

absolute india

VOL. 7, ISSUE 164, BHOPAL | SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2022 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI

NATION > 02

Armed forces will also cross border to take actions...



HOLLYWOOD > 06

Zendaya the fashion darling turns down Met Gala invite AGAIN...



SPORTS > 07

Gujarat Titans defeat Kolkata Knight Riders by eight runs...



'DIVIDED BY DISTANCE, UNITED IN EXPRESSION': WHAT INDIAN CINEMA CAN TEACH THE COUNTRY

In a country like India which has an array of customs, a spectrum of cultures, and a gamut of languages, there is one realm where all this diversity freely interacts and influences each other, and may offer a model of assimilation that the wider polity and society can aspire too.

Being a film industry operating largely in Hindustani and geared majorly towards its speakers but located in a western Indian but cosmopolitan port city, which draws in a large influx of migrants from all over the country, Bollywood obviously can draw in talent from a wider expanse that what its normative catchment area.

Real life inspires reel life, but this is one case where India would be better served with reel life inspiring real life.

Vikas Datta | New Delhi

This is Bollywood, whose contribution to the idea of India, based on unity in diversity, has not received due emphasis, possibly since it is primarily seen as a medium of entertainment. This 'idea' is, by no means, perfect - sometimes descending to stereotypes in some of its depictions, but still has seen more widespread - and voluntary - integration and creation of a composite sense of nationhood than any other endeavour.

Be it actors and the others that make up a success of a film - the music composer, the playback singers, the choreographers and the fight directors, as well as themes, Bollywood has rarely seen a regional divide - north-south, or east-west, for that matter. It has, however, long been oblivious of the northeast - but that is a failing of a large swathe of Indian popular culture too.

And Southern India has been quick on



the mark here - especially as far as Bollywood leading ladies are concerned.

While Hema Malini and Rekha are the oft-quoted examples, before Sreedevi, Meenakshi Seshadri and Jaya Prada and Vidya Balan, in recent times, it was Padmini Ramchandran, or Padmini, as she was known, who filled the void left by

the exit from Nargis from Raj Kapoor's life and banner, in 'Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai' (1961) and then in 'Mera Naam Joker' (1970). In 'Sangam' (1964), which came between these, Vyjanthimala did the honours.

And then there was Waheeda Rehman, who hailed from a Tamil Muslim family,

not from Hyderabad as commonly thought, and then Tabassum Hashmi or 'Tabu', who is from Hyderabad.

However, south Indian male actors - Kamal Haasan, Rajinikanth, Nagarjuna, Chiranjeevi, mainly, did appear in many Bollywood hits, but never matched their female counterparts. M.B. Shetty, or

Shetty, had a more long career as a stunt director off screen and well-recognised bad man on screen.

Music composers/playback singers are too well known - K.J. Yesudas, A.R. Rehman, Shankar Mahadevan, Hariharan, Chittra, S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, but one who's background is that not that known was Shankar, of the Shankar-Jaikishan duo. Though of north Indian descent, he grew up in Hyderabad and was fluent in Telugu. There is an anecdote when the duo was composing the music for one song of one of Raj Kapoor's most famous films, Shankar kept repeating a Telugu phrase while fine-tuning the melody and lyricist Hasrat Jaipuri hit on it to frame the 'mukhda' - we know the song as 'Ramaiyya Vastavaiya' from 'Shree 420' (1955). And then, the inspirations. The phenomenon of hit Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam films being remade in Hindi is not that recent as the current generation thinks.

CJI bats for the Indianisation of Judicial system



- One of the issue of Indianisation of the judicial system is the language used in the court.
- The common citizen cannot relate to the practices, procedures of our courts. Efforts should be to make the general population an active part of the justice delivery process. The people should understand the ongoing process and development of the case.

Team Absolute | Chennai

The Indian justice delivery system should be Indianised for the benefit of the country's population, said Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Saturday.

Speaking at the foundation stone laying function at the Madras High Court here, Ramana stated that Indian people look up to the judiciary in times of distress with a firm belief that their rights will be protected by the courts.

Ramana said it is necessary to contemplate on how to improve the functioning of the judiciary and reach out to the people to fulfill their judicial needs.

According to him, Indianisation of the justice delivery system is a moulding of the judicial system for the benefit of Indian people and is a multi-dimensional concept.

He said a Judicial Infrastructure Authority both at the national and state level should be set up to implement a National Court Development Project.

On the demand for use of regional language in the High Courts as provided in the

"People should relate and understand the practices, procedures of the courts, the development of the case and efforts should be made towards that. It should not be like chanting of mantras in a wedding which most of us do not understand."

Constitution, Ramana said it has been debated several times.

The practice of law before constitutional courts should be based on one's intelligence and understanding of law and not mere proficiency in language. It is time some decisions are taken on these issues after assessment of pros and cons.

NASA'S CHANDRA TELESCOPE FINDS LOCATION OF MEDIUM-SIZED BLACK HOLES

New York: Intermediate-mass black holes are notoriously hard to find but a new study indicates there may be some at the centre of dense star clusters located throughout the universe. For decades, astronomers have detected smaller black holes equal in mass either to a few suns or giant black holes with mass similar to millions of suns but the missing-link of black holes in between those sizes have eluded discovery. The existence of these intermediate-sized or massive black holes has long been theorised but finding them has proven difficult as the light emitted by objects falling into them is not easy to detect.



To address this challenge, the research team at the Washington State University in the US, used the Chandra X-Ray Observatory - the world's most powerful X-ray telescope - to look for X-ray signatures of black holes in nuclear star clusters in 108 different galaxies. Nuclear star clusters are found at the centre of most small or low-mass galaxies and are the densest known stellar environments. Previous research has identified the presence of black holes in nuclear star clusters but little is known about the specific properties that make these regions conducive for the formation of black holes. The study provides the first observational evidence supporting the theory that intermediate-sized black holes can form in nuclear star clusters. The findings not only suggest that intermediate-sized black holes can form in nuclear star clusters but also provides a mechanism by which they could potentially form throughout cosmic time rather than just during the first few billion years of the universe.

India becomes global investment hub for digital shopping

India's e-commerce market is likely to surpass \$120 billion in transactional value, a study by FIS, an American financial technology company, forecasts.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With the backing of global investors for e-commerce companies, India has become the second-largest global venture capital investment hub for digital shopping companies in 2021 after the US.

The Indian e-commerce segment registered a whopping growth rate of 175 per cent and reached \$22 billion from \$8 billion in 2020.

The reason for this kind of investment may be attributed to increasing demand for online purchases during a series of lockdowns across the world during the Covid-19 pandemic. Within India, Bengaluru was on top globally with \$14 billion worth of Venture Capital (VC) investments in digital shopping in 2021, followed by Gurugram at No. 7 with \$4 billion and Mumbai at No. 10 with \$3 billion. The data also shows that Bengaluru ranked number



five among cities with the potential for future unicorns, just behind London.

London is the leading European hub for digital shopping investment, with a record \$5 billion raised by digital shopping companies based in the capital in 2021.

Riding on the global sentiment, Indian consumers are relying more on mobile commerce than desktop e-commerce. Globally, the transaction value from mobile devices accounted for 52 per cent of all e-commerce

spending in 2021.

In India, consumers preferred to use digital wallets 45 per cent of the time, over debit, credit and charge cards for e-commerce payments, a trend common in Asia Pacific countries including China, Indonesia and the Philippines. While cash is still the leading in-store payment method in 2021, responsible for 37.1 per cent of transaction value. India's POS market is expected to grow by 28.8 per cent to \$1.08 trillion between 2021 and 2025.

AFTER WIMBLEDON, ITALIAN OPEN WEIGHING OPTION TO BAN RUSSIAN TENNIS PLAYERS

Rome: The Italian Open this year from May 2-15 could follow into the footsteps of the All England Club to ban Russian and Belarusian players from competing in Rome. It is currently weighing its options, a report in rt.com said on Saturday.



The Italian Open, an ATP Tour Masters 1000 event played on outdoor clay courts at the Foro Italico, is one of the biggest tennis tournaments in the world frequented by top players. But the report said that Italian authorities "are reportedly weighing up whether a ban should be imposed on Russian players" at the tournament.

Russian and Belarusian players will not be allowed to compete at Wimbledon 2022 because of the invasion of Ukraine, the organisers had confirmed in a statement recently. With this decision, men's world No. 2 Daniil Medvedev of Russia and women's world No. 4 Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus become the highest-ranked players to be affected.

On Saturday the report quoting Corriere della Sera in Italy, said that the local government "is considering whether it should follow the All England Club's lead and ban Russian stars from featuring at the Italian Open in Rome too". The Italian newspaper said that Prime Minister Mario Draghi had made up his mind on the issue but is wary of the repercussions and backlash the Italian Tennis Federation might face from the ATP and WTA if the sanctions are imposed.

West Bengal Folk singer on mission to get back students to school

"I repeatedly say 'shikhhai jahir merudanda' (education is the spine of the nation) through my songs," says kobiyaal, or folk singer, Ganesh Bhattacharya, on his unique way of encouraging students of rural West Bengal, who dropped out of school during the pandemic, to return to classes after their two-year gap.

"Village folk don't understand formal languages, but they respond well to rural dialects and folklore. Since they also believe in mythological figures, I use a mythological theme in my songs that's common in kobigaan. Through my poems, I convey how Kalidas was first insulted for not being educated but went on to gain knowledge," adds Bhattacharya, who has spent the last three decades trying to revive kobigaan, which can be traced back to the 17th Century.

Sreeja Ghosh | West Bengal

Kobigaan is a form of Bengali folk art that includes performances of songs and verbal duels among poets. It flourished during the 18th and 19th centuries, after which its popularity dwindled. Bhattacharya now uses its special connect with the rural population to raise awareness about social issues and highlight the importance of education among rural folk, in West Bengal's Bankura district. The easy-to-follow poetry set to a rhythm makes it more appealing to his audiences, he said.



Kushnath Kundu, headmaster of Sree Chandanpur Prathamik Vidyalaya, a pre-primary school in Gangajalghati, Bankura, told reporters: "After the Covid-19 pandemic struck, many students from poor families became reluctant to attend school. A lot of parents also sent their children to work as labourers in nearby towns. We then decided to ask Ganesh Bhattacharya to raise awareness and encourage children to attend school once again, through his kobigaan. I believe it's one of the easiest ways to communicate the value of education to rural people."

The devoted kobiyaal was happy to oblige: "I strongly believe my kobigaan will instil the importance of education

in students and their parents. So when Kushnath Kundu and other teachers requested me to perform, I agreed to the task without taking a single penny for such a good deed." Many found this tactic of encouraging students and parents in Gangajalghati quite unique and followed suit. Does kobigaan really raise awareness about the need for education? In a nutshell, yes. While schools appear to be receptive to this form of interaction, they were unable to share more information on the impact of Bhattacharya's kobigaan initiative.

Moreover, the overall sentiment was one that called for the need to improve students' attendance further. The kobigaan effect: more girls at school. On the impact of kobigaan on promoting education, headmaster Kundu said there's been a mixed response from parents, as many of them are more eager to send their children to work rather than school. The government supports kobigaan through different awareness programmes like science fairs and Bishwa Bongo Sahitya O Sanskriti Mela but has allotted a nominal stipend of Rs 1000 for performers of this folk art. While there are many kobiyaal who continue to perform, Bhattacharya claims he's the only one of them putting in the effort to revive its glory.

ODISHA POLICE ORGANISES MARRIAGE OF TWO SURRENDERED MAOISTS

Bhubaneswar: In a heart-warming gesture, the Odisha police conducted the marriage ceremony of two surrendered Maoists in Kalahandi district. The marriage was solemnised in a temple at the Reserve Police Ground in Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district on Friday in the presence of Pandit Rajesh Uttamrao, D.I.G of police (south-west range) Koraput, Saravana Vivek M, SP Kalahandi and Biblab Sarkar, Commandant CRPF 64th Battalion. The marriage was solemnised with full fanfare and a feast was also organised by the police in the temple premises in which the family members of the bride and the bridegroom participated along with the police and mediapersons. According to the police, groom Ramdas, a native of Chhattisgarh state, surrendered before the Kalahandi police in 2020 while bride Kalamdei is originally from Kalahandi and surrendered in 2016.



