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New Zealand thrash Pakistan by 71 runs...

From DLF to TATA, title sponsors help BCCI lift its brand value to Rs 47.5K cr

RICH, RICHER, RICHEST

Chetan Sharma | New Delhi

The 15th season of the Indian Premier League (IPL) is all set to kick-start on Saturday in Mumbai. Over the years, the

cash-rich league has turned out to be one of the world's biggest T20 spectacles.

The first edition was played in 2008 and ever since, its popularity has grown by leaps and bounds, which has ensured that big busi-

ness houses, and startups, keep lining up to pour hefty amounts on the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in order to bag title sponsorship rights.

We list the giants who have managed to

link their names with the prized trophy, helping BCCI in the bargain to lift its brand value to Rs 47,500 crore, as reported by the valuation experts Duff & Phelps (now known as Kroll) in 2019. Here's a timeline:



DLF (2008 TO 2012)



The then India's largest real estate firm -- DLF -- had won the title sponsorship in 2008 and signed a deal for four years, making a bid of Rs 40 crore annually. The deal ended in 2012 and the company did not renew it, reportedly because they were under "financial stress" at that time.

PEPSI (2013 TO 2015)



Pepsi, the soft drinks company, later stepped in to sponsor IPL in 2013. The company secured the rights with a bid of Rs 396 crore for a five-year period. The beverage company's contract ended in 2017 but the company walked out of the deal a year ahead of schedule because of the spot fixing allegations swirling around the lucrative league.



VIVO (2016 TO 2017)

The Chinese mobile manufacturer then signed a two-year contract with the BCCI by making a bid of Rs 100 crore in 2016 for one year.

VIVO (2018-2022)

Vivo renewed and bagged the sponsorship rights for another five years by making a huge bid of Rs 2,199 crore. The mobile maker had approximately paid Rs 439.8 crore per year. However, in 2020, it terminated its agreement before the contract ended due to the military face-off between India and China. The brand faced Indian fans' wrath and demand of 'Boycott China' gained momentum.

VIVO (2021)

Vivo again made a comeback (paid Rs 439.8 crore). The company had won sponsorship rights for five years from 2018 to 2022. Vivo was back in 2021 hoping that the two-nation tensions would have faded away. But evidently, it continued to haunt the company.



DREAM11 (2020)

The fantasy gaming platform, Dream11, then stepped into the space vacated by Vivo with a bid of Rs 222 crore.

TATA (2022-2023)



Tata group bagged the title sponsorship rights at approx Rs 355 crore (per year). They will be holding rights for the 2022 and 2023 season and are reported to be in contention for future years too when the BCCI brings out a tender further.

SPONSORSHIPS CROSS RS 1,000 CRORE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The BCCI this year will earn little over Rs 1,000 crore from the Indian Premier League (IPL 2022) central sponsorships, Inside Sport reported.

This will be record sponsorship revenue generated by BCCI till date in 15 seasons of IPL. The BCCI this year has signed a new title sponsor in the form of Tata and also two new associate sponsors. The IPL GC recently announced new deals with RuPay and Swiggy Instamart as central sponsors for IPL. The board for the first time has filled all NINE sponsorship slots for the season, the report said.

The big increase is coming from two sources for the BCCI. First of all the number of sponsors has increased this year.

The IPL GC recently announced new deals with RuPay and Swiggy Instamart as new central sponsors for IPL. The board now has 9 top brands on board for IPL and all slots for sponsorships are filled.

According to available information, the deal with RuPay & Swiggy is in a range of Rs 48-50 crore per annum, Inside Sport reported.

BROCCOLI, LEAFY GREENS CAN HELP SLOW GROWTH OF COVID, FLU

Go Vegetarian

Researchers at Johns Hopkins University's Children's Centre showed that sulforaphane - a plant-derived chemical - known as a phytochemical with anti-cancer effects, can inhibit the replication of SARS-CoV-2, virus that causes Covid, and another human coronavirus in cells and mice.

NEW YORK | Agencies

A chemical derived from a compound found abundantly in broccoli and other cruciferous plants such as cabbage, kale and brussels sprouts may offer a potentially new and potent weapon against the viruses that cause Covid-19 and the common cold, researchers have found.



sivir - an antiviral medication used to

shorten the recovery of hospitalised adults with Covid infections - also inhibited 50 per cent of the replication of both HCoV-OC43 and SARS-CoV-2.

While the results, published in the Nature journal Communications Biology, are promising, the researchers caution the public against rushing to buy sulforaphane supplements available online and in stores, noting that studies of sulforaphane in humans are necessary before the chemical is proven effective, and emphasising the lack of regulation covering such supplements.

In the study, the team used purified, synthetic sulforaphane purchased from commercial chemical suppliers in their experiments. In one experiment, the research team first exposed cells to sulforaphane for one to two hours before infecting the cells with SARS-CoV-2 and the common cold coronavirus, HCoV-OC43.

They found that low micromolar concentrations of sulforaphane reduced the replication by 50 per cent of six strains of SARS-CoV-2, including the Delta and Omicron variants, as well as that of the HCoV-OC43 coronavirus. Sulforaphane when combined with remde-

vidin significantly decreased in both a statistically significant decrease in the viral load, or amount of virus, in the lungs (17 per cent decrease) and upper respiratory tract (9 per cent decrease) as well as the amount of lung injury (29 per cent decrease) compared with infected mice that were not given sulforaphane.

The compound also decreased inflammation in the lungs, protecting the cells from a hyperactive immune response that seems to be one of the driving factors that has caused many people to die from Covid-19.

Now book your doctor's appointment via Google Search

According to the Verge, if a user searches for a doctor or a health provider's office, they'll see the available appointments with the date of the earliest appointment. A "book" button will direct them to a third-party site to make an appointment.

The new feature comes after Search team in December released features to help people navigate the complex healthcare system and make more informed decisions, like finding healthcare providers who take their insurance.

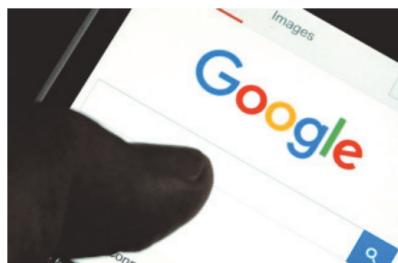
SAN FRANCISCO | Agencies

Tech giant Google has announced a new feature wherein users can book their appointment via a simple search, making it easier for people in the US to find and book local healthcare providers.

Users looking to book an annual check-up or a same-day visit can use Google Search to see the availability of select health care providers in their area. To begin with the feature, Google has partnered MinuteClinic at CVS, the company said in a statement.

The company said it is still in the early stages of rolling out this feature; it is working with partners, and other scheduling solution providers.

For its users in India, Japan, and Brazil Google-owned YouTube is adding health source information panels on videos to provide context that helps viewers identify videos from authoritative sources, and health content shelves that more effectively highlight videos



from these sources when people search for specific health topics.

These context cues help people easily navigate and evaluate credible health information. The feature will be rolled out starting this week.

Rajamouli's new release smashes records to emerge as India's biggest blockbuster!

CHENNAI | Agencies

Director S.S. Rajamouli's magnum opus, featuring Ram Charan and Jr NTR in the lead, has shattered records at the box office to emerge as India's biggest blockbuster, according to one trade analyst.

Taran Adarsh on Saturday tweeted: "RRR" smashes all records on Day 1. Overtakes 'Baahubali 2'. 'RRR' is now the number one opener of Indian cinema. The worldwide Day One business



[Gross BOC]: Rs 223 crore. S.S. Rajamouli is competing with himself."

The industry expert also put out a poster that confirmed the number. Adarsh went on to point out that the overwhelming success of 'RRR' had impacted the col-

lections of 'The Kashmir Files'. Globally, too, 'RRR' has been received warmly. The film collected Rs 4.03 crore on its first day in Australia and Rs 37.07 lakh in New Zealand. Adarsh added that the film had also had an "earth-shattering start" in the United States. It collected \$3,198,766 from preview collections on Thursday across the US. In Canada, the film made \$270,361. Across North America, the film raked in the US dollar equivalent of Rs 26.46 crore; in the UK, it made Rs 2.40 crore.

Fixing flat tyres, woman breaks gender barrier

Yedalapally Adilaxmi of Telangana has managed to break the gender barrier to enter an area which is dominated by men.

HYDERABAD | Agencies

The 31-year-old in a remote village in Bhadradi Kothagudem village has proved that women can do any work with willpower, determination and hard work. At a small garage in Sujatha Nagar near Kothagudem town, she fixes flat tyres of not just motorcycles but also of cars, tractors and even trucks.

The mother of two helps her husband Bhadradi in running the automobile repair shop and over the last five years has achieved expertise in repairing punctures and replacing tyres.

In her own words, people coming to the shop were initially reluctant as they did not believe that a woman can fix flat tyres. They were shocked to see a woman lifting the heavy tyres and doing the kind of work which is traditionally perceived to be the forte of men. However, the expertise she has gained over the years with sheer hard work has today made her the go-to-woman for those looking for someone to fix a flat tyre. It has not been an easy journey for Adilaxmi, the first woman mechanic of Telangana. She started helping her husband, who has experience in fixing punctures. She used to take care of the shop whenever her husband was out

to attend offsite calls. Educated only up to the fourth class, Adilaxmi was the second of four daughters. She recalled that it was a hand-to-mouth existence for the family. She thought this way they can be together and she can also help him in running the shop. She never thought one day she would be able to do all the work at par with him.

"I always felt helpless and disappointed when customers used to come to the shop in his absence as I was unable to repair the punctures. I used to feel depressed by not attending to the jobs coming to our doorstep as we were losing income. I started thinking why can't I do it. I made a beginning with small things like filling air in the tyres and as my interest grew and I gained confidence, there was no looking back."

Ocean surface temperature, heat wave incidents up in Indian Ocean

Team Absolute | New Delhi

If you thought heat waves are something to do with increased temperatures on the land in summer months, it is time for a rethink! Not only are there heat waves in the ocean, which is heating too, but they are increasing too over the decades.

The western Indian Ocean had a total of 66 Marine Heat Wave (MHW) events while the Bay of Bengal had 94 events during 1982-2018, a recent investigation of marine heat waves by the scientists at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, found out.

In 2021, there were six marine heat waves recorded in the western Indian Ocean over a period of 52 days. In the north Bay of Bengal, there were four marine heat waves over a period of 32 days.

The monsoon forecast models used by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) considers the ocean surface temperatures as



input data. These forecasts can be used for advance planning and disaster management.





BIJU JANATA DA REGISTERS LANDSLIDE VICTORY IN URBAN BODY POLLS



BHUBANESWAR | Agencies

The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) led by Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has made a landslide victory in the urban local body (ULB) election, for which results were declared on Saturday. The State Election Commission (SEC) conducted elections for 109 ULBs on March 24. The results of 105 municipalities/notified area

councils (NACs) and three municipal corporations of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur were declared on Saturday.

However, the counting of votes of Dhamnagar NAC was halted due to some reason, sources said.

The BJD has won chairperson seats in 73 municipalities/NACs and mayor seats in all three municipal corporations -- Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur. The BJD remained in second

position by winning 16 chairperson seats while Congress won 7 seats and independent candidates in nine. Similarly, out of 1,716 councillor seats in the 105 municipalities and NACs, the BJD has won 1,175 seats, BJP got 288, Congress - 134, BSP - 1, CPI - 1, and Independent - 117. Out of 67 corporator seats in the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), the BJD won 48, BJP got 10 and the Congress is in third position with 9.

