

# absolute india

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## Geetanjali Shree's 'Tomb of Sand' wins International Booker Prize

**It is the first Hindi-language book to win the award. The book was first published in Hindi as 'Ret Samadhi' (Rajkamal Prakashan) and has been translated into English by American writer-translator Daisy Rockwell into 'Tomb of Sand' (Penguin Random House India).**

**'RET SAMADHI' CENTRES AROUND A NORTH INDIAN 80-YEAR-OLD WOMAN WHO SLIPS INTO A DEEP DEPRESSION AFTER THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND AND THEN RESURFACES TO GAIN A NEW LEASE ON LIFE. HER DETERMINATION TO FLY IN THE FACE OF CONVENTION INCLUDING STRIKING UP A FRIENDSHIP WITH A TRANSGENDER PERSON CONFUSES HER BOHEMIAN DAUGHTER, WHO IS USED TO THINKING OF HERSELF AS THE MORE 'MODERN' OF THE TWO.**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

**G**eetanjali Shree, a Delhi-based Hindi novelist and short-story writer, has won the prestigious 2022 International Booker Prize for her book 'Tomb of Sand.' The author was in disbelief during her acceptance speech. "There is a melancholy satisfaction in the award going to it. 'Ret Samadhi/Tomb of Sand' is an elegy for the world we inhabit, a laughing elegy

**"This is a bolt from the blue, but what a nice one. I never dreamt of the Booker, I never thought I could. What a huge recognition, I'm amazed, delighted, honoured and humbled."**

that retains hope in the face of impending doom. The Booker will surely take it to many more people than it would have reached otherwise, that should do the book no harm." The book revolves around the story of an 80-year-old north Indian woman who goes into a depression after her husband dies, but eventually recovers from her depression and insists on travelling to Pakistan to confront the unresolved trauma during the partition. Geetanjali will be awarded 50,000 pounds, which will be shared between the author and translator.

## CRUISER DRUGS CASE: NCB GIVES CLEAN CHIT TO 6 PRIME ACCUSED INCLUDING ARYAN KHAN

# CULPRIT, VICTIM, SCAPEGOAT?

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) will soon prepare a supplementary charge-sheet in the drugs-on-cruise case in which Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan and five others have been given a clean chit.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**I**n a huge anti-climax, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Friday dropped charges of drug possession against 6 prime accused - including Aryan Khan, son of Bollywood mega-star Shah Rukh Khan, an official said here. The NCB's clean chit has gone to Aryan, Avin Sahu, Gopal Anand, Samir Sehgal, Bhaskar Arora and Manav Singhal, as per its charge sheet in the sensational case filed before a Special Court.



While Sahu was a guest on the ship Cordelia Cruise that was swooped on by a team led by the then NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede, the others were the organisers of the alleged rave party on board. The NCB has said in its charge sheet that narcotics were found on all - except Aryan Khan and Mohak Jaiswal - in the case that hogged international media attention for months.

In a terse statement, NCB Deputy Director-General Sanjay Kumar Singh said that

### SIT TO FIX RESPONSIBILITY OF NCB OFFICIALS

► The SIT formed in the drugs-on-cruise case might be filing a report with the Ministry of Home Affairs to fix responsibility for conducting shoddy probe in the matter, sources in the Narcotics Control Bureau have suggested. The MHA is keeping a close eye on the matter.

► Earlier, NCB official Ashish Ranjan Prasad was placed under suspension. Later his suspension was revoked and he was transferred to CISF. Another NCB official who faced the music was Intelligence Official V.V. Singh who filled the

arrest memo of Aryan Khan. Singh was placed under suspension which has not been revoked as of now.

► Sameer Wankhede, who was heading the Mumbai Zone of the NCB, was sent to the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI). Vishwanath Tripathi, who was the part of the NCB team which conducted the raid was also suspended.

► Sources have said that the officials who directly or indirectly implicated any innocent in the matter will not be spared. If any person who was travelling on Cordelia

Cruise was falsely booked, the official can face the music. The team which conducted raid at Cordelia Cruise committed huge blunders -- chats leaked to media before the court hearing was one of them.

► Action can be suggested against a few officials for not conducting the blood test of Aryan Khan before placing him under arrest. The SIT has also learnt that some witnesses were not trustworthy but they assisted the NCB team in the raid. They only harmed the NCB reputation and its investigation.

six persons will be free now as there's "no evidence to proceed against them, and the charges have been dropped" by the NCB. The development comes as a major relief for Aryan Khan who was among

those nabbed in a high-profile raid on the ship with 1,800 people on board by Wankhede on October 2 last year, and underwent nearly a month in police and judicial custody. Based on intel, the NCB

Mumbai had raided the Cordelia Cruise and detained, besides Aryan, Arbaaz Merchant, Nupur Sarika, Munmun Dhamecha, Ismeet Singh, Mohak Jaiswal, Gomit Chopra and Vikrant Chhokar.

## 10 SACKS OF LEMONS, 35 CRATES OF TOMATOES STOLEN FROM GURUGRAM VEGETABLE MARKET

# Inflation Effect

Gurugram | Agencies

**A**mid a sharp rise in vegetable prices, 10 sacks of lemon, 35 crates of tomatoes and 15 pouches of capsicum were stolen from a wholesale market in Gurugram early on Friday, police said.

According to police, the incident took place on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday. Driver Sandeep, a resident of Charkhi Dabri, had informed the police



that on Thursday night, he stored the vegetables inside shop no-64 at Khandasa market but the next morning, he found that the shop shutter was half-open and some of

the stock missing. He said that the rise in prices of vegetables and lemons could be the reason behind the theft. The stock was worth Rs 60,000-70,000 in the wholesale market while it would be around 1.50 lakh in the retail market, he said. The police said they registered a case against unidentified people under Section 380 (theft in dwelling, house etc) of the Indian Penal Code at the Shivaji Nagar police station.

## Hardik Patel hints at joining BJP next week

Ahmedabad | Agencies

**P**atidar Anamat Andolan Samiti (PAAS) convener and former Congress working president Hardik Patel will be joining BJP either on May 30 or May 31 in Gandhinagar. He gave the hint on Friday in Ahmedabad and even hinted at contesting elections.

Patel in a programme on a TV channel has hinted that he is joining the BJP, and the party will decide from which constituency he will contest the assembly elections. He also said that he is going to lead an Ekta Yatra from Somnath temple to the Statue of Unity.

It will be a grand show of Hardik Patel joining the BJP, party sources

said. He was given two options on how would he like to join BJP, in presence of National President in New Delhi, or in presence of Gujarat BJP in-charge Bhupender Yadav or B.L. Santhosh in Gandhinagar. He has selected the second option. Hardik and the BJP are planning to address a large gathering on the day, sources said. Since the day Hardik resigned from Congress, he has been attacking the party, saying the party is anti-Patidar and anti-Gujarat. He said that even the party national leaders' action is anti-Gujarat.



## As UP Assembly goes paperless, MLAs fumble with tablets

Lucknow | Agencies

**T**he e-Vidhan that has made the Uttar Pradesh state Assembly go paperless, is proving cumbersome for the legislators, many of whom are not tech-savvy. While the BJP MLAs and ministers are going an extra mile to learn how to operate the tablets installed on their seats and some are even taking classes from their children or others to learn the functioning of the device, opposition members are vocal about their reservations of the new system.

"The Vidhan Sabha officials should have implemented the new system in a phased manner and allowed

the house to function in a hybrid mode for some time. We are left grappling with the tablet and tend to miss out on the proceedings," said a Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA. Another SP MLA said that the government wanted to leave the opposition grappling with the new system so that focus could be diverted from other important issues.

Several MLAs can be seen peering into blank tablets and some SP MLAs managed to fix their party logo on their screens. A BJP MLA, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that a minimum training of one week was required to make the legislators familiar with operating the tablets.

## NOW VVSS DEMANDS BAN ON DISCLOSING GYANVAPI VIDEO CONTENT

Varanasi | Agencies

**J**itendra Singh Vishen, head of the Vishwa Vaidik Sanatan Sangh (VVSS), which is among the petitioners in the Kashi Vishwanath-Gyanvapi complex case, has now written to the District Magistrate of Varanasi, demanding a complete ban on publicising and disclosure of photography and video content of Gyanvapi Commission in the interest of national security and commu-



nal harmony of the country. In his letter, Vishen said that the video survey of Gyanvapi premises was conducted as per the orders of Court of Civil Judge, Senior Division, Varanasi, and the said photography and video content was submitted along with Advocate Commissioner Report to the Court.

He said that the content of said photography and video is part of court record of the case which stands pending adjudication.

"As the matter is apparently serious and concerned with national security and communal harmony of India, disclosing or publicizing of said photography and video content of aforesaid Gyanvapi Commission on any platform could be against the national interest," he said.

Vishen said that anti-national elements can publicize and disclose the content of photography and video of said Gyanvapi Commission to provoke, the religious sentiments

of both communities concerned with matter and utilize it as a tool to harm national security and communal harmony of India. He said that it is important that the content of photography and video should be confined to the court proceedings and not be disclosed or publicized at any public platform. He further demanded action against anyone found disclosing the aforesaid information at any platform.

## India votes for US-sponsored UNSC resolution to raise N Korea sanctions, China, Russia veto it

UNITED NATIONS | Agencies

**I**ndia has voted for a United States-sponsored resolution to strengthen sanctions on North Korea which was vetoed by China and Russia.

The US launched the unsuccessful effort on Thursday to punish North Korea which had tested three missiles on Wednesday after US President Joe Biden had wrapped up a visit to South Korea and Japan.

Speaking on the resolution, US Permanent

Representative Linda Thomas-Greenfield warned that North Korea was preparing for an imminent nuclear test. The failed resolution would have tightened sanctions on a wide range of products ranging from crude oil to tobacco and frozen the assets of a cyber-criminal outfit.

The vetoes marked another stage of intensification in the confrontations in the Council between the western countries and China and Russia.

The other 13 countries in the Council presented a



united front on the North Korea issue. The issue will now go to the General Assembly under new procedures adopted by it following Russia's vetoes

of resolutions in the Council condemning its invasion of Ukraine. Although the Assembly does not have the enforcement powers of the Council, it will now take up issues vetoed by a permanent member in the Council in the expectation that it will show the isolation of the veto-wielder.

