

# absolute india

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# Heatwave fury in Delhi-NCR; Capital records 49 degrees, Gurugram simmers at 48

The temperature at Mungeshpur in northwest Delhi was recorded at 49.2, while it was 49.1 degrees Celsius at Najafgarh while all stations in Delhi recorded maximum temperature above 45 degrees Celsius as a result of the massive heat wave on Sunday.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

All stations in Delhi recorded maximum temperature above 45 degrees Celsius, with Safdarjung see 45.6 degrees Celsius while two other stations recording over 49 degrees Celsius, as a result of the massive heat wave on Sunday.



The weatherman predicting a slight relief on Monday. Palam Observatory recorded maximum temperature at 46.4 degrees Celsius, Lodhi Road 45.8, Ridge 47.2, Ayanagar 46.8, Jafarpur 47.5, Mungeshpur 49.2, Najafgarh 49.1, Pitampura 47.3, Sports Complex near Akshardham 48.4, SPS Mayur Vihar 45.4, while Gurugram was at 48.1 and Noida at 47.1 degrees Celsius, India Meteorological Department (IMD) data showed.

The maximum temperature at Safdarjung, the base station for Delhi, at 45.6 degrees Celsius, was five notches above normal while the minimum temperature was recorded at 25 degrees Celsius. The maximum temperature at Safdarjung was much below the

all-time record of 47.2 degrees Celsius in May that was recorded in 1944 on May 29. The other two highest temperatures were recorded at 46 degrees Celsius on May 27, 2020 and 45.7 degrees Celsius on May 24, 2013. "Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) were installed only this year at Mungeshpur and Jafarpur

and hence, their maximum temperatures above 49 degrees Celsius needs to be taken as standalone as there is no previous record," IMD senior scientist R.K. Jenamani said. "Areas to the west of these two places have witnessed similar heat wave conditions, so it is advocating by winds. Further adding are respective local urban conditions," he added. The IMD forecast for Monday said there would be partly cloudy sky with possibility of dust storm/thunderstorm and the maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be 41 and 28 degrees Celsius, respectively.

## CIVILIAN KILLED IN FIRING EXCHANGE IN J&K'S SHOPIAN

A civilian was killed on Sunday in cross-firing between the terrorists and the security forces in Jammu And Kashmir's Shopian district.

The civilian, identified as Shoab Ahmad Ganai, was injured when he was caught in a chance encounter between the terrorists and the security forces in the Turkwangam village of Shopian district. Clarifying the incident, Kashmir police said on its official Twitter page, "Terrorist fired upon joint patrol party of CRPF-182Bn/SOG of Pulwama near the bridge connecting Litter Pulwama with Turkwangam, Shopian. During exchange of fire between terrorist & our joint team, 01 civilian namely Shoib Ah Ganie S/O Gh Mohd R/O Turkwangam, Shopian got injured. "He was referred to District Hospital, Pulwama for treatment where he succumbed to injuries. Terrorists after brief chance encounter managed to slip into nearby orchards. Search is still going on. Case has been registered and investigated taken up."



## CONG DEBATES TO COUNTER BJP'S HINDUTVA NARRATIVE WITH SOFTER VERSION

The Congress has debated for two days on the political response to the BJP's hard Hindutva line during its ongoing 'Chintan Shivir' here.

Udaipur | Agencies

The Congress has debated for two days on the political response to the BJP's hard Hindutva line during its ongoing 'Chintan Shivir' here. There appeared to be a division with regards to this with the veterans on side and the younger group seeking a more softer stance. Many veterans were of the view that the Congress should adhere to its strong secular character with inclusive agenda to counter the BJP and rather refrain from trying to bat at the BJP's pitch which could be counter productive, sources said. The younger, on the other hand, is more restless about toeing the soft line of indulging and participating in religious programmes. No final view has been taken, but leaders of Uttar Pradesh have suggested that the party should participate in religious programmes so that it is not isolated, sources said. However, the centrists have argued that Rahul Gandhi's visit to

temples have not given any desired results and it will be good to stick to its core secular ideology which the party can take on and counter the BJP. After all the debates done, the CWC resolution will tell what the Congress has decided this evening but its unlikely that CWC will endorse such proposals -- one of the General Secretaries during informal talks revealed that when the talk of taking credit of Ayodhya was proposed by someone it was turned down. In her inaugural address at the Congress 'Chintan Shivir' on Friday, Sonia Gandhi targetted the BJP and alleged that the party was constantly 'playing the polarisation game and instilling fear in the public'. She said, "By now it has become abundantly and painfully clear what Prime Minister Modi and his colleagues really mean by their slogan maximum governance, minimum government. It means keeping the country in a permanent state of polarisation, compelling people to live in a constant state of fear and insecurity, viciously targeting victimising and often brutalising the minorities who are an integral part of our society and equal citizens of our Republic."

## INDIA ASKS PAK TO TAKE ACTION OVER KILLING OF SIKH TRADERS

New Delhi: India on Sunday asked Pakistan to take strict action against those responsible for killing of two Sikh traders in Peshawar.



Responding to the incident, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said: "We have seen the reports on brutal killing of two Sikh traders by unidentified armed men in Peshawar. Sadly, this is not the first such case or a rare occurrence." He further said grave concerns have been expressed by various quarters of the Indian civil society and the Sikh community on this "shocking and deplorable incident". "We have registered a strong protest with the government of Pakistan on continued targeting of members of the minority community in Pakistan," he further said. "We call upon the authorities concerned to sincerely investigate the matter and take strict action against those responsible for this deplorable incident. We expect that the government of Pakistan, in discharge of its responsibilities, will look after the safety, security and well-being of its minority communities," Bagchi added. Two members of the Sikh community were killed after unidentified assailants opened fire on them near the outskirts of Peshawar, police said on Sunday. Suljeet Singh, 42, and Ranjeet Singh, 38, died on the spot after being attacked by two bike-borne assailants.

## Punjab CM slams targeted killing of two Sikh traders in Pakistan

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Sunday condemned the targeted killing of two Sikh traders in Pakistan and urged External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to speak to Pakistan on the security of minority communities.

Chandigarh | Agencies

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Sunday condemned the targeted killing of two Sikh traders in Pakistan and urged External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to speak to Pakistan on the security of minority communities. "I strongly condemn the gruesome killing of two Sikh youths in Peshawar Pakistan. I also request our Foreign Minister @DrJaishankar ji to speak to Pakistan to raise the concern and ensure safety of Hindu and Sikh minorities residing in Pakistan," Mann said in a tweet. Expressing concern over the incident, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami said the governments of Pakistan and India have failed to ensure the safety of life and property of minority Sikhs in Pakistan. "Such incidents occurred repeatedly but no justice was ever delivered," he said. "We strongly condemn the cowardly murders of two Sikhs. The Pakistan government should fulfil its responsibility diligently as



such murders of minorities are a matter of grave concern for entire world, especially the Sikhs. "We demand that the culprits should be nabbed immediately and justice should be delivered to the aggrieved families at the earliest," added Dhami. The two Sikh traders -- Ranjit Singh and Kuljit Singh -- who were doing business at Bada Bazaar in Peshawar district, were shot dead by unidentified persons. They were inside their shops when the assailants came and opened fire on them, reports said.

