new beginning will be made from tomorrow in the state..." the minister said. The International Women's Day is observed on March 8 to highlight the issues concerning women, especially to encourage gender equality.

## NCC CADETS RETURNED FROM REPUBLIC DAY CAMP HONORED

**Bhopal:** By illuminating the name of Bhopal Group at the Republic Day Camp 2022 in New Delhi, The returned cadets were honored at the NCC Headquarters. AVSM, PVSM, YSM (Retd) Lt Gen Milan Naidu made all the 16 cadets proud by giving them medals and awards. He also encouraged 3 cadets who were awarded the DGNCC Citation. Lt Gen Naidu encouraged the cadets by sharing his experience as NCC cadets. He described the formation of NCC Alumni Association as a very important step. Lt Gen Naidu is a former cadet of the Naval Wing of NCC. On behalf of DGNCC, Group Commander NCC Group Bhopal Brigadier Sanjeev Ghosh gave the letter of NCC Alumni Association membership to Lt Gen Naidu. He also invited more and more former NCC cadets to join the NCC Alumni Association.

# Dignity and respect of officers and employees is paramount for the state government: CM

- ▶ THIS IS A GOLDEN PERIOD FOR MAKING ATMANIRBHAR MADHYA PRADESH
- ▶ OFFICERS-EMPLOYEES SHOULD WORK LIKE A FAMILY AND WITH TEAM SPIRIT
- ▶ CM CHOUHAN THANKS OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES FOR DISCHARGING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES WITH SENSITIVITY DURING CORONA PERIOD
- ▶ OFFICER-EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS THANK CM FOR INCREASING DA

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that this is the golden period for the making of an Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh. We are committed for the development and welfare of the state by working like a family and with team spirit with the officers and employees of the state. With the



cooperation of officers and employees, new dimensions of progress and betterment of the state including health and education are being established. Madhya Pradesh is first in the country in many schemes. With your cooperation, we will get more achievements in other fields as well. Chouhan was addressing the office bearers of officer-employee organizations in the auditorium at the residence. It may be noted that officers of various officers-employee

organizations of the state and 57 employees unions of corporations, divisions etc. had gathered at the Chief Minister's residence to thank Chief Minister for the 11 percent hike in dearness allowance by the state government. Chouhan said that all grievances of officers and employees would be resolved through practical approach with sensitivity, love and dialogue. Chouhan said that there were financial challenges in the difficult times of Corona. Along with this,

working amidst the fear of Corona infection was also a big challenge. Be it health services or law and order situation or wheat procurement arrangements, the officers-employees on all fronts performed their responsibilities and worked with full dedication and sensitivity. Many officers-employees sacrificed their lives in their battle against Corona. Chief Minister said that I bow to them on behalf of the people of the state. Assistance has been provided to such families by the state government under the Covid Yoddha Yojana. Chouhan said that as a result of the economic conditions of the state created due to Corona crisis, the state government could not give legitimate rights to the officers and employees on time. As soon as the situation becomes normal, the state government has decided to hike the dearness allowance. Their other problems will also be resolved in the coming months. Officers-employees should discharge their duties with full sense of responsibility. Their human dignity and respect is paramount for the state government.

# Career Fair Will be Organised at the State Level: Yadav

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Higher Education Minister Mohan Yadav said that organising a career fair is a commendable step to provide employment as well as education. There is a golden opportunity for the students in the career fair. Yadav said this by inaugurating the district level "Career Opportunity Fair" at Sarojini Naidu Government Girls Post Graduate (Autonomous) College on Monday. Water Resources Minister Tulsi Silawat was also present. Yadav said that earlier in the career fair, children from technical fields were given priority. Now this system is changing. In higher educational institutions

also youths are getting help in their career through placement cell. He said that Sarojini Naidu College has been awarded 'A' grade by NAAC. The government is ready to do everything possible to help get an A++ grade. Yadav said that in the district level career fair, 10 children should be selected and organise a state level career fair. Silawat said that Madhya Pradesh has topped in the implementation of National Education Policy. This will see a big change in education. Silawat said that about two and half lakh students are being given employment oriented training under Swami Vivekananda Career Guidance Scheme. This is a big goal. Talking to the students to take a



pledge to stop the wastage of water, he said that there is an option for everything in life but there is no alternative to water, so save water. Principal of Sarojini Naidu College Pratibha Singh said that 750 students from different colleges of the district have registered

in the career fair. 22 companies from different sectors have participated in the fair. This includes companies like Netlink, Axis Bank, Daawat Foods, Magnum Group, Paytm etc. On this occasion, the two ministers also visited the stalls set up in the college premises.

# Bhopal court awards life sentence to Pyare Miyan for raping girls

**Pyare Miyan, owner of a daily newspaper, and accused of raping and sexually assaulting several minor girls, was awarded life imprisonment by a court on Monday. Additional Session Judge Savita Verma of Bhopal district court found him guilty and awarded life sentence.**

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Pyare Miyan, owner of a daily newspaper, and accused of raping and sexually assaulting several minor girls, was awarded life imprisonment by a court on Monday. Additional Session Judge Savita Verma of Bhopal district court found him guilty and awarded life sentence. Pyare Miyan was arrested from Kashmir in July 2020 a few days after a

case under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered against him. Presently, he is lodged in Jabalpur Jail. On Monday, he appeared before the special court of additional session judge Savita Verma via video conference. He was booked after some minor girls accused him of sexual assault and harassment. He later reached the police station and tried to bribe an inspector. He had identified himself as the grandfather of the girls.

Earlier in 2020, during investigation Bhopal police recovered expensive liquor bottles, child pornography, sex toys etc from his lavish flat in Bhopal's posh Shyamla Hills. Pyare Mian, 70, was running a daily newspaper - Afkar in Madhya Pradesh. The police came to know about Pyare Mian on July 12, 2020 after five minor girls were spotted in inappropriate con-

dition and when inquired it emerged that they (girls) had gone to attend a party where they were sexually assaulted. However, after knowing that the police had started an investigation in the matter, Pyare Miyan escaped and was later arrested from Jammu and Kashmir. During the investigation, police found that he used to lure parents on pretext of education. He used to convince parents that he will provide good education to their daughters and money as well. The police had also claimed that he was sexually assaulting minor girls for the last several years and when parents wanted to get back their children, he used to threaten them of dire consequences. Police seized Pyare Mian's properties in different districts of Madhya Pradesh including Bhopal and Indore.

# CM WILL GIVE NUTRITIONAL FOOD PLANT TO WOMEN ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

**MADHYA PRADESH STATE RURAL LIVELIHOOD MISSION UNDER THE PANCHAYAT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, HAS CONNECTED 40 LAKH WOMEN OF POOR CATEGORY FAMILIES LIVING IN RURAL AREAS WITH SELF-HELP GROUPS AND ORGANIZED THEM.**

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will give a special gift of nutritious food plant to the women of self-help groups on International Women's Day. In a state level programme to be held at Dewas Headquarters, Chouhan will hand over the key of nutritional food plant to the federations



of women's groups formed in Aajeevika Mission and also disburse a bank loan of Rs.300 crore. Along with this, appreciation letters will also be given to the cluster level unions of the state for doing commendable work. Member of Parliament JP Nadda will also be present. The programme will be telecast live through various means of communication, which will connect the members of lakhs of self-help groups of the state. It may be noted

that in order to make Madhya Pradesh self-reliant, the state government is working on top priority for social and economic empowerment of women. Madhya Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission under the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, has connected 40 lakh women of poor category families living in rural areas with self-help groups and organized them. To provide more than one livelihood opportunity to the group members, while reducing the dependence on their traditional means of income, sources of additional income is being increased by connecting them with other micro enterprises. Efforts are being made by the mission to make the group members self-reliant by engaging

them in about 100 types of different business activities by providing training, guidance and financial support. Along with the strengthening of agriculture and animal husbandry, dairy business in rural areas, new businesses are also being started. These mainly include clothing manufacturing, sewing, soap, incense sticks, sanitary napkins, including food items and hygiene items and many other products which are being made by the group members. These products are being sold through Aajeevika Mart portal. Operation of nutritional food plants in the state and sale of gas cylinder, diesel, lubricant oil in rural areas, management of drinking water supply schemes, tax collection in panchayats, brick mak-

ing from fly ash, Aajeevika Express ride vehicle operation, works like crop procurement are also being given to group members and federations. Due to this, their options for additional income are also increasing. Programmes will be organized at the district headquarters and other places on the occasion of Women's Day in all the districts of the state. The programme will also be telecast on Doordarshan, All India Radio and on various social media mediums, webcaster and internet from Dewas. The NIC centers in the districts will also join the group membership programme. Group members up to the gram panchayat level will be able to see the telecast of the programme through various mediums.