ARMED FORCES WILL ALSO CROSS BORDER TO TAKE ACTIONS AGAINST TERRORS INIMICAL TO INDIA: RAJNATH SINGH

GUWAHATI | Agencies

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said that if needed, Indian armed forces would go across the border to take actions against the terrorists who are inimical to India.

Speaking at the 'Felicitation Ceremony' of 1971 war veterans in Guwahati, the Defence Minister stated that this is the firm decision of the government that Indian armed forces would go across the border to take appropriate actions against the terrorists who are active against the country.

Referring to the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act, 1958 (AFSPA), he said that the act was recently lifted from 23 districts in Assam and from 15 Police stations each in Manipur and Nagaland as the situations were improved in these areas.

"Our Army also does not want to keep the AFSPA in Jammu and Kashmir. Army is not responsible, but the situation forced the promulgation of the act in Jammu and Kashmir. Whenever the situations improve, the AFSPA would be withdrawn from Jammu and Kashmir," the Defence Minister said. He said that the Army is not for maintaining the internal security of the country, this is the responsibility of other security forces and the



state police. "If the Army can be withdrawn from internal security, they would more effectively deal with the country's external security at the frontiers. The Indian Army's strength,

dedication and spirit are incredible. Due to the dedication and courage of 15 lakh strong Indian armed force personnel, the head of 'Bharat Mata' would never be low down," Singh said.

This is a very proud feeling for the country that currently there are 38,000 to 40,000 retired Army veterans in the northeast region, he added. Singh said that as part of the government's mission to make India an 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' in defence equipment, the export of defence equipment increased by 334 per cent during the past few years.

"By 2025, Indian defence exports would cross Rs 35,000 crore. India is now among the 25 countries in making and exporting defence equipment," he said. Assam Governor Prof. Jagdish Mukhi, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, High Commissioner of India in Bangladesh Vikram Doraiswami, Bangladesh's Lt Col Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir (Retd.) among others were present in the event, held at Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra in Guwahati.

Lt Col Zahir (Retd.), who played a key role in the 1971 Bangladesh's war of Liberation, was awarded with the Padma Shri in the social work category by the Indian government last year.

AMIT SHAH'S MOVES TO DECIDE FUTURE OF BJP-JD(U) RELATIONS IN BIHAR

Patna: A day after Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar attended an Iftar party at RJD leader Rabri Devi's residence, all eyes are on Union Home Minister Amit Shah who is slated to arrive in the state shortly, as his moves will decide the future of the BJP-JD(U) relations, the key constituents of the ruling NDA in Bihar.



Shah is visiting Bihar to participate in a programme organised to remember freedom fighter Babu Veer Kunwar Singh in Bhojpur's Jagdishpur.

According to sources in the JD(U), if Amit Shah talks about any controversial issues like "Uniform Civil Code" during the rally in Bhojpur's Jagdishpur or in Sasaram, it might irk Nitish Kumar.

Kumar, the JD(U) chief, has already clarified his stand on Azan, Hanuman, loud speaker and bulldozer politics. Under his governance in Bihar, not a single incident of communal aggression has appeared despite such incidents being reported from Jahangirpuri in Delhi and in BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh. Kumar is not pleased with the "bulldozer politics" of the BJP. Amit Shah, on the other hand, reportedly hinted in Bhopal on Friday that the Narendra Modi government may press for the implementation of uniform civil code in the country. BJP has already addressed controversial issues like Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, Triple Talaq, Article 370, CAA etc. The uniform civil code was in the manifesto of BJP in 2019 parliamentary election and Shah is likely to bring it out in the public domain in Bihar.

The uniform civil code is a proposal in India to formulate and implement personal laws of citizens which apply on all citizens equally regardless of their religion, sex, gender and sexual orientation. Currently, personal law of various communities are governed by their religious scriptures. For example, Muslim community follows the laws of Sharia. Implementation of a uniform civil code across the nation is one of the contentious promises of BJP.

RJD EXPECTS 'KHELA HOBE' IN BIHAR

Patna: A day after Chief Minister Nitish Kumar visited RJD leader Rabri Devi's residence for an Iftar party, the latter's son Tej Pratap Yadav claimed that a secret discussion took place regarding the formation of government in Bihar.

"We had a secret discussion with Nitish ji to form a government in Bihar," he said. Yadav admitted having posted a message that read "No Entry for Nitish Ji" in 2017 when he parted ways with the Mahagathabandhan. "Recently, I posted 'Entry Nitish Chacha (Uncle)' and now he has come on our invitation for the Iftar party on Friday evening. I am sure 'Khela Hobe' in Bihar and we will form the government. Tejashwi Yadav had uploaded a post on social media thanking Nitish Kumar for accepting the invitation and joining them for the Iftar party.

KEJRIWAL SENSES EARLY POLLS IN HIMACHAL, GUJARAT

Dharamsala: Sensing early assembly polls, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday said the BJP will hold early elections in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat, adding if voted to power, his party would implement the Delhi model of governance in Himachal Pradesh.



"I have heard that they (BJP) will hold early Assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat," said Kejriwal, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener, at a rally in Kangra town near Dharamsala. "The BJP is scared of the Aam Aadmi Party in Himachal and Gujarat. Actually, they are scared of the public, not the AAP. The BJP has decided to hold early elections in Himachal and Gujarat. It does not matter whenever BJP conducts elections, a power should come in the hands of common man," he said. In both the states, the elections are due by year-end.

3-YEAR-OLD RAPED, KILLED AND THROWN INTO WELL IN RAJASTHAN

JAIPUR | Agencies

In a horrific incident, a three-year-old girl, who along with her mother came to attend a marriage function at a village in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan, was allegedly raped and killed by a youth who also came to attend the wedding.

The incident was reported from a village under the Bassi police station in Chittorgarh district on Friday.

The police have arrested the accused after registering a case of rape and murder.

According to the information received, two daughters in a family were getting married in the village. When everybody was busy with the marriage rit-



uals, the accused first picked up a four-year-old boy and took him near a well around a kilometre from the wedding venue. As he started molesting the kid, the child cried loudly which scared the accused who then left the child back at the venue.

After that, he picked up the three-year-old girl and took her near the same well. After raping the minor, he reportedly strangled her to death and threw her body into the well.

Thereafter, he went back to the marriage function where he

even danced before returning to his village with the wedding procession.

When the girl was not found till late evening, the relatives and villagers informed the police. During police interrogation, it was found that the girl was last seen with Rameshwar Dhakad, a resident of Kishanpura in Bhilwara.

At first, Dhakad kept misleading the police, but when the cops pressed hard, he confessed to the crime.

Meanwhile, the local villagers, including BJP MLA Chandrabhan Singh, have accused the police and the administration of dereliction of duty, besides demanding death penalty for the guilty youth.

Woman asked to remove Hijab in school, TN Police commence probe

CHENNAI | Agencies

The Selayur police in Chennai have commenced a probe following a complaint by a person that his wife was asked to remove her hijab when they had gone to a school to seek a seat for their four-year-old son.

Ashiq Meeran of Tambaram, in his complaint, said that he and his wife had gone to a private school in East Tambaram for getting their son admitted to the LKG class. He said that an employee of the school asked his wife to remove her hijab stating that the school does not allow wearing hijab on its premises.

The couple then went to the principal and complained about the



incident. Station House officer of Selayur police station told reporter that according to the complainant and his wife, the principal was supportive of the stand taken by the

employee and told the couple that the school does not permit women wearing hijab within its premises.

Meeran and his wife came out of the school and along with other family members and relatives lodged a complaint with the Selayur police.

A police officer said that they will be meeting the school principal and elicit a response regarding the complaint and also will speak to other teachers and staff members of the school.

Tamil Nadu was free of hijab row even as neighbouring Karnataka was reeling under the issue and the action of the school authorities has upset the state government and political parties.

MAN KILLS WIFE IN DELHI OVER PETTY ISSUE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A 32-year-old woman was brutally thrashed, punched and face smashed on the floor by her husband, resulting in her death, an official said here on Saturday.

The police have arrested the accused husband, identified as Janmjai Singh, a native of Jharkhand.

Furnishing details, Deputy Commissioner of Police (outer north district), Brijendra Kumar Yadav, said a call was received at the Alipur police station on the intervening night of April 21-22 regarding the murder of a woman. When the police reached the spot, they found that the said woman had been shifted to the Babu Jagjeevan Ram Hospital. The hospital authorities informed the police that the woman, identified as Gudiya Devi, was brought dead and was shifted to the hospital mortuary. During investigation, it was revealed that the couple



had reached Budhpur to take their daughter, who had come to Delhi 15 days back, to their home in Ambala, Haryana. "An argument ensued between the couple over returning to Ambala either on the same day or the next day. The man wanted to return on the same day but his wife insisted on spending the night in Delhi," the official said. The argument soon turned violent and in a fit of rage, the husband repeatedly smashed her wife's face to the floor, resulting in her death."

MUMBAI: BJP'S EX-MP KIRIT SOMAIYA HURT IN ATTACK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Suspected Shiv Sena activists attacked former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Kirit Somaiya's vehicle here late on Saturday following which he was hurt.

The incident happened shortly before midnight when Somaiya had come to meet the arrested couple, Navneet Rana and her husband Ravi Rana. The Mumbai Police on Saturday evening arrested Independent Amravati MP Navneet Rana and her husband Badnera MLA Ravi Rana, soon after they suo-moto dropped their plans to storm Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's residence.

BJP bigwigs including Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis, Ashish Shelar and other strongly condemned



the attack and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits involved in the attack.

Somaiya, who is accorded Z security, was seen in his vehicle with blood on his jaw and the glass panes of his car shattered in the attack.

Fadnis said that Somaiya had expressed apprehension to the Khar Police that a large mob was waiting outside and could attack him, and requested them to clear them. However, the police did not heed his warnings and allowed the attacks to take place despite prohibitory orders clamped in the vicinity. He said he would write and speak to the Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil demanding stringent action against the perpetrators, and warned the Maha Vikas Aghadi government of consequences.

ACB sleuths catch ex-Alwar DC red-handed while accepting Rs 5L bribe

JAIPUR | Agencies

The sleuths of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Saturday caught the former District Collector of Alwar, Nannumal Pahadia, red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 5 lakh along with a Rajasthan Administrative Service (RAS) officer, Ashok Sankhla, and a broker named Nitin Sharma.

Pahadia was relieved from the post of District Collector three days back and was posted as the Commissioner of Divisional Inquiry.

ACB DG B.L. Soni said that their team acted on a complaint lodged a few days back wherein the complainant alleged that a bribe of Rs 16



lakh has been demanded to ensure construction work is being done regularly. The ACB formed a team under ADG Dinesh M.N. When the complainant reached Ashok Sankhla with the money and gave it

to him, Sankhla asked broker Nitin Sharma to take the funds to Pahadia.

Sharma was going to hand over the money to Pahadia when the ACB sleuths caught him and arrested Paharia from the collector's residence.

Pahadia is the same person who had recently lambasted innocent girls who came to him urging strict action against an accused after a deaf and mute girl was raped in Alwar. Pahadia asked each girl to submit their father's phone numbers so that they could be contacted to complain that their daughters are more into politics than studying. The video of the incident had gone viral on social media, drawing angry

MEGHALAYA RECEIVES 'LARGE EXCESS' RAINFALL AS NEIGHBOURS TRIPURA, MIZORAM DEFICIENT

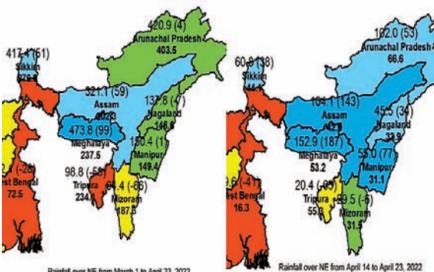
Nivedita Khandekar | New Delhi

Even when the entire northeast India has been experiencing heavy to very heavy rainfall for the last few days, the spatial variability due to various reasons has meant that Meghalaya has received 'large excess' rainfall while Tripura has received 'deficient' and Mizoram 'large deficient' rainfall since March 1 till Saturday.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) data has shown that for the period between March 1 and April 23, the quantum of rainfall received by Meghalaya is 473.8 mm, which is 99 per cent more than the normal rainfall 237.5 mm for this duration; Tripura received 98.8 mm rainfall, minus 58 per cent of 234.1 mm normal for the duration and Mizoram received 64.4 mm rainfall, minus 66 per cent of 187.3 mm normal for the duration.