## OUR TIES WITH NEPAL ARE UNPARALLELED, BASED ON PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACT: MODI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A day before his trip to Lumbini, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the ties between India and Nepal are unparalleled and based on the civilisational and people-to-people contacts that form an enduring edifice of a close relationship. On Monday, Modi is slated to leave for Lumbini, the birth-place of Gautam Buddha, where he will participate in festivities marking Buddha Purnima and also hold a bilateral meeting with Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba. In a departure statement issued by his office, Modi was quoted as saying: "I look forward to offering prayers at the Mayadevi Temple on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Jayanti. I am honoured to follow in the footsteps of millions of Indians to pay reverence at the sacred site of Lord Buddha's birth." "I also look forward to meeting Prime Minister Deuba



again after our productive discussions during his visit to India last month. We will continue to build on our shared understanding to expand cooperation in multiple areas, including in hydropower, development and connectivity. "Apart from visiting the holy Mayadevi Temple, I will be participating in 'Shilanyas' ceremony of the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture & Heritage in the Lumbini Monastic Zone. I will also be

attending celebrations to mark the occasion of Buddha Jayanti organised by the government of Nepal." This is Modi's fifth visit to Nepal since assuming office in 2014, but the first after he was re-elected in 2019. In conclusion, Modi said that his "visit is intended to celebrate and further deepen these time-honoured linkages that have been fostered through centuries and recorded in our long history of inter-mingling."

# CONG TO LAUNCH BHARAT JODO PADYATRA, SOON HAVE INTERNAL REFORM TASK FORCE: SONIA

Congress President Sonia Gandhi on Sunday announced that the party will embark on a "Bharat Jodo" padyatra from October 2, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, and will also set a task force for internal reforms within a week.

Udaipur | Agencies

Congress President Sonia Gandhi on Sunday announced that the party will embark on a "Bharat Jodo" padyatra from October 2, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, and will also set a task force for internal reforms within a week. An advisory body to advise the Congress President in day-to-day functioning will also be constituted, she said in her concluding remarks at last day of the party's three-day 'Chintan Shivir' (brainstorming camp) in this Rajasthan city. "We will launch a national Kanyakumari to Kashmir Bharat Jodo Yatra from Gandhi Jayanti this year. All of us will participate in it. The Yatra is to strengthen



the bonds of social harmony that are under stress, to preserve the foundational values of our Constitution that are under assault, and to highlight the day-to-day concerns of crores of our people," Gandhi said. "A compact Task Force will be

set up to drive the process of internal reforms that are essential and that has been discussed in different groups here at Udaipur. These reforms with focus on the 2024 Lok Sabha polls will cover all aspects of the organisation including structure, rules for appointments to party posts, communications and publicity, outreach, finances and election management. The composition of the Task Force will be notified in the next two-three days," she added. Gandhi said that an advisory group drawn from the Congress Working Committee, the party's highest decision-making authority, that would meet regularly under her chairpersonship to discuss and deliberate upon political issues and challenges before the party. "Of course, we do have the

CWC that meets from time to time and that will continue. The new group is not, however, a collective decision-making body but will help me get the benefit of the vast experience of senior colleagues. It too will be notified very soon," she said. Among other plans, the Congress chief said that Phase 2 of the district-level Jan Jagran Abhiyan, that had been launched earlier, will resume a month later on June 15. "This extensive campaign will highlight economic issues especially the growing unemployment and intolerable price rise that is destroying livelihoods. ". (This is) our determination. That is our NavSankalp (new resolution). The Congress will have a new Uday. That is our NavSankalp."

## RAHUL TO EMBARK ON PADYATRA FROM KASHMIR TO KANYAKUMARI

Udaipur: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is likely to embark on padyatra (foot march) from Kashmir to Kanyakumari to connect with the masses. The yatra was part of discussion during the 'chintan shivir' of the party. It is likely to commence later this year in run-up for the general elections, sources said. Similar padyatra will be organised in each state by the state leaders to push pro-people agenda and highlight the "failures" of the government and plight of the people. The final call will be taken by the CWC, however the party's interim President Sonia Gandhi has discussed a mass agitation programme against the government on inflation and economic issues. Rahul Gandhi's foot march will be

on "harmony", as Sonia Gandhi had said, "By now it has become abundantly and painfully clear what Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his colleagues really mean by their slogan maximum governance, minimum government. It means keeping the country in a permanent state of polarisation, compelling people to live in a constant state of fear and insecurity, viciously targeting victimising and often brutalising the minorities who are an integral part of our society and equal citizens of our Republic." The Congress interim President had said the country was looking at the party and the Congressmen should give one message of unity from here outside, but can speak freely inside the party's various forums.



# MODI TO CELEBRATE 8 YEARS IN OFFICE IN SHIMLA ON MAY 31

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Shimla on May 31 to celebrate the completion of eight years of the government at the Centre, Himachal Pradesh state BJP president Suresh Kashyap said on Sunday.



Shimla | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Shimla on May 31 to celebrate the completion of eight years of the government at the Centre, Himachal Pradesh state BJP president Suresh Kashyap said on Sunday.

He said that the party's state unit will celebrate eight years of service, good governance, and welfare of poor from May 30 to June 15.

Under this programme, the Prime Minister will be visiting Shimla with some of his Cabinet colleagues.

"This programme will boost the morale of our workers," Kashyap said in a statement

here. Various campaigns will be run by the party's frontal organisations in the run-up to the May 30 programme.

"We will run awareness programmes like the world's largest vaccination drive during the pandemic, providing nine crore families free ration, completing the construction of Atal Tunnel, and fulfilling demand over the construction of Renuka Dam that has been pending since 1993, are among major achievements for a small state like Himachal," he said.

A leaflet highlighting achievements of the Central government would be distributed among people during the various programmes organised under the campaign, Kashyap added.

# CONGRESS WANTS CASTE CENSUS REPORT OUT, PROMISES 50% QUOTA FOR BELOW 50

The Congress on Sunday adopted the Udaipur Declaration on the final day of its three-day 'Chintan Shivir' here, in which it has demanded that caste census report should be made public, pressed for an MSP guarantee act and that the party will reserve 50 per cent posts for people below 50, among others.

UDAIPUR | Agencies

The Congress on Sunday adopted the Udaipur Declaration on the final day of its three-day 'Chintan Shivir' here, in which it has demanded that caste census report should be made public, pressed for an MSP guarantee act and that the party will reserve 50 per cent posts for people below 50, among others.

Reading the statement in Udaipur, party General Secretary Ajay Maken said that this resolution was adopted by the Congress Working Committee, the party's highest-decision making body on Sunday, and the party will move forward from here to take on BJP.