# CM PLANTED SAPLING OF MOULSHREE AND CASSIA IN SMART GARDEN

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday planted saplings of Moulshree and Cassia in Smart Garden. Radheshyam Agrawal, Ananya Agrawal and Deepthi Sharma of Jan-Samvedna Sanstha, Bhopal also participated in plantation. Chouhan is continuously planting saplings every day since February 19, 2021, as per his resolve. With the aim of encouraging public participation in planting saplings and their conservation, Chouhan plants saplings with social organisations and individuals personally engaged in environment-protection activities. For the last 17 years, Jan-Samvedna Sanstha is doing service in Bhopal with the mantra of "Manav Seva Hi Madhav Seva" (serving humans is serving God). Tree plantation is being done by the organisation for the last many years with a view to protect the environment. The organisation distributes food daily to the families of patients coming from rural areas at Hamidia and Sultania Hospitals. The institution provides necessary materials to the needy and fee, educational material etc. to the talented children suffering from scarcity. Aadhar cards have been made by the institution for those living in places of worship and Rain Baseras (night shelters). Moulshree planted today is also called Kesav in Sanskrit, Molsari or Bakool in Hindi.





EDITOR'S SPECS

UP Polls: Why BJP is confident about winning!

After Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day stay in his parliamentary constituency Varanasi, the BJP is now hoping to sweep all the assembly seats of the district once again. A Varanasi BJP functionary claims that Prime Minister Modi's campaign has turned the tide in favour of the party and the saffron party will repeat 2017 performance by winning all the seats of the district like it did in 2017. In 2017, the BJP and its alliance won all the eight assembly seats. BJP is facing challenges on a few seats this time from opposition candidates and in some areas people are also expressing their anger against sitting MLAs. After the Prime Minister camped in the city and held a road show covering three assembly seats, the local cadre openly started pointing out that the situation has changed before polling on Monday. The Prime Minister stayed in his parliamentary constituency for two days before the end of campaign on Saturday evening. Varanasi BJP leader mentioned that there is a tough challenge from Opposition candidates or strong anti-incumbency against MLAs in two to three constituencies but with the end of campaigning, the situation is favourable in all the seats of the district. Prime Minister Modi's dream project Kashi Vishwanath corridor and Kashi Vishwanath Temple fall under the South Varanasi assembly seat. The Samajwadi Party has fielded Kameshwar Dixit, head of Maha Mrityunjay temple. Vijay, a resident of Varanasi South, said that local MP (Prime Minister Modi) is more visible in the constituency than local MLA Tiwari. A senior BJP district functionary said that the roadshow has also given boost to Saurabh Srivastava in Varanasi Cantt against former Lok Sabha member and Congress candidate Rajesh Mishra.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

WOMAN ON TOP: MEET MULTIPOTENTIALITE NIKITA CHAWLA

How many different professions can you juggle at a time? Two, maybe three? On Woman's DAY we reached out to superwoman Nikita Chawla, a lady who not only follows all her passions but balances some intriguingly incongruities (She's a food critic, jewellery designer, political analyst and a model). Winner of the prestigious Hindustan Times 30 under 30 Achievers national award 2021, Nikita is a multipotentialite who has trailblazed and shattered body stereotypes. Beatty with brains, she's India's youngest political analyst invited to the Network 18 India Rising Summit 2019, is often seen



on News channels as a guest panelist opining on issues of national importance takes motivational sessions in A-Grade Management colleges. At first it doesn't look believable-Travel writer, Food critic, jewellery designer, Motivational Speaker, Model and entrepreneur she is also a journalist from IIMC, New Delhi. But here she is, acing it all with panache. Q: What inspired you to be a jill of all Trades? Nikita: "Growing up, I was body shamed, bullied and never really fit in. You're that writer girl na? Stay in your lane fatty and stick to writing!" As a published author at 16, columnist with an international pet care magazine and editor of the school, I heard that a lot. Sure, I was an accomplished specialist who wrote

poems, but others would get to recite them. In fact, just going up on stage was a dream. No one believed in me, let alone fathom that a fly-by-writer has possibilities." Q: Are there more layers to the multi-talented, multifaceted Nikita Chawla we don't know about? Nikita: "Today, when people meet me, they are enamored by the glittery persona and glamour that surrounds me. Being an animal lover, I design and export animal jewelry under my own label. Q: You're paid to eat but modelling often requires you to starve. Is there a secret sauce? Nikita: Passion. Undoubtedly it is hard work, but when you're equally passionate about food and fashion you don't mind traipsing between two extremes!"

Let's embrace the skin we are in

Dr Jaishree Sharad

This Women's Day, let's embrace the skin we are in. Our skin protects us from the outside world, it is the body's largest organ; and so it is important that we maintain good skin health to feel comfortable in our own skin. Many women experience conditions like dryness, flakiness, dark spots, stretch marks and some even have prominent scars from past experiences. This leads to uneasiness and feeling self-conscious, especially when signs appear on commonly visible areas like the face, neck and arms. But we all have our flaws, and our scars have their own stories to tell; behind each mark, there is a journey that we might have mapped. For example, scraping your knees during your first-ever marathon run, the burns from learning how to cook as a teenager, marks from falling off the motorbike during your college trip to Goa, stretch marks from losing body fat after consistent workouts, abusive circumstances that you may have courageously walked out of, and so much more. While some scars go away, some only heal with time. As women, we are often guilty of trying to hide our flaws, our body size and what we believe is imperfect in our own eyes. Often scars can cause physical discomfort, itchiness and tenderness, but they also have distressing psychological effects that can affect

our self-esteem and confidence. Living in an image-conscious society, that is largely focused on appearances, it is natural for women to try to conceal anything that doesn't seem acceptable. This might look like applying make-up on affected areas, wearing polo-neck or full-sleeved clothing, signing up for expensive treatments, and what-not. This places emphasis on learning to love your own truths and making positive choices for skin health. For the latter, we can choose no-fuss skincare regimens that help us address common blemishes, acne scars, burns, stretch marks, age spots, discoloration, uneven skin tone, and more. There are a plethora of skincare products available in the market that claim to treat different types of concerns, but decoding this information can be overwhelming. Start by understanding key ingredients that are a must for efficacious skincare. **Vitamin A** - Retinol is a naturally occurring form of vitamin A. To prevent oxidation, retinol goes through an esterification process with palmitic acid. The resulting ester is commonly referred to as vitamin A palmitate, which is diluted for appropriate skin absorption. It demonstrates skin renewing properties and increases the thickness of the epidermis, particularly in mature skin types, and promotes the formation of new collagen. Vitamin A palmitate improves the appearance of UV-damaged

skin, by helping to increase elasticity and smooth the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. **Vitamin E** - Vitamin E has been scientifically proven to have a number of benefits for the skin, primarily being an antioxidant. Antioxidants are essential in helping to reduce free radicals, which attack healthy cells and cause skin damage and premature ageing. Vitamin E also increases the moisture content of the epidermis, making it feel softer and smoother. It mitigates against some of the effects of sunburn i.e. reduces the number of damaged cells found after the skin has been exposed to UV radiation. It has also been shown to have positive effects on the wound healing process. **Chamomile** - Chamomile oil is an anti-inflammatory, providing soothing and calming benefits to the skin. It is effective when the skin is stressed by both internal and external physiological conditions. **Lavender** - Lavender oil has multiple benefits for the skin. It is known to have skin-conditioning properties, such as improved firmness, smoothness and complexion. It provides calming and soothing benefits coupled with a mild astringency, which cleans the skin by constricting the pores, resulting

in a tingling sensation. **Rosemary** - Rosemary oil is used as a skin-conditioning agent, because of its soothing properties and mild antiseptic capability. **Calendula** - Calendula oil has cell regenerative effects and is suitable for the treatment of sensitive, damaged or sunburnt skin. Calendula extract has also been used to combat minor skin infections, rashes and superficial irritation. When it comes to vitamins, we can separately ingest or apply extracts from their capsules externally. Similarly, each of the mentioned plant-based oils can be applied externally on wounds and marks. Some formulations may offer two or more of these ingredients, which are highly recommended. For example, Bio-Oil Skincare Oil is one of the few products that contain all of the mentioned ingredients and being an oil, it is easily absorbed into the skin. It reduces the appearance of marks by nourishing and hydrating damaged skin. It is completely safe to use on both face and body for multiple skin needs, marks and scars. When you give your skin the love it deserves, you are bound to feel comfortable in your own skin.

international

IRAN SAYS FEW DIFFERENCES REMAIN TO BE SETTLED IN VIENNA TALKS

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh on Monday said that the remaining differences between Iran and the West in the Vienna talks are "less than the number of fingers on one hand".