India, which had stayed neutral on the resolutions on the Ukraine conflict that Russia had vetoed, did not abstain on this resolution for which the prime opposition came from China.

## 7 SOLDIERS KILLED, 19 INJURED IN LADAKH ROAD ACCIDENT

**Srinagar:** Seven soldiers were killed and 19 others injured in a road accident in Ladakh on Friday, defence sources said.

According to the sources, 26 soldiers were injured in the road accident in Turtuk area of Ladakh. "Seven soldiers died on the spot while 19 others were injured. The injured soldiers have been airlifted to military hospital in Chandigarh," a defence source said.



## NHRC NOTICE TO CENTRE, BIHAR OVER ILLEGAL HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The NHRC on Friday issued notice to top officials of the Central and Bihar governments over a report alleging that a large number of hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes are running illegally without any registration in the state's Munger district despite a specific 2013 state law.

Taking suo motu case of the report, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought detailed reports from the Union Health and Family Welfare Secretary, Bihar Chief Secretary, and the National Medical Commission Chairman in the matter within four weeks, including steps taken or proposed to be taken against the illegally running clinical establishments in the region.



ments in the region.

Reportedly, out of 40 private hospitals running in the district, only four are lawfully registered, the NHRC said in a statement.

It has also observed that the right to life and health are basic human rights and such serious violations by the clinical establishments, if true, is a matter of concern. "According to the media

report carried today on May 27, 2022, the information has been reportedly collected by an RTI activist. Reportedly, as per the provisions of the Bihar Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation Act, 2013), the registration of health care facilities is mandatory and the violators have to pay fine," the NHRC said.

## Parliament's Privileges Committee summons Maha officials over arrest of Navneet Rana

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Parliament's Privileges and Ethics Committee on Friday asked Maharashtra Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, and Commissioner Mumbai Police to appear before it on June 15 for oral evidence over the arrest of Lok Sabha Member Navneet Rana.

The Committee also asked Superintendent of Women District Prison, Byculla (Mumbai) to appear before it on June 15 for oral evidence. An office memorandum issued by Privileges and Ethics branch Lok Sabha Secretariat said: "Committee of Privileges has directed that Manu Kumar Srivastava, Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra be asked to appear before the Committee for oral evidence on the above subject matter on Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at 1230 hours in Committee Room '2', Parliament House Annexe Extension, New Delhi."

The office memorandum (OM) further stated that the Ministry of Personnel and Public Grievances and Pensions are accordingly, requested to ensure that the official referred to above, appear before the Committee of Privileges, Lok



Sabha on the date and time indicated above.

"Necessary confirmation, in this regard, may please be sent to this Secretariat latest by June 7, 2022. The receipt of this OM may kindly be acknowledged," it added.

Another office memorandum said that the Committee of Privileges has directed the following officials be asked to appear before the Committee for oral evidence on the above subject matter on Wednesday, June 15 at 12.30 p.m. in Committee Room '2', Parliament House Annexe Extension, New Delhi.

"The undersigned is directed to state that Director General of Police (DGP) Maharashtra Rajnesh Seth, Commissioner of Police, Mumbai Sanjay Pandey and Superintendent, Women District Prison, Class-2, Byculla, Mumbai." The Ministry of Home Affairs are accordingly, requested to ensure that the officials referred to above, appear before the Committee of Privileges, Lok Sabha on the date and time indicated above," it said.

Officials are asked to appear before the committee regarding April 25 complaint of Navneet Rana alleging patently illegal arrest and the consequent inhuman treatment meted out to her in Khar Police Station, Mumbai.

## TELANGANA CONG CHIEF'S REMARKS ON REDDYS-VELAMAS TRIGGER ROW

HYDERABAD | Agencies

Less than a month after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi visited Hyderabad and warned party leaders against airing their differences in public, the party's Telangana unit is witnessing an uproar over certain remarks made by state chief A. Revanth Reddy about a particular caste.

Finding fault with Revanth Reddy's remarks, some Congress leaders asked him to withdraw the same as they hurt the sentiments of a community and may damage the interests of the party.

Revanth Reddy had said on Sunday that Reddys were better than Velamas in providing leadership and steering a state to development.

Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu is a Velama while Revanth and several leaders of Congress are



Reddys. With Revanth Reddy's comments and reaction by some party leaders

sparking a new row in the party, MP and in-charge of party affairs in Telangana Manickam Tagore posted

the video clip of Rahul Gandhi's speech at TPCC headquarters at Gandhi Bhawan.

"Don't forget the words of our leader Rahul Gandhi on May 7 th 2022 at Gandhi Bhawan," tweeted Tagore.

Describing Congress as a family, Rahul Gandhi had warned the leaders against voicing their grievances publicly.

"If there are grievances or complaints we have an internal system. You can openly say whatever you want to say but if anyone goes out and tells something to the media, he will be damaging the Congress party and we will not accept this," he had said. He gave the warning as differences in the party's Telangana unit came to fore on several occasions. Leaders critical of Revanth Reddy's style of functioning had been speaking publicly.

## Senior nurses in Bengal to play doctors' role now in rural areas

KOLKATA | Agencies

The West Bengal Health Department has devised a unique initiative to cope with the problem of shortage of qualified doctors in the rural areas of the state, especially in the community health centers.

It will shortly start a three-week "doctor's training programme" for senior nurses employed under the department and after successful completion of the training, these nurses will be upgraded as community health officers and be posted in different community health centers. A state Health Department official said that



these community health officers will do the initial treatment in case of minor ailments and substitute in case of non-availability of doctors in the community health centers. However, these community health officers will not have the right to issue prescriptions or death certificates." The entire project is the brain-child of Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee,

to open the career growth avenues for the nurses employed with the state government," the official said.

He also said that in the initial phase, 704 nurses will undergo this "doctor's training programme". During the training period, they will receive a special allowance of Rs 10,000.

An announcement on these lines was made by Chief Minister Banerjee in August 2021, when she said that the state government is planning to open the promotion avenues for experienced nurses, contending these were capable of providing medical services just like qualified doctors.

## 2 centuries-old idols seized: TN idol wing continues probe

CHENNAI | Agencies

The idol wing of the Tamil Nadu police on Friday continued its investigation in connection with the seizure of two-centuries old metallic idols from a smuggler in Tiruchi.

The idols were seized from a smuggler in Myladuthurai district of Tamil Nadu.

Idol wing in a statement on Friday said that of the two idols, the statue of Buddhist Goddess 'Tara Devi' is believed to be 700 years old, while that of 'Vinayagar' is around 300 years of age.

The police are probing the origin of the idols and according to inputs from the idol wing, it is likely to have originated from Tibetan area. Idol wing sleuths are probing as to how the smuggler could get hold of these idols. On Thursday, the idol wing got confidential information that a man was in possession of metallic idols in Myladuthurai district and that he had concealed it in a den in a village. Idol wing ASP R.Rajaram and other officers posed as potential buyers and established contact with Suresh (32) who was in possession of the idols. The sleuths agreed to buy the idols at Rs 2 crore and asked Suresh to show them the idols. When the smuggler showed them the idols, the policemen pinned him down and took him into custody.

It is to be noted that the Tamil Nadu idol wing has retrieved several valuable idols from within and outside the country and has restored most of them to the temples from



where they were stolen.

According to idol wing officers, Suresh, who is remanded in judicial custody, will be taken for questioning and find out how he got the idols. Officers said that on detailed interrogation of the smuggler, they will get to know more about the idols and can trace it down.

The idol wing of the Tamil Nadu police has already informed all the antique sellers to get proper papers before they purchase or sell any antique metal pieces or will have to legal issues including arrest.

## ALLIANCE WITH JD(U) IS IMAGINARY: TEJASHWI YADAV



Patna: Amid speculation that the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) is attempting to forge an alliance with Janata Dal (United), Tejashwi Yadav, the leader of opposition in the Bihar Assembly has said that forming a government with Nitish Kumar in Bihar "was just an imagination" and there was no truth in it. After returning from London on Thursday evening, when Tejashwi was asked about forming a government with Nitish Kumar, he said: "All these things are imaginary. I don't see anything to reunite again to form a political alliance for the formation of the government in Bihar."

He further said: "Caste-based census was my initiative. I had written a letter to the prime minister to meet Chief Minister Narendra Modi last year."

## Life imprisonment for Telangana's serial killer who murdered 17 women

HYDERABAD | Agencies

A serial killer, who murdered 17 women, has been awarded life imprisonment by a court in Telangana's Joggulamba-Gadwal district.

Yerukali Srinu (47), who used to target women after befriending them at toddy shops, was awarded the sentence in one of the murder cases.

Third Additional District Magistrate held him guilty and on Thursday sentenced him to life imprisonment for the murder of Chitti Alivelamma (53). The serial killer was arrested in 2019 in Alivelamma's murder case. The investigations revealed that he killed 16 other women in the last one decade. Srinu's wife Salamma was also arrested for stocking the stolen property.

Srinu, addicted to liquor, would befriend women who come to toddy shops to drink, would take them out to isolated places in the name of picnic and after drinking with them would kill them and decamp with their gold and silver ornaments.

Srinu, who had also murdered his own brother, was finally caught when police cracked the murder case of Alivelamma, whose body was found on December 17, 2019 near a village in



Mahabubnagar district.

The police investigations had revealed that the accused targeted lone women at toddy shops at various places in Rangareddy and Mahabubnagar districts.

Srinu was convicted and jailed in a few criminal cases. In 2009, he was sentenced for life for killing his brother but was given remission in 2013 for good conduct in jail. However, there

was no change in him. After the last time he was released from jail in 2018, authorities had provided him a job at a petrol bunk run by the prison department with the hope that he would mend his ways. However, he continued to indulge in drinking and commit crimes. He was acquitted in 11 cases. In two of the cases, he was acquitted recently. Police have appealed against his acquittal.

## Non-alcoholic beverages sector adds Rs 7,91,599 mn value, over 6,90,000 jobs: Report

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The non-alcoholic beverages sector added Rs 7,91,599 million value to the Indian economy and created an estimated 6,91,491 jobs, a report released on Friday said.

The report, 'Contribution of Non-Alcoholic Beverages Sector in Indian Economic Growth and #AtmanirbharBharat' was released by Food and Public Distribution Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey, at an event organised by the Indian Beverage Association, wherein he highlighted the need to reduce wastage of fruits and making Indian beverage industry competitive while matching the global quality standards in the sector.