In the political resolution, the party said that it will incorporate all sections of the society in the party and will fight over the attack on core values of the constitution. The resolution also mentioned the Chinese incursion in Indian territory. As part of organisational restructuring, the party will set up a public



insight group, and election management committee, and a political affairs committee in the states and one session each of the AICC and the PCC will be held per year. The party has also approved 'one

family one ticket' decision but the higher age group cap could not find any mention in the final resolution. The Congress said that it has not compromised on core ideology issue as has been suggested by

some leaders and will take the BJP head on through economic and social issues.

Congress President Sonia Gandhi on Sunday announced that the party will embark on a "Bharat Jodo" padyatra from October 2, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, and will also set a task force for internal reforms within a week. An advisory body to advise the Congress President in day-to-day functioning will also be constituted, she said in her concluding remarks at the 'Chintan Shivir' (brainstorming camp) in the Rajasthan city.

"A compact Task Force will be set up to drive the process of internal reforms that are essential and that has been discussed in different groups here at Udaipur. These reforms with focus on the 2024 Lok Sabha polls will cover all aspects of the organisation including structure, rules for appointments to party posts, communications and publicity, outreach, finances and election management.

# Not to indulge in Hindu-Muslim debate: Congress leaders

The Chintan Shivir of the Congress discussed about ideological clarity, underlining there should be no confusion in the party even as different voices seemed emanating from different regions.

UDAIPUR | Agencies

The Chintan Shivir of the Congress discussed about ideological clarity, underlining there should be no confusion in the party even as different voices seemed emanating from different regions. The Hindi heartland people were wary of the Congress being termed as 'Muslim party' so they wanted to toe the line of soft Hindutva.

Meanwhile, the people of Northeast and South had different views on it with the southern states opining the party should stick towards its secular credentials and 'not fall into BJP's trap'.

Sources say former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan pointed that BJP is not fighting directly. Referring to his state, the senior Congress leader said the saffron party is using proxies like Raj Thackeray, and actors and fringe elements.

Meanwhile, the Muslim leaders of the party were of the views that withering support from the community is the reason behind the Congress not taking an aggressive stand, with many leaders asserting that to confront the BJP, the Congress should not get into the Hindu-Muslim issue but push the people-centric and development issues, and question the government on economy, inflation and other subjects.

Discussing other issues such as alliances, the party leaders said in the meeting that every state has different dynamics, and therefore, state-wise alliances should be considered rather than pan-India alliances.

The debate on 'Hindutva' also witnessed sharp differences.

Two leaders -- Chhattisgarh Chief

Minister Bhupesh Baghel and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath -- were of the idea to toe the soft Hindutva line only to face a stiff counter argument from some leaders, including former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan backed by leaders from South. Chavan argued that there should be clarity on the ideological issues and it should not be a copy of the BJP. Another leader, who backed the soft 'Hindutva' line, was Uttar Pradesh leader Acharya Pramod Krishnam who said that the party should not shy away from it while leaders like B.K. Harisprasad from Karnataka said that the Congress should stick to its core ideology.

Baghel pitched for reaching out to Hindus through programmes and participating in festivals to counter the BJP's 'Hindutva' agenda, which was opposed on the grounds that the Congress should not compromise on its core ideology. It was also said that for short-term electoral gains, it should not look like the B team of BJP.

# Assam: Many trains cancelled due to rain, landslide

The Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Northeast Frontier Railways (NFR) have evacuated over 1,500 stranded passengers while over 25 pairs of trains connecting Tripura, Mizoram and southern Assam had to be cancelled following heavy landslides triggered by incessant rains in Dima Hasao district in Assam, officials said on Sunday.

GUWAHATI | Agencies

The Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Northeast Frontier Railways (NFR) have evacuated over 1,500 stranded passengers while over 25 pairs of trains connecting Tripura, Mizoram and southern Assam had to be cancelled following heavy landslides triggered by incessant rains in Dima Hasao district in Assam, officials said on Sunday.

The NFR officials said that most of the stranded passengers were evacuated on Sunday from Ditokcherra by train while the remaining passengers were airlifted to Silchar by IAF choppers.

In view of winter logging and landslides due to heavy

rain, between Jatinga Lumpur and New Harangajao, and between Bandarkhal and Ditokcherra sections and other several locations in Lumding-Badarpur hill section of Lumding division of NFR, services of 25 pairs of trains have been cancelled/ partially cancelled.

"The stranded passengers of these trains are safe. All kinds of essential items like food and drinking water are being arranged by the railway authorities for them," the NFR official said.

A district official of Dima Hasao district said that soils of 100 meter railway tracks at Daotohaja-Phaiding section and similar length of the vital Haflong-Jatinga highway had been washed



away due to the non-stop rains, which continued for the past five days.

At least three people were killed and a few others went missing following heavy landslides triggered by incessant rains in Dima Hasao district in Assam during the last 24 hours.

Officials of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said that three persons, including a woman, lost their lives in Haflong revenue circle of Dima Hasao district.

After the landslides, few people remained missing till

Sunday. The mountainous district has been ravaged by flash floods and massive landslides in more than nine places causing snapping of vital rail and road links from other parts of the state and region.

Over 80 houses were either fully damaged or severely affected due to the landslides, which occurred at New Kunjung, Fiangpui, Moulhou, Namzeurang, South Bagetar, Mahadev Tilla, Kalibari, North Bagetar, Zion and Lodi Pangmoul villages.

# Amit Shah's speech a pack of lies: TRS

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) has termed as "pack of lies" the speech of Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a public meeting near Hyderabad.

Hyderabad | Agencies

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) has termed as "pack of lies" the speech of Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a public meeting near Hyderabad.

Minister for finance Harish Rao, minister for panchayat raj E. Dayakar Rao, minister T Srinivas Yadav and minister for roads and buildings Vemula Prashant Reddy said on Sunday that Shah uttered blatant lies at the public meeting at Tukkguda on Saturday.

Harish Rao came out with facts and figures to counter Shah's claims. He alleged that the BJP leader tried

to mislead people of Telangana with his lies.

The finance minister dubbed the Union home minister as 'Shah of lies' and described the BJP as 'Bada Jhootha Party'.

Harish Rao dared Shah to prove that the Centre granted funds to Telangana's 'Mission Bhagiratha', which is aimed at providing drinking water to every household.

Dayakar Rao said that there was no truth in the Union home minister's claims on Sainik School, rail coach factory and medical colleges.

He alleged that the BJP has done nothing for Telangana in the last eight years and it even went back on

all the commitments made to the state.

He told reporters in Warangal that people of Telangana will not believe the falsehood of the BJP leaders.

Dismissing Shah's criticism of the TRS government, he said TRS not only fulfilled 99 per cent of its poll promises but also went a step ahead to undertake schemes for the welfare of people which were not part of the election manifesto.

"I want to ask the BJP if it has fulfilled even one poll promise," he said.

The TRS leader slammed the BJP government at the Centre for the steep hike in prices of petrol, diesel

and cooking gas.