The BJD has won 38 out of 59 corporator seats in Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC), followed by Congress (8), BJP (7) and independent (6). In Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC), the BJD won 30 corporator seats while the BJP candidates won 7 seats.

Only one Congress corporator candidate won the poll in BeMC whereas independent candidates won four corporator seats.

The BJD mayor candidates won the seats with a comfortable margin in all three corporation towns.

Thanking the people for re-imposing faith in his party, BJD President Naveen Patnaik, in a tweet, said: "Thank all the people of #Odisha for the overwhelming support in #OdishaMunicipalElection. The win is a reflection of the outpouring of love for @bjd_odisha and the untiring effort of thousands of party workers. #OdishaLovesBJD"

He also congratulated all winning BJD candidates and appreciated the hard work of party workers.

Similarly, senior BJP leader and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has congratulated all winning BJD candidates and thanked the people who have voted for the BJD in the urban election.

Class 1 age criteria: Minimum age of 6 in line with NEP, HC told



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Opposing the plea of age relaxation, the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) has filed an affidavit in the Delhi High Court, saying its fixed age of 6 years for Class 1 admission does not violate the right of children, and it is in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

"The Right to Education Act recognizes the entry age of Class 1 to be 6 years or more. Further, the age criteria for admission in class/grade-1 should therefore be in consonance with the NEP

2020 because it is settled law that the executive has the competence to decide how a policy should be shaped or implemented," the KVS stated. The submission of the KVS before the bench of Justice Rekha Palli was in light of a recent plea in which the parent of a 5-year-old child challenged the criteria of KVS for Class 1 admission for 2022-23, in which the minimum age of a child has changed to 6 years instead of 5 years.

Earlier, the KVS had apprised the Delhi High Court that it has extended the online submission date

of application for Class 1, from March 21 to April 11 this year. In the plea moved through Advocates Ashok Agarwal and Kumar Utkarsh, the petitioner alleged that the admission criteria of KVS is arbitrary, discriminatory, unjust, unreasonable, violative of the fundamental right to education of petitioner as guaranteed to her under Articles 14, 21, and 21-A of the Constitution of India read with the provisions of the Delhi School Education Act, 1973 and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.

Reduce VAT on fuel instead of making 'The Kashmir Files' tax-free: Cong MLA

PANAJI | Agencies

Instead of declaring "The Kashmir Files" tax-free, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant should have emulated his predecessor late Manohar Parrikar, and lowered the VAT on fuel prices, Congress MLA Yuri Alemao said on Saturday.

"The Chief Minister has declared the film tax-free. The loss to the state exchequer would have gone to the director as benefit or the producer of that particular film," Alemao told reporters at the state legislative assembly complex.

Alemao also cited the example of then Chief Minister Parrikar, who in 2012, had reduced the state government's value added tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel to almost zero per cent, in order to reduce fuel prices at



the time, which made rates of the two popularly used fuels cheapest in the entire country. "Today what does the common man want, that the rise in the price of fuel should stop. This is an insensitive government. This is the fourth day that the prices of diesel and petrol have increased by 80 paise. It will keep on increasing. They do not care about the common people," Alemao said.

"The Congress had promised to cap fuel prices at Rs 80

by reducing the VAT. When Manohar Parrikar was CM, he had reduced it himself. The hardship faced by the people due to Covid, VAT should be reduced to give them relief," Alemao said.

The Goa government on Friday had issued a notification granting tax-free status to the Vivek Agnihotri-directed film "The Kashmir Files" for "disseminating positive message amongst public for ensuring that such events are not repeated in future".

INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT VERIFICATION FRAUDSTERS HELD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Two persons were arrested by the police for duping people on the pretext of verifying their Instagram accounts, a police officer said on Saturday.

According to social networking service Instagram, a verified badge is a Blue Tick that appears next to an Instagram account's name in search, and on the profile.

It means that the Instagram has confirmed that an account is the authentic presence of the public figure, celebrity or brand it represents. The official said a woman lodged a complaint at Cyber Police Station, Dwarka alleging that her son was cheated by unknown fraudsters of Rs 14,400.

She stated that her 15-year-old son got a mobile number for verifying his Instagram account. When her son contacted that number the caller asked him to deposit Rs 6,000 through UPI.

Afterwards, her son was again



forced to deposit Rs 5,700 as his account was blocked. The third time, the fraudsters demanded Rs 2,700 more for further course of action. As the complainant's son realised that he had been cheated, he

demanded his money back, however, the alleged persons refused to pay the amount and blocked him. Accordingly, based on this complaint, the police registered a case under section 420 (cheating and dis-

honestly inducing delivery of property) of the Indian Penal Code and took up the investigation.

During investigation beneficiary details of alleged fraudulent transactions were obtained from PhonePe, UPI and Kotak Mahindra bank.

On the basis of a technical analysis, a police team conducted raid in Pitampura and Rohini area and apprehended one accused Shivam Dev (19), a first year BA student, and on his instance the second accused Shubham Kumar (21), who is said to be mastermind of the scam was also nabbed.

During interrogation, both the accused disclosed that they used to look for the Instagram users whose accounts were not verified. Thereafter, they sent them messages through different IDs for verifying their accounts.

Whenever any user showed interest, they demanded money through UPI and once the money was received, they used to block the senders.

TWO SEX RACKETS BUSTED IN DELHI; 4 WOMEN HELD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In back-to-back operations against illegal sex trade in the national capital, the Delhi Police busted two prostitution rackets on Saturday, an official said.

In the first operation, the police said, information was received regarding the running of a prostitution racket at Avedam Spa in Rishabh Vihar in east Delhi, after which a decoy customer was sent to the spa as part of a raid.

One person, identified as Ramu Prasad, charged Rs 500 from the decoy customer for massage.

"Thereafter, he was sent to a cabin with a girl who offered him sex in exchange of Rs 1,000. The decoy customer signalled to the police team by giving a missed call, which conducted a raid on the said premises and



apprehended two persons from the spot," Deputy Commissioner of

Police (DCP), R. Sathiy Sundaram, said. The police have arrested both

the person, including the woman.

The DCP said the licence of the said spa was found to be expired, which was issued in the name of Nitin Gupta. "An application will be moved before the court for sealing of said premises and intimation will also be given to the SDM concerned. Nitin Gupta is still absconding," Sundaram said. In another operation, the Special Staff of Shahdara district police received an information regarding a prostitution racket being run from a flat at the Dilshad Garden Colony. "Subsequently, a police team was constituted and a decoy customer was sent to the said flat," the senior official said. The decoy customer, who was Rajkumar, a police constable, met a person named Sudhir and asked him to arrange girls for him.

Rajasthan MLA's son among 5 booked for gang-raping a minor

JAIPUR | Agencies

A Rajasthan MLA's son along with four others have been booked for allegedly gang-raping a minor in Dausa, confirmed Nathulal Meena, SHO Mandawar police station on Saturday. The 15-year-old victim is a student of class 10.

As per the complaint lodged by victim's uncle, the girl reportedly befriended one Vivek Sharma, a resident of Alwar who on February 24, 2021 drugged her and took her to a hotel at Mandawar road along with Rajgarh MLA Johari Lal Meena's son Deepak Meena and others and raped her.

After filming the act, the accused with his friends continued calling the girl to the same hotel and gang-raped her several times.

They also threatened to make the video viral. Fearing the worst, the victim gave Rs 15 lakh to Vivek in May 2021 which she said was



kept for marriage. When the relatives came to Vivek's house, both the money and the jewellery went missing. After this, a case of theft was registered at Rainsi (Alwar) police station. A thorough investigation brought Vivek Sharma into the picture. When Vivek was taken into custody and was interrogated, he confessed that the minor girl had given him the money.

Fake call centre duping US, Canada citizens busted in Gurugram



GURUGRAM | Agencies

A team from the chief minister's flying squad, DLF Phase-2 police station and cyber crime police busted a fake call centre and arrested 24 people, including 10 women and the owner, during the intervening night of Friday and Saturday.

According to police, the call centre operating from a ground floor of a house in DLF Phase-2, used to cheat the US and Canadian citizens in the name of tech support and charge \$500 to \$1,000 as service charge, via gift card.

The employees of the alleged call centre would call

the victims posing as officials of Canada Border Service Agent, Financial Crime Unit Bureau of Narcotics and Canadian Intelligence Service and accuse them of being involved in drugs peddling and money laundering cases and charge money from them.

The accused had also paid Rs 1.50 lakh per month as floor rent for four months.

Police have recovered Rs 2.50 lakh in cash, two CPU and as many mobile phones from the spot. The owner of the call centre identified as Umesh Yadav, a resident of Kosli in Rewari district, was also arrested.

87% CROREPATI MINISTERS IN UTTAR PRADESH

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As many as 87 per cent ministers are crorepatris; as many as 49 per cent have criminal cases against themselves and another 44 per cent have serious criminal cases against them -- that is the Uttar Pradesh cabinet for you.

And just five out of 45 ministers (11 per cent) are women, according to an analysis by Uttar Pradesh Election Watch and Association for Democratic Reforms released on Saturday.

The two organisations analysed the self-sworn affidavits of 45 out of 53 ministers, including the Chief Minister, from the Uttar Pradesh State Assembly 2022.

Giving out details, the analysis said 22 ministers (49 per cent) have declared criminal cases against themselves while it was 20 ministers (44 per cent) that had declared serious criminal cases against themselves.

Out of the 45 ministers analysed, 39 (87 per cent) are crorepatris with average assets analysed to be Rs 9 crore.

The minister with the highest declared total assets is Mayankshwar Sharan Singh from Tiloi constituency with assets worth Rs 58.07 crore while



the one with lowest declared total assets is Dharamveer Singh, an MLC Member from Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council with assets worth Rs 42.91 lakh.

A total of 27 ministers have declared liabilities out of which the minister with the highest liabilities is Rakesh Sachan of Bhognipur constituency with Rs 8.17 crore of liabilities. Nine (20 per cent) ministers have declared their education-

al qualification to be between class 8 and 12 while 36 (80 per cent) ministers have declared having an educational qualification of graduate or above.

Affidavits of Sanjay Nishad, Jitin Prasada, JPS Rathore, Narendra Kashyap, Dinesh Pratap Singh, Dayashankar Mishra Dayalu, Jaswant Saini and Danish Azad Ansari were not analysed for various reasons.

Centre approves setting up of 21 new Sainik Schools

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Ministry of Defence has approved setting up of 21 new Sainik Schools, in partnership with NGOs, private schools and state governments for this academic year.

These schools will be set up in the initial phase of the government's initiative of setting up of 100 new Sainik Schools across the country in partnership mode. They will be distinct from the existing Sainik Schools.

The objectives behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of setting up of 100 new Sainik Schools is to provide quality education to the students in tune with National Education Policy and give them better career opportunities, including joining the Armed Forces.

It also gives an opportunity to the private sector to work hand-in-hand with the



Government towards nation building by refining today's youth to become responsible citizens of tomorrow.

The 17 of these schools are Brownfield running schools and four are Greenfield schools to be operational shortly. While NGOs, Trusts and Societies have share of 12 approved new schools, six private Schools and three State Government owned schools find place in the list of such approved new Sainik Schools. Unlike existing Sainik Schools which are purely residential in nature, seven new Sainik Schools are Day School and 14 such new approved schools have residential arrangements.

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“ He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. ”
Jim Elliot

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INDIA ALLOWS OVER 3,200 INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS PER WEEK FROM TODAY

WINGS OPENED

▶ 1,783 DEPARTURES PER WEEK WILL BE OPERATED BY FOREIGN AIRLINES.