Noting the requirement of a holistic eco-system including a specialised logistics chain management system for better efficiency and productivity in the sector, he also drew attention towards the opportunities for generation of employment in rural areas and potential for investment in a diversified manner throughout the country. The report, which seeks to understand the contribution of the sector towards the Indian economy, examine the strengths and best practices, identify challenges and suggest a way forward to make India one of the world's leading beverage processing hubs,



found that the non-alcoholic beverage sector contributes significantly to the Indian economy in terms of value addition and job creation. The Input-Output model estimated that for every Rs one crore of output produced in the non-alcoholic beverage sector, a total of 8.9 additional jobs are created in the economy due

to both the direct as well as indirect impact, the report said. However, it also pointed out that employment creation is still below potential, as processing is much lower than in other developing countries in the ASEAN or in China. Foreign investment inflows are below one per cent and exports are much behind

what is required for India to become a \$17 trillion economy by 2047, it said.

The global non-alcoholic beverage market was worth \$1,180 billion in 2020 and is projected to reach \$2,175 billion in 2026, with a compound annual growth rate of 7.3 per cent.

In 2019, India ranked 19th, much below other developing countries such as Mexico (6th), Brazil (7th), Indonesia (8th) and Nigeria (10th). Global trade was \$77.36 billion in 2019. Over 60 per cent of the global market was accounted for by carbonated soft drinks (CSDs), ready-to-drink (RTD) tea/coffee, energy drinks and sports drinks.

The per capita consumption of CSDs is lower in India compared to other countries such as the US. Mineral water (packaged drinking water/natural mineral water) has the highest growth projection in Asia, with India being one of the largest markets, the report highlighted. The report also pointed to the top four challenges to the growth of this sector. These are unfair competition from the unorganised sector and counterfeit products, negative perception regarding the industry, high goods and services tax (GST) and additional "sin tax" (as applied based on the Subramaniam Committee Report) and infrastructure related issues.

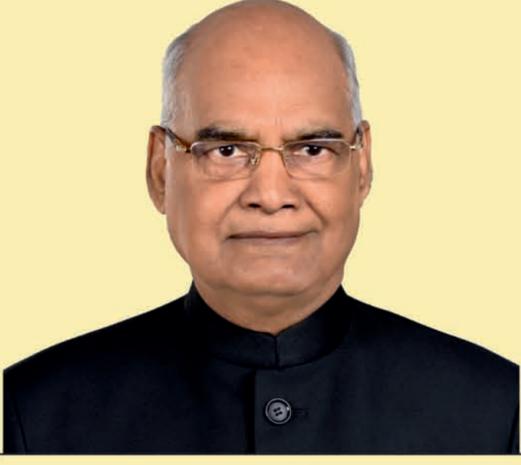
## 2 LASHKAR TERRORISTS KILLED IN SRINAGAR GUNFIGHT WERE LOCALS



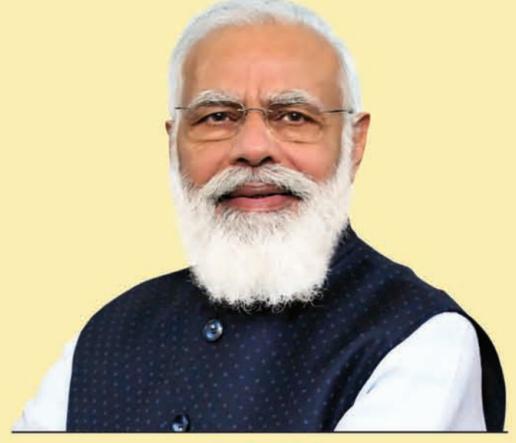
Srinagar: The two terrorists who were killed in a gunfight with the security forces at Soura in Central Kashmir's Srinagar district on Friday have been identified, officials said.

Both the terrorists belonged to the Lashkar-e-Taiba and were local residents. "The two killed terrorists of LeT have been identified as Shakir Ahmed Waza and Aftab Aftab Malik, both residents of Trenz Shopian and 'C' categorised. Incriminating materials, including arms and ammunition recovered," police said.

The gunfight took place after a joint team of the police and the security forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operation on the basis of specific information about the presence of terrorists. As the security forces zeroed in on the spot where the terrorists were hiding they came under a heavy volume of fire that triggered the gunfight.



श्री राम नाथ कोविन्द  
राष्ट्रपति



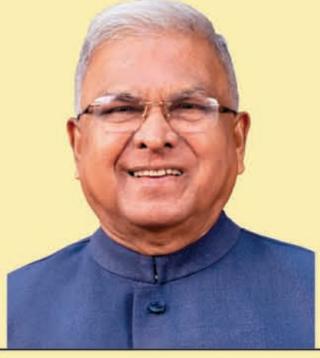
श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी  
प्रधानमंत्री

भारत के  
माननीय राष्ट्रपति

**श्री राम नाथ कोविन्द**

का देश के हृदय स्थल  
मध्यप्रदेश में

**हार्दिक स्वागत  
अभिनंदन**



श्री मंगुभाई पटेल  
राज्यपाल



श्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान  
मुख्यमंत्री

**“आरोग्य  
मंथन”**

एक देश  
एक स्वास्थ्य तंत्र  
वर्तमान समय की  
आवश्यकता

28 मई, 2022  
प्रातः 11.00 बजे

कुशाभाऊ ठाकरे  
इंटरनेशनल कन्वेंशन सेंटर, भोपाल

सभी के लिए बेहतर  
स्वास्थ्य सुविधाएं  
नवीन स्वास्थ्य  
संस्थाओं का  
भूमि पूजन  
एवं लोकार्पण  
कुल राशि  
₹ 399.72 करोड़

28 मई, 2022  
सायं 5.00 बजे

मोतीलाल नेहरू स्टेडियम  
भोपाल

अखिल भारतीय  
आयुर्वेद महासम्मेलन  
59वें महाधिवेशन का  
उद्घाटन  
एवं ₹ 19.37 करोड़ के  
शासकीय आयुर्वेद  
महाविद्यालय, उज्जैन  
के भवन का  
लोकार्पण

29 मई, 2022  
प्रातः 10.00 बजे

कालिदास संस्कृत अकादमी  
उज्जैन

मुख्य अतिथि

भारत के माननीय राष्ट्रपति  
**श्री राम नाथ कोविन्द**

गरिमामयी उपस्थिति

श्री मंगुभाई पटेल  
राज्यपाल, मध्यप्रदेश

श्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान  
मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश

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EDITOR'S SPECS

Ray of hope against new virus

A team of researchers have found that some antiviral medications might have the potential to shorten symptoms and reduce the amount of time a patient is contagious with Monkeypox virus. In the paper published in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* journal, researchers described a retrospective study of seven patients diagnosed with Monkeypox in the UK between 2018 and 2021. It also reported the first off-label use of two different antiviral medications - brincidofovir and tecovirimat - to treat the disease. The study found little evidence that brincidofovir was of clinical benefit but concluded that further research into the potential of tecovirimat would be warranted. The initial three patients were treated with brincidofovir seven days after the initial onset of the rash. Brincidofovir was not observed to have any convincing clinical benefit in treating Monkeypox and alterations in liver blood tests were observed. The researchers note that it is not known whether brincidofovir administration earlier in the course of the disease or at a different dosing schedule would have yielded different clinical outcomes. Despite this, all three patients, plus the fourth hospital transmission patient, made a full recovery. Of the three further cases of Monkeypox reported in the UK in 2021, one was treated with tecovirimat and experienced a shorter duration of symptoms and upper respiratory tract viral shedding than the other cases in this cluster. All patients experienced mild disease and were treated in a hospital setting for infection control purposes and not due to the severity of the infection. No patients experienced the commonly recognised severe complications of monkeypox such as pneumonia or sepsis, however, one patient experienced a mild relapse six weeks following hospital discharge, and another patient developed a deep tissue abscess that required drainage. Patients were also found to experience low mood, likely stemming from isolation.

# Myanmar's humanitarian crisis

India has taken a measured stance on the situation in Myanmar since the military took over power in February 2021. This stance is necessitated by the need to keep in mind the China factor in ties with Myanmar and continue to keep that nation at the centre of its Act East policy. These considerations remain paramount even today. India needs to step up humanitarian assistance to Myanmar, where over 9 million people remain internally displaced. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) recently hosted a meeting attended by high level representatives from the region, Myanmar, UN specialised agencies and other international organisations to discuss the humanitarian situation. The May 6 meeting held in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh aimed to revive the five-point consensus reached by ASEAN in April 2021, one part of which dealt with the provision of humanitarian aid to the people of Myanmar. The issue is: Can India take a lead in this direction? According to the UN Refugee Agency, some 9,24,800 people remain displaced across Myanmar as of April 25, including 5,78,200 people who have fled their homes as a result of conflict and insecurity since the military takeover. Consequently, humanitarian access to conflict-affected and displaced people remains restricted and significant gaps remain in assistance to these communities despite continued efforts by humanitarian partners and local organisations. In the Chin state alone, for example, nearly one-fifth of the population have fled their homes. Estimate indicates that more than 50,000 people are currently internally displaced across the nine townships of Chin State, while at least 40,000 may have crossed the border to become refugees in Mizoram. India realises that refugees will continue to come as long as there is instability in Myanmar. The humanitarian agencies and institutional donors must find further ways to directly provide funds and resources to local groups doing this important work. Perhaps the lead can be taken out of the Afghanistan example, where organisations like the World Food Programme and other UN organisations are distributing aid directly to the people of Myanmar. Recall that India's vaccine diplomacy was also conducted through the good offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross. However, the need of the hour in this regard is actually bilateral cooperation. Remember that India had provided vaccine



doses to the people of Myanmar and earlier, had provided education, healthcare and infrastructure development assistance. This indicates that the present Myanmar government is not averse to seeking India's assistance when needed. The best illustration of this is the gift of one million vaccine doses by former Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla when he visited Myanmar in end-December 2021. During the visit, he also held substantive discussions with military leader General Min Aung Hlaing. This has to be capitalised on. Just as India extended development assistance to Myanmar some years ago for the construction of houses in the Rakhine state, India could look at extending assistance to meet the immediate humanitarian crisis. Specifics can always be worked out diplomatically. The major benefit of such an understanding will be that India will be seen as having reached out to the people of Myanmar. Challenges however will remain for both countries in practical terms. These are not insurmountable and should be creatively

handled. While the direct route of connecting with the people through Naypyidaw is always there, India could also go the Japan route, which has challenged aid and assistance, in cooperation with international organisations and the ASEAN Secretariat, taking into account the local situation and humanitarian needs and urgency. India is best placed geographically and has the diplomatic advantage of being able to reach out to the military government. Therefore, one option would be for donor governments and international agencies to immediately offer their help to India, and to the local groups trying to reach local communities in Myanmar. The only catch here will be for India to be willing and able to undertake such an initiative. Past experience shows that India has the capacity to engage with Myanmar to provide aid and assistance. A similar story has unfolded in Sri Lanka where India became the first responder to the island nation's call for assistance with fuel and medicines. The narrative of

support is positive and provides reassurance that India is willing to take the first step to help. Addressing this issue will require deft diplomatic strategies entailing both direct and indirect connects to the government, NGOs and others in Myanmar. What is immediately needed is raising awareness of the problem and giving solutions, both bilateral and regional. At some stage, consensus will have to be reached on the way forward. There is much to be learnt from the experience of bilateral cooperation. Engagement with the military government as well as others concerned about the well-being of the people of Myanmar is the first step. For this, an invitation could be sent for Myanmar's Foreign Secretary to visit India at an opportune time to discuss matters. The long-term view is ready, what is needed is action on the ground.