In IMD parlance, 60 per cent or more rainfall is termed as large excess; 20 per cent to 59 per cent is excess; rainfall that is between minus 19 per cent to plus 19 per cent is normal; minus 20 per cent to minus 59 per cent is deficient while minus 60 till minus 99 is termed as large deficient.

Other states in the northeast received normal or excess rainfall. For the same duration of March 1-April 23, Manipur



received 150.4 mm (against the normal of 149.4 mm); Nagaland received 137.8 (against the normal of 148.6 mm) and Arunachal Pradesh received 420.9 mm (against 403.5 mm normal) while two states, Sikkim with 417.4 mm against 276.0 mm normal (51 per cent more) and Assam with 321.1 mm against 202.3 mm normal (59 per cent more) received excess rainfall.

Explaining the phenomenon, senior scientist from IMD, K.S. Hosalkar, said the orography of the region and wind direction played a major role. "The windward orography of Meghalaya and the hilly terrain further north is a major factor. Plus, this time round, the wind direction is from south-west to northeast direction. Therefore, there was more rain in the northern part of the NE region while Tripura and Mizoram in the southern parts remained dry."

Hosalkar also pointed out the lack of favourable low pressure system in the northern Bay of Bengal in this season for the missing heavy rainfall over Tripura and Mizoram.

Incidentally, Mizoram has recovered lost ground this week and showed normal rainfall while Tripura went from deficient to large deficient. For the duration between April 14-20, Tripura received 20.4 mm rainfall against the normal of 55.3 mm normal (minus 63 per cent) while Mizoram received 29.5 mm rainfall against the normal of 31.5 mm (minus six per cent). The IMD has further predicted widespread rainfall and thunderstorms over the region for next few days under the influence of strong southwesterly winds from Bay of Bengal to northeastern states at lower tropospheric levels.

2 JeM terrorists killed in J&K's Kulgam

SRINAGAR | Agencies

Two terrorists killed in an ongoing encounter between terrorists and security forces at Mirhama area in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district on Saturday belonged to terrorist outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), officials said.

Police said based on specific input generated by Kulgam police regarding presence of terrorists in Mirhama area of Kulgam, a joint cordon and search operation was launched by Kulgam Police and Army.

During the search operation, as the search party proceeded towards the suspect-



spot, the hiding terrorists fired indiscriminately upon the search party which was retaliated effectively leading to an encounter. Incriminating materials, arms and ammunition were recovered from the site of encounter. All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation.



Mahatma Gandhi

BA.2 VARIANT FOUND IN BENGALURU, EXPERTS WARN OF FOURTH WAVE

ALARMING BELL

BENGALURU | Agencies

Karnataka Health Department has stepped up measures to tackle the emerging situation in the state in the backdrop of detection of two cases of Omicron sub-variant BA.2, which is more transmissible than the original strain, in Bengaluru.

A decision has been taken to increase the number of tests in the state, especially in Bengaluru.

The authorities are worried that higher number of Covid cases are being reported from Mahadevapura and East Zones in Bengaluru where most major IT companies are located with lakhs of software professionals at work.

C.N. Manjunath, director of Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular



MODI TO CHAIR MEETING WITH CMS ON COVID SITUATION

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to hold a meeting with chief ministers on the current Covid situation of the country on April 27, officials said on Saturday. India has seen a steady rise in the Covid-19 cases and the positivity rate in the last few weeks. India on Saturday morning reported rise at 2,527 Covid cases in last 24 hours, against 2,451 cases recorded on previous day. In the same period, the nation has also recorded 33 Covid deaths, said the Health Ministry.

stated. "There are no restrictions in place in the state now and all activities

IIT MADRAS TURNS COVID-19 CLUSTER WITH 55 TESTING POSITIVE

Chennai: With 25 more testing positive, the total number of persons infected with Coronavirus in the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IITM) has gone up to 55, said Tamil Nadu Health Secretary J.Radhakrishnan. According to him, the tests are being conducted in the 19 hostels in IITM complex. The infection rate is higher in a hostel that has students from other states. Out of 1,420 persons, 55 have tested positive.

have resumed just like in the pre-Covid period. This is going to result in a spike in Covid cases in another two weeks. People need to be cautious," he warned.

Those with comorbidities need to be cautious, while wearing masks should again be made mandatory, Manjunath said. He also advised people not to neglect symptoms of fever, cough and cold and get tested at the earliest.

Earlier, Karnataka Health Minister K. Sudhakar had said that some studies have shown that the fourth wave of Covid-19 may start in June-July and last till September, and the state is prepared to face it.

No Mass Leader

Prashant Kishor flags biggest worry: Senior Congress decision makers are all nominated, barely fight polls

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In his presentation to the Congress top brass, electoral strategist Prashant Kishor flagged that the biggest worry is that members of decision-making bodies in the party are all nominated, not necessarily connected at the grassroots and barely fight elections.

For the 2024 general elections, Kishor has suggested a "pan-India avant-garde campaign to reach, connect and mobilise all of India for a mega movement leading to reincarnation of Congress and election of a transformational government".

To win, 45 per cent of votes are required which means a target of 30 crore, Kishor has said.

Within the country's digital consciousness, the BJP and its leaders currently score vastly above the Congress, he pointed out.

With a theme of "India Deserves Better", Kishor has suggested to the Congress to build a unified platform to provide strategic support and resources to non-political influencers and mount a sustained campaign against the ruling dispensation.

In his presentation, Kishor said his "Reincarnation of Congress" is about "preserving the soul, creating a new

body". The inspiration of the campaign is the symbols of Nataraja namely Creation, Protection, Liberation, Destruction, Concealment and Connect.

The resolves include the creation of a new Congress which will be a political platform of choice for the masses.

Destroy a sense of entitlement, lack of accountability and sycophancy, Kishor said in the presentation.

It notes that perhaps for the first time, Congress leadership does not appear fully aligned in terms of goals, strategy, method, approach, tactics and the way forward; leading to a complete lack of cohesion, at times confusion and stalemate.

There is a need for a non-Gandhi Working President/Vice President who can effectively work on the ground as per direction of Congress leadership, it suggests.

It advocates a Congress Plus alliance structure with a national character but having 5-6 partners.



Reliance calls off Rs 24,371 crore Future Retail deal

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has called off the deal with Future Retail Ltd (FRL) after FRLs secured creditors voted against the scheme.

In a filing with the stock exchanges, RIL said, "The Future Group companies comprising Future Retail Limited (FRL) and other listed companies involved in the scheme have intimated the results of the voting on the scheme of arrangement by their shareholders and creditors at their respective meetings.

"As per these results, the shareholders and unsecured creditors of FRL have voted in favour of the scheme. But the secured creditors of FRL have voted against the scheme. In view thereof, the subject scheme of arrangement cannot be implemented."

The scheme of arrangement was for



the transfer of retail and wholesale business and the logistics and warehousing business of Future Group to Reliance Retail Ventures Limited (RRVL), a subsidiary of the company, and Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Limited (RRFL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of RRVL, for Rs 24,371 crore.

The deal was opposed by Amazon and intense legal battles have been waged ever since the deal was announced.

MY RESIGNATION LETTER IS PERMANENTLY WITH SONIA: GEHLOT

Jaipur: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Saturday asked one and all to avoid lending rumours to the leadership change in Rajasthan, and said such rumours affect governance leaving people confused.

Addressing the conference of Revenue Service Council in Jaipur on Saturday, Gehlot said: "Rumours keep going on. You don't have to pay attention to them. Rumors say that the government is changing, the chief minister will change. But I am a person, who has been assigned as CM thrice by Sonia Gandhi. When I became the Chief Minister in 1998, I have authorized her since that time. My resignation (letter) is permanently with her (Sonia Gandhi)." His statement is believed to be a response to the discussions after Pilot met Sonia Gandhi.



Comments over distribution of 'Right wing' newspaper in train put Railways in a fix

BENGALURU | Agencies

Indian Railways has found itself in a spot over its comments on the distribution of a Right wing newspaper -- 'The Aryavarth Express' -- in the Bengaluru-Chennai Shatabdi Express on Friday.

The passengers boarding from Bengaluru were surprised to find copies of Aryavarth Express in the train which contained controversial articles, prompting the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) to issue a warning to the onboard services licensee later.

The Indian Railways authorities were first slammed by Left activists for the distribution of Aryavarth Express copies in the train.

The authorities then assured that the vendor has



been advised to avoid such incidents in the future. They also assured that the staff will keep a strict vigil to avoid distribution of such newspapers as inserts.

The clarification from the IRCTC has angered Right wing activists, who questioned the move saying anything related to the interests of Hindus would meet the same fate and whoever spoke

in favour of Hindus would be penalised. The IRCTC then deleted its tweets giving clarification.

The issue started with the distribution of Aryavarth Express along with the officially permitted newspaper in the train to the passengers.

The newspaper carried a lead article that read 'Genocide of Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists under Islamic

rule needs to be recognised'. The other news items in the newspaper also spoke about the plight of Hindus.

One of the passengers, Gopika Bashi, a gender justice campaigner, took objection to the distribution of Aryavarth Express in the train.

She slammed the IRCTC on its twitter handle and questioned how a 'blatantly propagandist' newspaper be distributed by it.

Soon Bashi was joined by others who questioned the distribution of a Right wing newspaper in the train. The IRCTC, on its part, clarified that it was distributed as an insert along with the approved daily.

The Railway Ministry has clarified that its tweet was only regarding distribution of newspapers, and had nothing to do with the content.

Centre issues strong advisory against channels broadcasting offensive, misleading content

The government, therefore expressed serious concern about the manner in which the television channels have gone about their operations in the matter of transmitting content and strongly advised them "to immediately refrain from publishing and transmitting any content which is violative of the aforementioned provisions of The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the rules there under".

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In view of the Jahangirpuri violence and the Ukraine war related coverage, the Centre on Saturday issued a strong advisory warning news organisations to refrain from publishing and transmitting any offensive, misleading or critical content which is violative of the relevant regulatory Act.

Drawing attention to reporting on Russia-Ukraine conflict, certain incidents in North-West Delhi and of certain news debates, the advisory issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting said: "It has been found that in the recent past several satellite TV channels have carried out coverage of events and incidents in a manner which appears to be unauthentic, misleading, sensational and using socially unacceptable language and remarks, offending good taste and decency, and obscene and defamatory and having communal overtones, all of which appear to be violative of the Programme



Code and infringement of the provisions of sub-section (2) of Section 20 of The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995." In connection with the reporting on the Russia-Ukraine war, the government said it has been observed that channels have been making false claims and frequently misquoting inter-

national agencies/actors; used "scandalous headlines/taglines" that are completely unrelated to the news item; and many of the journalists and news anchors of these channels made fabricated and hyperbolic statements intending to incite the audiences. Similarly on the Jahangirpuri commu-

nal clashes, the advisory pointed out that the coverage by the TV channels had provocative headlines and videos of violence that may incite communal hatred among the communities and disrupt peace and law and order; disrupting the ongoing investigation process by playing scandalous and unverified CCTV footages; showing footages of a specific community, thus aggravating the communal tensions and fabricated headlines, sensationalizing and giving communal colours to the actions of the authority. The Ministry also said that it was also observed that in the news, some of channels broadcast debates having unparliamentary, provocative and socially unacceptable language, communal remarks and derogatory references which may have a negative psychological impact on viewers and may also incite communal disharmony and disturb the peace at large. In all three instances, the advisory offered some of the exemplars of the content carried by the television channels.