Shah addressed a public meeting at Tukkguda on Saturday night to mark the culmination of the second leg of state BJP president Bandi Sanjay's 'Praja Sangram yatra'.

Earlier, TRS working president and state minister K.T. Rama Rao took to Twitter to react to Shah's public meeting.

"Season of political tourism continues; Ek Aur Tourist Aaj; Aaya, Khaya, Piya, Chal Diya. 8 Saal Mein Kuch Nah Diya Telangana Ko, Aaj Bhi Wahi Silsila Wahi Jhumlabaaazi Aur Dhokebaazi," tweeted KTR.

"Living up to its name B - Bakwaas J - Jhumla P - Party," he added.

# Delhi Congress protests outside BJP HQ over anti-encroachment drives



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Congress leaders and workers on Sunday staged protests outside the BJP headquarters against anti-encroachment drives in the national capital.

The agitating Congress workers, however, were stopped at a barricade erected by the

Delhi Police while marching towards the BJP headquarters in DDU Marg.

"BJP-ruled municipal corporations in Delhi are conducting these drives to demolish houses and shops of poor people, and Congress workers will keep protesting till it stops," said Parvez Alam, Vice-Chairman, Communications, Delhi Congress.

"Under the Street Vendors Protection of Livelihood Act 2013-14 and even after the formation of Town Vending Committee, due to negligence of both the governments, this law could not be implemented in Delhi. Hence the sword hangs on the livelihood of lakhs of street vendors today," said Anil Bhardwaj, Chairman, Delhi Congress' Communications Department. The "bulldozer" drive is going on in several parts of the capital's BJP-ruled municipal corporations. The South and the North Municipal Corporations have undertaken anti-encroachment drives in their areas of jurisdiction.

# AAP's 'Parivartan Yatra' aims to bring change in Gujarat politics

AHMEDABAD | Agencies

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) launched 'Parivartan Yatra' from five locations of Gujarat on Sunday.

The AAP is planning to interact with 10 lakh voters and citizens in the process and spread their message to four crore voters in the state. Leaders Isudan Gadhvi and Indranil Rajguru led the procession from Dwarka and Sagar Rabari, and Bhima Chaudhary from Siddhpur (North Gujarat); Raj Karpada and Kailash Gadhvi from Abdasa-Kutch; and Manoj Sorathia, Ram haduk, and Rakesh Hirpara led yatra from Dandi in South Gujarat.

The sixth yatra was to be led by Bharatiya Tribal Party leader Mahesh Vasava and AAP leader Arjun Rathva. This yatra was to pass through a tribal belt, but it did not get permission from the district authorities.

"Yatra will help the party reach all the corners of the state. But this is a long-term process and just a one-time yatra will not serve the purpose," said Jagdish Mehta, a senior journalist from Rajkot. Citing the example of party leader and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's public rally on Wednesday



in Rajkot, Mehta said that he had raised very valid issues and received good response; but to take this message to millions of voters, the party needs a much greater work force which it currently lacks. "This gap will be filled with individuals and we will reach out to the people in every corner," said Gulab Singh, AAP Gujarat in-charge. The yatra's aim is to bring much-needed change in the state and create awareness among the voters. The AAP aims to cover 182 Assembly seats in 20 days. Even if it covers all the Assembly seats, the challenge for the party is to retain their message in the minds of voters and match up to the BJP in terms of manpower, as Mehta said.

# CBI questions Under Secretary-level officials of Home Ministry in NGO fraud case

In a latest development in connection with the illegal gratification case in which 14, including six Ministry of Home Affairs officials were arrested, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has questioned an Under Secretary-level official of the department.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a latest development in connection with the illegal gratification case in which 14, including six Ministry of Home Affairs officials were arrested, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has questioned an Under Secretary-level official of the department. He was summoned to join the probe after a raid was conducted at his house. A source said that he is posted with the FCRA unit. His statement was recorded on Saturday at the CBI's headquarters.

The accused arrested by the federal probe agency were allegedly facilitating illegal clearances to Non-Government Organisations (NGO) in registration and renewal in lieu of bribes.

The CBI had on Wednesday arrested 14 persons, including six MHA officials following raids at 40 different places across the nation.

The CBI had recovered cash Rs 3.21 crore and several incriminating documents, mobile phones, etc., during the raid. The raids were conducted in Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Manipur. After conducting searches, the CBI lodged a case against 36 accused, including seven public servants of the FCRA Division of MHA and NIC and middlemen, representatives of various NGOs on the allegations that some officials of the FCRA Division in conspiracy with the promoters, representatives of different NGOs and middlemen were indulging in corrupt activities for getting backdoor FCRA registration and renewal to NGOs. They had been doing this illegally with an object to continue receiving donations despite not fulfilling the prescribed norms. The public servants were impersonating themselves as officers posted in the FCRA Division and

were indulging in said practices and obtaining bribes from the NGOs for facilitating them for their registration and renewal of registration under FCRA and for other related works. During investigation, two accused were caught while delivering and accepting the bribe amount of Rs 4 lakh on behalf of a Senior Accountant of MHA. It was alleged that the delivery of bribe was done through a hawala operator and a close associate of said public servant at Avadi (Tamil Nadu). The arrested accused are being produced before the Competent Court.

## CHANGE OF NAME

Rituraj Davande S/O Shankar Rao Davande is R/O 26/27, Purushottam Nagar Phase-1, Semra, Bhopal. In the certificates of Board of Secondary Education Bhopal, by mistake my name has been written as Ritu Raj Davande. However Rituraj Davande and Ritu Raj Davande are the name of the one and same person (me).



# TOTALLY DESTROY THE CRIMINALS: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that law and order and public welfare are the most important. This is the priority of the government. Interacting with all the Commissioners and Inspectors General of Police of the state through video conferencing, Chouhan said that the administrative and police officers should ensure the welfare of the people in each district with full coordination. Chief Minister started the discussion with law and order in a meeting held at his residence this morning. He said that law and order is my top priority. The job of the police is to make arrangements for all the citizens to live in peace.



destroyed. No mafia should be allowed to flourish. Thousands of acres of land have been freed from mafia in the state. The plan for the use of this land is being finalized.

ized. He directed that those involved in poaching and illegal liquor business should be crushed. He said that the officers should take this meeting as a new light and play a meaningful role. He directed all of them to work actively in the interest of the common man while staying healthy with yoga, meditation, physical exercise and morning walk. Chief Minister said that his role as the Chief Minister and your work in your post is meaningful only when we pay full attention to public service.

Chouhan said that I am very disturbed by the Guna incident. It is my resolve not to spare any criminal. In the case of Guna, strict action will be taken against the criminals that will be recorded in history. Strictest action should be taken against

those who commit poaching and other crimes. For this, instructions have been given from the Director General of Police to the police station level. Chief Minister said that the work of continuous review should be done in the police department. The criminals should be identified. Make an effort that crimes do not take place.

He said that good action has been taken by the police in some districts. For this the concerned officers and staff deserve to be congratulated. He said that quick action must always be taken. There should be a system to prevent crimes effectively. Chouhan said that crimes against women should also be kept under watch. Work analysis should be done regularly in each district. Crime control will be reviewed again soon.



## CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO MARTYR SUKHDEV

**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Shaheed Sukhdev Ji on his birth anniversary by garlanding his picture in the residence auditorium today.

Shaheed Sukhdev Ji was a prominent revolutionary of the Indian freedom struggle. He was born on May 15, 1907 in Ludhiana of Punjab province. He was hanged along with Bhagat Singh and Rajguru by the British rulers on March 23, 1931.

## Police team attacked in Dhar, 6 arrested

■ Six people have been arrested in connection with attacking a police team that was searching for a missing woman in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar village.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Six people have been arrested in connection with attacking a police team that was searching for a missing woman in a Dhar village.

Three policemen were injured in the incident that took place in Kharaywadi village under Tirla police station, some 35 km from the district headquarters on Saturday, Dhar's Superintendent of Police (SP) Aditya Pratap Singh said.

The police team reached the village after getting an information that a woman went missing with her child.

While exiting the village, the accused Suga Adivasi and his family members attacked the police team and snatched a rifle from them, the SP said.

After the incident, additional police force was deployed in the village and at least six persons allegedly involved in attacking policemen on duty were arrested.



Two injured policemen are constables Prakash Bhawar and Mahendra Rajput and assistant sub-inspector Manish Bhagore.

On Saturday, three policemen were killed by animal poachers in Guna.

The opposition Congress attacked the ruling BJP, alleging that the law and order situation in the state has deteriorated.

Senior Congress leader Govind Singh, who was recently appointed as leader of opposition in the state, accused the BJP government of failing to handle the law and order situation.

"In the BJP government, the spirits of the criminals are so high that even policemen are not spared. The Home Minister should resign from his post," Singh said.

## KHARGONE COLLECTOR, SP, ASP TRANSFERRED A MONTH AFTER COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

A month after communal clashes broke out in Madhya Pradesh's Khargone, the state administration has transferred the district collector, Superintendent of Police (SP) and Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP).

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A month after communal clashes broke out in Madhya Pradesh's Khargone, the state administration has transferred the district collector, Superintendent of Police (SP) and Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP). The major reshuffle came late Saturday.

The collector, Anugraha P has been transferred as an officer on special duty (OSD) at the Madhya Pradesh Bhawan in Delhi.

Replacing Anugraha will be Ratlam district collector Kumar Purshottam.

While, SP Siddharth Chaudhary, who was injured during the communal clashes on the occasion Ram Navami procession and was on medical leave, has been transferred to the

police headquarters in Bhopal.

Satna SP Dharam Veer Singh has been transferred to Khargone.

Khargone ASP Neeraj Chaurasiya also has been transferred to police headquarters and Manish Khatri has been appointed in place. The Khargone district administration and the police was criticised for their failure to control the situation.

On April 10, a man was killed and 50 others were injured in the clash in Khargone, which erupted after a few people allegedly threw stones at a Ram Navami procession.

Over 55 "illegal structures" were demolished by the district administration while taking action against the stone pelters and the accused.

## In parched Bundelkhand, village ponds returning to life in Chhatarpur dist

Team Absolute | Bhopal/Chhatarpur

As soon as summer approaches, Bundelkhand is in the news for the wrong reason - water scarcity. With the help of NITI Aayog, efforts are on to change the picture of Bundelkhand's Chhatarpur district by reviving the village ponds, and if the efforts are successful, then it can serve as an example for the entire country.

Chhatarpur, which was once famous for its water structures, is now known as an area facing a water crisis. And the major reason for it is the drying up of the water bodies in the district. The NITI Aayog has chosen to revive 168 ponds in two districts, Rajgarh and Chhatarpur, and the work is scheduled to be completed in June. The ponds which have been chosen by NITI Aayog for revival now appear as plain grounds. The ponds are filled with silt due to which their water storage capacity has reduced. However, this silt is good for agricultural fields as it works as a good fertiliser. Now with the farmers' support, work is on for deepening of the ponds.

The farmers are carrying away the silt for their fields. One such pond is in Gahvara village in Gaurihar block. As per parameters set by the NITI Aayog, deepening of the water body has started with the help of a JCB and the farmers are carrying this silt to their farms.

Pond management committee president Shiv Shukla said that carrying the silt to the farms will not only increase the land's productivity but also reduce the water needed for

irrigation. Bharat Pathak, National Convener, National Mission for Clean Ganga, who was here to

■ As soon as summer approaches, Bundelkhand is in the news for the wrong reason - water scarcity.



review the ponds' deepening exercise, said that as per Prime Minister Narendra Modi's desire, NITI Aayog has started digging up the ponds. The campaign is being run in those gram panchayats which are under the aspirational districts.

The water storage capacity of a pond decreases because the soil flows into the water body from the nearby areas. Efforts are being made to remove the silt and increase the water storage capacity of the ponds.

Gahvara gram panchayat sarpanch Kamal Shukla said that ponds are being dug in his village under the campaign "Catch The Rain". Rambabu Tiwari, who has been working for water conservation in Bundelkhand, said that reviving ponds in 168 districts will become the main medium of changing the situation in the area. This work is being done by non political organisations on the directions of NITI Aayog. All the villagers are taking part in it.

## PLANTING A SAPLING IS A WONDERFUL ACT: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the work of planting saplings is wonderful. It is not the work of just planting and irrigating the saplings, but the work of irrigating life. We survive if there are trees. Social organisations should extend full cooperation in this work. Chouhan was planting saplings today at Smart Garden located in Shyamla Hills along with the office bearers of social organisation India Home Construction Cooperative Society, JK Road. Peepal and Neem saplings were planted today.

Chouhan received information from Commissioner Municipal Corporation Bhopal about the activities of resident associations and the works of the cleanliness campaign. He also gave instructions for smooth operation and maintenance of these works.

Divya Attri, Alpana Jha, Pallavi Sharma, Kavita Sohane, Sushma Choukse informed Chief Minister Chouhan about the activities of the organisation. This society of about 300



resident families has worked in the field of cleanliness and environment. Municipal Corporation Bhopal also rewarded the institution last year. Plantation is done by the organisation in the gardens and other public places of the area.

Among the saplings planted by Chief Minister and the organisation today, Peepal is a shady tree. It purifies the environment. It has religious and Ayurvedic significance. Neem tree is rich in antibiotic elements and known as supreme medicine.

## CM CHOUHAN CONGRATULATES THE NEW CM OF TRIPURA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has congratulated and extended best wishes to the new Chief Minister of Tripura Manik Saha. Saha has taken oath as the Chief Minister of Tripura on Sunday. Congratulating Saha, Chief Minister Chouhan has expressed hope that under the guidance of the successful Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji and under your able leadership, Tripura will create a new history in the field of public welfare while touching new heights of development.