international

## MONKEYPOX SPREADS TO MORE THAN 20 COUNTRIES: WHO

**New Delhi** | Agencies  
The monkeypox virus has spread to more than 20 countries, with about 200 confirmed cases and over 100 suspected cases in nations where it is typically not found, the World Health Organization (WHO) said. The global health body has urged nations to increase surveillance of the infectious disease as outbreaks grow. According to Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's Covid-19 technical lead, more cases of the rare viral illness will likely be reported as surveillance expands, but added that the recent spread is containable, CNBC reported. "We expect more cases to be detected. We are asking countries to increase surveillance," Van Kerkhove said during a Q&A on the global health agency's social media platforms. "This is a containable situation. It will be difficult,



but it's a containable situation in non-endemic countries." Since the first reported case on May 7, from the UK, monkeypox has spread to North America and Europe in recent weeks. The outbreak is driven by a milder West African strain of the virus and most patients recover in a few weeks. No deaths have been reported so far. As per the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the European Union (EU) has confirmed 118 cases of monkeypox. Spain and Portugal have reported the largest outbreaks in the EU with 51 and 37 cases, respectively. The UK Health Security Agency has

confirmed 90 cases of the virus. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identified nine cases across seven states, while Canadian health officials have confirmed 16 cases of monkeypox, all detected in the province of Quebec, the report said. CDC Director Rochelle Walensky noted that some patients in the US haven't travelled to countries with active outbreaks, suggesting that the virus is spreading domestically. Health officials in these countries have said a majority of the patients are gay or bisexual men, with the virus spreading in many cases through sex. However, the officials emphasised that monkeypox can spread to anyone through close physical contact regardless of sexual orientation. But, monkeypox is not a

sexually transmitted disease. The virus can spread through any kind of sustained skin-to-skin contact with an infected person who has a lesion. It can also spread through body fluids, contaminated bed sheets and clothing, or respiratory droplets if a person has a lesion in their mouth. Van Kerkhove suggested health-care professionals to consider monkeypox a diagnosis for patients with rash illnesses that present at sexual health clinics, emergency departments, infectious disease clinics, primary-care physicians and dermatologists, the report said. "It doesn't mean that anyone with a rash will have monkeypox but we need to raise awareness about what monkeypox is and isn't, and we need to ensure that countries have the capacity to test and provide the right information."

## Countries attempting to isolate Russia only hurt themselves: Putin

**Moscow** | Agencies  
Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the countries, which are attempting to isolate Russia, are primarily only harming their economies. While addressing the plenary session of the First Eurasian Economic Forum on Thursday, Putin said it would simply be unfeasible and impossible to isolate Russia, and "those, who aspire to do so would harm themselves the most", reports Xinhua news agency. The President noted that the current state of the global economy demonstrates that Russia's position is right and justified, as opposed to the countries, which are trying to "pursue short-sighted policies". Those advanced economies are experiencing their worst inflation in 40 years as well as growing unemployment, he said, adding that logistic chains



were breaking, and global crises were intensifying in such areas as food. "This is a serious issue that is affecting the entire system of economic and political relations," Putin said. The Russian leader said that the sanctions and restrictions, which aim to primarily weaken and contain countries that wish to pursue independent policies, are ultimately futile. "There are many countries that want to and will pursue an independent policy... and no world policeman will be able to stop this global process... there will not be enough power for this and the desire to do so will evaporate due to a host of domestic problems in those countries," Putin said.

## Pakistani rupee drops to all-time low as IMF talks fail

**Karachi** | Agencies  
Pakistan's rupee hit a historic record on Thursday of 202.01 against the US dollar in the interbank market, below the previous close of 201.92, after the failure of talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the media reported. Pakistan and the IMF have failed to reach a staff-level agreement for the revival of the \$6 billion programme as the Fund emphasised the "urgency of concrete policy actions, including removing fuel and energy subsidies", Geo News reported. In line with the financial pundits' predictions, the local currency continued its downward slide following the delay in the revival of the IMF programme, Geo News reported.

The IMF assistance has been stalled since a disagreement with the previous government over energy subsidies in late February. Pakistan is facing a fast depletion of foreign exchange reserves and analysts have been warning that the country is at risk of defaulting on its external debts. The mounting political unrest, after the former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan marched towards the federal capital and gave a six-day ultimatum to the government to force early elections, shook investors' confidence in the economy, putting pressure on the local unit. The country needs foreign inflows to bolster its forex reserves, which have fallen to \$10.2 billion, enough to meet the cost of fewer than two months of imports.

## 50 CIVILIANS KILLED IN BURKINA FASO ATTACK

**Ouagadougou** | Agencies  
At least 50 civilians in Burkina Faso's Madojari region were killed during an armed attack, according to an official statement. Residents from the Madojari town who were trying to reach Nadiagou, in the town of Pama, were targeted by unidentified armed men, Xinhua news agency quoted the statement from the regional government as saying. On May 14, an attack on civilians in the same area left 17 dead and seven injured. On May 19, another attack against the military detachment of Madojari left 11 soldiers killed and 20 others injured. Security in Burkina Faso has worsened since 2015 as terrorist attacks have killed more than 1,000 people and displaced more than 1 million others in the West African nation.

## MASSIVE 6.9-MAGNITUDE QUAKE JOLTS PERU

**Lima** | Agencies  
A massive earthquake measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale jolted Peru's Puno region, with no report of casualties or material damages, authorities reported. The Geophysical Institute of Peru (IGP) said the quake was registered at 7.02 a.m. on Thursday, with its epicentre 20 km northeast of the town of Ayaviri in Melgar province and a depth of 240 km, reports Xinhua news agency. The quake was felt strongly in the districts of Ayaviri, Asillo and Azangaro in Melgar province, and moderately in Orurillo, Pucara, Tirapita and San Jose, the National Emergency Operations Centre said. IGP President



Hernando Tavera said that in spite of the quake's magnitude, "we have no information of damages", although it alarmed the population in a region that borders Bolivia. Meanwhile, the Peruvian Presidency has called on the population to remain calm in the face of possible after-

shocks on its Twitter account, as the government is coordinating the evaluation of possible casualties or material damage. Peru is located in the area called the Pacific Ring of Fire, where about 85 percent of the world's seismic activity is recorded.

## STRONG 6.5-MAGNITUDE QUAKE HITS INDONESIA

**Jakarta** | Agencies  
A strong 6.5-magnitude earthquake struck off Indonesia's eastern province of Maluku on Friday, but there was no initial report of damage or casualties, disaster officials said. The country's meteorology, climatology and geophysics agency did not issue a warning for a tsunami as the jolts did not potentially trigger giant waves, Xinhua news reported. The quake struck at 9.36 a.m., with the epicentre at 85 km southwest of Maluku Barat Daya district with a depth of 104 km, the agency said. However, they said the risk assessment for the quake impacts was underway.



MP PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS: 3-PHASE POLLING FROM JUNE 25

Madhya Pradesh State Election Commission (MP-SEC) on Friday announced a three-phase poll schedule from June 25 to July 8 to the three-tier panchayats, which will be conducted through ballot papers.

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Madhya Pradesh State Election Commission (MP-SEC) on Friday announced a three-phase poll schedule from June 25 to July 8 to the three-tier panchayats, which will be conducted through ballot papers.

With the declaration of poll dates, the model code of conduct has come into force with immediate effect and will stay in force till July 15.

The first phase of voting for three-tier panchayats (gram, janpad and zila panchayats) will be held on June 25, the second on July 1 and voting for the third and final phase will be held on

July 8.

The results will be announced on July 14 and 15, state election commissioner Basant Pratap Singh said.

The SEC also made it clear that voting in panchayat elections will be conducted through ballot papers and not EVM (Electronic Voting Machines).

The electorate in three-tier panchayats will be allowed to exercise their votes between 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. "Panchayat elections will be conducted using ballot papers and the voting will be scheduled between 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.," Singh told the media.

Nominations process will start from May 30 and the last date for withdrawal of nominations will be June 10 till 3

pm. The SEC said that voter ID cards will be necessary for voting. The results will be announced at the Block Headquarters.

As per the SEC, the three-phase elections will be held for 875 posts of 52 district panchayats (zila), 6771 posts of 313 Janpad panchayats, 22921 sarpanch and 3,63,726 gram panchayat members posts. Over 3.93 crore voters, including over 2.03 crore male and 1.90 crore women voters will exercise franchise at 71,645 polling booths.

The MP-SEC Commissioner also said that the dates for the urban local bodies polls will be announced later. These polls will be held through EVMs, he said.

President to perform bhoomi-pujan of 8 urban health institution buildings and dedication of 4 newly constructed buildings

PRESIDENT RAM NATH KOVIND WILL PERFORM BHOOMI-PUJAN OF 10 URBAN HEALTH INSTITUTION BUILDINGS COSTING RS 154 CRORE 78 LAKH 8 THOUSAND AND WILL DEDICATE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED BUILDINGS OF 4 HEALTH INSTITUTIONS COSTING RS 72 CRORE 3 LAKH 94 THOUSAND ON MAY 28 AT MOTILAL NEHRU STADIUM.