ANDHRA MAN KILLED, 3 INJURED AS BATTERY OF E-SCOOTER EXPLODES

Vijayawada | Agencies

In yet another incident, a man was killed and three others were injured when the battery of an electric two-wheeler exploded in their house in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday.

The incident occurred in Vijayawada early Saturday when the man had kept the battery on charging in the bedroom.

Shiva Kumar, his wife and their two children sustained burn injuries. Hearing their screams, neighbours rushed to their rescue and shifted them to a hospital, where Shiva Kumar succumbed while his wife is stated to be in critical condition.

The man had reportedly purchased the electric scooter on Friday. Name of the manufacturer and other details are awaited.

This is the second incident in the Telugu states in less than a week.

An 80-year-old man was killed and two others were injured in Telangana's Nizamabad district on April 19 when the battery of electric two-wheeler exploded.

The incident occurred in a house where the the battery was being

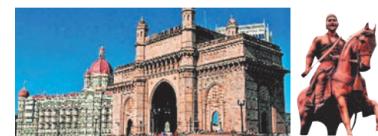


charged. B. Ramaswamy died in the incident while his son B. Prakash and daughter Kamalamma suffered burn injuries when they tried to rescue him. They were admitted to a hospital.

Police registered a case under Indian Penal Code Section 304A (causing death due to negligence) against Pure EV and took up investigation. Pure EV issued a statement deeply regretting the incident and stating that it is cooperating with local authorities and seeking details from the user.

A series of such incidents in the country have created concern over the safety of batteries.

Three Pure EV scooters and electric vehicles of some other manufacturers caught fire in separate incidents in recent months.



Loudspeaker row:

Maharashtra govt to hold all-party meet on Monday

▶ ATTEMPT BEING MADE TO CREATE COMMUNAL STRIFE IN ORDER TO IMPOSE PRESIDENT'S RULE IN STATE, SAYS HOME MINISTER DILIPWALSE PATIL

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra government will be calling an all-party meeting on April 25 on the issue of loudspeakers at religious places and to ensure that there are no law-and-order issues in the state, Maharashtra Home Minister DilipWalse Patil said. He added that an

attempt was being made to create communal strife in Maharashtra with a view to impose President's Rule in the state. "The Maharashtra government has called for an all-party meeting on April 25. We have invited two leaders each from prominent political parties in the state to discuss the Supreme Court's 2005 judgment on loudspeakers. We hope to discuss the stand that the state needs to take on the issue of loudspeakers," he said on Saturday. He further said that there was an attempt to vitiate the peace of the state. "There is an attempt being made to vitiate the situation by creating communal strife in the state. This is being done with an attempt to foist President's Rule in Maharashtra. However, we and the law enforcement agencies are

well equipped to handle such things," Patil added. Meanwhile, reacting to the agitation by Shiv Sena workers after MLA Ravi Rana and his wife MP Navneet Rana said the duo would recite Hanuman Chalisa outside Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's house, Patil said that elected representatives need to conform to the law and behave in a manner which does not disturb peace in the society. "All those who want to read Hanuman Chalisa can read it inside their homes," Walse Patil said in reaction to the Ranans' insistence on reading the Hanuman Chalisa outside Thackeray's Bandra residence. He also said that the Ranans are "puppets being used to malign the image of Maharashtra".

SEVEN DOCTORS FROM GMCH YAVATMAL BOOKED FOR MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE OVER TEENAGER'S DEATH

Yavatmal: The complainant has stated that her son, who was suffering from sickle cell disease, was admitted to the GMCH on September 18, as he was vomiting profusely. An offence has been registered against seven doctors of the government medical college and hospital (GMCH) in Maharashtra's Yavatmal for medical negligence over the death of a 16-year-old boy last year, police said on Saturday. Based on a complaint lodged by the mother of the boy, who died in September 2021, a case under section 304 (A) (causing death by negligence) of the IPC was registered at Lohara police station on Wednesday, an official said. The complainant has stated that her son, who was suffering from sickle cell disease, was admitted to the GMCH on September 18, as he was vomiting profusely, he said. During the course of the treatment, the boy was shifted from one ward to another following discussions about which department would be treating him and he was subsequently moved to the medicine ward, where he died, the official said. The complainant had alleged medical negligence by seven doctors, including four junior residents, of the casualty department, he said. The boy's mother also lodged a complaint with the hospital's dean who set up a three-member panel to probe the incident, the official said, adding that the report from the dean indicated mistakes by the doctors.

Electricity woes:

Enough coal available, Maharashtra busy blaming Centre: Danve

▶ DANVE SAYS, 'MAHARASHTRA IS FACING LOAD-SHEDDING SINCE A MONTH. IT IS THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE ELECTRICITY TO INDUSTRIES, FARMERS ETC. INSTEAD, THE MVA GOVERNMENT IS BUSY BLAMING THE CENTRE'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Union Minister Raosaheb Danve on Saturday said there was enough coal for supply to power plants and alleged that the Maharashtra government

was busy blaming the Centre instead of providing electricity to citizens. He said the state government owes Rs 3,000 crore in coal dues but the Centre had not stopped supply. Addressing reporters here, Danve said, "Maharashtra is facing load-shedding since a month. It is the state government's responsibility to provide electricity to industries, farmers etc. Instead, the MVA government is busy blaming the Centre." He said the current electricity crisis in the state was due to mismanagement and lack of coordination among the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress, which form the Maha Vikas Aghadi government. He also attacked the state government on the Hanuman Chalisa row involving Independent Lok Sabha MP Navneet Rana and her MLA husband Ravi Rana and said law and order had collapsed in Maharashtra. The

couple had announced that they would recite Hanuman Chalisa in front of Matoshree, the private resident of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday, but later pulled back their stir amid strident protests by Shiv Sainiks. The Ranans, however, said they were pulling back the stir as Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be in Mumbai on Sunday for an awards ceremony and they did not want the atmosphere in the metropolis and state to be vitiated over this issue during the latter's visit. Maharashtra BJP chief Chandrakant Patil, speaking to reporters at another location here, condemned Friday night's attack on his party colleague Mohit Kamboj's car in Mumbai's Bandra area as well as the ruckus created by Shiv Sainiks near the Khar (in the metropolis) and Amravati residences of the Rana couple.

Amid high-voltage drama, Mumbai Police arrest 'farmer couple' Rana

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a dramatic climax, the Mumbai Police on Saturday evening arrested independent Amravati MP Navneet Rana and her husband Badnera MLA Ravi Rana, soon after they suo-moto dropped their plans to storm Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's residence.



goons have gathered outside our home since yesterday. If this is what we are facing, what justice can the commoners expect," said Navneet Rana. Jubilant men and women Shiv Sainiks said that the Shiv Sena has shown its power and "people like (Ranas) these come and go" and the party doesn't bother about them.

Among other things, the Ranans have been charged for disturbing peace and order, and making inflammatory statement, by the Khar Police Station following a complaint by Shiv Sena activists. In a countermeasure, the Ranans also submitted a complaint with the Khar Police against various Shiv Sena leaders for allegedly threatening them. The development came soon after they were detained by a team of Khar Police Station and later placed them under arrest with plans to produce them before a Magistrate Court on Sunday. Earlier, the Ranans claimed that they had called off their plans to go and recite Hanuman Chalisa at the Chief Minister's private residence 'Matoshri', even as hundreds of Shiv Sena and Yuva Sena activists laid a siege at the politician couple's home, demanding an apology for insulting Thackeray. At the Ranans' home, there were heated exchanges with the police who wanted them to come to the police station, but the couple insisted the police should produce a warrant, with the entire high-voltage drama shown live on social media. "We are elected representatives, but under Thackeray's rule, we have been forcibly taken to the police station. There's no law and order here. Sena

Seven including five women killed, 10 injured in truck-SUV collision

The incident took place at Nandgaophata near Ambajogai town on the Latur-Ambajogai highway around

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Seven persons including five women were killed and ten injured after a truck rammmed into their SUV in central Maharashtra's Beed district on Saturday morning, police said. The incident took place at Nandgaophata near Ambajogai town on the Latur-Ambajogai highway around 10 am, said a police official. The condition of three of the injured was critical, he added. The victims, who hailed from Sai and Arvi villages in Latur district, were traveling to Radi in Ambajogai tehsil in Beed for a program when a truck rammmed into their Cruiser Jeep near Nandgopal Dairy, the police official said. The deceased were identified as Nirmala Somvanshi (38), Swati Bodke (35), Shakuntala Somvanshi (38), Sojrabai Kadam (37), Chitra Shinde (35), Khandu Rohile (35, driver) and a nine-year-old boy. On receiving information about the accident, Maharashtra Social Justice Minister Dhananjay Munde and senior police officials visited the hospital.

BJP Slams MVA Govt; Alleges Hooliganism By Shiv Sena

The Maharashtra BJP on Saturday attacked the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Agadhi (MVA) government in the state amid the ongoing Hanuman Chalisa Row.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra BJP on Saturday attacked the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Agadhi (MVA) government in the state amid the ongoing Hanuman Chalisa row. Addressing the media, BJP leader and Leader of Opposition in Maharashtra Legislative Council Pravin Darekar slammed the state government over the current law and order situation in Maharashtra. Darekar alleged that the Shiv Sena is creating chaos in the state. The BJP's briefing also comes after its leader Mohit Kamboj was allegedly attacked by Shiv Sena workers. "There is no law and order in Maharashtra and Shiv Sena is

creating chaos in the state. In the past few days, violence happened in Chembur and Kandivali. Shiv Sainiks attacked our raths during the Pol Khol Yatra and they broke barricades and created chaos. They are engaged in goonda gardi," said Pravin Darekar. Meanwhile, Darekar also spoke about the ongoing faceoff over Hanuman Chalisa between Shiv Sena and independent MP Navneet Rana. It should be noted that Navneet Rana's husband who is also an independent MLA had challenged chief minister Uddhav Thackeray to read Hanuman Chalisa at his residence. He also stated that he would go with his followers to read 'Hanuman Chalisa' at Matoshree if he fails to do so. Following this, Sena workers have been staging a protest outside Rana's residence in Mumbai. Speaking on the same, Darekar condemned Sena's actions despite police presence. Apart from him, BJP's Ashish Shelar also addressed the media and spoke about the attack on Mohit Kamboj.

All accused in Sharad Pawar home attack case get bail

Around 116 accused in the attack on NCP president Sharad Pawar home on April 8, including lawyer Gunratan Sadavarte, were granted bail by the Mumbai Sessions Court, here on Friday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Around 116 accused in the attack on NCP president Sharad Pawar home on April 8, including lawyer Gunratan Sadavarte, were granted bail by the Mumbai Sessions Court, here on Friday. Besides Sadavarte, the others nabbed included 109 employees of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation, and other accused from Pune and Mumbai, were in judicial custody. Sadavarte alleged to be the mastermind of the attack, was granted bail of Rs 50,000, and all others shall be released on a personal bond of Rs 10,000 each. The development came on the final day of the Bombay High Court deadline to the MSRTC employees - on strike since October



28 2021, to resume duties and they would not face disciplinary action. However, the state government had later said those MSRTC workers who took part in the attack on Pawar home would face dismissal from service, sending shockwaves among the 95,000 employees. According to available information, more than 95 per cent of the employees have rejoined duties across the state but have vowed to continue their agitation seeking a merger of MSRTC with the state government.

GST detects Rs 10 cr cash, turnover of Rs 1,764 cr in toilet-sized office

▶ NOT MORE THAN FIVE PEOPLE WILL BE ALLOWED TO GATHER AT A PLACE IN MUMBAI FOR GANESH CHATURTHI
▶ MUMBAI CIVIC BODY HAS BANNED PHYSICAL DARSHAN FOR DEVOTEES AT PUBLIC PANDALS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a shocker, the Maharashtra GST Department raided and detected cash, silver bars worth Rs 10 crore, plus a business turnover of a staggering Rs.1,764 crore from an office measuring just 35 sq. feet -- smaller

than a home toilet. Following a tip-off, the Department on April 16 raided the premises of south Mumbai's Zaveri Bazaar and other locations belonging to one Chamunda Bullion.