## Ensure drinking water and power supply for general public: CM

**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Chouhan said that there should be adequate drinking water arrangement for the general public in urban and rural areas. Collectors should play the role of coordinators. There should be no problem of drinking water in any area. If there is any technical problem in the operation of tap-water schemes, the system should be rectified immediately. If hand pumps are damaged, these should also be repaired. Chouhan said that a team has been formed at the block level. If the water in drinking water schemes has gone down considerably, then rising pipes can be used. Electricity supply should not be a problem for drinking water schemes. Water should be supplied according to the fixed schedule. Publicity should also be given to this system. A register has been arranged in the offices for registering complaints. Complaints of CM Helpline should also be taken seriously. The field staff should be made aware. Coordination among the staff of Rural Development, Water Resources, Public Health Engineering and Energy Department is must. All necessary measures should be adopted. If the local water source is not effective then water should be supplied through tankers. The Chief Minister said that arrangements for power supply should also be ensured without any hindrance. All should work as a team right from Bhopal to Chaupal.

Chouhan said that on May 16, the amount would be distributed to the beneficiaries of Sambal Yojana. Mission Nagarodaya is very important for the state. Beneficiaries will be benefited in many schemes. Chouhan said that Mission Nagarodaya is starting on May 17. Work is starting with about Rs 20 thousand 753 crore. These works will change the picture of cities. He directed the collectors and the officers of the Urban Development Department to ensure that the Mission Nagarodaya is organized systematically. Beneficiaries will be benefited for other schemes including Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Griha Pravesh of the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Shahari Awas Yojana will be conducted. Beneficiaries will get the benefits of about Rs 12 thousand crore. The ministers in-charge of the districts will be present in the programmes.



## GOVERNOR PATEL CALLED ON BY CM CHOUHAN

**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan made a courtesy call on Governor Mangubhai Patel by reaching Raj Bhavan on Sunday. Chouhan apprised Governor Shri Patel about the development activities being conducted in the state. He also gave information about various programmes of public welfare going to be held from May 16 to May 20. Chief Minister felicitated the Governor by presenting him with a bunch of flowers.

## POLITICS OVER POACHING HEATS UP AFTER KILLING OF 3 COPS

▶ THE POLICE CLAIMED TO HAVE RECOVERED THE DECAPITATED CARCASSES OF TWO BLACKBUCKS, FOUR HEADS AND A PEACOCK FROM THE POSSESSION OF POACHERS WHO OPENED FIRE ON A POLICE TEAM, KILLING THREE POLICEMEN ON THE SPOT IN MADHYA PRADESH'S GUNA DISTRICT ON SATURDAY.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The police claimed to have recovered the decapitated carcasses of two blackbucks, four heads and a peacock from the possession of poachers who opened fire on a police team, killing three policemen on the spot in Madhya Pradesh's Guna district on Saturday.

One of the poachers was also killed in the cross-firing and two of them were arrested by the police. Subsequent to the incident, the state administration ordered the suspension of Gwalior zone IG Anil Sharma with immediate effect for the delay in reaching the spot of the crime. He was replaced by 1997 batch IPS officer D Srinivas Verma.



The policemen killed by the poachers will be given the status of martyrs and an ex-gratia of Rs one crore for each bereaved family was also announced in an emergency meeting called by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan with state home minister Narottam Mishra, the Director General of Police (DGP) Sudhir Saxena and other top officials.

This incident, however, has once again raised the alarm over the protection of wildlife and also on the movement of poachers in the forests of the state. Madhya Pradesh based wildlife activist Ajay Dube, who had in the past exposed the nexus between poachers and the senior forest officials in the state's Panna tiger reserve, said, "The movement of poachers

with arms in Guna's forest area indicates a possible nexus, which needs to be probed thoroughly."

Talking to IANS, Dube said that Guna's forest area has always been a target of poachers because of blackbucks and peacocks. "Sagon woods from Guna's forest are often being smuggled despite the claims of high visibility by the forest department. But, what is more pathetic is that if forest officials take action against poachers or wood smugglers, they have to face dire consequences," Dube said, pointing to a couple of such incidents when forest guards were beaten up by goons having a strong connection with politicians. Earlier this month, forest guards

deployed in Bhopal's Badli forest circle were attacked by hunters at night. One of the guards received knife injuries while another guard received a gunshot wound on his private parts and he is still recuperating in a hospital in Bhopal.

Another such incident took place in Sheopur district in April this year when forest guards were attacked allegedly by Dhanraj, who is the son of sitting BJP MLA Sitaram Adivasi. A police complaint lodged by the forest officials accusing the MLA's son and his associates of beating them up, is available with IANS.

The close nexus between top officials and poachers had resulted in MP's popular Panna Tiger Reserve being denuded of big cats in 2008. The matter was probed by the central agencies then.

Meanwhile, soon after the news of the policemen's killing came, politics in the state started heating up with leaders from the BJP and the Congress attacking each other.

Congress leader Govind Singh, who was recently appointed Leader of Opposition in the state, accused the BJP government of failing to handle the law and order situation and of allowing 'jungle raj' in the state.

"In the BJP government, the spirits of the criminals are so high that even policemen are not spared. The home minister should resign from his post," Singh said. State BJP president VD Sharma went

one step further and accused former Chief Minister and Congress Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh of having a strong connection with poachers. He demanded a probe in this matter.

Sharma alleged that Digvijaya's son Jaivardhan Singh, who is the MLA from Raghogarh, was providing protection to local criminals. He said this claiming that the poachers who killed the policemen are residents of Bidoria village in Guna's Raghogarh area.

Digvijaya Singh retorted, "I agree. From the Centre to the state, BJP is in power. A fair probe should be conducted and responsible people should be punished for this heinous crime."

As per the police, the incident took place at around 2.45 a.m. in the Aron police station area, 45km from the district headquarters. The slain policemen were identified as sub-inspector Rajkumar Jatav, head constable Sant Kumar Meena and constable Neeraj Bhargav. The driver of the police vehicle was injured. Rajeev Mishra, superintendent of police, told the media that the team went to the forest area following specific intelligence inputs about poachers. They managed to round up three of them. However, their accomplices opened fire killing three policemen on the spot. One of the poachers identified as Naushad was killed in police firing. The others managed to escape taking advantage of the dense foliage.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Will Hardik divorce Congress?

The Hardik Patel-Congress marriage seems to be heading for a divorce after just three years. Patel, who joined the Congress in March 2019 and is currently the state Working President, has, since the last one month, started sending signals that he is reviewing his position, stand, and association with the party. Congress sources said even before he made his dissent public through interviews, Patel had started acting against the party interests, and claimed that he had blocked the state organisation's plan to have four to five Working Presidents. The party's state President Jagdish Thakor and his team wanted to give importance to four to five castes that have good dominance in the state and can help the party in creating a new social engineering. Towards this end, it wanted to have Working Presidents from the Patidar, Koli, Rajput, Brahmin/Baniya, and the Muslim community. However, sources said Patel wants only one Working President - that should be him and no one else. According to sources, Patel had met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in April during the latter's visit to Ahmedabad, when his entry into the BJP was worked out. Sources however said that his entry into the state's ruling party is not going to be a cake walk as one stalwart BJP leader is opposed to him since the leader's political career was jeopardised by the Patel-led Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti agitation. Recently, Patel had been constantly alleging that few state Congress leaders are sidelining him in the party, he is not given work to do, otherwise he is ready to give 100 per cent to the party. He had appealed to the central leadership to intervene, but, at the same time, he also praised the BJP, removes the Congress symbol from his Twitter and other social media accounts. He has also started calling himself "hard-core Hindutvavadi".