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President Kovind will also perform bhoomi-pujan of Regional Institute of Respiratory Diseases with 182 bed capacity costing Rs 55 crore 63 lakh, Center of Excellence for Orthopedics with 133 bed capacity costing Rs 84 crore 94 lakh and Superintendent's Office and Central Drug Store building construction costing Rs 32 crore 34 lakh.

President Kovind will perform bhoomi-pujan of upgradation and construction work of Dewas District Hospital's 400 to 500 bedded building costing Rs 20 crores, upgradation and construction

work of 275 to 500 beds of Jabalpur District Hospital costing Rs 44 crore 78 lakh 8 thousand and upgradation and construction work of 200 to 300 bed building of Sehore District Hospital and Shajapur District Hospital costing Rs 20 crores each. He will also perform bhoomi-pujan for the construction work of 100 bedded new Civil Hospital at Civil Hospital Govindpura, District Bhopal at a cost of Rs 20 crores, upgradation and construction work of Civil Hospital buildings with 50 beds each at Nanda Nagar and Kanadia district Indore costing Rs 10 crores each and upgradation and construction work of 34 bedded civil hospital of Mahidpur in

Ujjain district to 50 bedded Civil Hospital building at a cost of Rs 10 crores. Kovind will dedicate 300 to 600 bedded hospital building upgradation and construction work of Morena District Hospital costing Rs 60 crore 54 lakh and 10 KLD ETP plant costing Rs 34 lakh 70 thousand in Guna District Hospital. He will dedicate upgradation work and Awastriha construction in 50 bedded Civil Hospital building of Bamor District Morena at a cost of Rs 10 crore 65 lakh 12 thousand and installation of 10 bedded HDU/ICU at Civil Hospital Ambah in Morena district at a cost of Rs 50 lakh 12 thousand.

Moong Dal Best Source of Protein and Vitamins for Children: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the quality of education is continuously improving in the state at the school level. In the last survey conducted by the Government of India, Madhya Pradesh was ranked 17th, in this year's survey, Madhya Pradesh is at the fifth place in the entire country. The people of the state deserve congratulations for this achievement. The quality of education plays an important role in building a self-reliant Madhya Pradesh. CM Rise Schools are being started with the aim of improving the quality. We have to keep in mind that a healthy body is of utmost importance for happiness. For this the quality of the food is important. The mid-day meal provided in schools provides nutrition, but proteins and vitamins play an important role in the development of children. Moong dal is a good source of protein. Therefore, the state government has decided to provide moong dal to the students up to class 8th. Chouhan inaugurated the programme for distribution of 78



thousand 511 metric tonne moong dal to 66 lakh students of the state by lighting a lamp and performing Kanya Poojan. Chief Minister Shivraj Chouhan started the state-wide moong dal distribution programme by presenting five kg packets of moong dal to Kumari Rashi Mishra, Kumari Sonam Gaur and Kumari Kavita Dhakad in a programme held at Government Subhash Utkrishi Higher Secondary School. Under the scheme, 10 kg of

moong dal will be given to students of classes 1 to 5 and 15 kg of moong dal to students of classes 6 to 8 with the aim of ensuring more nutrients in the food of the students. Chouhan said that for the all-round development of the students, it is necessary to pay attention to personal health, sports and nutrition along with education. Special campaign is being conducted to remove malnutrition in Anganwadis also. Distribution of moong dal at the

school level will improve the nutritional and health status of the students and their families.

Referring to Swami Vivekananda, Chief Minister Chouhan while motivating the students said that one should never consider oneself weak. You become what you want with your strong will and constant effort. Chief Minister Shiv Chouhan motivated the students to move ahead while being studious and said that we will not allow money to become a hindrance in the education of any child. The fees of the students who pass the engineering, NEET, CLAT examinations will be paid by the state government.

It was informed that the implementation of moong distribution would be done in coordination with the Department of School Education, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection and Panchayat and Rural Development. Former Pro Tem Speaker and MLA Shri Rameshwar Sharma, MLA Smt. Krishna Gaur, Principal Secretary Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Shri Faiz Ahmed Kidwai were present.

CM Chouhan Planted Peepal, Neem and Banyan Saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Peepal and Banyan saplings in the Smart City Garden. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, the team of Radio My FM planted saplings on the completion of 15 years of My FM in Bhopal. My FM's RJ Tina, Mansi, Ved along with Nitesh Bhatia, Adarsh and Deependra planted saplings. Rashmi, Shubhshree, Abhishek Mishra, Shubhankar Tiwari, Alpana Sharma and Rudresh Mishra of Shubh Shree Seva Samiti also planted saplings.

Chouhan congratulated and extended greetings to Radio My FM on completion of 15 successful years. Chief Minister Shiv Chouhan said that My FM is dedicated to connect the society, provide healthy entertainment and encourage the spirit of working for social welfare in all



age groups including youth. Shubh Shree Seva Samiti, which participated in tree plantation, conducts activities for the welfare of differently abled, destitute, helpless children and women. The Samiti inspires people for environmental protection, cleanliness, women's safety, nutrition, yoga-training. Peepal planted today is a

shady tree. It purifies the environment. It has religious and Ayurvedic significance. Abundant in antibiotic elements, neem is known as the supreme medicine. Banyan tree is also called Vat tree or Bad. Banyan has religious importance. According to Ayurveda, the cure of many diseases is possible from the banyan tree.

MP govt sends ordinance to elect mayor directly, Shivraj meets Governor

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Thursday visited the Raj Bhavan to meet Governor Mangubhai Patel.



It has said that the ordinance was taken back due to differences within the BJP.

However, a week later, the BJP-led state government sent the ordinance to the governor's office again to seek his consent ahead of the panchayats and local body polls, which would be conducted soon.

The Shivraj Singh Chouhan government has decided that mayors and chairpersons of municipalities would be elected directly by the electorate. There are as many as 16 municipal corporations, 99 municipalities

and 292 town councils in the state. Notably, the erstwhile Kamal Nath-led Congress government had ended the system of direct election of mayors and chairpersons of municipalities and town councils by voters. However, after returning to power, Shivraj's cabinet passed an ordinance on December 9, 2020 to return to the system of direct election of mayors by the electorate.

Digvijaya Singh led the Congress government (1993-2003) that introduced the system of direct election of mayors in Madhya Pradesh. Till 1998, the state corporators elected their leader as mayor of municipal corporations after local body elections. After the Supreme Court permitted the state government to conduct local body polls with OBC reservation, the state elections commission (ECS) has started the process of reservation of panchayats and local wards in all districts.

Do Whatever Is Necessary For Transparent and Fair Elections

State Election Commissioner Singh Gave Instructions during Review of Election Preparations

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Do whatever is necessary to conduct the elections in a transparent, fair and correct way. State Election Commissioner Basant Pratap Singh gave these instructions during the review of the preparations for the three-tier panchayat and urban body elections. Singh reviewed the election preparations through video conferencing. Singh said that nomination papers for the election of three-tier panchayats would be taken off-line only.

Singh said that all polling stations should be inspected keeping the rainy season in mind. Where necessary, get the required repairs done. Make all arrangements to take the polling parties to the polling stations on time.

Singh said that with the announcement of Panchayat elections on May

27 today, the model code of conduct has come into force in rural areas. This will be applicable to the officers-employees as well as the political parties. Organise Standing Committee meetings from time to time. Ensure action for arms license suspension, property defacement, preventive action, confiscation of illicit liquor. Make proper security arrangements by identifying sensitive and hyper-sensitive polling stations. Rallies, processions, meetings etc. should be organised in the election area only with the prior permission of the competent authority. Polling parties should be given proper training. Enter the vacant posts of Panchayats who have completed their tenure by November-2022.

Singh said that the election information for all the three phases will be issued by the Collectors and District

Election Officers on May 30, 2022. Along with this, information regarding reservation of seats and list of polling stations will also be published. Nomination papers will be taken at the District Headquarters for District Panchayat members, Block Headquarters for Janpad Panchayat members and at the Block Headquarters and Cluster level for the posts of Sarpanch and Panch.

The State Election Commissioner informed that along with the nomination, a deposit amount of Rs. 8 thousand for District Panchayat member, Rs. 4 thousand for Janpad Panchayat member, Rs. 2,000 for Sarpanch and Rs. 400 for Panch will have to be deposited. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Women candidates will have to deposit half of this deposit amount.

Singh said that the Returning Officer himself should scrutinize the nomination papers. During scrutiny, if only one candidate remains, it will be revised by the sub-divisional officer revenue for Panch or Sarpanch, Collector for Janpad Panchayat member and Divisional Commissioner for District Panchayat member.

Make proper arrangements for distribution and receipt of voting material. Follow the process of e-tendering fully. Establish control r

The polling time for the election of Panchayats will be from 7 am to 3 pm and in urban bodies from 7 am to 5 pm. Singh said that the information of Returning Officer, Assistant Returning Officer and Special Executive Magistrate should be given soon. Get the work of FLC of EVMs completed within the time limit.

Scindia not an issue for Congress: Govind Singh

Seven-time Congress MLA Govind Singh, who recently took charge as the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Madhya Pradesh Assembly, in an exclusive interview with IANS said that Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia is "neither a big challenge in Gwalior-Chambal division nor an issue for the Congress".

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Seven-time Congress MLA Govind Singh, who recently took charge as the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Madhya Pradesh Assembly, in an exclusive interview with IANS said that Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia is "neither a big challenge in Gwalior-Chambal division nor an issue for the Congress".

Here are the excerpts from the interview: Q: BJP terms the Supreme Court's decision on OBC reservation its "victory" and accuses the Congress of creating hurdles time and again on the reservation issue. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan says that the Congress moving the court was a sin. What do you say?

A: People know who is against reservation. During the last Bihar Assembly polls, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat had said that there is no need for reservation in the country now and the BJP follows his agenda. Though he changed his statement later, but the truth had come out. On the contrary, the Congress introduced Mahajan

Ayog during Arjun Singh's tenure, which was the first initiative to provide reservation to the OBCs in the country. Later, Digvijaya Singh-led Congress government introduced a reservation quota for OBCs and a proposal was passed to increase it from 14 per cent to 27. But, in the last 15 years, the BJP government pushed the matter into cold storage. Again, when Kamal Nath became the chief minister in 2018, he restarted the process and it was implemented in local bodies, but the BJP government changed it and brought an ordinance to conduct elections as the basis of the reservation system of 2014. It was the BJP that sinned not the Congress.