Most of these places, including the tiny one raided, were not disclosed as place of business in the registration with the State GST Department. While searching one such mystery location on April 20, GST sleuths stumbled across cash Rs 9.78-crore and 19 kg of silver bricks worth Rs 13 lakhs, and the entire booty was hidden inside the walls and floor of the tiny premises. A detailed analysis of the accounts using comprehensive analytic tools of

the State GST made more stunning revelations of Chamunda Bullion. The GST team found that the company's gross turnover suddenly shot up from Rs 22.83 lakhs in 2019-2020, to Rs 652 crore the next year (2020-2021), and upto an astronomical Rs 1,764 crore the following (2021-2022) year. When questioned, the owners and family members of the premises denied knowledge or ownership of the treasure trove sniffed out by the GST teams. Accordingly, the State GST has sealed the premises and informed the Income Tax Department to make further investigations. After it was detected, the cash

counting that night took over six hours till the next morning, and further procedures are underway. The entire sensational operation was executed under the supervision of Joint Commissioner of State Tax Rahul Dwivedi (IAS) and Deputy Commissioner Vinod Desai of Investigation-B. Meanwhile, the owner of the premises (tax-payer) moved the Mumbai Sessions Court seeking anticipatory bail to avoid imminent arrest from the State GST Department. The State GST said that it will delve into the suppression of GST while the IT will now probe the source of the unexplained cash and valuables recovered from the small office, and related aspects. This year, the GST Department has made five major arrests, passing a strong message to defaulters and tax evaders that they will not be spared if they flout the laws.

Mob attacks BJP activist's car near Maha CM's home

Team Absolute | Mumbai

An irate mob attacked the vehicle of BJP activist Mohit Kamboj-Bharatiya near the the Bandra East private home of Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Accusing that the Shiv Sena was behind the attack, the BJP on Saturday demanded a probe by the the Maha Vikas Aghadi government into the incident that occurred on Friday night. In a statement, Kamboj claimed that when his car stopped near the Kalanagar junction, a mob of around 200 people suddenly surrounded and pounced on his car. "Some police jawans rushed there and rescued me. They also controlled the mob to save me... I thank them," Kamboj said, adding that he was waylaid while returning from a marriage. The Kalanagar



junction is a stone's throw away from the Thackeray's home, Matoshri, in a high security zone. Kamboj vowed that he would not be cowed down and continue exposing the MVA leaders. A huge posse of police has been deployed at Thackeray's home with a large number of Shiv Sainiks also camping there since Friday morning, to counter plans by

Independent MP Navneet Rana and her husband MLA Ravi Rana to recite Hanuman Chalisa at 'Matoshri' on Saturday. The Mumbai Police have served a notice to the Rana couple and also guarding their home in Khar. Meanwhile, Leaders of Opposition (Assembly) Devendra Fadnis and (Council) Pravin Darekar have condemned the Kamboj incident. "There appears to be a trend of carrying out attacks on people who speak against the (MVA) government," said Fadnis. "It is unfortunate, such an incident happening here," said Darekar, even as other BJP leaders like Sunil Deodhar, Mumbai North-East MP Manoj Kotak and others slammed the MVA government. Countering, Sena leaders claimed that Kamboj had gone there to carry out a 'recce' before the Rana couple's threat to land at 'Matoshri' and recite the Hanuman Chalisa.

KAMBOJ ALLEGES SHIV SENA, MAHARASHTRA CM ATTEMPTED TO KILL HIM

Mumbai: BJP leader Mohit Kamboj on Friday alleged that his car was attacked by a mob at Kalanagar Junction in Mumbai, and called it an attempt to kill him by the Shiv Sena and the Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Kamboj had once alleged that Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) ministers have links with 'drugs mafias'. The BJP leader said that the governance in Maharashtra is worse than that in West Bengal. "My car was attacked at Kalanagar Junction by a mob. We managed to flee. Governance in Maharashtra proving to be worse than that in Bengal. Opposition leaders who expose corrupt ministers like Nawab Malik are being attacked by the state government... I condemn it," Kamboj said. He further claimed that the attack was the ruling party's attempt to kill him. "This was an attempt to kill me by Shiv Sena and Maharashtra CM, so as to suppress my voice. Will see what action will be taken by Mumbai Police. Everything has been recorded on the CCTV," he said.

CM'S COMMENT CALLING FOR BAN ON PFI IMMATURE: GOA PFI CHIEF

Panaji: The Popular Front of India (PFI) has called Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's statement calling for a ban on the organisation as an "immature" one. "We have not thought about meeting the CM so far to speak about this. The statement is immature, we do not find it necessary to clarify it," the organisation's Goa president Shaikh Rauf said on Saturday. Earlier, Sawant, while speaking to reporters in Mumbai had said that he would write to the Centre to ban the organisation. "PFI's statement over my anti-conversion remark was irrelevant as there'll be opposition to the increasing conversion cases in Goa. We'll never promote religious conversions in the state. PFI should be banned. We'll recommend to the Government of India to stop them," Sawant had said. Sawant, and the PFI in Goa have been at logger-heads ever since the latter criticised Chief Minister Pramod Sawant over the latter's comments about the need to crackdown on religious conversion in Goa. The Goa unit of the PFI in a statement earlier this week had said that the Chief Minister should not comment on non-relevant issues and focus on inflation instead, while also accusing Sawant of making comments to make his "bosses" in Nagpur happy.



CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN MEETS PM MODI; DISCUSSES STATE GOVT'S INITIATIVES

▶ DETAILED DISCUSSION HELD ON ISSUES RELATED TO STATE'S DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC WELFARE

▶ UPCOMING "PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS" WILL BE ORGANIZED IN INDORE

▶ PM WILL INAUGURATE UJJAIN'S MAHAKAL MAHARAJ KSHETRA EXPANSION SCHEME

▶ IN A TWEET, MODI SAID, "MET MP CM SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN, WHO DISCUSSED THE GOOD GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES OF THE MP GOVERNMENT AND HOW THEIR TRANSFORMATIVE SCHEMES ARE BRINGING A POSITIVE CHANGE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES."



axal issue, Ken-Betwa river interlinking project and several other matters also figured in their discussion, with Chouhan briefing Modi about the measures taken by his government, officials said. Chouhan briefed the Prime Minister on various issues related to the state's development and public welfare and sought guidance. Chouhan urged the Prime Minister to ensure that the upcoming "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas" should be organized on 9 January 2023 in Indore district of Madhya Pradesh. In coordination with the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, it has been decided to organize the Investors' Summit on January 7 and 8, 2023 instead of 4th, 5th and 6th November. Chief Minister also extended an invitation to Prime Minister Shri Modi to launch Mahakal Maharaj Kshetra Expansion Scheme of Ujjain, which the Prime Minister gladly accepted. Chouhan also requested Prime Minister Modi for virtual launch of Madhya Pradesh Startup Policy in the month of May. Chouhan apprised the Prime Minister

about the progress of Amrit Sarovar Yojana in Madhya Pradesh. He informed that a target of 75 Amrit Sarovar structures has been set in each district of the state. In this way, construction of about 3800 Amrit Sarovar structures in the state will be completed with public participation. On August 15, flag hoisting will also be done near these water structures. Chief Minister informed the Prime Minister about the world famous Sharbati and Durum wheat of the state. He said that till date 2 lakh 40 thousand tonnes of wheat has been exported. Now there is possibility of more export of 20 lakh metric tonnes of wheat. The Egyptian delegation has expressed its desire to import wheat from Madhya Pradesh. The Chief Minister also informed about the facilities being provided to the exporters by the state in the export policy. While apprising the Prime Minister about the diversification policy of agriculture, Chouhan told the Prime Minister that oilseeds and cash crops are being promoted

in the state, so that foreign exchange can be saved by reducing the import of edible oil. While discussing the progress of ethanol policy of the state, Chief Minister Chouhan said that so far approval letters for 50 crore liters of ethanol production have been issued. Chouhan apprised the Prime Minister about the schemes being run to provide employment and self-employment in the state and their progress. He informed that one Rozgar Divas is being organized every month, in which a target has been set to provide 2 lakh jobs. So far, three Rozgar Divas have been organized on 12 January, 25 February and 30 March. Out of these, loans worth about Rs 7.7 thousand crore have been disbursed to more than 13 lakh 60 thousand youths. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan informed that a campaign has also been launched to celebrate the birthdays of villages and towns as Gaurav Divas in the state. So far, Gaurav Divas of 14 thousand villages and 31 urban bodies have been organized. The date of Gaurav Divas of the remaining villages and urban bodies has been fixed. Chouhan informed the Prime Minister about e-vouchers. He said that e-vouchers would be issued for purchase of equipment in the Agriculture Department and for purchase of cycles in the Education Department. Chief Minister also apprised about the progress of centrally sponsored schemes implemented in the state, which mainly included the achievements of Swamitva Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Svanidhi Yojana, Ayushman Bharat Yojana, Matru Vandana Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Prime Minister listened carefully to all the issues raised by Chouhan and also assured to provide all possible help to the state by the central government.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday to brief him about various initiatives of his government, with the two leaders also discussing a host of issues. In a tweet, Modi said, "Met MP CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who discussed the good governance initiatives of the MP Government and how their transformative schemes are bringing a positive change in people's lives." Issues related to law and order besides the

Two sons of BJP MLA, two others booked for assaulting forest department staffers

▶ A video of the incident, which showed some persons thrashing a group, went viral on social media soon after.

booked under IPC sections 323, 294 and 506 on the complaint of a forest staffer, who claimed the incident took place in Thursday night," said Sub Divisional Officer of Police (SDOP) Ramtilak Malviya.

Team Absolute | Sheopur

Two sons of a BJP MLA and two others were booked for allegedly assaulting forest department staffers who had reportedly stopped them from illegally quarrying stones in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district, police said on Saturday. A video of the incident, which showed some persons thrashing a group, went viral on social media soon after. "Dhanraj, Deendayal, Tilla and one more person were

BJP sources said Dhanraj and Deendayal are sons of Sitaram Adivasi, party MLA from Vijaypur. As per the complaint, these persons assaulted Ramraj Singh, Rishabh Sharma and driver Hassan Khan at a security post in Piprani after being stopped from illegally quarrying stones in a forested patch, an official said. BJP MLA Sitaram Adivasi, when contacted, told PTI he was in Bhopal for the past five days and would collect information about the incident on reaching Sheopur.

3 KILLED, NINE INJURED IN CAR-TRUCK COLLISION IN GUNA

Guna: The incident occurred on Apr 22 near a toll tax barrier in Guna, said Dharnawada police station in-charge Arun Singh Bhadoria. An elderly man and two women were killed and nine others injured after a car collided with a truck in Madhya Pradesh's Guna district, police said on Saturday (April 23).

The incident occurred late Friday (April 22) night near a toll tax barrier in Guna, said Dharnawada police station in-charge Arun Singh Bhadoria. "The car carrying 12 persons, residents of Jhabua, collided with the truck in a bid to overtake it. The car overturned thrice, in which three persons - a 63-year-old man and two women, aged 45 and 58 - died on the spot," he said. Nine others suffered injuries in the accident and were hospitalised, he said. These people were on their way to attend a marriage ceremony at Dumri village in Guna, he added.

Chief Minister pays homage to Pandit Madhav Rao Sapre

▶ Sapre was a Hindi writer and journalist. He is known as the first story writer of Hindi. He also had a leading role in India's freedom struggle.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to the famous litterateur and journalist Pandit Madhav Rao Sapre on his death anniversary. Chouhan paid floral tribute by garlanding his picture in the auditorium at his residence office. Pt. Madhav Rao Sapre was a Hindi writer and journalist. He is known as the first story writer of Hindi. He also had

a leading role in India's freedom struggle. Sapre was in the role of people's sentinel as a renowned editor and people's teacher as a scholarly litterateur. He enriched the Hindi language as a lexicographer and translator. In the year 1902, he took the responsibility of giving shape to the 'Vigyan Shabdakosh' (science dictionary) scheme of Kashi Nagari

Pracharini Sabha. At the same time, the vocabulary of economics was also preserved and enriched. Pt. Madhav Rao Sapre was born on June 19, 1871 at Patharia in Damoh district. He passed away on 23 April 1926. A newspaper museum and research institute is established in Bhopal in the memory of Pandit Madhav Rao Sapre.