Tehran | Agencies

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh on Monday said that the remaining differences between Iran and the West in the Vienna talks are "less than the number of fingers on one hand". "If the US approach is reasonable, the quick agreement is available," he made the remarks in his weekly press conference, stressing that Iran will never accept or adhere to a deadline for negotiations, Xinhua news agency reported.

Regarding the likelihood of direct talks with the US, Khatibzadeh said that "we make decisions based on US behaviour, not on vague messages or without knowing what the outcome will be". "Asking for a direct negotiation only makes sense if we know the reason for the meeting," he said, adding that "so far, we have not seen any change in the behaviour of the US, and the maximum pressure on the Iranian people has continued." Referring to the recent coopera-

tion agreements reached between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the spokesman said that the trip of the IAEA director-general to Iran was within a technical framework, and within the format of Vienna talks. Iran had answered the questions of the agency, but it was necessary to answer these questions again within a technical framework and within a certain period, he said. "There is a direct link between the closure of these questions and the

(possible) agreement in Vienna talks," he pointed out. Talks between Iran and the world powers in the Austrian capital of Vienna over the revival of the Iranian nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), have reached the climax, with the parties expected to make few political decisions for a new accord. Iran signed the JCPOA with world powers in July 2015. However, former US President Donald Trump pulled Washington out of the agreement in May 2018 and re-imposed unilateral sanctions on Iran, which prompted the latter to drop some of its nuclear commitments one year later and advance its halted nuclear programmes. Since April 2021, eight rounds of talks have been held in Austria's capital Vienna between Iran and the remaining JCPOA parties, namely Britain, China, France, Russia plus Germany, with the US indirectly involved in the talks, to revive the landmark deal.

Chinese FM says Taiwan will eventually return to 'embracing the motherland'

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that Taiwan is an integral part of China and will eventually return "to the arms of the motherland".

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that Taiwan is an integral part of China and will eventually return "to the arms of the motherland". "Taiwan will eventually return to the arms of the motherland," he said at a press conference. He recalled that some forces in the US, in order to contain China, encourage those who advocate Taiwan independence, thereby challenging the "one China" principle, RT reported. "Attempts to use Taiwan to contain China are doomed to failure," RIA Novosti quoted the Minister as saying. Wang also said that China will firmly defend national sovereignty against the



backdrop of increasing US pressure and is ready to take all possible measures to this end. In February, China decid-

ed to take countermeasures against the US over arms sales to Taiwan that would target Lockheed Martin and Raytheon Technologies.

Two civilians killed in Israeli attack on Damascus

Two civilians were killed by an Israeli missile attack against Syrian military sites in the capital Damascus on Monday, the state news agency SANA said in a report.



Damascus | Agencies

Two civilians were killed by an Israeli missile attack against Syrian military sites in the capital Damascus on Monday, the state news agency SANA said in a report. Citing a military source, the report said the Israeli attack was carried out from over the Lebanese capital Beirut and triggered the Syrian air defenses, which intercepted most of the Israeli missiles. The report gave no further details but

said damage was caused in addition to the falling of two civilians, Xinhua news agency reported. The Israeli side has not commented on the development either. On February 23, three soldiers were killed by a similar attack in Damascus. In the southern province of Quneitra, causing damage. On February 16, Israel carried out a similar missile strike targeting points south of the capital Damascus, which resulted in some material damage but no casualties.

AFTER AFGHANISTAN, IS-K SETS FOOT IN PAKISTAN

The recent devastating suicide bombing, targeted at a Shia Muslim mosque in Peshawar has marked the re-emergence of the dreaded Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K) terror group in Pakistan.



Peshawar | Agencies

The recent devastating suicide bombing, targeted at a Shia Muslim mosque in Peshawar has marked the re-emergence of the dreaded Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K) terror group in Pakistan. The IS-K claimed responsibility for the attack in which a suicide bomber

blew himself up after entering into the mosque during Friday prayers, claiming lives of at least 63 and injuring over 200. It also claimed the terror attack just outside Kabul airport during the evacuation process of foreign forces was underway after the Taliban takeover, as well as many others on mosques and other places in Afghanistan, becoming the biggest opposition to the incumbent regime. Pakistan had been on consultation with the Afghan Taliban and working towards a joint

strategy to counter terror threats from organisations operating along the two countries' border. The attack in Peshawar comes at a time when the country's Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) killed an IS-K commander named Bilal Khan, during a police encounter on January 19 this year. It is believed that the commander's killing activated many sleeper cells, associated with the terror group, who planned to respond with a major suicide attacks. It is believed that Bilal Khan, who was a member of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), joined the IS in 2015, pledging allegiance to Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi, the group's slain leader. Experts believe that intelligence-based operations by Pakistani security agencies against terror elements, including the IS-K, have not only increased targeted

attacks, but supporters of the Afghan Taliban have also come under deadly attacks in Peshawar. The emergence of the IS-K in the heart of Peshawar raises major concerns and a new set of challenges for the Pakistani authorities, as neighbouring Afghanistan conducts search operations in various parts, looking to neutralise the militants. Some reports also indicate that many IS-K militants have already fled Afghanistan and entered Pakistan, while sleeper cells of the group have also been activated. It is because of this reason that a major surge of terror attacks is being witnessed in Pakistan. While negotiations with the TTP remains on the agenda of the Pakistani government, it is feared that disagreements among the TTP militants, as well as a deal with Islamabad, may push them towards joining the IS-K.

Denmark to hold referendum on joining EU's common defence policy

Denmark will hold a referendum on June 1 on whether to join the European Union (EU)'s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said.

Copenhagen | Agencies

Denmark will hold a referendum on June 1 on whether to join the European Union (EU)'s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said. The referendum is part of a new political agreement on defence reached by leaders of the Liberal Party, the Conservative People's Party, the Radical Left and the Socialist People's Party, reports Xinhua news agency. In addition, Denmark aims to meet NATO countries' target defence spending of 2 per cent of GDP by 2033, with efforts starting to be made in 2024, according to the



agreement. The CSDP offers a framework for cooperation between member states, within which the bloc can conduct operational missions "with the aim of peace-keeping and strengthening international security in third countries by relying on civil and military assets provided by EU member states."



# MAHA PASSES BILLS TO DELAY CIVIC ELECTIONS SANS QUOTAS

In a major political development, the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly unanimously passed two bills to defer the upcoming elections to the civic and local bodies till the OBC quotas are restored in the state, here on Monday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a major political development, the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly unanimously passed two bills to defer the upcoming elections to the civic and local bodies till the OBC quotas are restored in the state, here on Monday. The assembly passed the bills - the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act, the Maharashtra Municipal Corporations Act, the Maharashtra Municipal Councils, Nagar Panchayats & Industrial Townships



(Amendment) Bill 2022 and the Maharashtra Gram Panchayats Act, 1959, and the Maharashtra Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samitis (Amendment) Bill 2022. Under these amendments, the Maharashtra State

Election Commission (SEC)'s powers to delimit and fix the wards is proposed to be cancelled and the government shall be empowered to decide delimitation of wards and fix the number of members in these bodies. The Maharashtra State Election Commissioner (SEC) will decide the poll schedules for the civic and local bodies elections in consultation with the state government. The development came after the Supreme Court last week rejected the Maharashtra State Backward Classes Commission's Interim Report recommending restoration of the 27 per cent political reservations to the OBC communities, proving a setback to the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi government of Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress. The move, supported by the Opposition, assumes significance as 15 top civic bodies including BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), 25 Zilla Parishads and 232 Municipal Councils are slated to go for elections shortly.

# After ED remand, Nawab Malik gets 14 days' judicial custody

A Special PMLA Court on Monday remanded Maharashtra Minorities Affairs Minister Nawab Malik to judicial custody till March 21 in an alleged money-laundering case arising out of a tainted land deal nearly 20 years ago.