Q: But, the BJP claims that they have given three OBC chief ministers to Madhya Pradesh...

A: Yes, the BJP did give three OBC chief ministers but they should also tell us what they did for the community in the last 18 years. The party has nothing to say and that's the reason they count the chief ministers. It should also declare the measures taken for a large popula-

tion of OBCs or SC/ST in the state. How many OBC people were made officers or given jobs under their reservation quota?

Q: You held a meeting of party MLAs after taking charge as LoP. What is your strategy to take on the BJP government?

A: See, there is a huge difference between what BJP says and what it actually does. The BJP government's strategy is avoid debates on public issues during the Assembly sessions. But, in the next session, Congress will ensure debates associated to common man.

Q: It has been seen that the Opposition often walks out of the House during sessions. How will you corner BJP then?

A: Since BJP is a visionless party, it does not debate on public issues like unemployment, atrocities against tribals, increasing crime against women, mafyraj etc. These subjects are out of its syllabus. Congress always debates on public issues, but the BJP leaders always enumerate Prime Minister Modi's schemes. It means the state government has no vision and

no work. In the last Assembly session, our leaders wrote to the Speaker seeking extension of the duration of the session to debate on crucial issues.

Q: Have you made any changes in the party's strategy after taking over charge as LoP?

A: See, our single aim is to expose the BJP and we are working on it. We share ideas with each other and follow our president's direction. Whoever will come forward to take over responsibilities, they will be assigned as per their expertise and commitment. I am hopeful that it will be discussed in the next meeting.

Q: BJP leaders allege that the Opposition frames its strategy sitting in rooms and not visiting on ground. How would you reply to this?

A: The Opposition will not function on BJP's advice, and we do not bother what their leaders say. We do our work. Each Congress leader has a prominent role to play which they are doing. BJP will get a befitting reply from the

people of the state during the elections. Q: Will Gwalior-Chambal division be a big challenge in the 2023 Assembly polls after Jyotiraditya Scindia shifted to the BJP?

A: Scindia is not an issue for the Congress, it is the media that makes it out to be. A leader, who was given so much importance but was defeated by a non-popular Congress worker, so it is proven that people do not trust him. People in the Gwalior-Chambal area are well aware of his dictatorial behaviour in the past. He used to be the sole decider of tickets but he took wrong decisions everytime. Therefore, Scindia is not an issue for the Congress.

Q: Recently, you attacked Scindia saying that the revolver that was used for killing Mahatma Gandhi was from Gwalior. What was the basis of this allegation?

A: I have not made allegations against the Scindia family. I just said that the revolver, which Nathuram Godse used to kill Gandhiji, was from Gwalior. Not even once did I say that it belonged to the Scindia family.



## Nick Jonas loves serenading Malti with 'old classics'

Los Angeles | Agencies

American pop-star Nick Jonas loves serenading his four-month-old daughter Malti with "old classics" after she was released from the NICU after more than 100 days since her birth in January. The 29-year-old pop star told Entertainment Tonight: "I sing to her. You know, I love to sing to her, and yeah, it's beautiful." He revealed her mother and his wife, Priyanka Chopra-Jonas, prefers to show their little songs "that's on the iPod or whatever," reports femalefirst.co.uk. He said: "My wife kind of plays her more of the stuff that's on the iPod or whatever, but I sing."

## HARRISON FORD-STARRER 'INDIANA JONES 5' TO RELEASE ON JUNE 30 NEXT YEAR



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Harrison Ford will soon be seen in the fifth instalment of Indiana Jones which is set to debut in theatres on June 30, 2023. The actor appeared at the Lucasfilm panel at Star Wars Celebration to make the announcement, reports Deadline.

He told the crowd that the film is almost done and will again feature the music of John Williams. As per Deadline, Williams joined the event to conduct a live orchestra in his Indiana Jones theme before Ford was introduced.

Taking over from Steven Spielberg, James Mangold is at the helm for Indiana Jones 5 with Jez Butterworth and John-Henry Butterworth. Mangold is also co-writing the script. No plot details have been revealed so far. However, Ford, Mangold and executive producers Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall did reveal a first photo from the movie.

The film had originally secured a July 10, 2020 release date and later July 29, 2022, but pandemic delays and Spielberg's work completing West Side Story sidelined the production.

The film's ensemble also includes Antonio Banderas, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Mads Mikkelsen, Boyd Holbrook, Shaunette Renee Wilson, Thomas Kretschmann and Toby Jones. Spielberg, Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall and Simon Emanuel are producers.



## Uvalde effect: Country singer Lee Greenwood pulls out of NRA concert

Houston | Agencies

Following Don McLean, Larry Gatlin and Larry Stewart, right-wing country singer Lee Greenwood has announced he is pulling out of the concert scheduled to take place at the rally to be organised by America's discredited gun lobbying group, National Rifle Association (NRA), in Houston on May 27, reports Variety.

Greenwood, whose decision was clearly spurred by the massacre of school children at Uvalde, Texas, was followed by T. Graham Brown and Danielle Peck, according to Variety. Their departures leave the concert

with one remaining performer, Jacob Bryant. Sources expect the concert to be cancelled on Friday.

In a statement, Greenwood said: "As a father, I join the rest of America in being absolutely heartbroken by the horrific event that transpired this week in Texas. I was scheduled to perform at the NRA's private event on Saturday with my band. After thoughtful consideration, we have decided to cancel the appearance out of respect for those mourning the loss of those innocent children and teachers in Uvalde.

The concert is part of a larger rally organised by the NRA, which also features speeches from former President Donald Trump, Texas

Governor Greg Abbott and Texas Senator Ted Cruz, besides "over 14 acres of guns and gear and 800 exhibitors", a firearms law seminar, a prayer breakfast and other activities.

The event is going forward even though it is taking place less than a week after -- and less than 300 miles from -- Uvalde, where a school shooting on Monday killed at least 19 children and two adults.

It was the deadliest and at least the tenth mass shooting, besides being the 27th school shooting in the U.S. this year alone -- including one in Houston just two weeks ago, in which two men were killed and three critically wounded, notes Variety.

## Jodie Foster to star in her first big TV role in 'True Detective 4'

Los Angeles | Agencies

The fourth instalment of the anthology crime-drama series 'True Detective' will see Jodie Foster in her first major television role as an adult, reports Deadline.

As per 'Deadline', 'The Silence of the Lambs' star, who will also executive produce the series, will play Detective Liz Danvers, which comes from writer and director Issa Lopez and executive producer Barry Jenkins. Alan Page Arriaga, executive producer of Starz's Shining Girls, has also joined Lopez to write.

The series is centred around Detectives Danvers and Evangeline Navarro who are looking to solve the case of six men that operate the Tsalal Arctic Research Station vanishing without a trace, when the long winter night falls in Ennis, Alaska. The pair will have to confront the darkness they carry in themselves and dig into the haunted truths that lie buried under the eternal ice.

The actor, who was 12 when she starred in 'Taxi Driver', has featured in series such as 'Gunsmoke', 'My Three Sons' and ABC's TV spinoff of 'Paper Moon' as a child, but has not had a starring role on the small screen since 1975.

She has, however, lent her voice to series such as 'Frasier', 'The X-Files' and 'The Simpsons' and has directed episodes of television such as 'Orange Is the New Black', 'Black Mirror' and 'Tales From The Loop'.

'True Detective', which was created and written by Nic Pizzolatto, ran for three seasons between 2014 and 2019.

The third season aired on HBO in 2019 and starred Mahershala Ali and Stephen Dorff, set in the Ozarks. It was the follow up to 2015's Colin Farrell, Taylor Kitsch, Rachel McAdams and Vince Vaughn-fronted series and the first season, which starred Matthew McConaughey and Woody Harrelson.



## Jude Law to star in new 'Star Wars' web series

Los Angeles | Agencies

Jude Law is going to star in a new 'Star Wars' series coming to Disney+. The announcement, Variety reports, was made at the 'Star Wars' Celebration in Anaheim, California, on Thursday evening (U.S. Pacific Time). Exact details on who Law will be playing in the series remain under wraps. The show was previously reported as being in the works as part of a larger 'Star Wars' story published by 'Vanity Fair' earlier this month. The description 'Vanity Fair' gave was: "The show takes place during the post-'Return of the Jedi' reconstruction that follows the fall of the Empire, the same as 'The Mandalorian', but its plot remains a secret. It's created and executive produced by director Jon Watts and writer Chris Ford, who made 'Spider-Man: Homecoming' for Marvel. A casting notice has called for four children, around 11 to 12 years old. Inside Lucasfilm, the show is being described as a galactic version of classic Amblin coming-of-age adventure films of the '80s." The formal announcement of the new show and Law's role in it were one of several new 'Star Wars' announcements made during the kickoff of the 'Star Wars' Celebration.



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Simone Ashley

## THE RENOWNED 'GRAN TURISMO' WILL BE MADE INTO A MOVIE

Los Angeles | Agencies

The famous computer game 'Gran Turismo' will be converted into a feature film shortly, with South African-Canadian filmmaker Neill Blomkamp set to helm.

The project is still in its early stages, with the narrative being kept under wraps. The game has a long history, having been developed in 1997 by Polyphony and Kazunori Yamauchi and praised as one of the most accurate driving simulators in its class for its emphasis on detailed visuals, driving mechanics, and attention to detail of its automobiles,



which players would construct and race. According to 'Deadline', the series has sold over 85 million copies,

with the most current version, 'Gran Turismo Sport', hitting the market in March for the PlayStation 4 and

PlayStation 5. According to 'Deadline', 'Gran Turismo' is one of the numerous game-centred initiatives for corpo-

rate siblings Sony and PlayStation Production. Takashi Doscher was supposed to pen the adaptation of the action-adventure game 'Ghost of Tsushima', which has sold over 8 million copies since its release in July 2020.

The HBO series 'The Last of Us', with Craig Mazin attached to write and executive produce, is also in development; and 'Twisted Metal', at Peacock, with Anthony Mackie, Stephanie Beatriz, Thomas Haden Church, and Neve Campbell leading the action-comedy adaptation based on an original take by Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick.