CM WILL DISTRIBUTE BENEFITS TO BENEFICIARIES OF PM AWAS YOJANA URBAN

An amount of Rs 500 crore will be transferred by Chief Minister Shri Chouhan to the accounts of more than 50 thousand beneficiaries with a single click.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will distribute benefits to more than one lakh beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban at Kushabhau Thackeray International Convention Center in Bhopal on Wednesday, April 27 at 11 am. An amount of Rs 500 crore will be transferred by Chief Minister Shri Chouhan to the accounts of more than 50 thousand beneficiaries with a single click. Along with this, bhoomi-pujan of the houses of more than 30 thousand beneficiaries and grihapravesh of new houses of

21 thousand beneficiaries will also be done. The total cost of these houses is about Rs 3900 crore. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan will also interact with the beneficiaries. Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh and Minister of State OPS Bhadauria will also take part. Programmes will also be held in all the urban bodies of the state where citizens and beneficiaries including regional public representatives will be present. The programme will be broadcast live through various mediums of public relations portal, Doordarshan and social media.

CM Planted Saptaparni and Kachnar Saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Saptaparni and Kachnar saplings along with the activists of Ujjara Foundation in the Smart City Garden on Saturday. The foundation's Jyoti Ratre, Ramswaroop and Virendra Gurjar also planted saplings. The foundation works in the field of cleanliness and environment. Along with this, training is also given in water harvesting and making seed balls. The foundation has planted more than 100 saplings over the years, out of which about 40 have taken the form of trees. Citizens are also encouraged to plant trees in vacant places and to look after them, not to litter around the houses and to



take the responsibility of cleaning themselves. Smt. Jyoti Ratre achieved success in climbing Mount Elbrus, the highest peak of the continent of Europe on July 8, 2021. Along with this, on 15 August 2021, she made a record by hoisting the tricolor on Mount Kilimanjaro, the high-

est peak of the African continent. Along with this, she also did adventure by completing Everest winter trek in cold weather. Saptaparni planted today is an evergreen medicinal tree, which has great importance in Ayurveda. It is used in the manufacture of various medicines.

WEBINAR ON BHIMBETKA ROCK PAINTING AND SHELTER

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In The Rock Paintings of Bhimbetka, 4 colors red, white, green and yellow have been used. All these colors are made from natural sources like leaves, stones, hematite etc. These interesting facts were told by Ajay Singh Chouhan from Bhopal, Regional Guide of Central India, in a webinar organized by the Ministry of Tourism. He told that recently the team of Geological Survey of India has found a fossil from Bhimbetka, which is about 25 million years old. Such fossils have also been found in Ukraine, Russia and China. According to the carbon dating process of the Archaeological Survey of India, the rock painting of Bhimbetka is 30 to 35 thousand years old. The famous archaeologist Shri Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar had discovered Bhimbetka in the Vindhya mountain range during his visit to Nagpur in 1957-58.



that the journey of human life has been depicted in Bhimbetka rock painting and shelter. Day to day activities of life, animals, hunting, collecting useful things in the forest etc. are shown. Ms. Moutoshi Naskar conducted the webinar. Guides, archeology and history lovers from the country and the state participated in the webinar. Bhimbetka Rock Painting and Shelter is a UNESCO World Heritage Rock Site in India. It is very popular for prehistoric rock paintings and rock shelters.

A World Heritage Site and one of the world's oldest rock paintings, Bhimbetka depicts dance and music, body art, hunting and animals. These types of paintings are called pictographs. Shri Chouhan informed

EDUCATION IS THAT WHICH BRINGS LIBERATION: CM

New Building of NES Education College in Narmadapuram Dedicated

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that education is that which brings liberation. Education illuminates life. Schools and colleges of excellent quality should also be established in private sector along with government institutions. There is no greater virtue than giving knowledge. By developing skills in the students, they should be educated to become good citizens.

Chouhan on Saturday inaugurated the new building of NES Education College at armadapuram. He also released a souvenir



and booklet focused on the life of Late Pt. Ramlal Sharma, the founder of Narmada Education Society. Chief Minister Chouhan honoured the author of the souvenir, Millin Ronghe, by presenting him a shawl, shrifal and mementos.

Chouhan said that Pt. Ramlal Sharma was a very good person. He lit the light of education in difficult times. He faced many difficulties, which he tackled firmly. His life was dedicated to others. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said,

"Apneliyejiye to kyajiye, tuuji ai dilzamaanekeliye" (Living only for oneself is purposeless, let us live for the whole society). Chairman of the Education Committee, Pt. Bhavani Shankar Sharma delivered the welcome address. MLA Dr Sitasaran Sharma informed about the work done by Late Ramlal Sharma and Education Committee. Cultural programmes were presented by the students. Minister and in-charge of the district Brijendra Pratap Singh, Darshan Singh Choudhary, Maya Naroliya and Girija Shankar Sharma were present.

MP POLICY TO REWARD PUBLIC PROSECUTORS FOR SUCCESSFULLY ARGUING DEATH PENALTY CASES COMES UNDER SC SCANNER

The bench said that currently, NALSA has a very loose kind of arrangement where there are some panel and remand advocates and they keep changing.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Madhya Pradesh government's policy to reward or give incentives to its public prosecutors for successfully arguing death penalty cases in trial courts has come under the scanner of the Supreme Court.

A bench headed by Justice UU Lalit took note of a submission of Attorney General KK Venugopal that such a practice of rewarding prosecutors should be nipped in the bud. The attorney general is assisting the top court in a suo motu case registered to examine and institutionalise the process involved in collection of data and information to decide award of death penalty.

On being told about the policy or a system in Madhya Pradesh where public prosecutors are being rewarded and paid incentives for successfully arguing death penalty cases, the bench asked the state counsel to put the related documents on record and be ready to defend it on May 10, the next date of hearing.

...There has been policy in Madhya Pradesh wherein the public prosecutors are given incentive/increments on the basis of death sentence awarded in cases argued by them, it said and asked lawyer Rukmini Bobde, appearing for the state, to place the policy on record and defend it.

The bench, which also comprised justices S Ravindra Bhat and PS Narasimha, also said that it was mulling laying down guidelines to

be followed in cases where maximum sentence provided for the offence is death penalty.

To ensure proper legal assistance to the accused facing criminal trials, it said that like public prosecutors, who pursue cases on behalf of the state, the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) can have defence counsel or public defender's office in every district of the country.

I must share with you that at NALSA, we are thinking of having defence counsel office in every district. Something like public prosecutors' office...there would be the office of public defenders, Justice Lalit, who is heading the NALSA, said during the hearing.

The bench said that currently, NALSA has

a very loose kind of arrangement where there are some panel and remand advocates and they keep changing.

Hence, there is a need to have an institutionalised system to ensure proper legal assistance to the accused, it said.

The bench said that it has been accepted by the advocates concerned that the matter required consideration at an early date and asked them to file relevant material pertaining to award of death penalty in other jurisdictions as well.

The top court on Friday initiated the proceedings in the suo motu case to examine and institutionalise the process involved in awarding death penalty in heinous crime cases.

The matter arose from a plea of one Irfan challenging the death penalty imposed on him by the trial court and confirmed by the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

The bench, earlier, had decided to examine how courts dealing with a death sentence can procure a comprehensive analysis about the accused and the crime, especially the mitigating circumstances so that the judicial officer concerned can decide whether death sentence needs to be awarded.

Prior to this, an application was filed by 'Project 39A of the National Law University, Delhi, an anti-death penalty body seeking nod for an investigator who would collect mitigating information in favour of the accused to argue on the sentencing.



'YOUR GIRL'S GOTTA WORK'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Zendaya the fashion darling turns down Met Gala invite AGAIN blaming her busy schedule

Fashion darling Zendaya will not be attending the Met Gala for the second year in a row. The Euphoria star will skip the annual fashion fundraiser at New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art again this year, because of her busy work schedule.

The 25-year-old actress told Extra: 'I hate to disappoint my fans here, but I will be working. Your girl's gotta work and make some movies ... I wish everyone the best.'

The Spider-Man: No Way Home star promised to deliver some impressive red carpet outfits until she returns to the bash, which she hasn't attended since 2019. She vowed: 'I'll keep delivering in other ways.' Zendaya will be busy filming her role as Tashi in Luca Guadagnino's upcoming tennis drama, Challengers.

The screen star was preoccupied with shooting HBO teen drama Euphoria when the gala took place in September 2021, reports dailymail.co.uk.

At the time, Zendaya said: 'My fans are going to be very upset with me. I will unfortunately not be able to attend because I'll be working for Euphoria.'

The Emmy winner last graced the steps of the Met in 2019 in an outfit inspired by Disney classic Cinderella and designed by Tommy Hilffiger.



KATIE MALONEY IS 'OPEN' TO DATING'

Los Angeles | Agencies

The cast of Vanderpump Rules showed up in force for the grand opening of Lisa Vanderpump's newest Las Vegas establishment, Vanderpump à Paris at the Paris Las Vegas.

The star-studded event marked the first for Vanderpump Rules stars Tom Schwartz and Katie Maloney since announcing their split last month after 12 years.

Despite not walking the red carpet together, the former couple told DailyMail.com there is no awkwardness and Katie exclusively revealed that she is already 'open' to dating.

If fans are looking for the same drama they got with Lala and Randall or James and Raquel, they're going to be disappointed as Tom revealed he has nothing but love for his soon-to-be ex-wife.

'I have a deep love and admiration for her,' the star said. 'I love her with all my heart, I really do. I think it's as healthy of a separation as can be. That's kinda boring isn't it?'



IT'S A REAL HEAD TRIP FOR ME

Los Angeles | Agencies

Nicolas Cage-starrer action comedy 'The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent' is all set to hit the Indian theatres. Directed by Tom Gormican, the movie also features Pedro Pascal, Neil Patrick Harris, Tiffany Haddish amongst others.

When asked about his role in the film as a fictionalised version of himself, Nicholas said: "This is Tom's invented version of Nick Cage - a neurotic, high-anxiety version of Nick Cage. This film is a real head trip for me."

Tom Gormican, who is the writer and director of the movie added about the inspiration behind the film based on the award-winning actor's life.

"There's so much goodwill out there for Nick, and people want him to succeed. We thought, what is he really like as a person?," said Gormican, while speaking about his inspiration behind the movie.

"He's become a cultural figure. As culture gets stranger and



Nicolas Cage on 'The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent'

stranger and fashion choices get more outlandish, you can trace like a direct line back to the patron saint of strangeness, Nicolas Cage. Just seeing his face makes people happy. That's really interesting and made me

want to dig in further and find out who he actually is." On shooting with the talented actor, Gormican concluded by saying: "Nicolas loved acting opposite himself. There's no finer scene partner for Nicolas Cage than Nicolas Cage."

Written and Directed by Tom Gormican, 'The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent' is brought by Lionsgate India to theaters on April 22.

'SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2': BETTER THAN THE PREVIOUS EDITION



FILM REVIEW

TROY RIBEIRO

(Running in theatres)

Duration: 122 minutes

Director: Jeff Fowler

Cast: James Marsden, Jim Carrey, Tika Sumpter, Natasha Rothwell, Adam Pally, Shemar Moore, Lee Majdoub; Voice Cast: Ben Schwartz, Idris Elba, Colleen O'Shaughnessey

Rating: ***

This live-action-adventure film is a sequel to the 2020 released film - 'Sonic the Hedgehog'. If those who saw the first edition felt the previous edition was an off-seen and an outdated fare, then the sequel is many notches better than the first film.

The narrative feels like a direct continuation of its predecessor. Here we follow the anthropomorphic blue hedgehog Sonic (Ben Schwartz), the iconic Sega video game character as he meets two of the other famous faces from the video game franchise Tails the two-tailed fox, and the red echidna Knuckles (voiced by Colleen O'Shaughnessey and Idris Elba), except that Knuckles is working with the returned evil and mad scientist Dr. Ivo Robotnik (Jim Carrey).