Enforcement Directorate (ED) for the past 12 days ended on Sunday. At the previous hearing, the ED had informed the Special Court that Malik had allegedly taken only Rs 5 lakh and not Rs 55 lakh as stated earlier which was paid to Haseena Parker between 1999-2005, for a property deal in Goawala Compound of Kurla. The Special Judge extended Malik's custody as the ED argued that they could not interrogate the Minister as he was ill and hospitalised. The ED in February raided the homes of the kin of absconding mafia don Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar, including his deceased sister Haseena Parker and interrogated his nephew Alishah

Parker, in connection with the alleged money-laundering case. Among other things, the ED has contended that Malik was allegedly involved in a conspiracy hatched with Dawood's gang members to usurp the ancestral property of one Muneera Plumber, with a current estimated market value of Rs 300 crore, which the central agency was a crime under the PMLA. Later, Malik moved the Bombay High Court challenging his 'illegal arrest' by the ED and seeking immediate release from custody. Malik denied any links with the mafia and argued that the PMLA could not be applied for the alleged offence which was completed over 20 years ago, when the Act did not exist. The MVA hit back by asking whether Union MSME Minister Narayan Rane had quit after he was arrested in August 2021 for a slur on Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, and hence there was no need for Malik to quit his Cabinet post.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A Special PMLA Court on Monday remanded Maharashtra Minorities Affairs Minister Nawab Malik to judicial custody till March 21 in an alleged money-laundering case arising out of a tainted land deal nearly 20 years ago. Arrested on February 23, Malik was produced before the Special PMLA Judge RS Rokade after his extended custody with the

# Maharashtra MLA Alleges Police Was Pressurized To File Case Against Him

Independent MLA Ravi Rana alleged the case against him of throwing ink on Amravati Municipal Commissioner was filed at the instance of the Maharashtra chief minister and the home minister.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Independent MLA from Amravati Ravi Rana on Monday alleged that Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Home Minister Dilip Walse Patil pressurized the police to file a false case against him of throwing ink on Amravati Municipal Commissioner. "I was not even present in Amravati during a program where some workers threw ink on the face of Amravati Municipal Commissioner for allegedly removing Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue," said Rana during the Question-Answer session in

Maharashtra Assembly. Rana, who was supported by BJP MLAs, created a ruckus in the assembly and said, "The Chief Minister and Home Minister pressurized the Amravati Commissioner of Police to file a case against me." "At midnight around 150 police officials reached my residence and searched my home that day. I want justice," he said. Rejecting the allegations, Patil said, "Rana claims to be in Delhi when the incident happened, we will look into it. However, neither did I nor the Chief Minister instruct or pressurize anyone."

"It is true that the Shivaji Maharaj statue was placed without the permission of the local authorities in Amravati. So, the Municipal commissioner took the decision to remove the statue. Later, ink was thrown on his face for removing the statue," he said. Later, the names of the Home Minister and the Chief Minister were removed from the records of the Assembly following a request by Shiv Sena MLA Bhaskar Jadhav who said that "it is not right to make allegations against the Chief Minister or Home Minister when nothing of this sort has been proved."

# Second time in a week, power breakdown hits Mumbai

For the second time in a week, large parts of south Mumbai were hit by a massive power failure on Sunday night, with many areas without electricity for over 12 hours, officials said here on Monday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

For the second time in a week, large parts of south Mumbai were hit by a massive power failure on Sunday night, with many areas without electricity for over 12 hours, officials said here on Monday. The BEST said that 3 11KV faults occurred in Colaba which affected 19 Distribution Sub Stations, but power



supply was restored to 70 per cent of the affected regions by late night. The tentative cause is said to be many areas dug up which may have led to power outage, and with repair work completed on a war footing on the faulty feeders, the supply was normalised, though some areas are still affected. It may be recalled that on Sunday, February 27, large parts of south Mumbai experienced a major power failure which even hit the suburban local trains, but was restored after three hours and later normal supplies started. That was the biggest power breakdown since October 12, 2020 when entire Mumbai was plunged into a blackout for over 18 hours, crippling normal life, and later the then Maharashtra Power Minister Dr. Nitin Raut ordered a probe into a possible sabotage.

# No COVID-19 death in Maharashtra for second time this month

Maharashtra on Monday reported 225 coronavirus cases, the lowest after April 18, 2020, and zero fatality, a health official said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a good news, Maharashtra on Monday (March 7) did not record a single COVID-19 death. This was for the second time this month that the state did not report any COVID-19 death. Earlier on March 2, the state hadn't reported any death due to coronavirus for the first time since the pandemic began. Maharashtra on Monday reported 225 coronavirus cases, the lowest after April 18, 2020, and zero fatality, a health official said. With the fresh infections, the state's COVID-19 tally reached 78,69,038 and the toll to 1,43,740. On March 2 also Maharashtra had



reported zero fatalities due to COVID-19. The state had recorded 362 coronavirus cases and three fatalities on Sunday. "Maharashtra reported 225 daily COVID-19 cases today, lowest since April 18, 2020, and zero fatalities," Maharashtra health surveillance officer Dr Pradip Awate said. Maharashtra is now left with 3,742 active cases. The total number of

recoveries post COVID-19 infection in the state now stands at 77,17,823. The recovery rate in the state is 98.08 per cent, while the case fatality rate is 1.82 per cent, the state health department said. Mumbai recorded 38 new cases and Pune city 29. The Mumbai circle - which consists of MCGM, Thane, TMC, Navi Mumbai, KDMC, Ulhasnagar MC, Bhivandi Nijampur MC, Mira Bhayandar MC, Palghar, Vasai Virar MC, Raigad, Panvel MC. Of the eight administrative circles in Maharashtra, Pune recorded 68 cases, followed by Mumbai (59), Nashik (53), Nagpur (13), Aurangabad and Latur (nine), Kolhapur (eight), and Akola (six). The Nashik circle - which consists of Nashik, Nashik MC, Malegaon MC, Ahmednagar, Ahmednagar MC, Dhule, Dhule MC, Jalgaon, Jalgaon MC, Nandurbar. The Pune circle - which includes Pune, PMC, PCMC, Solapur, Solapur MC, Satara. The Kolhapur circle - which includes Kolhapur, Kolhapur MC, Sangli,

Sangli MC, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri. The Aurangabad circle - which consists of Aurangabad, Aurangabad MC, Jalna, Hingoli, Parbhani, Parbhani MC. The Latur circle - which consists of Latur, Latur MC, Osmanabad, Beed, Nanded, Nanded MC. The Akola circle - which includes Akola, Akola MC, Amaravati, Amaravati MC, Yawatmal, Buldhana, Washim, Nagpur circle - which includes Nagpur, Nagpur MC, Wardha, Bhandara, Gondia, Chandrapur, Chandrapur MC, Gadchiroli. With 32,854 tests conducted in the last 24 hours, the total number of samples examined so far in Maharashtra has gone up to 7,83,14,109. "Currently 28,975 people are in home quarantine and 589 people are in institutional quarantine," the department said. Maharashtra's COVID-19 figures are as follows: Fresh cases 225, fatality 0, active cases 3,742, tests conducted 32,854.

# Bombay HC Slams Uber, Ola For Operating Without Valid Licences in Maharashtra; Gives March Deadline

In a fresh faceoff with BJP, Congress demanded an inquiry to ascertain the role of former Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnis in phone tapping of MVA leaders.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Observing that app-based cab aggregators, such as, Ola and Uber operating in Maharashtra without valid licences was an instance of "complete lawlessness," the Bombay High Court on Monday directed all such firms to apply for valid licences by March 16 if they wish to continue operations in state. The HC however refrained from prohibiting such cabs from plying in the mean time saying it was

aware such a move would adversely affect commuters. "We are conscious that restraining aggregators, who have not yet obtained licences, will operate to prejudice and detriment of passengers who avail the services," a bench led by Chief Justice Dipankar Datta said. Crasto cited an incident from November, 2020, when she booked an Uber ride in the city and was dropped off mid-way "at a shady dark place" and she found that the firm's app had no effective option to lodge complaints. During the previous hearings, the HC had found that the Maharashtra government was yet to approve specific guidelines to issue licences and regulate the operations of such cab aggregators. Though the Central government had issued the Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines, meant to regulate

such cabs, those in the state were operating on the basis of permits issued to them under Maharashtra City Taxi Rules 2017. The law is very clear that so long as the state government does not have Rules, you (aggregators) will have to follow the Central government guidelines. We will stop you (aggregators) from plying," the HC said. Senior advocate Janak Dwarkadas, who appeared for Uber India, told the court the firm had no intention of flouting the law and added that it had an effective grievance redressal mechanism on its app. The HC, however, said such a mechanism alone was not adequate. "We gave suggestions and objections through videoconferencing. The same were submitted in writing as well, and are currently under consideration," he told the court.