## IPL 2022, QUALIFIER 2

# RAJASTHAN THRASH RCB BY 7 WICKETS, TO FACE GUJARAT TITANS IN FINAL

Ahmedabad | Agencies

A clinical bowling performance followed by a convincing batting effort helped Rajasthan Royals thrash Royal Challengers Bangalore by seven wickets in the Qualifier 2 and reach the final of the IPL 2022 at Narendra Modi Stadium, here on Friday.

Sanju Samson-led Rajasthan will now face Hardik Pandya's Gujarat Titans in the final at the same stadium in front of a huge crowd on Sunday. Excellent bowling performance by Prasad Krishna (3/22) and Obed McCoy (3/23) helped Rajasthan Royals restrict Royal Challengers Bangalore to 157/8 despite a fighting fifty by Rajat Patidar (58 off 42) in 20 overs after winning the toss and opting to bowl first.

Apart from Prasad and McCoy, Trent Boult (1/28), Ravichandran Ashwin (1/31) also chipped in with one each for Rajasthan while the likes of Faf du Plessis (25 off 25) and Glenn Maxwell (24 off 13) were the only main contributors with the bat for RCB besides Patidar. Chasing a modest target, Jos Buttler smashed a superb unbeaten century (106 not out off 60) and led Rajasthan Royals to a convincing 7-wicket win over RCB in 18.1



### Brief scores :

Royal Challengers Bangalore 157/8 in 20 Overs (Rajat Patidar 58, Faf du Plessis 25; Prasad Krishna 3/22, Obed McCoy 3/23) lost to Rajasthan Royals 161/3 in 18.1 overs (Jos Buttler 106 not out, Yashasvi Jaiswal 21; Josh Hazlewood 2/23 by 7 wickets)

overs. Apart from Buttler, the likes of Sanju Samson (23 off 21) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (21 off 13) also made vital contributions with the bat for RR.

Josh Hazlewood (2/23) was the most successful bowler for RCB while Wanindu Hasaranga (1/26) also picked one wicket.

## FRENCH OPEN

# Fernandez overcomes Bencic, to meet Anisimova in last 16

Paris | Agencies

Canadian tennis player Leylah Fernandez reached the fourth round of French Open after triumphing 7-5, 3-6, 7-5 over No 14 seed Belinda Bencic, here on Friday.

No 17 seed Fernandez will meet No 27 seed Amanda Anisimova, who advanced after an ankle injury forced Karolina Muchova to retire trailing 6-7(7), 6-2, 3-0.

The result marks the second time Fernandez has reached the second week of a Grand Slam, following her breakthrough run to last year's US Open final. The Canadian saved two set points in the first set, and came back from an early break down in the decider.

It is also her second win against Bencic in as many meetings. As a No 185-ranked 17-year-old facing a Top 10 opponent for the first time, she upset Bencic 6-2, 7-6(3) in the 2020 Billie Jean King Cup qualifiers.

Two years on, Fernandez is ranked No 18, and her win



## SCHWARTZMAN DISPATCHES DIMITROV, MOVES TO FOURTH ROUND

Paris: Argentina's Diego Schwartzman advanced to the fourth round of the French Open after beating Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov 6-3, 6-1, 6-2, here on Friday.

Schwartzman rallied from two-sets-to-love down to overcome Jaume Munar in the second round, while Dimitrov entered the match off the back of two straight-sets victories. However, it was the 15th seed who looked the fresher throughout on a packed Court Simonne Mathieu.

The 29-year-old Schwartzman hit his watertight groundstrokes with consistency and power as he forced the 31-year-old Dimitrov into errors, improving to 2-3 in their ATP Head to Head series.

over the Swiss player is her second Top 20 victory of 2022.

An absorbing contest saw both players mirror each other's tactics by taking the ball early, redirecting it continually and looking for opportunities to outmanoeuvre the other.

## FAZZA DUBAI PARA-BADMINTON

# Top Indian shuttlers enter quarterfinals

Dubai | Agencies

Top Indian para-shuttlers led by Paralympics champion Pramod Bhagat (MS SL3), Tarun Dhillon, Manasi Joshi and Parul Parmar advanced to the quarterfinals here, continuing their winning march through the group stage at the 4th Fazza Dubai Para-badminton International 2022 here.

Bhagat, the highest-ranked player in Men's Standing Lower (SL3) category, lived up to his billing as he topped the group stage with three wins as the group stage matches ended late on Thursday.

The Odisha-born player is also through to the last-8 stage of the mixed doubles along with Manisha Ramadass, who is expected to advance in her women's singles SU5 and women's doubles SL3-SU5 with Mandeep Kaur.

Meanwhile, Tokyo 2020 bronze medalist Manoj Sarkar and Nitesh Kumar, placed in the lower half of the draw in men's singles SL3, and promising Hardik

Makkar and Chirag Baretha (both in men's singles SU5) are also through to the quarterfinals.

In men's SL4, Tarun Dhillon will play Korea's Cho Nadan in the quarterfinals and is expected to be challenged by Thailand's Siripong Teamarom in the semifinals. A summit clash between Dhillon and Indonesian Fredy Setiawan looks likely.

Dhillon is also through to the last-8 stage of men's doubles SL3-SL4 and mixed doubles SL3-SU5 events.

In the women's events, India's reigning world champion Manasi Joshi, and Parul Parmar (women's singles SL3) advanced as did Nithya Sre Samathy Sivan, who should make it to the finals of women's singles SH6.

Promising Manisha Ramadass continued her good run and is through to the women's singles quarterfinals SU5. She is expected to face Denmark's Cathrine Rosengren in the semifinals.

# SRI LANKA BEAT BANGLADESH BY 10 WICKETS, WIN SERIES 1-0

Mirpur (Bangladesh) | Agencies

Pacer Asitha Fernando (6/51) down an incisive and decisive spell after lunch on the fifth and final day of the second Test here to break a crucial partnership and trigger a collapse as Sri Lanka thrashed hosts Bangladesh by 10 wickets to win the two-match series 1-0.

On the penultimate day of the match, a solid partnership between Angelo Mathews (145\*) and Dinesh Chandimal (124) had helped Sri Lanka take a considerable lead before their bowlers wreaked havoc in the final session to reduce Bangladesh to 34/4, the home side going into stumps trailing by 107 runs.

Bowling with searing pace and reverse swing, Asitha Fernando claimed 6/51, wiping off the Bangladesh middle-order and tail as the hosts lost their last five wickets for 13 runs, their second innings ending at 169, thus setting Sri Lanka 29 runs to win the match. The visitors raised



the required runs in three overs with Oshada Fernando blasting a nine-ball 21 to seal a 10-wicket victory.

Asitha was the best bowler for Sri Lanka as he claimed 6/51 and added with his first innings haul of 4/93, completing his first 10-wicket match haul (10/141) in his fifth Test.

Earlier in the match, Bangladesh opted to bat first but the decision seemed to have back-fired when Bangladesh were reduced to 24/5. However, twin tons from Das (141) and Mushfiqur Rahim (175\*) scripted a brilliant turnaround as they helped Bangladesh end the day's play at

### Brief scores :

Bangladesh 365 & 169 all out in 55.3 overs (Litton Das 52, Shakib Al Hasan 58; Asitha Fernando 6/51, Kasun Rajitha 2/40) lost to Sri Lanka 506 & 29 for no loss in 3 overs (Oshada Fernando 21 not out, Dimuth Karunaratna 7 not out) by 10 wickets.

277/5. Bangladesh then extended their score and ended their first innings at 365. Sri Lanka's Kasun Rajitha recorded his best bowling figures of 5/64, his first five-for in Tests.

In reply, Sri Lanka started strong, with the openers Oshada Fernando (57) and Dimuth Karunaratne (80) notching up half-centuries. Mathews and Chandimal scored brilliant centuries, helping Sri Lanka end their first innings on the following day at 506. Shakib remained the highest wicket-taker for Bangladesh, picking up 5/96.

# Manikandan bags best score as Tamil Nadu dominate opening day of Indian Open of Surfing

Chennai's Groms (U16) surfer, Kishore Kumar, stunned everyone with his performance under testing conditions as he made his way into the semifinals of the 3rd edition of the Indian Open of Surfing on Friday with the highest score of 14.50 of the day.



the 3rd edition of the Indian Open of Surfing on Friday with the highest score of 14.50 of the day.

The other surfers who got high scores from the judges in what is essentially the national champi-

onships of surfing were Manikandan D (12.6), Ramesh Budhial (12.33), Surya P (11.9), Sathish Saravanan (11.9) and Ajeesh Ali (11.66).

The first day's rounds saw Tamil Nadu surfers dominate the proceed-

ings in both the men's open and groms (U16) categories. A total of 16 surfers from the men's open surf category will battle it out in the quarterfinals on Saturday morning to book a slot in the semifinals that are scheduled to be held later in the day.

The quarterfinalists in the men's open category are Manikandan D, Raghu P, Surya P, Srikanth D, Harish M, Ruban V, Vignesh V, Sathish Saravanan, Ajeesh Ali, Sivaraj Babu, Manikandan M, Manivannan T, Nithishvarun T, Ramesh Budhial, Sanjaikumar S and Santhosan S.

The Groms (U16) category saw a clean sweep by Tamil Nadu surfers as seven of the eight semifinalists came from the state. Local lad Likhith S from Mangalore is the only semifinalist in the category to keep Karnataka's hopes alive. The other seven semifinalists are Kishore Kumar, Jeevan S, Logesh S, Naveenkumar R, Jeevanathan I, Tayin Arun and Ranjith Kumar.

# IF PANT PLAYS MORE THAN 100 TESTS, HIS NAME WILL BE IN HISTORY BOOKS FOREVER: SEHWAG

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former India opener Virender Sehwag claimed that if wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant completes 100 appearances in Test cricket, his name will be written forever in the history books. Pant came into prominence due to his exploits in T20 cricket. But of late, he has been a force to reckon with in Test cricket, amassing 1920 runs in 30 matches at an average of 40.85, including four centuries and nine half-centuries. In India's last Test assignment, a two-match home series against Sri Lanka in March, Pant, 24, made 185 runs at a strike rate of 120.12, including a 28-ball fifty, the fastest by an Indian batter, on the second day of pink-ball Test at Bengaluru.

"If he goes on to play 100-plus Tests, his name would be etched in the history books forever. Only 11 Indian cricketers have achieved this feat, and everyone can recall those 11 names," said Sehwag in an upcoming episode of Home of Heroes show on Sports18, to be aired at 7pm on Friday.