AFTER UP, BJP SEES IN BULLDOZERS A TICKET TO ELECTION VICTORIES

After gaining electoral success in Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, the BJP has started believing that the "bulldozers" will also ensure victory in more states in the coming polls. Several BJP-ruled states followed the successful 'bulldozer' style of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and tried to send a strong message on the issue of law and order and his government's tough stance against people involved in violence and heinous crime. The bulldozers, which initially started from Uttar Pradesh, are now rolled out in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Delhi. BJP-ruled Karnataka is also mulling to roll out bulldozers to send a strong message about government's stance on law and order situation. A section in the party feels that the word 'bulldozer' is turning into a political synonym for 'polarisation' after Uttar Pradesh polls. The chief ministers, who rolled



out demolishing illegal construction and encroachments, are - 'Bulldozer Baba' (Yogi Adityanath), or 'Bulldozer Mama' (Shivraj Singh Chouhan). Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta, who instructed party ruled municipal corporations to roll

land. "Many in the BJP including me think that there is nothing wrong if any government decides to use bulldozers against properties of anti-social elements," a BJP functionary said. While the opposition parties alleged that the BJP targeted minorities only by demolishing their properties, the BJP accused the opponent of giving political colour to illegal construction and encroachment. "Bulldozers are rolled out not against any community but against those involved in unlawful activities," he said. After the demolition drive in Shaheen Bagh in the national capital, Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi had said it has become a fashion to give a "communal colour" to illegal and unlawful acts and the "bulldozer was getting defamed" for action against encroachment. "Bulldozer badnaam hua, encroachment tera liye," Naqvi had said. Amid allegation that the bulldozer only rolled

out against the minority, Delhi BJP spokesperson Aditya Jha told correspondent that it was a drive in the city against illegal encroachment and not individuals or community. "It is an anti-encroachment drive and it will continue till people of Delhi get respite from encroachment," Jha said. The BJP also took a dig at the opposition, especially Congress, saying that in India, it was Indira Gandhi who first ordered the use of bulldozers on minorities at the Turkman Gate. In-charge of BJP's national information and technology department Amit Malviya had tweeted, "Does everyone in the Congress party, from Manish Tewari to Rahul Gandhi, suffer from amnesia or are they simply ill-informed about their own past? Forget the Nazis and Jews, in India it was Indira Gandhi who first ordered the use of bulldozers on minorities at the Turkman Gate."

Twitter, Tesla, Musk see billions evaporate

Nikhila Natarajan

Elon Musk, still the world's richest man, is poorer by nearly \$39 billion since he spoke of buying out Twitter. Irony. At \$231 billion of worth on the Forbes Real Time Billionaires Index at close of play on Friday, only part of Musk's losses are because of his still single-digit ownership of Twitter. Most of the vapourisation is coming from investors abandoning Tesla. Their carp is that legal issues at Twitter might distract the maverick suitor. Of his two infatuations, Musk's Tesla has fared worse. Stock was down almost 21 per cent in the last 30 days at \$769 Friday. Seventeen days back, Musk had put a \$44-billion tag to buy out Twitter. On Friday, he threatened a classic u-turn, saying he demanded greater clarity that Twitter has just 5 per cent fake accounts. "Twitter deal temporarily on hold pending details supporting calculation that spam/fake accounts do indeed represent less than 5% of

users," Musk tweeted, challenging Twitter's claim that spam and bot accounts are less than 5 per cent of total users. Predictably, Twitter crashed more than 25 per cent at one point. It managed to arrest the bloodbath only when Musk followed up saying he is "still committed to the acquisition." The stock recovered somewhat to 9.67 per cent down at just over \$40, still way below the \$54.20 per share purchase price Musk said he would put on the table. Friday's closing is just a hair breadth above the 39.31 price on April 1, when Musk chose to disclose that he had built up a sizeable stake in TWTR stock. His delayed disclosure is legally suspect under Securities and Exchange Commission rules. Twitter's market cap on Friday was \$34.45 billion. That's an uncool \$9.5 billion lower than what Musk had dangled for a complete buyout. Musk's long shadow seems to engulf morale and talent. Two top Twitter executives exited just this week. Twitter's general manager of consumer product Kayvon Beykpour said CEO Parag Agrawal asked him to leave.

General manager of revenue Bruce Falck announced his departure too. "The truth is that this isn't how and when I imagined leaving Twitter, and this wasn't my decision. Parag asked me to leave after letting me know that he wants to take the team in a different direction," Beykpour said in a candid tweet. Falck, who was with Twitter for 5 years, announced his departure without specifying which of the parties took the first step. Twitter CEO Agrawal announced Falck and Beykpour leaving the company in an email. He noted pausing most hiring and pulling back on spending. "Effective this week, we are pausing most hiring and backfills, except for business critical roles as determined by Staff members in partnership with their HRBPs (human resource business partners) We will also be reviewing all extended offers to determine criticality and those



that should be pulled back." Agrawal said he had no plans for layoffs, but leaders can be removed. "We are not planning company-wide layoffs, but leaders will continue making changes to their organizations to improve efficiencies as needed. As always, performance management will continue to be a priority at this time at all levels to ensure we have the strongest teams possible."

international

Yoon, Biden to discuss N Korean provocations during 1st summit

Seoul | Agencies  
During their first-ever summit this week, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol and his US counterpart Joe Biden will discuss North Korean provocations, economic security and contributions to pending international issues, a senior official here said on Sunday. Biden is set to arrive in Seoul on Friday for the summit with the new South Korean President the following day before visiting Japan on May 22 on his first Asia trip since his inauguration last year, reports Yonhap News Agency. The two leaders will discuss how to deal with North Korea's provocations, the official said, adding that they will also discuss bilateral cooperation in supply chain issues, emerging technologies and other topics related to economic security. Also on the agenda is South Korea's contributions to pressing international issues and how to coordinate them. Yoon's top priority in the summit is to build trust with Biden and further strengthen the South Korea-US alliance and combined



defence posture, according to the official. The US currently maintains some 28,500 troops in South Korea to deter North Korean aggression, a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War that ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty. The summit and a joint press conference will both be held at the new presidential office in Yongsan in central Seoul.