▶ THE SUMMER SCHEDULE 2022 IS EFFECTIVE FROM MARCH 27, 2022 TILL OCTOBER 29, 2022.

▶ A TOTAL OF 1,466 DEPARTURES PER WEEK HAVE BEEN APPROVED TO 43 DESTINATIONS IN 27 COUNTRIES.

▶ AS PER THE APPROVED SCHEDULE, INDIGO WILL OPERATE 505 DEPARTURES PER WEEK, FOLLOWED BY AIR INDIA AT 361, AIR INDIA EXPRESS 340, SPICEJET AT 130, GOAIR (GOFIRST NOW) AT 74 AND VISTARA AT 56.

INDIGO TO LAUNCH 100 DOMESTIC FLIGHTS FROM TODAY ONWARDS

New Delhi: Airline major IndiGo will launch 100 flights connecting key domestic metro cities and regional centres, starting from March 27, 2022.

Accordingly, the airline will introduce flights on 20 exclusive routes effective March 27, 2022.

Furthermore, it plans to re-commence 16 exclusive flights. At present, IndiGo has a fleet of over 275 aircraft. The airline operates over 1,500 daily flights connecting 73 domestic and 24 international destinations.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Over 3,200 departures per week will be operated from India per week during this year's summer schedule which commences from Sunday. According to aviation regulator DGCA, 1,466 departures per week have been approved for Indian carriers.

A total of 60 foreign airlines of 40 countries have been given approval to operate 1,783 frequencies to and from India during 'Summer Schedule 2022'.

Out of the approved schedule, Gulf-based carriers like Emirates will operate 170 departures per week, followed by Oman Air at 115, Air Arabia at 110, Qatar Airways at 99, Gulf Air at 82, Etihad Airways at 80, Saudi Arabian Airlines at 63 and Kuwait Airways at 56. Furthermore, Sri Lanka Airlines will operate 128 departures per week, Singapore Airlines at 65, British Airways at 49, Thai Airways at 36, Lufthansa

German at 32, Malaysia Airlines at 30, Japan Air Lines at 22, Air France at 20, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines at 18 and Aeroflot Russian Airlines at 6.

In addition, the Centre has allowed operations to and from India of airlines such as Salam Air, Air Arabia Abu Dhabi, Qantas and American Airline.

Recently, the Central government allowed the resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services from March 27.

"After having recognised the increased vaccination coverage across the globe and in consultation with the stakeholders, the Government of India has decided to resume scheduled commercial international passenger services to or from India from March 27, 2022," an official communique had said on March 8. "The suspension of scheduled commercial international passenger services to or from India, thus, stands extended only up to 2359 hrs IST on March 26, 2022 and air bubble arrangements shall accordingly be extended to this extent only." Last month, India's civil

B'LRU AIRPORT NAMED 'BEST AIRPORT' AT WINGS INDIA AWARDS 2022

Bengaluru: The Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru has won two major accolades at the Wings India Awards 2022.

The airport has been adjudged the 'Best Airport' under the General Category, and also won the 'Aviation Innovation' Award, according to an official statement by Bengaluru International Airport authorities on Saturday.

This recognition is one of the industry's most recognised

accolades, and is awarded following an assessment of customer service, facilities and innovations.

Bengaluru airport was recently conferred with the 'Voice of the Customer' recognition from Airports Council International (ACI), and as a testament to its commitment to provide superior airport experience, the airport was recently recognised by the Confederation of Indian Industry with the Customer Obsession Award.

aviation regulator had extended the ban on scheduled international commercial flights till "further orders". In late 2021, India had announced plans to allow resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services from December 15, 2021 with certain conditions. However, the plan was post-

poned due to the emergence of the third Covid wave globally.

India had banned the operation of international flights on March 23, 2020 to contain and control the spread of Covid-19. Flight restrictions, however, were later eased under air bubble arrangement with certain countries.

BHARAT BANDH, BANK STRIKE CALLED ON MONDAY-TUESDAY MAY HIT SERVICES

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A joint forum of central trade unions has called for a nationwide strike on Monday and Tuesday to protest against Central government policies that affect workers. The banking sector will be joining the strike, the All India Bank Employees Association said on Facebook.

The call for a nationwide strike was taken after a meeting of the joint platform of central trade unions on March 22, 2022. After taking stock of preparations in various states, the unions announced a two-day all-India strike against "the anti-worker, anti-farmer, anti-people and anti-national policies" of the central government. The bank unions are participating in the strike to protest against the govern-



(Representational Image)

ment's plan to privatise public sector banks, as well as the Banking Laws Amendment Bill 2021.

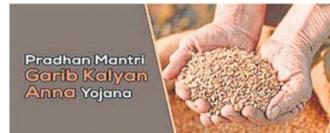
The State Bank of India has issued a statement informing customers that banking services may be impacted on March 28 and 29.

Banks have pensions of workers who are about to retire, would not be affected if they participate in the

strike. Workers from various other sectors such as coal, steel, oil, telecom, postal, income tax, copper, and insurance are expected to participate in the strike.

The unions in the railways and defence sector would be making mass mobilisation in support of the strike at several hundreds of spots across the country.

CENTRE'S FREE RATION SCHEME EXTENDED FOR SIX MONTHS, RS 80,000 CRORE ALLOCATED FOR SIXTH PHASE



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre has extended Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY) for another six months (April to September). Under the extended scheme, each beneficiary will get an additional five kilos of free ration per person every month to the normal quota of food grain. This will be the sixth

phase of the scheme. The fifth phase was to end in March. The scheme, which was implemented in April 2020, is known to be the largest food security programme in the world.

The scheme is to benefit the poor and vulnerable sections, with an allocation close to Rs 3.4 lakh crore and over 1,000 lakh metric tonnes of free food grain under the scheme. This will be the sixth phase of the scheme.

The fifth phase was to end in March. According to a press release, the central government has spent approximately Rs 2.60 lakh crore, so far, and another Rs 80,000 crore will be spent over the next six months till September 2022 taking the total expenditure under the scheme to Rs 3.4 lakh crore.

Former MP CM Digvijay Singh sentenced to one year jail, granted bail



Team Absolute | Bhopal

The district court in Indore on Saturday convicted veteran Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijay Singh and six others in an 11-year-old case, and sentenced them to one-year imprisonment. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 on each of them.

However, later on

Saturday evening, all the convicted persons were released on bail after furnishing an amount of Rs 25,000 each.

After getting bail, Singh said that he has been falsely framed in the case, and he will challenge the decision in the high court.

Three other accused in the case were acquitted in the absence of appropriate evidence against them.

The case dates back to 2011, when Singh along with then Congress MP Premchand Guddu had gone to Ujjain to attend a programme organised by the party.

While Singh was on his way to Ujjain, some members of the BJP's youth wing had shown black flags to him, which did not go down well with the Congress work-

ers, leading to clash between both sides.

In the incident, a BJP youth wing leader, Amay Apte, had received severe injuries while some others also got injured. The youth wing of the BJP had lodged a complaint against Congress leaders, including Singh, accusing them of attempt to murder.

Apart from Singh and Guddu, the other accused in the case were -- Mahesh Parmar (ex-MLA), Dilip Choudhari, Jay Singh Darbar, Aslam Lala, Nanant Narayan Meena, Mukesh Bhati and Hemand Chouhan.

Out of the nine accused in the case, three -- Parmar, Bhati and Chouhan -- have been acquitted, while six others were sentenced to one-year imprisonment.

Hindu activists object to Muslim merchants' presence at convention



Team Absolute | Bengaluru

Hindu activists in Karnataka's Madikeri district on Saturday staged protest by sitting on the ground to vacate Muslim merchants from carrying out their business in a convention organised at Shanivarsante of Somavarapet taluk.

The Muslim merchants were carrying out their business in the state-level convention of organic farming and indigenous breeds of cows organised by Manehalli Mutt.

They had put up sugarcane juice and

snacks shops. The Hindu activists present on the spot objected to their presence and told them to vacate. "What is the connection between the convention of indigenous breeds of cows and the people who slaughter cows," submitted the activists.

They further said that "the Muslim merchants do not have any love for cows they only want to carry out the business here".

Meanwhile, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) had demanded to get shops of Muslims vacated from the premises of famous Chamundeshwari hills in Mysuru city.

Biden calls Putin 'A Butcher'



Warsaw/Moscow: US President Joe Biden on Saturday called Russian President Vladimir Putin a "butcher" after meeting refugees in Warsaw, Poland, in an intense criticism of the Russian leader's actions in Ukraine that have seen millions of refugees flee to the neighbouring countries, CNN reported. During his visit, Biden was asked by reporters what seeing the Ukrainian refugees at Stadion Narodowy made him think of as he deals with Putin every day. Biden responded: "He's a butcher", CNN reported.

After initially looking to downplay a personal rivalry between himself and Putin, Biden has ramped up his rhetoric against Putin over the last 10 days.

Last week, Biden for the first time called Putin a "war criminal" and then later referred to him as a "murderous dictator, a pure thug who is waging an immoral war against the people of Ukraine". He has also called the Russian invasion of Ukraine "inhuman", CNN reported. Biden's new insults further narrow the window of opportunity for improving Russian-American relations. This was stated by the press secretary of Putin, Dmitry Peskov, RT reported.

SPO KILLED, BROTHER INJURED IN TERRORIST ATTACK IN J&K

Srinagar: A special police officer (SPO) has been killed in militant firing on Saturday in J&K's Budgam district, while his injured brother is being treated at a hospital.

As per the police, SPO Ishfaq Ahmad Dar was injured in firing by militants at Chatabugh village in Budgam district on Saturday evening. He later succumbed to his injuries at the hospital.

"Umar Ahmad Dar, the brother of the slain SPO, is being treated at the Bemina hospital in Srinagar. Search operations have been launched to nab the assailants," sources said.

Convince students, don't ruin their careers, Shivakumar to parents, government

Bengaluru | Agencies

Karnataka Congress President D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday urged parents and the BJP government in the state to convince the students about the court verdict on hijab to ensure that their careers are not ruined.

Shivakumar was speaking to reporters on the state government's decision to ban students from appearing in the crucial SSLC exams (Class 10) wearing hijab in the backdrop of the recent high court verdict.

"Children's education is of paramount importance. The students might commit mistakes. They might even be persistent. But their future must not be harmed for this. The parents need to sit and talk with them," he said.

"Religious leaders, parents and teachers must themselves get convinced first,

and then persuade the children. Children always listen to their teacher's words, and the mother is their first teacher," the Congress leader added.

When asked about Opposition leader Siddaramaiah's demand to let students wear 'dupatta' around their heads and write exams, Shivakumar said, "The Congress stands with what the Constitution says. For us, the Constitution is like Bible, Quoran or Bhagavad Gita. I won't say anything more."

"The court has given its verdict on hijab, which some have agreed, and some have not. I am not in a position to say whether the judgment is wrong," Shivakumar said.

The state government will conduct the SSLC exams from March 28 to April 11. As many as 8,73,846 students have enrolled for the exams this academic year.

Ayush ministry signs agreement with WHO for global centre of traditional medicine

■ The Centre will be supported by an investment of about USD 250 million from the Government of India. The primary objective of GCTM is to harness the potential of traditional medicine from across the world through modern science and technology and improve the overall health of communities' the world over.