After being banished to the Mushroom Planet, Dr. Robotnik returns to Earth with his new companion Knuckles. He once again seeks out Sonic, who along with his new ally Tails, is searching for the hidden mystical emerald which holds the - "ultimate



power to turn thoughts into reality".

So inadvertently, the film turns into a treasure hunt and a villain showdown, which is fun to watch. There are a lot of familiar adventure tropes that will appeal to kids. The subplot about a destination wedding of Rachel (Natasha Rothwell), the sister of Sonic's surrogate mother Maddie (Tika Sumpter), in Hawaii feels included, just to give the humans something to do away from the action. It is also stuff kids would be bored by, but for their parents, it's a nice CG-free reprieve and a chance for the fuming Rothwell to steal the scene.

Also, what makes this edition appeal to Sonic video game fans- is that it

leans a lot more into the game's influences than the previous edition. There are few witty lines in the form of recycled gags from other films and plenty more nods to a secret temple in Siberia that houses a compass for the Emerald, giant spikes, and a scene where Tails pilots a biplane as it does battle with a King Kong-sized robot.

The set-action pieces feel nearly ripped from the games and are- a little over the top. The general message of responsibility and working together is simple and goes well with the narrative.

Overall, the film is bright, vibrant, energetic, and delivers just the right amount of- emotional quotient without feeling overdone.

MTV VIDEO MUSIC AWARDS TO AIR LIVE FROM NEW JERSEY

Los Angeles | Agencies

Music channel

MTV announced that the 2022 Video Music Awards will air live and around the world in more than 170 countries on August 28 from the Prudential Center in New Jersey.

"We are thrilled to be back in New Jersey for this year's VMAs live from Prudential Center," said Bruce Gillmer, president of music, music talent, programming & events, Paramount and chief content officer, music, Paramount+.

"Our 2019 show in Newark was undoubtedly one of our biggest and most successful shows yet and we're excited to bring back the incredible fan energy for one of music's most anticipated and iconic nights," reports 'Variety'.

"New Jersey is honoured to once again host the MTV Video Music Awards at one of our many world-class entertainment and sports venues," said Governor Phil Murphy.

"Our state has a proud history of supporting the arts and is always seeking opportunities to partner with the entertainment industry to promote economic development and cultural appreciation. On behalf of New Jersey, we welcome VMA performers and attendees alike to our great state."

"We are excited to have the MTV Video Music Awards return to Newark this year. It is fitting that Newark is once again the host city, as it is the birthplace of many of the biggest names in music, and has so much to offer its visitors - a vibrant arts and culture scene, historic downtown, and diverse cuisine," said Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka.

"On behalf of Newark residents, we are happy to welcome everyone attending and are very much looking forward to one of the biggest nights in entertainment."

"We are extremely proud MTV has chosen Prudential Center to once again host its marquee showcase, the 39th Annual Video Music Awards," said Prudential Center President Jake Reynolds.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Nicole Scherzinger



INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE 2022

GUJARAT TITANS DEFEAT KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS BY EIGHT RUNS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Gujarat Titans' bowling attack successfully defended 156 to defeat Kolkata Knight Riders by eight runs at DY Patil Stadium on Saturday. Despite losing seven wickets in the last five overs after Hardik Pandya's 67 to end at 156/9, Gujarat's bowling attack clicked in unison, taking four wickets in the first seven overs.

They were also aided by fielders taking some stunning catches to restrict Kolkata to 148/8 in 20 overs. The result means that Gujarat are now on top of the points table.

With a new opening combination in Sam Billings and Sunil Narine, Kolkata's hopes of a blistering start began well when the former brought out a glorious straight drive against Mohammed Shami. But Shami had the last laugh as Billings top-edged a pull to wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha. Shami then setup Narine with two short balls on body and then slipped one on hips, which the batter pulled uncomfortably to a diving short fine leg.

Nitish Rana fell cheaply, forced to poke at a Lockie Ferguson delivery and took a healthy edge behind to Saha as Gujarat successfully overturned not out decision. Shreyas Iyer had begun to look comfortable at the crease but was



undone by over the wicket angle from Yash Dayal and nicked behind to Saha.

Rinku Singh found the boundary rope five times in his stay of 35 and shared a 45-run stand with Venkatesh Iyer. But in an attempt to smash Yash Dayal over mid-wicket, Rinku could only manage a bottom edge going behind to Saha. Venkatesh tried to slog-sweep Rashid Khan but Abhinav Manohar took a stunning catch just in front of deep mid-wicket boundary rope.

In between, Andre Russell got his first boundary with a thickish edge off Dayal over Saha's head. On the next ball, Russell tried to fend a Dayal bouncer with his bat but the ball flew straight off his bat to fine leg. But Dayal's jubilation

was cut short as replays showed front foot no ball. Russell rubbed salt on wounds by thumping Dayal on back-to-back sixes to end an eventful 13th over.

Russell then smacked a Ferguson full toss over long-off. Khan got out Shivam Mavi and almost had Umesh Yadav lbw with the googly but replays showed ball missing the stumps. With 45 needed off 24 balls, Russell upper cut Shami over backward point for six. Umesh cleared his front leg to swat Ferguson over deep mid-wicket for six more. Russell hit a six down the ground off Dayal but could manage five runs off rest of the over for the equation to read as 18 off the final over. On the first ball, Russell smashed an Alzarri Joseph full toss over long-on for a huge six. But Joseph had the last laugh as Russell mistimed a pull to fine leg immediately. That turned out to be a decisive blow for Kolkata as Joseph conceded two, one followed by successive dots to seal a close win for Gujarat.

Brief scores

Gujarat Titans 156/9 in 20 overs (Hardik Pandya 67, David Miller 27; Andre Russell 4/5, Tim Southee 3/24) beat Kolkata Knight Riders 148/8 in 20 overs (Andre Russell 48, Rinku Singh 35; Mohammed Shami 2/20, Rashid Khan 2/22) by eight runs

SUNRISERS THRASH ROYAL CHALLENGERS BY 9 WICKETS



Mumbai | Agencies

Marco Jansen landed the early blows and T Natarajan wiped off the lower-order in a brilliant display of medium pace bowling to restrict Royal Challengers for 68 as Sunrisers Hyderabad romped to a 9-wicket victory in Match 36 at the Brabourne Stadium here on Saturday.

The Sunrisers bowlers came up with a brilliant display as they bowled good line and length and used the conditions well to never allow Royal Challengers to recover. The Bangalore side finished with 68, the lowest total in IPL 2022 so far. They also hold the unwanted record of scoring the lowest total in IPL history -- 49 against Kolkata Knight Riders on this same day in 2017. On Saturday, Jansen claimed 3/25,

claiming all three of his victims in his first over itself, the second of the innings, as he dismissed Faf du Plessis (5), Virat Kohli (0) and Anuj Rawat (0) as Royal Challengers were reduced to 8/3 at the end of the second over from which they never recovered.

Nataraj got into the act in the middle overs as he ended with 3/10, and with Jagadeesha Suchith (2/12) and Umran Malik maintaining the pressure, Royal Challengers just could not recover and continued to slump in the abyss.

Chasing 69 to win, Sunrisers did not face any trouble as Abhishek Sharma blasted 47 off 28 deliveries and SRH raced to 72/1 in 8 overs as they romped home to a nine-wicket victory with 72 balls remaining. Skipper Kane Williamson remained not out with 16 off

17 deliveries and Rahul Tripathi was not out on 7 off three balls as Sunrisers scored the biggest win of IPL 2022.

Royal Challengers had slumped to their lowest ever total on April 23, 2017, and five years later they suffered another humiliating defeat as nothing went right for them at the Brabourne Stadium on Saturday.

Brief scores

Royal Challengers Bangalore 68 all out in 16.1 overs (Suyash Prabhudessai 15; Marco Jansen 3/25, T Natarajan 3/10, Jagadeesha Suchith 2/12) lost to Sunrisers Hyderabad 72/1 in 8 overs (Abhishek Sharma 47, Kane Williamson 16 not out; Harshal Patel 1/18) by 9 wickets

IPL 2022 PLAYOFFS TO BE HELD IN KOLKATA, AHMEDABAD

After the culmination of league round matches in Maharashtra, the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022 playoffs will be held in Kolkata and Ahmedabad, between May 24 to 27.

Mumbai | Agencies

Qualifier 1 and Eliminator will be held at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on May 24 and 26 while Eliminator 2 will be in Ahmedabad on May 27 and the final of the cash-rich league will be held at the Narendra Modi Stadium on May 29.

The decision on the venue was taken by the Apex Council of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Saturday, which also confirmed that a full house will be allowed for the play-offs matches.

The Apex Council also decided that the Women's Twenty20 Challenge, involving three



teams -- Trailblazers, Supernovas and Velocity -- will be held in Lucknow from May 24-28. The squads will be picked after the ongoing women's Twenty20 Trophy in May, a Cricbuzz report said.

The big decision before the selectors will be whether they will pick the veterans in Indian women's cricket - Mithali Raj and Jhulan Goswami, who have retired from T20Is.

Meanwhile, the BCCI has also announced the venues for the upcoming home T20I series against South Africa, scheduled to be held in June. The five-match T20I series will be played in Delhi, Cuttack, Vizag, Rajkot and Bengaluru, on June 9, 12, 14, 17 and 19 respectively.

Archery World Cup

INDIAN MEN'S COMPOUND TEAM CLINCHES GOLD

Antalya (Turkey) | Agencies

Indian men's compound team of Abhishek Verma, Aman Saini and Rajat Chauhan defeated France 232-230 in the final to win the gold medal at the 2022 Archery World Cup Stage 1, here on Saturday.

The trio of Abhishek, Aman and Rajat were trailing by three points in the second set but produced a perfect score of 60 in the third to close the gap and shot 59 in the final set to snatch the victory. This was India's first medal at the ongoing meet. Later in the day, India's mixed compound team of Abhishek Verma and Muskan Kiran narrowly missed out on the bronze medal, going down to Croatia 156-157. Apart from these two events, Indian archers have



the opening contest. Meanwhile, the women's individual recurve saw Ridhi reaching the round of 16.

Komalika Bari lost in the round of 32 while Anikta Bhakat and Simranjeet Kaur could not go past the first round. The compound archers also struggled, with only Rajat Chauhan and Priya Gurjar making the top eight in the men's and women's individual events, respectively.

Asian Games gold medalist Abhishek Verma was ousted in the round of 32. The recurve teams (men and women) and women's compound team could also not reach the medal rounds. However, the recurve mixed team, featuring Tarundeep Rai and Ridhi will play for the gold against Great Britain on Sunday.

Asian Wrestling C'ships

Ravi Dahiya clinches gold, Bajrang Punia bags silver

Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia):

India's Ravi Kumar Dahiya clinched the gold medal at the 2022 Asian Wrestling Championships after beating Kazakhstan's Rakhat Kalzhan in the men's 57kg final event by technical superiority, here on Saturday. This is Ravi's third straight gold medal after Delhi 2020 and Almaty 2021.

Meanwhile, another ace Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia settled for silver in the men's 65kg after he lost to Iran's Rahman Amouzad khalili.



I-League: Rajasthan United back to winning ways with clinical performance against NEROCA

Naihati | Agencies

Two second-half goals for Rajasthan United against NEROCA FC were enough to end their four-game winless run, here at the Naihati Stadium. A goal from Biswa Darjee right after half time and a late strike from Pedro Manzi got Rajasthan off to a winning start in Phase II.

Unlike the Phase I encounter between these two sides, the game got off to a very cagey and slow start. Neither goalkeeper was tested as the final third performance of both sides was disappointing. When it looked promising, the attacks were stalled by astute defending at both ends.

In first half stoppage time, Anil Chawan came flying in with a strong challenge on Abdul Salam and got his name taken by the referee. NEROCA were unable to cause any damage from the resulting free-kick after it was hurled in towards Sergio Mendigutxia. The first half-



half ended with Rajasthan having only one shot on-target and NEROCA with none.

The second half was nothing like the first. Aman Thapa won a corner after forcing a save out of Shubham Dhas from close range. From the resulting corner, the ball was cleared off the line by Lallenmang Sithou.