Sehwag himself had been one of the most destructive players to feature in Test cricket, compiling 8586 runs, averaging 49.34 at an



astonishing strike rate of 82.23 apart from 8273 in ODIs at 35.05 with a strike rate of 104.33.

It wasn't surprising that Sehwag still feels that Test cricket will remain the ultimate format of the game in the future despite the T20 format turning out to be more popular and lucrative. "In my humble opinion, Test cricket is the ultimate cricket. Why does Virat Kohli emphasise so much on playing Tests? He knows that if he plays 100-150 or even 200 Tests, he will be immortalised in the record books."

# Asian Games postponement gives us more time to prepare like Tokyo Olympics: Hockey captain Savita

Bengaluru | Agencies

Indian women's hockey team goalkeeper and captain Savita is taking the postponement of the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou as an opportunity to train harder for the quadrennial showpiece continental event, quite like the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, which too were postponed by a year.

Having already dealt with the postponement of the Tokyo Olympics, which were rescheduled for 2021 due to the pandemic, the Indian team is once again faced with the same situation where the Asian Games have been postponed indefinitely.

But Savita expressed optimism, saying, "We will once again deal with this postponement as an opportunity to train and be better prepared for the Asian Games. The one-year postponement for the Olympics gave us significant time to improve and, personally for me, I got to work closely with (women's head coach) Janneke (Schopman) who had a great impact on my improvement as a goalkeeper."



Speaking about the team's preparations here at the Sports Authority of India centre for the FIH Pro League matches in Europe and the World Cup in July, Savita said, "There is a lot of excitement ahead of the Pro League matches in Europe as well as the Women's World Cup. Last time, we exited in the quarterfinals but this time we will do our best to finish in the top 4." India are scheduled to play hosts Belgium on June 11 and 12, followed by matches against Argentina on June 18 and 19 and the United States on June 21 and 22 in the FIH Pro League.

# KIYG: Daughter of a plumber, star sprinter Avantika eyes gold

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Avantika Narale, the daughter of a plumber, has come a long way. She shot into the limelight as a 15-year-old, when she rewrote Dutee Chand's 200m junior national record in 2018.

Now, she has set her eyes on the gold medal in the Khelo India Youth Games in Panchkula, Haryana.

"I have been training very hard and am confident of winning one or two sprint gold in Haryana," she said.

The Pune girl will be representing defending champions Maharashtra at KIYG 2021. Avantika is not new to the Khelo India platform, though. She missed out on the 100m sprint in 2019 Pune, not even starting as



she had somehow failed to hear the start gun. She, however, more than made up for the loss by clinching the 200m gold. Avantika's path to

the top has not been on a bed of roses. Her mother supported her plumber husband by working as a maid in neighbouring houses.

Yet, they never let anything come in Avantika's dream of becoming one of India's biggest hopes. Her father now looks after her training schedule, taking her to the venue (Sanas ground) and back home every day.

"I am proud of my family. They support me and the rest at home in every possible way. I have started to reap some fruits, but have a long way to go," Avantika revealed.

In 2019, Avantika won the Asian Youth Athletics Championship 100m gold medal (11.97 secs) in Hong Kong to show her mettle at the highest level. She also won the silver in the 200m, finishing in 24.20 secs, the same as her junior national record. She also won silver in the medley relay.



# YAMI GAUTAM EXPOSES BOLLYWOOD'S UGLY SIDE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Yami Gautam has come a long way since her 2009 Kannada film debut *Ullasa Utsaha*. She has been a part of several prominent films like *Kabil*, *Vicky Donor*, *Uri: The Surgical Strike*, *Badlapur*, and others. In an interview with *Bollywood Hungama*, Yami opened up about creating a niche for herself and how she was asked to work with certain big names. Yami revealed, "After that, I did a few films and I clearly remember that I was not happy because when you have to work against your wish, only because you have to work. It was because I'd been told that 'you will be out of sight, out of mind', then I didn't have any choice...6-7 years back, it was not easy for me. [bollywoodlife.com](http://bollywoodlife.com)."

## Amrita Arora hits back at trolls body-shaming her



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Amrita Arora was at her stylish best at Karan Johar's 50th birthday party. The actress posted a picture with her bestie Kareena Kapoor Khan and sister Malaika Arora. Reacting to the picture, an Internet user commented and called them '3 Buddhi'. Giving a befitting reply to the user for age-shaming them, Amrita Arora wrote, "I keep seeing this on comments! If and when I bother to check unless it's the one that comes up on top! So... buddhi is meant to be an insult?? Coz for me it's just a word... a word that means old?! Yes, we are older...n wiser... but you, are nameless, faceless, ageless? And so are your folks?!" Amrita Arora had further penned, "Also got a lot of hate on my weight gain! I own it... I love it... my weight is my problem! Since when has everything become everyone's issue! Ohhh ya since social media gives...I give zero f'sss... so please go on and I'll name and shame! Ha!"

Actress Malaika Arora too shared the story and schooled netizens for fat-shaming. She wrote, "You say it, sis...Ur beautiful just the way you are.... N guys it's so damn uncool to fat shame anyone...Tch tch".

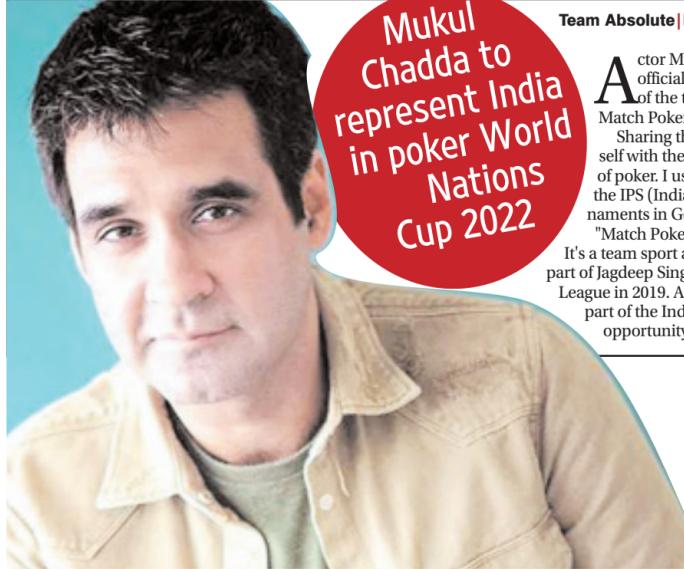
For the unversed, Ace filmmaker Karan Johar recently celebrated his 50th birthday. Notable celebrities from the B-town industry were a part of the celebration.

Jackie Shroff to play 'Slow Joe' in Singapore

Cannes | Agencies

Jackie Shroff will play the lead in a Singapore-France-India co-production titled 'Slow Joe', which will be released in French, English and Konkani, reports 'Variety'. The film, a biopic, will be produced by Shreyasi Sengupta for Darpan Global (Singapore), it was announced at the Cannes Marche du Film.

The Bollywood star will play the late Goan musician, Joseph Manuel Da Rocha, who was known as Slow Joe, a former heroin addict and drug dealer born in Mumbai, disowned by his family, heartbroken at 50, and who moved to Goa and cleaned up.



Mukul Chadda to represent India in poker World Nations Cup 2022

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Mukul Chadda, who played the character of Jagdeep Chadda in the official Indian adaptation of 'The Office', has been selected to be a part of the team representing India at the IFMP World Nations Cup for Match Poker, to be held in the Macedonian town of Gevgelija.

Sharing the news on social media, the actor put up a few pictures of himself with the team, wearing the Indian jersey. "I have always loved the game of poker. I used to play it semi-professionally at one time - even finishing as the IPS (Indian Poker Series) Player of the Year in 2011 for their series of tournaments in Goa," he said.

"Match Poker, a new format, is a variant of the popular Texas Hold'em game. It's a team sport and requires a lot of team-think and strategy. I was excited to be a part of Jagdeep Singh's Haryana Hawks team when they won the Match Indian Poker League in 2019. And when he asked me to once again help with strategy and be a part of the India team for the World Nations Cup, it was a too-good-to-miss opportunity. Can't describe what it feels like to wear the India Jersey."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Tridha Choudhury



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan, who was in the capital to unveil the new track from his upcoming film 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo', has given a cryptic reply on him making a digital debut.

"I don't think I can give details about this. But something in the works... Hai kuch something prime. The world is getting smaller in concerns with information and technology. There are certain genres that work well on streaming and there are some in theatres but definitely audience wants to consume content."

"They want to be

Varun Dhawan hints at OTT debut soon

entertained for sure. Right now whatever the environment is... we want entertainment. We want to laugh and enjoy."

## DEHATI DISCO: A HEARTBREAKING DISCO



FILM REVIEW  
BY SHACHI CHATURVEDI

**Directed by:** Manoj Sharma  
**Written by:** Ganesh Acharya and Manoj Sharma  
**Runtime:** 2 hours 10 minutes  
**Cast:** Ganesh Acharya, Ravi Kishan, Manoj Joshi, Rajesh Sharma, Saksham Sharma, Remo D'Souza, Sunil Pal, Mahesh Chandra Deva, and Hemant Bharati.  
**Rating:-** 1 / 5

It tells the story of a young kid who was expelled from his home for dancing at a temple, but who eventually salvaged the village's future with his dance abilities. The story also emphasises the significance of Indian culture.

### STORY

Despite the fact that the film attempted to raise an important problem. However, due to a lack of competent direction, it failed to hold the audience's attention.

Ganesh Acharya attempted, but failed, to use his dancing skills to make it a dance-centric film. *Dehati Disco* can't match with the great dance films that have come out of India.

### PERFORMANCE

There was no real acting, to be exact. It appeared to be overacting, with closeups and camera movements that were unneeded.

The actors in the film did not even attempt lip sync with their sentences, which is unacceptable.

### ASPECTS OF TECHNOLOGY

Although the camera had a few flaws in a few occasions when we could see some unwanted pans and a lot of unneeded close ups, there wasn't much in terms of technology.

The text isn't that engaging. This film didn't pique our interest in any way. The songs were there to pass the time and had nothing to do with the story. The cinematography could have been tighter.

The movie was predictable and didn't offer anything worthwhile to watch.

Overall, the picture never reaches the desired level of momentum. The film can do well in rural areas as well as Ravi Kishan fans would love to see him on screen. Apart from that you can definitely skip this film.