The GCTM will be the first and only Global Centre for traditional medicine across the world. It will focus on building a solid evidence base for policies and standards on traditional medicine practices and products and help countries integrate it as appropriate into their health systems and regulate its quality and safety for optimal and sustainable impact. The WHO-GCTM is designed to engage and benefit all the regions of the world.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Ministry of Ayush has signed a Host Country Agreement with the World Health Organization (WHO) for establishing a WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine at Jamnagar in India, with its interim office at the Institute of Training and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) in Gujarat.

The agreement was signed in Geneva by Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush and Director General, WHO Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on March 25.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his message to the event said, "It is heartening to learn about the signing agreement for the establishment of Global Centre for



Traditional Medicine. Through various initiatives, our government has been tireless in its endeavour to make preventive and curative healthcare, affordable and accessible to all. The global centre at Jamnagar

will help in providing the best healthcare solutions to the world."

Ayush Minister Sarbanand Sonowal said that his Ministry was able to get this due to the initiative and efforts of our illustrious Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He added that the Centre will bring far-reaching benefits to traditional medicine systems around the world. He informed that the Centre will bring availability of a better system to connect with the latest scientific methods.

Highlighting the importance of the Indian government's initiative, Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus said that harnessing the potential of traditional medicine by drawing on modern science and the principles of equity and sustainability will be a game changer for health in the 21st century.



MAHARASHTRA GOVT SLASHES VAT ON CNG FROM 13.5% TO 3%

The huge reduction in CNG rates will benefit the common man travelling in taxis, auto-rickshaws that use CNG as a fuel.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) in Maharashtra will become cheaper with the state government Saturday taking a decision to reduce the Value Added Tax (VAT) from 13.5 per cent to three per cent from April 1.

The decision was taken by Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar. The huge reduction in CNG rates will benefit the common man travelling in taxis and auto-rickshaws that use CNG as a fuel.

The government's emphasis to bring down CNG prices is also oriented towards promoting greater use of transports that are environment-friendly. CNG is perceived as more environmentally-friendly as compared to diesel and petrol.

During the two-week-long Budget session, Pawar had announced that the government would initiate measures to bring down CNG prices. Accordingly, on the last day of the Budget session Friday, the minister directed the Finance department to initiate the process and issue notifica-



tions to that effect. Pawar said, "The state government has always strived towards extending relief to the common man. The VAT reduction in CNG is a step in that direction. It will help lakhs and lakhs of people who rely on auto-rickshaws and taxis to commute daily.

Projects worth 5 lakh crore executed in Maharashtra: Nitin Gadkari

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of two national highway projects in Sangli, Gadkari said he considers himself an "ambassador of Maharashtra" and feels that the state should emerge on top in the country in terms of progress and economy



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Saturday said that ministries under him have executed projects worth Rs 5 lakh crore in Maharashtra. The minister said that development works, be it in Maharashtra or India, will be carried out without any political interests.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of two national highway projects in Sangli, Gadkari said he considers himself an "ambassador of Maharashtra" and feels that the state should emerge on top in the country in terms of progress and economy.

"In the last seven years of my tenure, I got an opportunity to execute development works worth Rs 5 lakh crore in Maharashtra. I was in port, shipping, water resources, MSME and road transport (as a minister), but I always considered myself an ambassador of Maharashtra and feel that the land of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj should prosper and flourish," Gadkari said.

If any state should emerge as number one, it should be Maharashtra, he said. The minister said

development works put forth before him will be fulfilled. "We are going ahead with a promise that as far as development works are concerned, be it of anybody, if it is related to the development of Maharashtra or country, it will be carried out without bringing in any politics," Gadkari said.

As a minister for ropeways and cable cars, he has invited proposals for alternate modes of transport, especially for tourism purposes.

State water resources minister Jayant Patil, BJP MP from Sangli Sanjay Patil and others were present at the inauguration of Rs 2,344 crore highway projects. Gadkari underlined the importance of water conservation along the national highways to address various issues. He said to encourage the export of sugar, he is ready to set up a logistic park or satellite port in Sangli. "I am building 29 roadcum-airstrips. Seven are already built. I am ready

to build another at the logistic park where any plane can land," he said. The minister said he is building a new national highway from Pune to Bengaluru and it has been designed in such a way that vehicular traffic will not be affected in monsoon. "The proposed highway is 699 km whereas the current distance on the NH 4 (Mumbai-Pune-Bengaluru highway) is around 775 km. The alignment is completed and it will go through backward regions and drought-prone areas of Pune-Satara-Sangli district," said Gadkari. He said his ministry is building bitumen roads on a big scale. "Praj industry in Pune has successfully made bitumen out of sugar bagasse and biomass. I tell this every time that farmers should not remain just 'anna data' (food donor) but become 'urjadata' (energy donor)," he said. Gadkari said for bitumen, he is going to hold a meeting in Delhi. "We are considering to make the use of bitumen produced by the biomass for all national highway projects mandatory. So, farmers in the country will give a substitute for petrol-diesel by producing ethanol, they will also give a substitute for energy and the same farmers will give bitumen and there will be no need to export it," he said. He said the economy of western Maharashtra is dependent on sugar and he has been emphasising producing ethanol instead of sugar. "There is smile on your (sugar cane cultivators) faces as there is drought situation in Brazil (the highest sugar-producing country), but once sugar production goes up there and once the prices go down by 10 kg in India, think of the situation of Indian farmers," he said. He added to avoid this situation, in the coming days, there will be a need to produce ethanol instead of sugar and bitumen from bagasse.

Maharashtra signed MoUs worth Rs 3 lakh crore with 98 firms amid pandemic: Desai

Speaking to reporters after attending the 'Aura of AURIC' conference here, organised along with eight consulate generals, Desai said these MoUs will generate three lakh jobs in the state.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) worth Rs 3 lakh crore with 98 companies amid the Covid-19 pandemic, state industries minister Subhash Desai said on Saturday.

Speaking to reporters after attending the 'Aura of AURIC' conference here, organised along with eight consulate generals, Desai said these MoUs will generate three lakh jobs in the state. "The requisite land has been allotted to nearly 70 per cent of these compa-

nies. The investment is from nations like USA, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Russia and Japan. Maharashtra did not stop (in its path of progress) during the pandemic," he said. The minister also informed that AURIC has got a permit to distribute electricity in the industrial areas of Shendra and Bidkin, and the rates would be cheaper than those in neighbouring states, making the region highly competitive for firms to invest in. AURIC or Aurangabad Industrial City is a multi-billion dollar corridor being developed as part of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. Earlier, speaking at the event, NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said the area will attract investment due to the fast pace of infrastructure development, adding that AURIC will recycle 42 per cent of its consumed water and also have an e-land management system. Desai also Marathwada Acceleration for Growth and Incubation Council (MAGIC), which will help units involved in innovation, here.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra on Saturday reported 138 new COVID-19 cases but no pandemic-related death, the state health department said.

On Friday, the state had recorded 275 cases and two deaths.

The caseload in the state rose to 78,73,369, while the death toll remained unchanged at 1,47,779.

With 137 people recovering during the day, the tally of recovered patients rose to 77,24,697.

There are now 893 active cases in Maharashtra.

As many as 16 districts and 14 municipal corporations did not report fresh cases. The fatality rate in the state was 1.87 per cent while the recovery rate stood at 98.11 per cent.



The tally of coronavirus tests carried out in the state rose to 7,92,08,961 with 52,959 samples tested since previous evening.

The Mumbai administrative circle, which comprises the country's

financial capital and adjoining metropolitan region, saw 55 new cases, followed by 40 in Pune circle, 23 in Nashik circle, six each in Akola and Aurangabad circles, five in Nagpur circle, two in Kolhapur circle and

one in Latur circle. Coronavirus figures of Maharashtra: Positive cases 78,73,369; fresh cases 138; death toll 1,47,779; total recoveries 77,24,697; active cases 893, total tests 7,92,08,961.

Maharashtra: Over 12 lakh students bear brunt of MSRTC strike

In absence of cheapest mode of transport, students forced to take auto, risk safety by climbing atop it or clinging to it

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As the MSRTC bus strike is nearing six months, around 12 lakh school students, especially in rural parts of the state, continue to suffer due to lack of public transport. Some are even risking their safety, clinging onto autos and sitting atop them, to reach their schools that are kilometres away. The MSRTC has

offered the students concessions, but since bus services are still not operating regularly, the students are paying from their pockets for other modes of transportation. "As there are no buses, six of us have pooled in money to get an auto rickshaw to take us to school together," said a student living near the Mumbai-Nashik Expressway.

A local activist from Shevgaon in Ahmednagar has clicked a touching picture of students clinging to an auto and also atop it on their way to school during exams. "I saw the plight that the students are facing near Pathardi in Ahmednagar, and have appealed

to MSRTC staffers to return to work. As a member of the Akhil Bharatiya Sant Bhagwan Seva Sangh, we have supported the call of raising their salaries, but not their demand for merger with the government. But it is incorrect and unfair to play with the safety and lives of students like this," said Shrikant Chemate. Meanwhile, a good samaritan from Narayangaon in Junnar has offered his personal vehicle to local students who need to travel to school. "The MSRTC strike has been very painful for the students, and it was especially difficult for students living in the rural belt during the board exams. That is

when I decided to put my personal vehicle to good use and posted my contact number in public domain, offering my vehicle for free to any student who needs to travel to school," activist Suraj Wajwe said. MSRTC officials said that students and senior citizens comprise 35 per cent of its passengers, who were now deprived of services due to the strike. MSRTC employees went on an indefinite strike from October-end over their demand for merger of the cash-strapped corporation with the state government and intensified after the Diwali festival concluded. Despite giving a salary raise and assurances, there has been a stale.

No free homes for MLAs in new Mumbai project: Ahwad

Ahwad had on Thursday announced in the Legislative Assembly that the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority will build high income group category homes for MLAs who do not own homes in the metropolis and represent constituencies outside the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After the Maharashtra government announced construction of homes for MLAs in suburban Goregaon, state Minister Jitendra Ahwad on Friday clarified the legislators will not get the residences for free. The housing development minister said the MLAs concerned will have to pay for the homes, expected to cost Rs 70 lakh each.

"There is noise over the homes which will

be built for MLAs. I would like to clarify that the homes will not be given for free. The land price + construction cost (expected expenses Rs 70 lakh) will be recovered from the MLAs concerned," he tweeted. Ahwad had on Thursday announced in the Legislative Assembly that the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority will build high income group category homes for MLAs who do not own homes in the metropolis and represent constituencies outside the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

Mumbaikars to lord over 'Sunday Streets' from March 27

At the crack of dawn on Sunday, the Chairman of Tata Sons and Air India N. Chandrasekaran will kickstart a unique citizen-friendly initiative of Mumbai Police called 'Sunday Streets' inspired by Commissioner of Police Sanjay Pandey.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

At the crack of dawn on Sunday, the Chairman of Tata Sons and Air India N. Chandrasekaran will kickstart a unique citizen-friendly initiative of Mumbai Police called 'Sunday Streets' inspired by Commissioner of Police Sanjay Pandey.

Chandrasekaran, along with Joint Commissioner of Police Vishwan Nangre-Patil and others, will flag-off a t-shirt run by people at Nariman Point at 6.15 a.m., marking the arrival of 'Sunday Streets' concept for the country's commercial capital.