# 185 Indians return from Ukraine to Mumbai

Another batch of 185 Indians, mostly students stranded in war-ravaged Ukraine, arrived by an Air India Express flight from Budapest at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA), here early on Monday, officials said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Another batch of 185 Indians, mostly students stranded in war-ravaged Ukraine, arrived by an Air India Express flight from Budapest at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA), here early on Monday, officials said. The flight IX-1202 included a maximum 143 people from Kerala, besides 25 from Tamil Nadu. There are five persons from Maharashtra, three from Haryana, two each from Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, one each from Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Manipur, Punjab and



Andhra Pradesh. The CSMIA authorities had deployed special measures for the speedy exit and luggage clearance of the Ukraine evacuees, and following the Covid-19 protocols. Representatives of various states later took charge of their people to help them with their lodging-board and onward journey plans by trains or flights, said the officials.

# PAWAR'S NEW DIG AT GOVERNOR IN FRONT OF PM

The bench passed the directions while hearing a public interest litigation filed by advocate Savina Crasto highlighting the lack of an effective grievance redressal mechanism for customers using the Uber India app.

Pune | Agencies

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Sunday said some people holding high posts were making unnecessary comments and this was not acceptable to the people of the state. Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar made the comments, appar-



ently aimed at Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, at Pune's MIT College ground, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the governor were present during the inauguration of various development projects. Notably, some leaders of the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA-comprising the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress) in Maharashtra as well as the BJP recently objected to Governor Koshyari's remark that Samarth Ramdas was the guru of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

On Sunday, before PM Modi's public address, Pawar said, "I want to bring one thing to the prime minister's notice. Of late, some people holding important positions are making unnecessary comments which are not acceptable to Maharashtra and its citizens." "Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and his mother Rajmata Jijau formed Swarajya. We need to carry forward their legacy without holding grudges against anyone and without bringing politics into the development works," the NCP leader said.

Koshyari, during a programme in Aurangabad last Sunday, underlined the role of the guru (teacher) while citing the examples of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Chandragupta Maurya. "Many chakravartis (emperors), maharajas took birth on this land. But, who would have asked about Chandragupta had there not been Chanakya? Who would have asked about Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj had there not been Samarth (Ramdas)," he said. "I am not questioning the calibre of Chandragupta and Shivaji Maharaj. Like a mother who plays a key role in shaping her child, similarly, the role of guru (teacher) has a big place in our society," governor had said. In the past, the MVA government and Koshyari have been engaged in a war of words over various issues.

# 2009 BUILDING SAFETY REGULATIONS

# HC seeks Maharashtra gov't reply to PIL on implementation

The draft regulations were formulated in 2009 in the aftermath of the 26/11 attacks.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Monday directed the Maharashtra government to file an affidavit in reply to a PIL lodged in 2018 seeking the enforcement of draft regulations issued for fire safety in buildings vulnerable to man-made disasters. The draft regulations were formulated in 2009 in the aftermath of the 26/11 attacks. The court asked the state government to place on record whether the final notification is contemplated to be issued and give reasons if the

same is not to be issued. The court noted that suggestions were invited on the draft regulations from members of the public through a notice dated February 27, 2009, but no positive step was taken thereafter, leading the petitioner to make a representation on January 15, 2018 seeking appropriate steps from the state Urban Development Department (UDD) to finalise the regulations. The bench said it was "appalled" at the manner in which the state delayed the matter and noted, "Reluctantly, we grant the state ten days' time to file an affidavit and place on record whether the final notification is contemplated to be issued, if not, reasons therefore must be indicated. The petitioner would have a week's time to file rejoinder."



## Idina Menzel spotlights Ukrainian girl singing from bunker

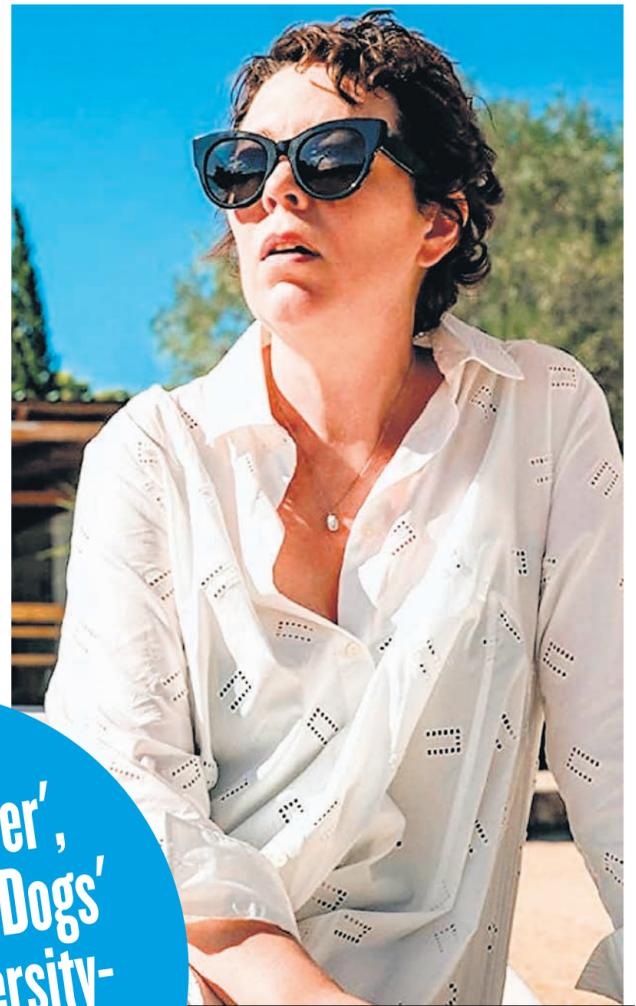
International Woman's Day

Los Angeles | Agencies



**B**roadway star and singer Idina Menzel, who played Elsa, the character who sings the song in 'Frozen', has extended her support to a Ukrainian girl whose video of singing a song from 'Frozen' from inside a makeshift bunker went viral, reports 'Variety'. As per 'Variety', the unnamed girl performed a more than minute-long rendition of "Let It Go" in an unverified video posted by Ankita Jain. Menzel in a tweeted response said, "We see you. We really, really see you." The war between Russia and Ukraine has entered its eleventh day. The Russian annexation of Ukraine has resulted in the destruction of schools, hospitals and residential buildings, flushing millions of civilians in Ukraine out of the war-torn country. Despite the hardship, many Ukrainians appear to be in good spirits.

Menzel, who earned a Tony Award with her debut Broadway performance in 'Rent', is Jewish and of Russian and East European descent. It has been reported that her grandparents emigrated from Russia to the U.S. where Menzel was born.



'The Lost Daughter', 'Reservation Dogs' score in diversity-focused ceremony

## SPIRIT AWARDS 2022

Los Angeles | Agencies

**T**'he Lost Daughter', a psychological drama that marked the directing debut of Maggie Gyllenhaal, has been named as the best feature at the 37th Film Independent Spirit Awards.

The awards were given on Sunday. It was one of a leading three prizes that the movie about a middle-aged professor forced to grapple with her life choices earned at the ocean-side ceremony, reports variety.com.

'Red Rocket' actors Simon Rex and 'Zola' star Taylor Page earned best lead actor and actress prizes for portraying a faded porn star and a part-time stripper, respectively, a sign of the edgy projects that the Spirits were designed to highlight.

The awards aired on IFC and were handed out in a text next to the Santa Monica Pier during a boozy ceremony that stretched on for two

hours and changes.

The Spirits mostly spread the wealth. 'Passing' and 'Zola' won two prizes apiece, but no other films made repeat visits to the podium to accept statues.

"Reservation Dogs," a comedy about four indigenous teenagers growing up in Oklahoma, was the most honoured television show, with two awards, including a prize for best new scripted series.

The awards, lubricated with champagne and more profane than the Oscars or other prestigious movie honours, returned live and in-person for the first time in two years.

Designed to celebrate the best of indie moviemaking, they were handed out at a time when arthouse cinema is being challenged and reconfigured.

The theatrical business has yet to recapture its pre-pandemic popular-

ity, with smaller movies aimed at adults, the ones the Spirits recognise, still facing an uphill battle when it comes to attracting crowds.

Hosts Megan Mullally and Nick Offerman alluded to the anemic box office results that many arthouse movies have suffered since Covid disrupted the business.

After Offerman declared that movies are back at the start of the show, Mullally told the crowd that there was no need to clap. "They're not going to see your movies," she said.

"They're going to see the eighth Spider-Man for the sixth time," Offerman joked.

At the same time, streaming services have become a home for many of the movies that were once given robust theatrical distribution, such as 'The Lost Daughter' or 'Passing', both of which debuted on Netflix.

## ZOE KRAVITZ THINKS CALL-OUT CULTURE IS 'OUT OF CONTROL'

Los Angeles | Agencies

**A**ctress Zoe Kravitz believes that social media spreads "fear" and she's previously been "stung" by some of the criticism that's come her way.