The game was put to bed in stoppage time when substitute Alocius Muthayyan put Pedro Manzi through on goal with a clever pass and the Rajasthan United skipper made no mistake in tucking the ball into the net. Manzi could have bagged a brace in the last minute of the game but his shot from close range rattled the crossbar and stayed out.

All three points and a clean sheet lift Rajasthan United up from the bottom of the Championship Playoff table as they go above NEROCA FC, into 6th place. Both sides are only separated by a single point.

Santosh Trophy

Manipur ease past Karnataka by 3-0

Malappuram | Agencies

Manipur eased past Karnataka 3-0 in a Group B match of the Hero 75th National Football Championship for Santosh Trophy at the Kottapadi Stadium, here on Saturday. With this win, they became the first team from Group B to make the semifinals as they joined hosts Kerala.

Manipur coach Gift Raikhan had said that his instruction to his players was to go all out right from the start and ensure qualification to the last four and his team delivered. Three goals in the first-half itself with Lunminlen Haokip running the show.

The first goal of the game came from a terrible mistake by young Darshan L at left-back. He tried to pass back to his keeper Jayanthkumar Krishnamurthy but his loose pass was intercepted by an alert Somishon Shirak. He looked up and picked out an onrushing Lunminlen Haokip who



made no mistake as Manipur took the lead in the 19th minute. Karnataka players seemed deflated

after conceding the second and they let their heads drop. And Manipur punished them even fur-

ther. A through ball found Somishon Shirak in acres of space. His first shot was saved superbly by Jayanthkumar Krishnamurthy but Shirak poked home the rebound to make it three goals without reply right at the stroke of half-time. In the second half, Manipur were content to hold their shape and try to hit Karnataka on the break. The Karnataka players did put up a much improved display in the second forty-five minutes but they had nothing to show for their efforts. Kamallesh P and Solaimalai N both had shots from range but the Manipur keeper saved on both occasions. The win meant Manipur now have nine points after four games and have secured progress to the last four. Karnataka, having played three, have four points to show for their efforts. They are still in with a shout but need to win their final game against Gujarat on Monday and hope for other results to go their way if they are to have a chance of making the semis.

Jr men's academy nationals

Mohd Konain Dad scores five in Madhya Pradesh's 13-1 win

Jamshedpur | Agencies

It continued to rain goals at the 2nd Hockey India Junior Men's Academy National Championship 2022 here on Saturday with top teams winning their respective pool matches.

Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy, Raja Karan Hockey Academy, Smart Hockey Academy, Raipur, Markandeshwar Hockey Academy and Cheema Hockey Academy won their respective pool matches on the fourth day of the event at the Naval Tata Hockey Academy here.

In the first match of the day, Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy beat Mumbai Schools Sports Association (MSSA) 13-1 in Pool A.

Mohd Konain Dad (8', 32', 36', 48', 51') started with five

goals, while Kashif Khan (6', 30') and Mohammad Zaid Khan (24', 40') bagged a brace each for Madhya Pradesh Hockey academy.

Mudassar Qureshi (14'), Saddam Ahmad (35'), Haider Ali (53') and Ali Ahmad (56') also got on the scoresheet for the winning team. Seraj Ahmed (42') scored the lone goal for MSSA. In the second game of the day, Republican Sports Club beat Raja Karan Hockey Academy 2-0 in Pool B. Het Rajubhai Pawar (6') and Saurabh Mayekar (44') were the goal-scorers for Republican Sports Club.

In Pool B, Smart Hockey Academy, Raipur defeated Tamil Nadu Hockey Academy 8-0. Mohd Amir (5', 29', 31') started with a hat-trick, while Kulwinder Parshad (25', 30') netted twice and Harmanpreet Singh (10'), Karambir Singh (47') and

Jaskaran Singh (57') contributed a goal each for Smart Hockey Academy, Raipur

In a Pool F match, Markandeshwar Hockey Academy beat Salute Hockey Academy 9-2. Gurpreet Singh (3', 21', 31') and Ankit (14', 42', 56') each registered a hat-trick each, while Kulbir Singh (34'), Pawel Singh (37') and Munish (55') scored a goal each for Markandeshwar Hockey Academy. Meanwhile, Ujjwal (8') and Sahil (23') scored for Salute Hockey Academy.

In the final match of the day, Cheema Hockey Academy beat Citizen Hockey XI 4-0 in Pool E. Tushar Joshi (39', 40') scored a brace for Cheema Hockey Academy, while Sukhpal Singh (23') and Manpreet Singh (45') also registered their names in the scoresheet for the winning team.



SHILPA SHETTY TO ENTER ROHIT SHETTY'S COP UNIVERSE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

This year, Shilpa Shetty is unstoppable! Despite the huge buzz surrounding her upcoming films Sukhee and Nikamma, the iconic star has revealed another piece of news that will send you to the sky. With Rohit Shetty's Indian Police Force, the actress is set to make her OTT debut.

Apart from her OTT debut, Shilpa Shetty's role as the first female police officer in Rohit Shetty's policeman universe makes the Indian Police Force intriguing. To break the news, the talented actress posted a photo of herself dressed as a cop with a gun, on Instagram. She penned, "Ready to set the OTT platform on fire for the first time Superrrr Thrilled to join The Action King Rohit Shetty in his Cop Universe!"

Shilpa Shetty has captivated her audience with her portrayal of an Indian police officer. With her upcoming assignments, the actress will be able to play a wide range of personalities. While she would star in an action drama with Nikamma, she would also play the lead in Sukhee. Shilpa Shetty is making news in the business world after launching Binge, the third restaurant in the Bastian series. The entrepreneur has also taken the internet down by announcing SVS Studios, a VFX specialty studio.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Bhumika Chawla needs no introduction. After working in films like Tere Naam, Run, Dil Ne Jise Apna Kahaa, Family, Silsilay, Gandhi My Father, she has also cemented her position in the South film industry. Now the beautiful actress is back with a Hindi film this week with noted producer-director Neeraj Pandey - Operation Romeo.

The film also stars Sharad Kelkar, Sidhant Gupta, Vedika Pinto and Kishor Kadam. Bhumika has played the wife of Sharad Kelkar in the film. Operation Romeo is about Aditya Sharma and Neha Kasliwal (Sidhanth Gupta and Vedika Pinto) being captured on their date night by two men acting as strong police officers, Mangesh and Kiran (Sharad Kelkar and Kishor Kadam). Bhumika is famed for her understated performance, and this film is no exception. Her scene begins at a department

BHUMIKA CHAWLA SURPRISES WITH HER STINT AS MARATHI MULGI

store cash register, where she works. It's nice to see Bhumika Chawla on screen again after such a long period. Especially in the pre-climax moment, where Bhumika and Sidhant have a few engaging scenes that they have nicely sealed. There are other scenes between Sharad Kelkar and Bhumika in which the latter uses a variety of facial expressions to bring the action to life.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Avika Gor all set to make her Bollywood debut

She was TV's sweetheart and now she is all set to take over the big screen. Avika Gor is making her Bollywood debut in 2023 with filmmaker Vikram Bhatt's next venture "1920- Horrors of the heart". A new installment in the hit franchise, the movie is written by Mahesh Bhatt and directed by Krishna Bhatt.

It will be interesting to see the young actress in not just a spine-chilling role but also in a glamorous avatar that also demands detailed acting skills.

Avika has already made a name for her in the South film industry and recently even made her Kazakh film debut with "I Go To School". The makers announced their association with Avika through a social media post. Her fans have been wanting to see her on the big screen from a long time and we hope to see her give her best in this challenging movie and we wish her all the very best.



Happy Birthday to Bhiku Mhatre of Bollywood

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Manoj Bajpayee gets a year older on April 23. The actor is well-known for his variety and acting style. He has ruled many hearts, from little roles in films

to showcase his talent by portraying the protagonists. After a few modest roles in films, he rose

to attention as Bhiku Mhatre in Ram Gopal Varma's crime drama Satya, released in 1998. In Satya (1998), Manoj Bajpayee as Bhiku Mhatre, an outsider from Belwa, Bihar, humanized Mumbai's mafia. "Mumbai ka king Kaun?" "Bhiku Mhatre!" says the famous dialogue.

He's won various honors since then, including Filmfare, Dada Saheb Phalke, and National Awards. In addition, he was awarded the Padma Shri for his contributions to cinema. Manoj's characters have emphasized his resolve not to be a cut-out actor over the years. They've been as diverse as human nature itself. Like the law-enforcer,

who storms the sanctum of law-makers in Shool (1999), or Maharaja Vijayendra Singh of Fatehpur in Zubeidaa (2001), where earthy Manoj demonstrated his ease amid the royal tiers. In Gangs of Wasseypur (2012), he plays the daring 'Keh Ke lenge' Sardar Khan, who is all about wayward emotions and scruples. As tormented real-life academic Ramchandra Siras, who in Aligarh had a browbeaten expression of humiliation and powerlessness. Srikant Tiwari, who plays a spy disguised as a regular guy in the blockbuster online series The Family Man (2021), has swung the pendulum even further.

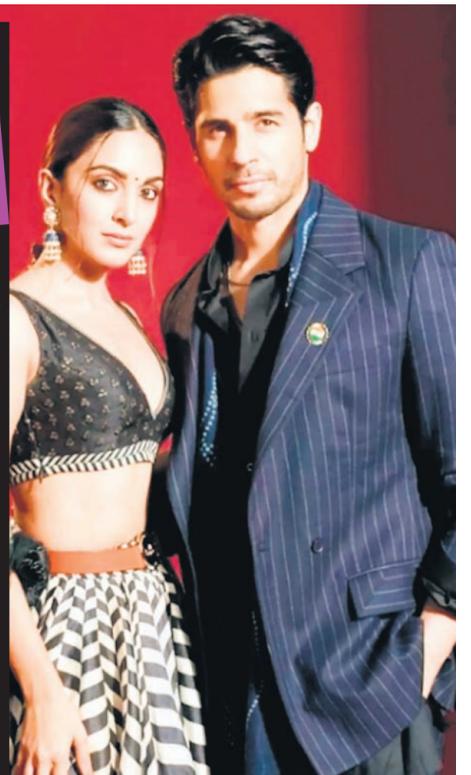
Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani parted ways?

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Another Bollywood romance appears to have ended abruptly. According to the latest rumours, actors Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani have ended their relationship after years of dating. According to reports, the couple, who met on the set of 'Shershaah,' has stopped seeing each other because they have 'fallen out of love.' While the cause for their split is still unknown, fans and shippers who were hoping for a wedding announcement will be disappointed. For a long period, Sidharth and Kiara were rumoured to be dating. They

were frequently seen out on dates or on vacations together. The two, however, never publicly confirmed their connection.

On the work front, Kiara's next project is Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2, in which she will star alongside Kartik Aaryan and Tabu. On May 20, the film will be released in theatres. Jug Jugg Jeeyo, starring Varun Dhawan, Neetu Kapoor, Anil Kapoor, Prajakta Koli, and Manish Paul, is also in the works. Apart from that, Kiara will be seen in Govinda Naam Mera alongside Vicky Kaushal and Bhumi Pednekar. Sidharth Malhotra, on the other hand, has a number of other projects in the works. Along with Pushpa actress Rashmika Mandanna, the actor will be seen in Mission Majnu. He's also working on Karan Johar's Yodha. Along with Ajay Devgn and Rakul Preet Singh, Sidharth has been working on Thank God. He also appeared in Indian Police Force, Rohit Shetty's OTT debut series.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Jayashree Venketaraman



Ranbir Kapoor's leaked photos with Rashmika Mandanna go viral

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The fans of Ranbir Kapoor and Rashmika Mandanna are ecstatic as the two are collaborating on Animal. The film was first announced in 2021 and went into production on April 22, 2022. Ranbir and Rashmika are now filming in Manali's gorgeous locales.

A video of Ranbir and Rashmika shooting on set has recently been released and is doing the rounds on the internet. Ranbir is clad in a white kurta set on the set video, while Rashmika is dressed in a red-and-white saree.

Animal, starring Ranbir Kapoor, Rashmika Mandanna, Anil Kapoor, and Bobby Deol, is a criminal.