The initiative envisages 'handing' over around half-a-dozen prominent roads in the city and suburbs to the people to bring them out of their homes and let them 'chill in the streets' without the fear of speeding vehicles or tiresome traffic jams. These streets are Marine Drive, Bandra, Andheri, Goregaon, Vikhroli and Mulund - over which Mumbaikars shall 'lord' for 4 hours - starting this Sunday morning and maybe extended further. "It's final. #SundayStreets from this Sunday (March 27). Look forward to

Mumbaikars joining in large numbers," said Pandey, who has been interacting directly with the citizens and social groups after he assumed charge of the coveted top police post this month. During the four hours, the citizens can let their hair down on open roads, engage in activities like yoga, running, cycling, walking, skating, etc, without the fear of getting knocked down by zooming vehicles, or pesky hawkers and vendors creating hurdles.

Around 8 years ago, a similar 'Equal Streets' movement had been launched by some social groups but it was limited to certain suburban areas and went on the 'back-street' during the two years of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Urging people to step out on the vehicles-free streets and do anything they desire on the free roads, Pandey said even the Mumbai Police band would be available to regale the citizens. Citizens and groups have welcomed the Mumbai Police chief's initiative and are demanding that more roads be converted into 'Sunday Streets' to enable people, especially women, children and seniors, to step out safely and move around freely, and there's a buzz on social media. People's groups term it as a game changer for the city, pointing out how lakhs have fallen ill remaining cooped up in their homes, especially during the pandemic, and roads are out of bounds even on week-ends when the traffic increased by nearly 50 per cent. Citizens in some other areas like Lokhandwala, Charkop, Kandivali, Borivali, Dahisar, Powai and Dadar have also demanded similar 'Sunday Streets' in their respective localities and to make it a permanent feature of Mumbai's weekend 'outing'.

Uddhav dares 'pervert' BJP to jail him and grab power

In one of the bitterest attacks till date, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Friday accused the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party of being a 'pervert' and dared it to arrest him if it wanted to grab power in Maharashtra.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In one of the bitterest attacks till date, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Friday accused the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party of being a 'pervert' and dared it to arrest him if it wanted to grab power in Maharashtra.

Coming three days after his brother-in-law faced action by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Thackeray also questioned the corruption allegations levelled by the BJP and the actions of various central probe agencies to defame the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, its leaders and their families.

"I am not scared by these tactics. If you want to jail me to come to power then do it... Put me in a cell like Lord Krishna. But don't indulge in such vicious tactics to grab power. Don't harass us or our family members. We never bothered your family members," Thackeray declared.

The Chief Minister recalled how Indira Gandhi had declared Emergency, but now we are in a state of 'undeclared Emergency' and said "it needs great courage to declare a public Emergency".

Wondering if the ED has become the maid-servant of the BJP, especially after the arrests of former home minister Anil Deshmukh and later Nawab Malik, the Chief Minister took strong umbrage at the Opposition for linking Malik and the MVA in general with the fugitive don Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar, and exploiting the absconder mafiosi's name in elections. Taking a swipe at Devendra Fadnavis's 2-man 80-hour long government, Thackeray said if the early morning oath ceremony experiment had succeeded, "then Malik and Deshmukh would have been sitting in the BJP's lap".

He recalled how the former state BJP home minister, the late Gopinath Munde had promised to bring back Dawood, but it has not yet happened. "Former US President Barack Obama displayed guts by sending his commandos to Pakistan to kill the Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. Why similar courage has not been shown to deal with Dawood?" Thackeray asked pointedly without naming Prime Minister Narendra Modi. On another BJP charge, the Chief Minister said that a Waqf Board member was elected when the BJP-led government was in power, with the appointment letter signed in green ink by the then minister Vinod Tawde, who is now the BJP national general secretary. Referring to the BJP's taunts that he had abandoned Hindutva by allying with Nationalist Congress Party-Congress, Thackeray reiterated that he was very much a Hindutva proponent and reminded how it was the late Balasaheb Thackeray who supported said if the early morning oath ceremony experiment had succeeded, "then Malik and Deshmukh would have been sitting in the BJP's lap".

The Chief Minister also blamed the BJP for disrupting the Budget Session opening day speech by Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, which was against the 'culture' of the state, adding such a thing was unprecedented in the country and should not have happened.

Continuing his spirited tirade against the BJP's charges after the state government allowed controlled sale of wine through supermarkets, he said the liquor consumption in some BJP-ruled states was much higher than Maharashtra. To the Opposition's charges on corruption in the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation during the Covid-19 pandemic, Thackeray strongly rebuffed the BJP's allegations point by point and said the 'Mumbai Model' of Covid management has been hailed globally. He said while the Opposition was welcome to point out any lapses which can be rectified, he asked the BJP to stop hurling baseless accusations. Later, responding to the ripping speech, Fadnavis claimed that the Chief Minister failed to answer any points raised by the Opposition.



BRAINSTORMING SESSION OF STATE CABINET GETS UNDERWAY IN PACHMARHI

The two-day brainstorming session of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's cabinet began in the state's hill station - Pachmarhi on Saturday morning.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The two-day brainstorming session of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's cabinet began in the state's hill station - Pachmarhi on Saturday morning.

The session started with all the party workers singing national song 'Vande Mataram' at a well decorated lawn of a hotel.

Various developmental issues will be discussed during the meeting with each cabinet minister submitting a detailed report of his department. Chouhan will review the development works done in the last two years of his tenure and instructions will be issued for completion of delayed projects before the Assembly polls.

Before leaving for Pachmarhi



from Bhopal on Friday night, Chief Minister Chouhan had formed several committees involving different cabinet colleagues. The committees are assigned to prepare a complete blueprint of schemes which will be reviewed in one-on-one meetings with the cabinet ministers.

Also, the meeting will be crucial for the chief minister to prepare a roadmap for the next Assembly polls in the state. Interestingly, hours before Chouhan, along with his cabinet colleagues, left for

Pachmarhi, BJP's national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya held a press conference in Bhopal and said that Chouhan will lead the party in the 2023 Assembly polls.

There is no discussion of a change in leadership in the state, he said. "Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has performed well and you can be assured that BJP will contest the next Assembly election in the state under his leadership," Vijayvargiya has said. Since the BJP lost the 2018

Assembly elections, it was being speculated that the party might make changes in the leadership just before the November 2023 Assembly polls.

"In this state, Shivraj Singh Chouhan has created a record of being the longest serving chief minister. His simplicity, accessibility, humility and sensitivity are the reasons why he is still extremely popular. Even today, he is known as 'Mama' for the children of the state," Vijayvargiya stated.

Cong calls Shivraj's cabinet meeting in Pachmarhi as an event

Congress leader and former Minister Kamleshwar Patel called Shivraj Singh Chouhan's ongoing two-day brainstorming cabinet meeting at hill station Pachmarhi as an event. The Congress leader alleged that for the last two years, the BJP government has been more focused on event management than the serious challenges the state is facing.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Congress leader and former Minister Kamleshwar Patel called Shivraj Singh Chouhan's ongoing two-day brainstorming cabinet meeting at hill station Pachmarhi as an event. The Congress leader alleged that for the last two years, the BJP government has been more focused on event management than the serious challenges the state is facing.

Addressing a press conference at the Congress headquarters in Bhopal on Saturday, Patel questioned Shivraj Singh Chouhan's decision to hold a cabinet meeting in a hotel in Pachmarhi instead in Bhopal. He demanded that the state government should tell the people how much money was invested for BJP's event.



"If Shivraj Singh Chouhan is really serious about the development of Madhya Pradesh, he would not have invested public money for event management, instead he could have held meetings at the secretariat office or his official residence as it always happens," Patel said.

He further alleged that the BJP led Madhya Pradesh government failed to provide scholarships to the students belonging to ST, SC and OBC categories for the past two years. "Recently Rs 318 crore was released for scholarship, whereas it requires around Rs 1,200 crore. More than 35,000

primary schools have been shut in the past two years and teachers who were earning for their livelihood are now unemployed," Patel said. During the Congress government, primary schools were opened under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to provide education to the poor children, but all those schools were closed and now the BJP government has introduced a new concept -- CM Rise Schools. "It would have been better if those existing schools were redeveloped and teachers have been appointed. But, for his own event management, the chief minister invested around Rs 7,000 crore. This huge amount of money could have been utilized for other purposes," he added. A two-day brainstorming cabinet meeting is underway at a hotel in Pachmarhi.

Digvijaya Singh opposes proposal to set up 'genocide museum' in Bhopal

Congress Rajya Sabha member Digvijaya Singh on Saturday opposed the proposal moved by Vivek Agnihotri to set up a 'genocide museum' for Kashmiri Pandits in Bhopal, for which Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has promised land to the 'The Kashmir Files' director.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Congress Rajya Sabha member Digvijaya Singh on Saturday opposed the proposal moved by Vivek Agnihotri to set up a 'genocide museum' for Kashmiri Pandits in Bhopal, for which Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has promised land to the 'The Kashmir Files' director.

Singh said the step would disrupt the social harmony of Bhopal which has a large Muslim population.

"I am totally against setting up a genocide museum in Bhopal. We will not let the communal harmony of

Bhopal get disturbed," he said. Singh's objection came a day after Agnihotri arrived in Bhopal to participate in a film festival and proposed to establish a 'genocide museum' to showcase the sufferings of Kashmiri Pandits. The Chief Minister on his part has promised to provide land and other facilities for the proposed museum.

On Friday, Singh had objected to Agnihotri's recent "Bhopalis are assumed to be homosexuals" remark.

In a viral video clip of an interview given to an online channel, Agnihotri could be heard saying in Hindi: "I have

grown up in Bhopal, but I am not a Bhopali. Because Bhopali has a different connotation. You can ask any Bhopali. I will explain it to you in private. If someone says he is Bhopali, it generally means he is homosexual, a person with 'Nawabi' desires." Reacting to Agnihotri's remark, Singh tweeted: "Vivek Agnihotri ji, this could be your experience, but not that of the Bhopal citizens. I am also in contact with Bhopal and Bhopalis since 1977, but I never had this experience. Wherever you stay, there's always an influence of the company you keep."

Present Generation Needs To Be Taught the History of Freedom and Its Importance

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that there is a need to teach the history of the country's independence and its importance to the present generation. Those who made sacrifices have also played an important role in the independence of our country. Litteratures should keep circulating new blood in the arteries of the country with their works while showing the right path to their civilization, culture and nation.

Patel was addressing a conference of literary organisations organised by Madhya Bharat Hindi Sahitya Samiti in Indore today. In the programme, he honoured senior litterateur Damodar Khadse and Rajkumar Kumbhraj with Samiti Centenary Award.

Patel said that Madhya Bharat Hindi Sahitya Samiti is a pious organisation doing supreme service to the national language Hindi for a century. It is a matter of pride to be present in the conference of literary organisations conducted by this institution.



Revered Babu Mahatma Gandhi Ji also visited this institution. The committed service of national language by this institution of literary workers and seekers (sadhaks) of Ma Saraswati is exemplary and venerable. Writers and poets are an integral part of the society. They never retire, their creativity doesn't get tired, and they don't let the society get tired.

The writer also fulfils the responsibilities of ordinary life while creating extraordinary. He appealed to all the literary scholars to keep spreading new blood in the arteries of their country with their pen, showing the right path to their civilization, culture and nation. Keep the social consciousness awake and active to help the needy and deprived sections. The

history of the country's independence should be told to the present generation and its importance should be explained. He said that those who made sacrifices have also played an important role in the independence of the country.