She confessed: "It's dangerous to start caring about what other people are going to think, or what they do think."

Kravitz hates cancel culture and feels it's ultimately encouraged people to censor themselves online, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She told the Observer newspaper: "People are not expressing or doing what they want to do, because they're afraid of getting into trouble. We're not leaving room for growth. It's all based on

shame and fear. It's completely out of control." Kravitz also feels frustrated by some of the current trends in the movie business.

The actress said: "The idea of certain actors not being able to play a certain part because you're not that thing in real life, I think that's really dangerous. Because I don't know what acting is, if we're not allowed to play someone. It's about empathy. It's about stepping outside yourself."

Kravitz is the daughter of rock star Lenny Kravitz and actress Lisa Bonet, and she concedes that her family name has opened some doors for her in her career.

However, the Hollywood star also says she's worked hard for her own success.



## Benedict Cumberbatch did 'dream therapy' for 'Power of the Dog' role

Los Angeles | Agencies

**A**ctor Benedict Cumberbatch, who portrays rancher Phil Burbank in the 'Power of the Dog', said it was a "very new experience" to try and delve into his subconscious to find inspiration for his performance, but enjoyed the "trip" when he was eventually able to let his mind drift in a certain way when he fell asleep.

Speaking during the Leading Actor virtual discussion at the 'EE Bafta Film Awards: The Sessions 2022', he said: "We did dream therapy! We did dream analysis, which is a real trip, the idea that you can just drop a tiny suggestion on a notepad or in a mantra or some kind of thought process before you sleep and let your subconscious do some of that work."

"So as if having a book wasn't easy, I then fell back on dreaming for inspiration, but boy is it there after the first few dry spells of worrying about did I lock the door, or is the oven on?"

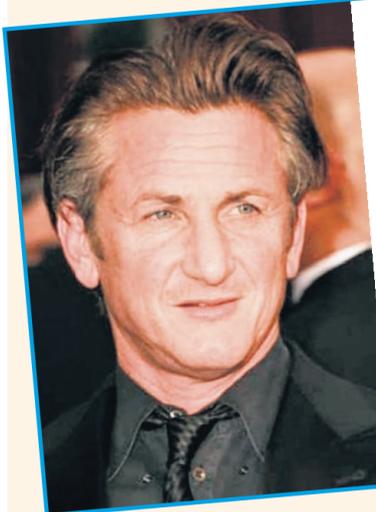
"And Jane (Campion) was dreaming of flowers exploding with blood. I exaggerate but not far off and then eventually that silt from the bottom of the well kind of gets a little bit more interesting and stuff comes up, which I never would have thought of looking there for before. So that was a very new experience for me."

Ahead of filming, Benedict had an "endless" list of skills he had to master for the role so stayed with a real-life rancher and his wife to pick up necessary abilities such as riding and treating hide.

He said: "The horse riding and the roping and the cattle ranching, it's pretty daunting for a man as far away from my character's lived experience as I was at the beginning."

"But Jane (Campion) and Tanya (Seghatchian) and everyone in the production were very secure that I get there, but said, anything you feel insecure about we'll help you with and so I gave them a list which was endless."

Sean Penn 'startled' by experience at Ukrainian border



Los Angeles | Agencies

**O**scar-winning actor Sean Penn recently returned to the US after spending time at the Ukrainian border, and shared his experience of the refugee crisis that's taking place in eastern Europe.

The 61-year-old star, who has been filming a documentary for Vice Films, told 'Anderson Cooper 360': "We had the luxury of being able to abandon a rented vehicle on the side of the road. This was a startling thing to me; it was mostly women and children, some in groups and some just a mother and her child, in almost all of those cars."

"In some cases, the father was dropping them off and returning, because we know that from 18 to 60, men are not to leave, they're to stay in the resistance against Russia."

More than a million people are believed to have fled Ukraine since the start of the Russian invasion, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Penn was astonished by the scale of the refugee crisis.

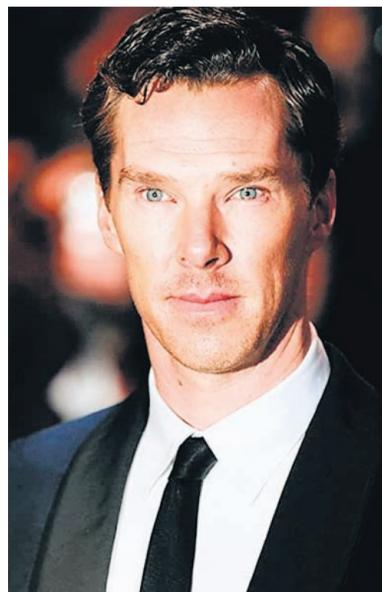
He recalled: "I didn't see any luggage. It was as though they wanted to believe they're going to be able to come back, and there was an immediacy to leave because of the incredible amount of people leaving and how long it takes to get out of the country now."

"So, the car is pretty much, aside from those who have family or friends that could help on the other side, all they have."

"So, in the several miles that we walked after abandoning our car, I didn't see one of those cars move a car length because that line was so slow. And then you get there and you see all those who have walked as well in that crowd."

Despite this, Penn was glad that he got to witness the situation at first hand.

"I was glad, not so much in the moment, but I was glad to have had the experience of having to see what it was to get through that border ... what it is to just sit there for sometimes days."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



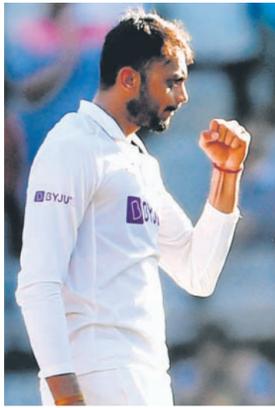
Julia Fox



## AXAR RETURNS TO INDIA SQUAD FOR SECOND TEST, KULDEEP RELEASED

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian all-rounder Axar Patel is all set to feature in the second Test against Sri Lanka, which is set to begin on March 12 in Bengaluru. As per ESPNcricinfo report, the left-arm orthodox spinner, who was recovering from an injury as well Covid-19, has replaced the left-arm wristspinner Kuldeep Yadav, who has been released from the squad. Earlier, the BCCI's statement, announcing the squad for the first Test, had mentioned that Axar's fitness would be "assessed later to ascertain his selection for the second Test". "Axar is likely to slot straight into the XI in Jayant's place



if India persist with a three-spinner attack, given his outstanding record over his first five Tests, in which he has picked up 36 wickets at an average of 11.86. "The fact that the Bengaluru match is a day-night Test involving the pink SG ball will strengthen Axar's case for selection; in India's last day-night Test in Ahmedabad last year, he picked up match figures of 11 for 70 to help blow England away in just two days and pick up the Player-of-the-Match award," the report said. Kuldeep did not feature in the first Test in Mohali, with India preferring Jayant Yadav as their third spinner. Jayant went wicketless in both innings, while his spin partners R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja dominated the

### 9.5 OUT OF 10 TO ROHIT: GAVASKAR

"Excellent debut (as captain). When you win inside three days, it tells you your team has been superior. More importantly, when India were fielding, the bowling changes were very impressive. The catches were going to exactly where the fielders were. The fielders did not move much. What does it tell you? Spot on-field placing. Even the bowling changes, you could possibly argue that the Ravindra Jadeja in the first innings was brought on a little later but at the end of the day, the team has won with 2 days to spare. I would give him 9.5 out of 10."

## I-League: Mohammedan Sporting come from behind to defeat Sreenidi Deccan 3-1

Nahani | West Bengal | Agencies

Mohammedan Sporting has tried to maintain their hundred percent record this season in the ongoing I-League after coming from a goal behind to defeat Sreenidi Deccan 3-1 at the Naihati Stadium, here on Monday. The Black and White Brigade ensured victory and all thanks to a brace from frontman Marcus Joseph and a spot-kick from Andelo Rudovic, which cancelled out David Munoz's first-half strike for Sreenidi Deccan. The victory consolidated Mohammedan Sporting's lead at the top of the table with three wins from their first three matches.

Sreenidi Deccan opened the contest in an energetic fashion and laid the first blow on their opponents in the 16th minute, when David Munoz picked up the ball after Mohammedan turned possession over in their half. With scores level going into the break, it took a moment of magic from Mohammedan Sporting in the 51st minute to turn the contest around on its head. It was Marcus Joseph again with the goods; this time with a humdinger of a strike from 30 yards that left goalkeeper Shibinraj Kunniyil hapless as the ball arched past him like a bullet into the top corner. Chasing a hat-trick, Marcus Joseph found himself in the thick of the action once

again in the 68th minute. Joseph unselfishly laid the ball across into the path of his teammate SK Faiaz this time, but Shibinraj was equal to Faiaz's effort as he tipped the ball over the bar. Mohammedan Sporting confirmed their victory late in the contest after being awarded a penalty in the 88th minute. Andelo Rudovic; the man from Montenegro, stepped up from 12 yards and made no mistake as he slid the ball into the right corner to seal all three points for Mohammedan Sporting. The table-toppers take on the Indian Arrows in their next fixture on March 12 while Sreenidi Deccan will come up against Real Kashmir FC on March 11.