Former Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan said that literature is a special genre. Literature is a medium of positive change. Literature helps to understand our culture and civilization. MP Shankar Lalwani said that Madhya Bharat Hindi Sahitya Samiti has a glorious history. This institution has a great contribution in the service of literature. Damodar Khadse and Rajkumar Kumbhraj also expressed their views. On this occasion Divisional Commissioner Pawan Kumar Sharma, Director of Madhya Pradesh Sahitya Academy Vikas Dave, Prime Minister of Madhya Bharat Hindi Sahitya Samiti Prof. Suryaprakash Chaturvedi, Vice Chancellor of Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya Renu Jain etc. were present.

Irregularities in Food Distribution Will Not Be Tolerated: Chief Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that irregularities and wrong-doings in the work of distribution of food grains will not be tolerated. The work of distribution of ration should be done with transparency. Implement the system strictly to benefit the general public. Chouhan was addressing after the presentation given by the fourth group during the contemplation meeting (Chintan Baithak) at Pachmarhi today.

Chief Minister said that in the state about 5 crore consumers are getting food grains at low price. In this work all the arrangements should remain perfect. Technology should be used. Take action on complaints of irregularities. Zero tolerance policy should be adopted. Consider making fair price shops multipurpose. People will bless for implementing reforms in this area. Chouhan said that the



distribution of food grains through vehicles has been started in 89 tribal-dominated development blocks of the state. In the past, the work of distributing food grains through bags or sacks was also done. Food grains were delivered to homes in rural areas during the Corona period. Food festival and arrangements should be made better in the interest of consumers. In the contemplation meeting, on behalf of the Group of Ministers, Food Minister Bisahul Singh informed that the unemployed youths have been given the

responsibility of distribution of ration in 89 development blocks in the state. Fortified rice was also distributed in Singrauli district, which will be done in other districts as well. Along with this, an initiative has also been taken to distribute salt and other essential material. Food Minister Singh informed that food grains and other consumer items are being distributed to 5 crore consumers in the state. The arrangements for storage and distribution of food grains are constantly monitored. Suggestions were also made regarding distribution of food grains through mobile vehicles, use of GPS in grain distribution vehicles, availability of fair price shops at panchayat level, ration cards and supply of materials through eligibility slips to all eligible beneficiaries, appointment of a salesman in place of the careless society manager also in other development blocks in addition to tribal development blocks.

CM PLANTED BLUE GULMOHAR SAPLING IN PACHMARHI



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a sapling of Blue Gulmohar in Pachmarhi. Along with Chouhan, all the members of the Cabinet also planted sapplings of Blue Gulmohar. Around 35 Blue Gulmohar sapplings were planted in the pine ground opposite the Resham Kendra at Pachmarhi. Blue Gulmohar is also known as Neelmohar. This is an ornamental plant. Its botanical name is Jacaranda Mimosa Folia.

Namaz offered in classroom at MP college, probe ordered

After a video of a hijab-clad Muslim girl purportedly offering namaz inside a college classroom in Madhya Pradesh went viral on social media, the university administration has ordered a probe into the matter.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

After a video of a hijab-clad Muslim girl purportedly offering namaz inside a college classroom in Madhya Pradesh went viral on social media, the university administration has ordered a probe into the matter.

As per sources, the incident occurred in Dr Harisingh Gour University (HGU), a Central variety, in Sagar district. In the viral video, a burqa/hijab-clad girl could be seen purportedly offering namaz inside a classroom.

After the video surfaced on media, members of the Hindu Jagran Manch reached the university campus and staged a protest, raising 'Jai Shree Ram' slogans and reciting Hanuman

Chalisa at a temple located on the campus. They later handed over a memorandum to the university administration demanding action against the girl student.

Kapil Swami, a member of Hindu Jagran Manch, claimed that namaz was deliberately offered inside the classroom on Friday.

"It was a deliberate act carried out on the behest of some faculty members of the university. We have demanded that punitive action be taken against those who helped the girl offer namaz," Swami said. Neelima Gupta, Vice Chancellor of HGU, has ordered an inquiry into the matter. "A five-member committee has been constituted to look into the matter. The committee will submit its report within three days, and further action will be taken based on this report. We have asked all the students to follow their religious practices outside the university campus." Gupta said. The Karnataka High Court had recently ordered restricting the wearing of hijab in educational institutions in the state, deeming it not an "essential religious practice" in Islam. On Thursday, the Supreme Court refused urgent hearing of pleas challenging the Karnataka High Court verdict.

DJ ORDERS UNION CARBIDE & ITS CONVICTED OFFICIALS TO PRESENT ARGUMENTS FROM 25-FOR FINAL JUDGEMENT

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The organisations working with the survivors of the December 84 Union Carbide disaster are hopeful that there will be an end to the long drawn out criminal appeal proceedings pending against Union Carbide India Limited, & 7 of its Indian officials since 2010. In a hearing held on 25 March 2022, the District Judge of Bhopal has granted another date for hearing to Union Carbide and its convicted officials to present their final arguments from April 25-29, 2022 from 11am-12:30pm, 2022 and has also ordered to list the matter for final judgement on 24 May 2022.

Union Carbide India Limited and its convicted officials have ensured that no arguments on the merit of appeal takes place in the court of District Judge since August 2021 by employing all sorts of delay tactics. The prosecution agency, CBI in its application dated 25 March 2022 has stated that "instant criminal appeal is pending before this Court since 2010 and accused applicant is playing all tactics to derail the due process of law and

causing inordinate delay in the administration of justice by filing such petition. There is no order of any higher courts which stops this court from hearing this appeal. "While this criminal appeal has continued for more than 11 years, 2 convicted officials (KV Shetty, Vijay Gokhale) have already died as free men, without paying for their crimes and the rest of the convicted officials don't even show up for hearing dates, said Rachna Dhingra of Bhopal Group for Information & Action.

In an attempt to delay the criminal appeal proceedings in November 2021 3 convicted officials of UCIL (Kishor Kamdar-Former President, J Mukund-Works Manger & SP Choudhary) sought recusal of the current District Judge as she had served in an administrative role in the Office of the Welfare Commissioner -Bhopal gas claims & compensation tribunal in 1997. The District Judge denied the request for recusal. The three UCIL convicted persons approached the MP High Court. On 30th November 2021 the MP High Court found that their case was without any merit and it ordered the District Judge to hear the mat-

ter at the earliest. On January 20, 2022, these 3 convicted officials of Union Carbide filed a SLP (Special Leave Petition) in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India against the order of MP High Court. It is the contention of Union Carbide convicted officials that criminal appeal filed by them in the Sessions Court of Bhopal should not be heard until the SC decides on their SLP case regarding the recusal of District Judge.

On 7th June 2010, the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Bhopal court convicted Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) & 7 of its Indian officials including Keshav Mahindra & others were convicted under IPC Section 304-A, 336, 337, 338. The criminal appeal (Cr 365/10) was filed in 2010 by Union Carbide India Limited & its indian officials and has been pending in the Sessions court of Bhopal District Court since then. "37 years after the world's worst industrial disaster the corporations and individuals responsible for killing more than 25,000 people, injuring more than half a million people of Bhopal have used every delay tactic in the book to delay criminal appeal proceedings.

While the convicted officials are yet to pay for their crimes, the survivors of Bhopal disaster have gotten no justice or closure and they continue to suffer from chronic illnesses and die untimely deaths due to exposure related ailments. There cannot be a better example of Justice Delayed-Justice Denied said Shezadi Bee of Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangarsh Morcha

In the criminal proceedings pending in Bhopal District court against the foreign corporations; Union Carbide Corporation-USA & Dow Chemical, the Bhopal Group for Information & Action (NGO assisting the CBI, prosecution) filed an application and provided details of the authorised representative of Dow Chemical to whom notice for appearance should be served. Earlier six notices have been issued to The Dow Chemical Company for appearance in the Bhopal district court. The prosecution agency, CBI, has been asked to verify details of the authorised representative of Dow Chemical and present its findings in the next hearing to be held on April 25, 2022.

CM CONGRATULATED THE WOMEN HOCKEY PLAYERS

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has congratulated and extended best wishes to the women hockey teams of Madhya Pradesh for entering the finals of the All India Inter University Tournament. Chouhan has said that the proud girls of Madhya Pradesh have once again created history. In an unprecedented event, two teams of ITM Gwalior and Jiwaji Vishwavidyalaya Gwalior have reached the finals of the All India Inter University Hockey Championship at Udaipur, Rajasthan. The Chief Minister has congratulated and blessed both the teams on this achievement. This is the first time that two teams from the same academy will get gold and silver medals.



KIM KARDASHIAN IS EXCITED FOR PEOPLE TO SEE THE LINE IN-PERSON

Los Angeles | Agencies

Kim Kardashian has been working very hard on her new swimwear line called SKIMS SWIM.

And on Thursday the 41-year-old TV star talked about how the suits came to be when she sat down with Vogue Hong Kong.

The mother of four also shared there will be several pop up shops selling the bikinis and one pieces. They will be in Miami, LA, Japan and Dubai, reports dailyemail.co.uk.

"We just announced our Skims Swim launch, which I am so excited about!" began the sister of Khloe and Kourtney.

"I've wanted swim for a really long time, so I cannot wait for this - I tested all the fabrics myself." Kim then said she was happy to have the suits be versatile. "The swimsuits are available in seven solid colours and can seamlessly go from day to night, poolside to party, the beach, and more."

Then came the big pop up news: "We'll have upcoming pop-ups around the swim line in Miami, Los Angeles, Japan, and Dubai so people can get to see the line in-person."

And she is excited about another launch.

"We also just launched our maternity line, which is designed to support the bodies of new and expecting mothers."



THE REALITY STAR ANNOUNCES SKIMS SWIM POP UP SHOPS IN MIAMI, LOS ANGELES, JAPAN AND DUBAI

Charlotte Ritchie joins 'You' Season 4

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Charlotte Ritchie is set for a main role in Season 4 of Netflix's 'You', Variety has confirmed.

Ritchie will appear opposite series stars Penn Badgley as Kate. The character is described as fearfully smart, independent, suspicious, misses nothing, reports 'Variety'.

A fiercely loyal friend, a brick wall to everyone else, the daughter of a chaotic, bohemian single mother, Kate worked hard to create the life she now leads. She's an art gallery director whose job means managing tempestuous artists. Kate tends to be "the adult in the room", and has embraced the moniker of "icy b***h". She's especially protective of best friend Lady Phoebe, a sweet and trusting person whose extreme wealth and fame tend to attract opportunists.

Kate prefers "arrangements" to love, which is why she dates fun but self-centred partier Malcolm. When Malcolm invites Joe, an American outsider of no apparent means, into their privileged world, Kate not only immediately dislikes him, she strongly suspects something about the man is not what he seems.

Ritchie previously starred in the Netflix series 'Feel Good' opposite Mae Martin.



BLISSFUL DANIEL RADCLIFFE HAS 'A REALLY NICE LIFE'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Daniel Radcliffe, who has been in a relationship with Erin Darke for a decade, couldn't be happier with how things are going for him personally and professionally.

Radcliffe told People magazine: "I've got a really nice life. I've been with my girlfriend for a decade pretty much. We're really happy."

"I just got to make the Weird Al movie, which is honestly one of the most pleasurable, exciting experiences in my career. I'm doing the last season of 'Miracle Workers' this year and then another Broadway show. So it's a good year, man. I'm really happy with how it's all going so far."

Radcliffe and Erin met on the set of 'Kill Your Darlings' and the actress filmed an episode of the actor's comedy series 'Miracle Workers' last year, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The 'Swiss Army Man' star found it "special" to work with his girlfriend again, though they don't want to film together regularly.