### SPANISH PARA BADMINTON

## Pramod Bhagat wins 3 gold, Kadam bags two medals

Team Absolute | New Delhi

World No. 1 Pramod Bhagat struck gold in all the categories he participated in, while Sukant Kadam, the World No. 4, continued his good run and ended with a yellow medal and a silver at the recently concluded Spanish Para badminton International II. The Padma Shri Awardee won three gold medals in all the three categories he played. In singles, he defeated Kumar Nitesh in a hard-fought match lasting more than an hour. A set down, the Paralympic champion found his rhythm and overcame a resilient Kumar Nitesh in the next two sets. The final score read 17-21 21-17 21-17. In men's doubles, world No. 1 pair Pramod Bhagat and Manoj Sarkar defeated their Indian counterparts Sukant Kadam and Kumar Nitesh in another tight game. Pramod and



Manoj took the first set 21-19 and the duo faced a re-energised Sukant and Kumar who took the second set 11-21 but they lacked the fire-power in the third set and Pramod and Manoj closed the match with the score line of 21-19 11-21 21-11. In mixed doubles, Pramod and Palak had a difficult outing against the Indian pair of Ruthick Ragupathi and Manasi Girishchandra Joshi. But the former emerged victorious with a score line of 14-21 21-11 21-14. World No.

4 Sukant Kadam had a relatively easy outing defeating his German counterpart Marcel Adam in straight sets. Though the match ended in straight sets it was not an easy game by any feat. The match lasted 31 minutes and the final score line read 21-13 21-18. This victory is Sukant's third gold medal in as many tournaments. In men's doubles, unfortunately, he had to settle for silver after being defeated by world No. 1 pair Pramod Bhagat and Manoj Sarkar.

### ASIAN YOUTH & JUNIOR BOXING

## VISHWANATH, RAMAN STORM INTO SEMIS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian boxers Vishwanath Suresh and Raman dished out stunning performances to enter the youth men's semifinals at the 2022 ASBC Asian Youth & Junior Boxing Championships in Amman, Jordan on Monday.

According to information received here, Vishwanath got the better of Tajikistan's Meroj Zoidov by a split 4-1 decision in the 48kg quarterfinals to secure his second successive medal at the prestigious continental championships. On the other hand, Raman (51kg) also confirmed his medal by outperforming Jordan's Yazan Albitar in an impressive 5-0 win.

The last edition's silver medallist Vishwanath, who received a bye in the opening round, exhibited a great tactical brilliance against the aggressive opponent from Tajikistan. In an intense battle, the Indian, with his fine defensive skills and counter attacking display, however, managed to keep himself ahead in each of the three rounds. Meanwhile, Raman had a comparatively easy task against the local favourite. Despite some stiff challenge from the opponent, he



kept things in control before winning the match convincingly. Vishwanath and Raman will now take on Uzbek boxers Miralijon Mavlonov and Khujanazar Nortojev respectively in the semifinals on Friday. Later on Monday, five more youth boxers-Anand Yadav (54kg), Ayush (57kg), Rudra Pratap Singh (60kg), Vanshaj (63.5kg) and Anjani

Kumar Mummana (67kg)-will fight it out in the quarter-finals in the tournament, where both the age groups of men and women-youth and junior-are being played together. In the junior boys' section, three Indian boxers, Jayant Dagar (54kg), Chetan (57kg) and Yashwardhan Singh (60kg), made their way into the Last-4 stage while Lovepreet Singh

(50kg) exited after enduring a loss against Kazakhstan's Bek Zholdasbek by RSC verdict. While Chetan outclassed Iraq's Murtadha Hamad by unanimous margin, Jayant had to work hard during his close 3-2 win over Pansher Aliakhmed of Kyrgyzstan. Yashwardhan was given a walkover against Kuwait's Mohammad Alenzi.

### PREMIER LEAGUE

## City overpower United 4-1 in Manchester derby

Manchester | Agencies

Premier League champions Manchester City produced a stunning display to beat arch-rivals Manchester United 4-1 and restore a six-point advantage over Liverpool at the top of the table. Two goals by Kevin De Bruyne ensured City edged a keenly-contested first half, going 2-1 up. Pep Guardiola's side shifted through the gears in the second-half. Riyad Mahrez added two more goals to his tally in the second period, with Guardiola's men utterly dominant and perhaps a little disappointed not to have won by an even bigger margin. With less than five minutes on the clock, Kevin De Bruyne provided Manchester City with a superb start. Jack Grealish and Bernardo Silva combined well on the left of the United box, with the Portuguese then squeezing a low cross into the box



where De Bruyne arrived to sweep the ball past David De Gea and score his 50th Premier League goal in the

process. However, United weren't able to fight back and City secured all three points in the second half.

### ARSENAL SURVIVE TENSE MOMENTS IN 3-2 WIN OVER WATFORD

Watford: Arsenal moved into the top four in the Premier League with a hard-fought 3-2 win against Watford on Sunday in a roller-coaster of a game at Vicarage Road. Martin Odegaard (5th min), Bukayo Saka (30th min) and Gabriel Martinelli (52nd min) scored for Arsenal while Juan Hernandez (11th min) and Moussa Sissoko (87th) scored for Watford. With this win, Arsenal now have 48 points from 25 matches, trailing Manchester City, Liverpool and Chelsea. After the drama of their last Premier League clash some 10 days earlier against Wolverhampton Wanderers in which they scraped through to a 2-1 win, Mikel Arteta would have been expecting a more sedate affair on Sunday.

### ICC WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

## Fargana Hoque hits half century as Bangladesh post 140 in rain-hit match

Dunedin | Agencies

A fine half-century from Fargana Hoque (52 off 63 balls) helped Bangladesh post a competitive score in their rain-affected second match of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup against New Zealand at the University Oval here on Monday. Following a frustratingly long rain delay and being sent in to bat by New Zealand skipper Sophie Devine, the 28-year-old top-order batter guided her side to 140/8 from their 27 overs. Bangladesh's score could have been much bigger if it wasn't for the heroics of Amy Satterthwaite, with the White Ferns vice-captain picking up superb figures of 3/25 from her five overs.



Hoque and Shamima Sultana (33) gave Bangladesh a perfect start, with the visitors reaching 50 without loss for the second time at the tournament until Frances Mackay (1/24) intervened to make the initial breakthrough courtesy of a tough outfield catch from Lea Tahuhu. Satterthwaite then picked up two wickets in an over to help slow the run rate, before Hoque was

run out after some clever work from Mackay in her follow through. Hoque's dismissal slowed the run-rate and the hosts picked up a handful of late wickets to ensure the required total was not too lofty.

**Brief scores:** Bangladesh 140/8 in 27 overs (Shamima Sultana 33, Fargana Hoque 52; Amy Satterthwaite 3/25) vs New Zealand.

## SMRITI MANDHANA HAILS 'INSPIRATIONAL' BISMARH MAROOF

Hamilton

India opener Smriti Mandhana hailed Pakistan captain Bismarh Maroof as 'inspirational', a day after both teams faced off against each other in the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup. On Sunday, after India defeated Pakistan by 107 runs at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui, Mandhana along with vice-captain Harmanpreet Kaur, Shafali Verma, Renuka Singh Thakur, Meghna Singh and Richa Ghosh were seen playing with Maroof's six-month old daughter Fatima. There was also a video of reserve India player Ekta Bisht playing with baby Fatima just after the end of the match. The pictures and the videos of the Indian team players playing with baby Fatima went viral on social media. Mandhana took to Instagram on Monday and praised Maroof's efforts in playing international cricket after becoming a mother. "Coming back post pregnancy in 6 months and playing international cricket is so smahmaroof setting an example for sportswoman across the globe. Lots of love to baby Fatima from India and I hope she picks the bat just like you because lefties are special," wrote Mandhana on her Instagram story.