Radcliffe said: "We definitely like (working together), but it's not something we want to do all the time."

"We obviously met on film and so getting to do stuff on 'Miracle Workers' with her last year was incredibly special and felt lovely. Hopefully we'll get to do more in the future, but we also both write, so maybe we'd write something together at some point, and that would be cool."

Radcliffe will next be seen as a billionaire treasure hunter in 'The Lost City' and he admitted the adventure comedy is his girlfriend's "favourite" project of his because she loves his co-star, Sandra Bullock, so much.

The British star loved making the movie but much to the disappointment of his female friends, he didn't get to meet Brad Pitt, who has a cameo in the film.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Organisers are taking precautions to prevent the 2022 Academy Awards from being a super-spreader, as other awards shows and film festivals have proven to be in the pandemic era.

Attendees will have to show two negative PCR tests and be fully vaccinated in order to attend the festivities. On Friday, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences updated its COVID protocols and rules, announcing that people "...who tested positive for Covid and are within a zero to five-day window from the date of their first positive test, are not permitted to attend under any circumstances."

There's a reason that the rules are so stringent, reports 'Variety'.

This year's Academy Awards kicks off as Covid infections are once again on the rise.

On Thursday, public health officials announced that cases of BA.2, the new and highly contagious sub-variant of omicron, climbed 130 per cent in a week, though cases remain low. Adding to the unease is the fact that the BAFTA Awards on March 13 appears to have been a variable Petri dish with studios privately reporting that dozens of executives contracted Covid at the event -- stars such as Kenneth Branagh and Ciaran Hinds and 'The Mitchells vs. the Machines' producers Phil Lord and Christopher Miller, who appeared at the show, also came down with the virus, reports 'Variety'.

Shadow of new Covid variant on Oscar celebrations



CHARLIE'S NEW SINGLE WAS INSPIRED BY 'WORST YEAR' OF HIS LIFE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Charlie Puth says his new single was inspired by the "worst year" of his life and an incredibly difficult breakup.

The 30-year-old pop star announced his new single 'That's Hilarious' and said that he based it on a breakup which happened during a particularly tough 2019, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

He said: "It just rears its ugly head every time-sorry-every time that I hear it. I'm also really excited for you to hear it as well, because I just heard the master, but it just brought me back to 2019, which was the f***** worst year of my life." The 'We Don't Talk Anymore' hit-maker went on to explain that although he had never opened up about it at the time he had gone through the "worst breakup" of his life that year and had initially wanted to forget all about it before using it as inspiration for his music.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Comedienne Amy Schumer has gotten candid about her "big secret." According to aceshowbiz.com, having been struggling with a hair-pulling disorder called trichotillomania, the actress divulged that she will no longer hide her personal struggle because she's tired of carrying "so much shame" for years.

The comedienne, who shared her experience in her semi-autobiographical new show 'Life & Beth', told The Hollywood Reporter that she has had the disorder since she was in grade school.

Once she picked out so much of her hair that she had to wear an ill-fitting wig to school. "And everybody knew," she recalled.

"I think everybody has a big secret, and that's mine," the 40-year-old actress revealed.

"And I'm proud that my big secret only hurts me, but it's been what I've carried so much shame about for so long."

Schumer disclosed that it started when her family was going through a tough time. It was when her father declared bankruptcy and had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. At that time, her mother left him for her best friend's dad.

"And it's

not that I used to have this problem, and now I don't... It's still something that I struggle with," she said, before admitting that she fears her toddler son Gene will have it as well. "Every time he touches his head I'm having a heart attack," she said.

"I really don't want to have a big secret anymore," she further emphasised.

"And I thought putting it in there would be good for me to alleviate some of my shame and maybe, hopefully, help others alleviate some of theirs, too."



Amy Schumer gets candid about hair-pulling disorder

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Maya Henry



IPL 2022: KKR BEAT CSK BY 6 WICKETS IN SEASON OPENER

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former captain MS Dhoni's fighting fifty went in vain as Kolkata Knight Riders registered a comfortable six-wicket win over defending champions Chennai Super Kings in the opening match of the IPL 2022 at the Wankhede Stadium, here on Saturday.

KKR bowlers -- Umesh Yadav (2/20) and Varun Chakaravathy (1/23) bowled well and restricted CSK to 131-5 despite a fighting fifty by former captain MS Dhoni (50 off 38).

Chasing a modest target, openers Ajinkya Rahane and Venkatesh Iyer gave KKR a solid start. Starting with some crisp drives and a stunning pulled six off Adam Milne, Rahane got off the blocks swiftly. He continued in a similar vein and took KKR to 35/0 after five overs along with Venkatesh.

It was Dwayne Bravo, who gave CSK their first breakthrough by getting rid of Venkatesh (16) in the 7th over of the innings. Nitish Rana, who came to bat next, played an important cameo of 21 runs and stitched a



33 runs stand for the second wicket with Rahane before he got out to Bravo. Soon, Rahane, who set the tone in the chase by his fine knock (44) also got out to Mitchell Santner. Thereafter, CSK managed to string together a few tight overs and

brought the equation to around run-a-ball.

Earlier, batting first, CSK were off to a bad start as KKR pacer Umesh removed Ruturaj Gaikwad for a duck in the very first over of the innings. Robin Uthappa and Rayudu took CSK

to 35/2 at the end of the 6th over.

Just when it looked like the stand between Uthappa and Rayudu was building, CSK lost another wicket. CSK tottering at 61-5 after 10.5 overs.

After losing back to back wickets, former skipper MS Dhoni and new captain Jadeja had the big responsibility on their shoulders to bail CSK out of trouble. However, both Dhoni and Jadeja couldn't free their arms under the tremendous pressure as CSK played many consecutive quiet overs. Dhoni showed his class and hit some glorious shots in the last two overs to complete his fifty off 38 overs. In the end, Both Jadeja (26 off 28) and Dhoni remained not out and added 70 runs for the sixth wicket and took Chennai to 131/5 in 20 overs.

Brief scores

Chennai Super Kings -- 131-5 in 20 Overs (MS Dhoni 50 not out, Robin Uthappa 28; Umesh Yadav 2/20) lost to Kolkata Knight Riders - 133-4 in 18.3 overs (Ajinkya Rahane 44, Sam Billings 25; Dwayne Bravo 3/20) by 6 wickets

Women's World Cup:

Must-win match for India against South Africa

Christchurch | Agencies

India will be banking on an all-round show as they face South Africa in their final league match to seal their spot in the semi-finals of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup.

Currently, India are on six points, with three wins and as many losses while South Africa are already into the semi-finals. If they are to go into the semi-finals, India need a win. If they lose to an in-form South Africa side, they will be out of the competition. It has been a rather up-and-down campaign for India in the tournament. In one match, they are a winning side but in the very next game, they end up as the losing team. Sample this: against West Indies, they made 317 and won by 144 runs. In the very next match against defending champions England, they were all out for 134 and lost by four wickets.

In India's batting at the World Cup, losing wickets in clusters has become a regular occurrence. Against Pakistan,



they were 114/6 before Sneha Rana and Pooja Vastrakar saved the day with a 122-run partnership. When facing New Zealand, they were 95/5 and eventually lost by 62 runs. India was 78/3 against the West Indies before Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur slammed centuries. Ideally, India would like for runs to flow from Mithali Raj's bat. The skipper, one of the most experienced players in the side, hasn't been at her best self with the bat, barring the half-century against Australia. Her deputy, Harmanpreet Kaur, has been consistent with the bat and

with Pooja Vastrakar and Sneha Rana, has been leading India's charge with the final ten overs. Their bowling attack, which took a beating against Australia, bounced back strongly against Bangladesh. But India might be tempted to bring in pacer Meghna Singh for leg-spinner Poonam Yadav due to the Hagley Oval's nature of helping the fast bowlers. If there was an occasion where India would like for their batting, bowling and fielding to click in unison, then the do-or-die match against South Africa is the one, especially with a semi-final berth on the line.

World Cup qualifiers

Algeria secure vital victory over Cameroon in Africa

Yaounde (Cameroon) | Agencies

Algeria registered an important 1-0 road victory over Cameroon in the first leg of playoffs in FIFA World Cup African qualifiers on Friday.

Cameroon began the match with determination and showed promising signs in front of home fans at the Japoma stadium in Douala, where Algeria had lost two matches and drawn one in their disappointing Africa Cup of Nations campaign early this year. Algeria put on a masterful display of defensive football, holding the Indomitable Lions at bay, reports Xinhua.

Striker Islam Slimani scored with a brilliant header in the 40th minute to move the Algerians ahead, and the North Africans held on to win the match. Algeria have never beaten Cameroon in any



competitive game since 1984.

Cameroon were playing their first game under new coach and former national captain Rigobert Song, who replaced Toni Conceicao in early March. The two teams will face off again on Tuesday at Mustapha Tchaker Stadium in Blida.

Messi helps Argentina to 3-0 win over Venezuela

Buenos Aires: Lionel Messi scored his 81st international goal as Argentina cruised to a 3-0 home win over Venezuela in their World Cup qualifier here. Nico Gonzalez opened the scoring on Friday in the 35th minute at La Bombonera with a sliding first-time finish on Rodrigo de Paul's cross. Substitute Angel Di Maria made it 2-0 with a superb chipped effort from the edge of the box after spotting goalkeeper Wuilker Farinez off his line. The 34-year-old Paris Saint-Germain forward has now scored 81 times in 159 appearances for his country.



Women's World Cup

New Zealand thrash Pakistan by 71 runs

Christchurch | Agencies

Ascintillating century from opener Suzie Bates followed by a maiden five-wicket haul from Hannah Rowe helped New Zealand thrash Pakistan by 71 runs in their final league match of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup at a packed Hagley Oval on Saturday.

Bates, while registering her 12th ODI century and fourth of the World Cup, also became the fourth women's cricketer overall to reach 5,000 runs in the format as New Zealand made a challenging 265/8 in their 50 overs. In reply, Rowe's career-best figures of 5/55 triggered a collapse of Pakistan's batting order as they slumped from 155/3 to 194/9.

With the win, New Zealand ended their league stage on a high. To have a miraculous chance of qualifying for the semi-finals, they would need South Africa to beat India and Bangladesh to beat England by huge margins and then sneak into the last four on the basis



of net run rate. Meanwhile, Pakistan ended their World Cup campaign at the bottom of the points table with just a win over the West Indies to show.

Brief scores

New Zealand 265/8 in 50 overs (Suzie Bates 126, Katey Martin 30 not out; Nida Dar 3/39) beat Pakistan 194/9 in 50 overs (Nida Dar 50, Bismah Maroof 38; Hannah Rowe 5/55, Frankie Mackay 2/29) by 71 runs

Miami Open Gauff takes revenge on Wang Qiang, Rogers upsets Ostapenko

Miami | Agencies

Coco Gauff of the United States exacted sweet revenge against China's Wang Qiang while another American player, Shelby Rogers stunned Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia in the opening round matches at the Miami Open here.

Gauff and Ostapenko opened their campaigns in Miami on Friday against opponents to whom they had lost this year but came away with contrasting results.

Gauff, no.14 seed here, reversed her Australian Open loss to Wang Qiang to defeat the qualifier 7-5, 6-4, but No.10 seed Ostapenko was stunned by Shelby Rogers 6-3, 7-6(0) for the second tournament in a row.

In other matches on Friday, Second seed Iga Swiatek of Poland remained on course to



become World No 1 as she defeated Swiss Viktorija Golubic 6-2, 6-0; no. 12 seed Victoria Azarenka defeated Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-4, 2-6, 7-6(5) while fifth seed Paula Badosa of Spain got the better of Marie Bouzkova of the Czech Republic 7-5, 7-5.

Czech star Petra Kvitova too advanced to the Round of 32 with a 6-1, 6-3, 6-3 win against Clara Burel of France while Brazil's World No 62 Beatriz Haddad Maia upset No. 4 seed Maria Sakkari of Greece 4-6, 6-

1, 6-2 to reach the second round.

Before this month, Rogers had yet to beat Ostapenko in three meetings, though she had held a match point over the Latvian at Charleston 2019. Rogers claimed her first win in their rivalry 7-5, 7-6(7) in the second round of Indian Wells two weeks ago, and reprised the outcome at the same stage of Miami in 1 hour and 34 minutes. The result was her 22nd career victory against a Top 20 player.

Da Silva leads West Indies fightback in series decider against England

St George's (Grenada) | Agencies

Joshua Da Silva reached a hard-earned half-century to help hosts West Indies take a 28-run lead with two wickets in hand at the end of the second day of the third Test against England.

With Da Silva batting on 54 off 152 balls, with Kumar Roach on 25 at stumps as West Indies reached 232/8 after restricting England to 204 in their first innings on a topsy-turvy second day on Friday. West Indies had looked in serious trouble after losing six wickets for 45 runs on either side of lunch, with Chris Woakes picking up three in an excellent spell. But, just as England had done on day one, the West Indies tail bailed out



Brief scores

England 204 v West Indies 232/8 in 86 overs (Joshua Da Silva 54*, Kumar Roach 25*, John Campbell 35; Chris Woakes 3/48, Craig Overton 2/71, Ben Stokes 2/40).

the recognised batters, as Kyle Mayers (28), Alzarri Joseph (28), Roach and Da Silva eked out every run in the second half of the day to overhaul the tourists' first-innings total. The first day in Grenada had seen England's lower-

order bail the batters out with a fine rearguard effort, and the same scenario unfolded on day two, as Da Silva and Alzarri Joseph picked up where Mayers had left off to inch towards first-innings parity.

WITH BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE, INDIA WILL WIN MORE OLYMPIC MEDALS IN HOCKEY,

Mumbai | Agencies

Cricket legend Kapil Dev, who led India to World Cup triumph in 1983, has emphasized on providing the best infrastructure to sports persons so that they can go on and win medals and titles for the country, saying with the best infrastructure, India will win more Olympic medals in hockey.

"We as a country need to give the infrastructure first," cricket legend Kapil Dev said of the necessity for increased sports facilities in the country. "If we have it, the kids will be free to choose any sport they want. Cricket has reached new heights as a result of enhanced facilities. However, if we do the same thing in other sports, such as having 200 extra astro turfs, India will win more

Olympic medals in hockey than any other country," he said at the ABP Network's inaugural 'Ideas of India' summit at which country's greatest sporting minds shared their thoughts on how India should progress toward being a sporting nation.

The summit, held here on Friday, has brought together some of the best minds from many fields to examine India's 75-year journey, current state, and future plans. ABP Network is India's most popular multilingual news channel, with a viewership of 535 million people.

At the session titled, 'We Are The Champions: Patience, Perseverance, Practice', Kapil Dev said there has been a change in the mentality of promoting sports in the country in the last four



decades.

"The most important thing I'll say is that what I have seen in the last 40 years is that today the parents bring their kids on the ground and say 'make them a player'. In our time, no parents got time to bring their kids to the ground. Today, they come to us and ask whether they can play IPL or if they can they play for India?"

Darshan Singh, Varsha Devi secure maiden National Cross Country victories

Kohima | Agencies

Darshan Singh (Services) and Varsha Devi (Railways) finally kept their tryst with the men's and women's crowns in the National Cross Country Championships by winning their 10km events in the picturesque but tough course, made more challenging by 60 per cent humidity and gusts of wind, here on Saturday.

Having played key roles in their respective team's victories, their joy was enhanced even more as they claimed the South Asian titles as the second SAFF Cross Country Championships was run concurrently. They tasted international success on appearance, having had to miss out on the 2020 competition in Sri Lanka - postponed at first and then moved here.

After the early jostling for the lead, 25-year-old Darshan Singh was bunched in the front with his Services team-mates, Rajendra Nath, Deepak Singh Rawat, Dipak Suhaug, defending champion Parasappa Madevappa Hajjilol and Railways Narendra Pratap Singh even before the runners were midway through the opening loop of 2km. He never lost rhythm or position.



Swiss Open badminton

PV SINDHU, HS PRANNOY REACH SINGLES FINALS

Basel | Agencies

India's two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and compatriot HS Prannoy reached the final of Swiss Open 2022 badminton tournament after winning their respective women's and men's singles semi-finals, here on Saturday.

Sindhu made it to the women's singles final with a hard-fought win over Thailand's Supanida Katethong in the first game. The former world champion beat Katethong 21-18, 15-21, 21-19 in the semi-final contest, which lasted for one hour and 19 minutes at the St Jakobshalle Arena.

The Indian ace, ranked seventh in the badminton



world rankings, faced a strong challenge from the 29th-ranked Supanida Katethong in the first game. But powerful smashes from Sindhu, coupled with some unforced errors from Katethong, helped her take the opener in 21 minutes.

Meanwhile, in the men's singles semis, HS Prannoy registered a win over Tokyo

2020 bronze medallist Anthony Ginting of Indonesia to reach his first BWF World Tour event final since 2017. Prannoy, a Commonwealth Games medallist, took the opening game but went down in the next before winning the final game and, with it, the match. The scoreboard read 21-19, 19-21, 21-18.



RS Secretariat to screen 'Bahubali: The Beginning' on April 1

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid the controversy on the recently released film "The Kashmir Files", the

Rajya Sabha Secretariat Recreation Club has arranged a special screening of the Telugu film "Bahubali: The Beginning", for all members on April 1 at the Films Division Auditorium, here in Mahadev Road.

According to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, the move came after the suggestion from the Hindi Salahkar Samiti of the Upper House to encourage the linguistic exchange among the Hindi speaking and other language-speaking people and the Members have been requested to watch this movie. The subtitles of the film are in English. In a parliamentary party meeting of the BJP held

on March 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked the MPs to watch the newly released film, The Kashmir Files. "The Kashmir Files is a very good movie. All of you should watch it. More such movies should be made," Modi said. "The Kashmir Files" is based on the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from the Kashmir Valley in the 1990s, and endorsing the film, Modi said that there was an effort underway to prevent the truth from being told.

"History has to be presented in the right context. Just as books, poetry and literature play a role in this, films can do so too," he said.

I couldn't feel my body: Sukhmani Sadana

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Actress and writer Sukhmani Sadana recalls shooting in extreme cold weather conditions for the web series. The actress is seen playing Nafisa in the web show. Sukhmani says: "The day I recovered from Covid was the day I had to fly down to Haridwar for my first day of shoot in 'Apharan'. I had an action sequence to do on day 1 falling off from the top of a bridge. I was so weak because of dengue and Covid during the first wave."

'Sacred Games' actress shares further about the challenges: "Everybody on the crew was also very scared that I was going to jump off the bridge though I had a harness and there was an action master, a director. But I realised that it was my true test as an actor because we have to do our job because that's what we are meant to do."

Recalling her experience of shooting one of the most challenging sequences of her career, Sukhmani shares: "We had a really tough time shooting in Belgrade in Serbia. It was freezing, everybody was wearing warm clothes, but I, as Nafisa, had to wear a thin chiffon saree on the top of a building. "I remember I could barely feel my limbs and every time my shot was over, my team would come and rub my hands and feet and get me gel pads that give warmth. They got me blowers and heaters and blankets and shawls to cover me because I literally could not feel my fingers and my feet."



Let faith inspire you: Amala Paul

Team Absolute | Chennai

Actress Amala Paul, who loves to travel, on Saturday chose to share her wisdom on decision-making and life with her followers on Instagram by posting a video clip of her road trip.

Posting a video clip of a drive that she had undertaken with friends to heal herself, the actress wrote, "There are two roads you can take at this point; one that repeats the same cycles you're currently experiencing or one that throws you into a world of new beginnings."

"Whatever you decide, let your intuition guide you and your faith inspire you. You're getting closer to greatness each day."

Amala is known to travel and go on treks to relax. In fact, Amala considers her Himalayan trek to be one of her biggest achievements. In 2016, the actress went on a 110-km trek that happened at a height of 17,000 feet. It was supposed to be a 10-day trek, but she covered the distance in eight days.

Only recently, the actress had recalled her trip to Indonesia's Pink Island by posting pictures on Instagram that she had shot there.



FITNESS MAKES ME FEEL MORE CONFIDENT AND COMFORTABLE AS AN ACTOR: HITANSHU

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Hitanshu Jinsi, who is currently playing the role of Param Singh Gill in the TV show 'Choti Sardarni' feels fitness is important for actors.

He says: "It's not just for the occasional audition where you have to reveal a bit of skin that fitness is important for actors. Being fit and healthy will help in all aspects while pursuing acting. When you're physically fit, you are mentally fit as well. Acting is exhausting. It requires energy and vitality, and they are products of a healthy lifestyle."

Hitanshu has earlier featured in shows like 'Roop Mard Ka Naya Swaroop' and 'Mahakali - Anth Hi Aarambh Hai'.

He adds: "Fitness leads to feel more confident and comfortable in your skin. It's a superficial industry

HITESH BHARADWAJ: I TRY MY BEST TO FULFIL RESPONSIBILITY OF BEING AN ACTOR AND RJ

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Iss Mod Se Jaate Hain' actor Hitesh Bharadwaj talks about his passion for writing poetry and striking a balance between his radio and TV shows. Talking about acting and RJ experience, Hitesh shares: "It does get difficult for me to cope between multiple tasks, but I try my best to complete the responsibility of being an actor and RJ. Since I am one of the leads on the show 'Iss Mod Se Jaate Hain', managing time becomes difficult. It feels like I am the captain of the ship, and my character in the show has a huge responsibility." "In addition, my show on the radio station presents my writing talent. I know I have done multiple commitments and taken responsibilities, but there was

a time when I was completely idle and had nothing to do. But today, I can't express, how happy I am occupied for at least 17-18 hours a day," he says.

He adds: "Life is like a cinema, and you don't know what is going to happen next, but it's just moving forward, and right now I am enjoying both the platforms in my life. I have completely changed my routine for my listeners and viewers. Since I was facing difficulty travelling after long hours of the shoot, I installed the recording setup on-set and started recording from there itself."

"Whenever I get idle time, I do my research work for the show and write poetry. I am grateful to the team of 'Iss Mod Se Jaate Hain' and the radio station for all their cooperation. Without them, it wouldn't have been easy for me to fulfil the responsibilities," he concludes.



Payal Dev: I can recreate but I would love to make my own music

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer Payal Dev shares her opinion on the latest trend of recreating songs in the music industry. The singer is known for some hit numbers such as 'Say yes to the dress', and composed songs like 'Tumse Pyaar Karke', 'Baarish Ban Jana', 'Tum hi Ana' and 'Dil Chahte ho'. She talks about recreating old classic songs that have become a trend. "I can recreate it but I would love to create my own songs!"

Payal adds that she also enjoys recreating the old songs but is more fond of original creations. "Recreations of old classic songs are definitely relieving but the essence of making and singing original songs and reaching out to the heart of my audience is what I wish to work on for," says the singer.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Jiya Roy