## Ahead of crucial friendlies, Sunil Chhetri ruled out due to injuries

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Veteran India football striker and captain Sunil Chhetri has been ruled out of the two international friendlies against Bahrain and Belarus in Manama later this month as he is suffering from "a few injuries" that need "time to heal". The All India Football Federation (AIFF) had recently announced a 38-member list of probables for the preparatory camp scheduled to kick off in Pune on March 11. India will play Bahrain on March 23, while they will take on Belarus on March 26. "I was really looking forward to the two friendlies



against Bahrain and Belarus and it's a shame I'll be missing out. It's been a long, tough season and I've suf-

fered a few small injuries that need time to heal. I will be doing all I can to recover in time for the predatory camp

in May," Chhetri told AIFF. "The potential this squad possesses is immense, and a lot of the lads are riding high on confidence on the back of good performances in the League (ISL and I-League) season. I'm certain we'll put our best foot forward. I'm wishing the team all the luck," said the 37-year-old Chhetri. The players along with head coach Igor Stimac and support staff will assemble in Pune on March 10. Those players whose clubs would be playing in the semifinals of the Indian Super League (ISL) will join the camp as and when their club commitments end. The contingent will fly to Bahrain on March 21.

## HAMILTON'S WARNING TO RIVALS: 'MY TEAM DON'T MAKE MISTAKES'

London: Mercedes Formula-1 driver and seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton of Great Britain issued an ominous warning to his rivals, especially Red Bull's Max Verstappen ahead of the new season, saying his "team don't make mistakes". Verstappen miraculously won the last F1 race of 2021 to deny Hamilton the world title under controversial circumstances but the 37-year-old Brit isn't short of confidence when it comes to Mercedes' chances of clinching more silverware in 2022. While Hamilton missed out on a record eighth drivers' crown in 2021, which would have broken the tie with German great Michael Schumacher, his team clinched its own record-extending eighth consecutive constructors' championship. With 2022 set to witness arguably the biggest rule changes in the sport's history, Hamilton when asked ahead of the pre-season running in Barcelona whether he feared Mercedes' crown might slip amid all the modifications in the new season, he gave a firm rebuttal. "Why would I ever think that? We've won eight (titles) in a row. Why would I feel that way?" said Hamilton on Sunday evening. "My team don't make mistakes. Of course, there is always a risk, but we don't make mistakes. There's a lot of very intelligent people back at the factory and I trust them 100 per cent. Whatever we start with today, whether it's good or bad, we'll work through it.



## INTERNATIONAL WOMAN'S DAY

## Neelanjana Ray wins 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa' title

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa' contestant Neelanjana Ray was on cloud nine as she won the trophy and took home an amount of Rs 10 lakh in the grand finale episode of the show. It was a moment of pride for her to receive the winner's title in the presence of judges Vishal Dadlani, Shankar Mahadevan and Himesh Reshammiya and the special guest popular singer Udit Narayan. Neelanjana shared: "I am extremely grateful to the audience for all their consideration, love and affection. It has been such an enriching experience and there is a lot that I have had the opportunity to learn from our judges, the mentors and the grand jury members. I am extremely happy to be raising aloft this souvenir trophy." She earlier had also participated in reality shows such 'The Voice India Kids Season 2' and 'Indian Idol 10'. The 19-year-old girl from West Bengal further talks about her musical journey and said: "My goal was very clear from the very beginning. I was only 4 years old when I started learning music professionally. It was very challenging without any doubt but I took it up and it is said when you strongly desire for anything even God is there to help you. I think same happened with me." When asked what she is looking ahead in life, she replied: "I would relish thanking 'Sa Ra Ga Ma Pa' for providing me with this tremendous opportunity. Now after this achievement, I am planning to shift to Mumbai in the next few days and give rise to my career in Bollywood. I want people to know me as singer Neelanjana Ray, I want to create my own space and identity in the music industry." Rajashri Bag and Sharad Sharma were the first and second runners-up at the finale of the singing reality show.



I wanted my dignity back:  
**Bhavana**



Team Absolute | Chennai

Actress Bhavana has said that she was devastated and wanted to get her dignity back after she was sexually assaulted five years ago.

In a live interview to a private YouTube channel, 'The Mojo Story', the noted actress spoke up, ending her five-year silence, and declared that she would give a strong fight without thinking about the outcome. The actress, who had essayed prominent roles in Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada and Telugu movies, said her family, including her husband, close relatives, friends and the general public had supported her during her traumatic period. Bhavana said: "My dignity has been shredded to a million pieces." It was sheer willpower that kept her going, she added. The actress said she felt lonely despite the strong support extended to her by her family and friends.

She recalled how she was in the courtroom for 15 days in 2020 from morning till evening. Each time a lawyer cross-examined her -- and she was quizzed by a battery of seven lawyers -- she had to prove that she was innocent.

Bhavana said the perpetrators were insulting her on social media after the traumatic incident and added that after the incident she was denied acting jobs in the Malayalam film industry. The notable exceptions were directors such as Ashik Abu and Shaji Kailas, actor-turned-director Prithviraj, and actor Jayasurya. The actress was kidnapped in 2017 when she was returning home from a shooting location and was subjected to sexual assault by a gang of men.

The incident snowballed into a major controversy after the main accused, Pulsar Sunil, revealed that popular Malayalam actor Dileep was behind the assault. Dileep was arrested and is now on bail.

## Shefali Shah on female actors breaking stereotypes with challenging roles

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Ahead of International Women's Day, actress Shefali Shah, who was recently seen in the web series 'Human', talks about how female actors are not afraid to work in challenging genres and are opting for clutter-breaking shows. Shefali says: "With powerful women actors breaking stereo-

types and taking up challenging roles in different genres, women's representation in the Indian entertainment landscape has tremendously evolved."

She further adds how working in the medical drama 'Human' was not an easy project for her and it was something like taking a risk but she was ready to do that.

"Working in a recently released

medical drama, 'Human' was not at all a piece of cake considering the complexities of the genre. However, throughout my life and career, I have always aimed at opting for clutter-breaking movies and series that would trigger larger social conversations and inspire the world to break the biases," she concludes. 'Human' streams on Disney+ Hotstar.



## HEMA MALINI RECALLS LATE MOM, UNSPOOLS MEMORIES OF RAJESH KHANNA

ILA SANKRITYAYAN | New Delhi

Bollywood's 'Dreamgirl' Hema Malini remembered her late mother Jaya Chakravarty while she recalled working with late superstar Rajesh Khanna. Hema appeared as a special guest for 'Mother's Day' special episode on 'Hunarbaaz- Desh Ki Shaan'. The veteran actress spoke to correspondent and recalled working with late superstar Rajesh Khanna and her initial relationship with him.

Hema Malini referred to her late mother and said: "Though she has gone and is no longer with me physically but still I can feel she is there around me. Many times if I am doing some work, I feel like she is waiting for me and I have to go, then suddenly I realise that she is no more. But still she is with me all the time. And the same connection I have with my daughters."

"And I am happy to see that my daughters are giving the same affection care to their kids like I had given to them. They know the true meaning of being a mother and motherhood." The actress further gets nostalgic about her journey in Bollywood and also regretted that she couldn't explore much as a classical dancer in movies.

As she said: "Unfortunately when I came in movies that era was not the same as the time of Vyjayanthimala and Padmini, so I couldn't get many chances to do classical dance in movies."

During the show she did a small performance on the song, 'Gori Tori Paijaniya' from the movie 'Mehbooba' starring herself and Rajesh Khanna.

"You know the best part of coming to these reality shows is that you can recall those moments from the past. I did a small performance but it was really great. I still remember that initially me and Rajesh Khanna never liked each other. But later we did the film 'Prem Nagar' together and from there we developed a good friendship that continued forever. In fact his wife Dimple and children used to visit the sets during shooting." Hema Malini seemed quite excited to be on the talent-based reality show and looking at the performances of the participants. "I feel honoured because the channel felt that I am the right person to come on 'Mother's Day' special episode. So, they invited me and I accepted to be on the show."

## ICCR ORGANISES CULTURAL EVENT IN MEMORY OF LATA MANGESHKAR

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) organised a cultural programme in the national capital in the memory of legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar, who passed away on February 6.

The concept of the concert, which was a tribute to Lata Didi, as she was fondly called by her fans, was a panoramic view of her mystique, magic and music, and was created by Vinay Sahasrabudhe, ICCR President and Rajya Sabha MP.

"Many ambassadors and other dignitaries joined the programme to pay their respects," Sahasrabudhe said.

With the concert which was held on Saturday, the organisers paid tributes to the different facets of the iconic singer, who by lending her voice to a



range of regional melodies, deepened the process of national integration.

With many concerts abroad, Lata 'didi' reiterated India's pre-eminence as the land of poetry and music. The concert brought together, through an English narrative, nuggets and anecdotes from Mangeshkar's career spanning over seven decades.

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Taapsee Pannu