NY MASS SHOOTING GUNMAN ARRAIGNED

New York | Agencies  
An 18-year-old white gunman was arraigned on Sunday hours after shocking the nation by live-streaming his mass shooting at a supermarket in the city of Buffalo, New York, which led to the deaths of 10 people, mostly African-Americans. The heavily armed shooter, identified as Payton Gendron, surrendered to local police after the mass shooting at the Tops Friendly Markets on Saturday afternoon in Buffalo, located near the Canadian border, reports Xinhua news agency. Gendron was taken into custody and transported to Buffalo Police Headquarters. Local law enforcement officials were quick to prosecute the racially motivated perpetrator. Gendron, from the town of Conklin, New York, was arraigned in a Buffalo court on one count of murder in the first degree, said Erie County District Attorney's Office. Gendron appeared in the court for less than five minutes and pleaded not guilty, according to a report by United Press International. The shooter was remanded without bail, and a felony hearing is scheduled for Thursday, according to

Erie County District Attorney's office. "This defendant is accused of traveling to our area and targeting innocent people who were shopping for their groceries on a Saturday afternoon... My office is working closely with the US Attorney's Office and our partners in law enforcement into potential terrorism and hate crimes. This is an active investigation and additional charges may be filed," said Erie County District Attorney John Flynn in a statement. If convicted, Gendron faces a maximum sentence of life in prison without parole, added Flynn. Gendron wore military-style clothing and body armour and opened fire with a rifle while live-streaming the attack on the Twitch gaming platform. Out of the 13 victims, 11 are African-Americans while two are white, according to Buffalo Police Commissioner Joseph Gramaglia. Police also said the suspect drove for hours to the supermarket, located in a predominantly African American neighbourhood. US Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a statement that the Department of Justice "is investigating this matter as a hate crime and an act of racially-motivated violent

extremism". Garland vowed to conduct "a thorough and expeditious investigation into this shooting" and seek "justice for these innocent victims." Meanwhile, attention quickly turned to fundamental issues like white supremacy, social media and gun violence. "A racially motivated hate crime is abhorrent to the very fabric of this nation. Any act of domestic terrorism, including an act perpetrated in the name of a repugnant white nationalist ideology, is antithetical to everything we stand for in America," said President Joe Biden in a statement. He called for the elimination of hate crime and hate-fueled domestic terrorism. "We'll be aggressive in our pursuit of anyone who subscribes to the ideals professed by other white supremacists and how there's a feeding frenzy on social media platforms where hate festers more hate, that has to stop," said New York Governor Kathy Hochul in a press conference on Saturday evening. "We must do more to address the scourge of racism and anti-Semitism, and to pass commonsense gun safety measures to keep our communities safe," said Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

from New York State. Hochul urged social media platforms to be vigilant in monitoring content and pushed for legal responsibility to ensure that such hate cannot populate social media sites. The gunman live-streamed the shooting on Twitch, a platform best known for gaming, and posted a racist and anti-Semitic manifesto online, according to reports. Twitch was quick to respond saying it has a "zero-tolerance policy against violence of any kind and works swiftly to respond to all incidents. The user has been indefinitely suspended from our service, and we are taking all appropriate action, including monitoring for any accounts rebroadcasting this content." The suspect is believed to have used a gun that was legally purchased but modified with illegal magazines, according to Hochul. "I've seen violence from guns on the streets of Buffalo, and now in the streets of Buffalo, it has to stop," she added. According to a database run by the nonprofit research group Gun Violence Archive, more than 28,000 people have died or been injured due to gun-related incidents in the US this year.

Security to be tightened in SL after reports of possible attacks on May 18

Colombo | Agencies  
Sri Lanka's Defence Ministry announced the tightening of security across the island nation after reports emerged in the Indian media that the former cadres of the now-defunct Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militant group are planning to carry out attacks during the Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day on May 18. The Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day, also known as Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day, is marked annually by the Sri Lankan Tamils on May 18, the date on which the over 25-year-old Civil War in the island nation ended in 2009 after the killing of LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. Responding to a report carried by India's 'The Hindu' newspaper on May 13, the Defence Ministry said:

"After inquiring about the information, Indian intelligence agencies told Sri Lanka that the information was given out as general information, adding that investigations will be carried out in this regard and action will be taken to inform Sri Lanka about it." The said information received by the intelligence and security forces in connection with national security will be duly investigated and all further steps are taken to strengthen the security while informing the respective security forces on the same, the Ministry added. As Sri Lanka is undergoing its worst economic crisis since it gained independence in 1948, intelligence agencies warned that the LTTE cadres were grouping to launch attacks in the island nation taking advantage of the situation. As the island nation has declared



emergency twice amid violent protests, some sections of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, with multinational links, were trying to make their presence "felt" in the clashes that took place between protesters and security forces later, police sources said on May 13. Initially, Sri Lanka's Defence Ministry was quick to deny the 'The Hindu' newspaper's report saying:

"The article is completely baseless. We have received no intelligence warning of such a security threat,". In the political circle too, the news was criticised. Marxist National People's Power politician Bimal Ratnayake questioned the authenticity of the news and asked is this a true news or planted one to protect the Rajapakas by distracting the attention and to justify President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's draconian emergency laws and military mania or to ignite ethnic tension. After toppling the government led by Mahinda Rajapaksa with a spate of violent street fights led by non-political youth protesters, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa replaced his elder brother with Ranil Wickremesinghe, a six-time Prime Minister, who is now struggling to form a fresh government with just him as the only MP in his party.

Palestine warns against allowing Israeli settlers to visit Al-Aqsa

Ramallah | Agencies  
Palestine has warned of consequences against allowing Israeli settlers to visit the compound of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the old city of Jerusalem during the "Second Jewish Passover" on Sunday. "These plans are an Israeli persistence to perpetuate visiting the Al-Aqsa as something imposed by force, to consolidate its temporal division to divide it spatially," the Palestinian Foreign Ministry said in a statement, adding that the Israeli government is responsible for the consequences should a conflict occur, reports Xinhua news agency. Earlier on Saturday, the Jewish "Temple Mount" groups called through social media platforms on their Jewish fans to enter Al-Aqsa Mosque collectively on Sunday to mark the anniversary of the "Second Jewish Passover." The Palestinian Foreign Ministry called on the international community and the US to intervene urgently and put pressure on the Israeli government to stop the settler groups' visits to the Al-Aqsa Mosque. In April during the Muslim fasting month



of Ramadan and the Jewish Passover, the Al-Aqsa compound witnessed fierce confrontations between Israeli police and Palestinian worshippers who protested against Jewish visits to their holy site. Tension at the Al-Aqsa Mosque could spark a military confrontation between armed Palestinian factions and Israel, similar to the last offensive waged by Israel on the Gaza Strip in May 2021. For Muslims worldwide, the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the old city of Jerusalem is their first shrine and third mosque. They call the holy place al-Haram al-Sharif, while Jews call it "The Temple Mount."



# THACKERAY'S REFERENCE TO 'EARLY MORNING GOVT FORMATION' IRKS PAWAR



▶ THE NCP LEADER AND DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER SAID HE WILL COMMENT ON THE MATTER "AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's attack on Opposition leader Devendra Fadnis in the context of an "early morning secret government formation" has apparently irked NCP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. Addressing a public rally at BKC in Mumbai on Saturday, the chief minister had alluded to the short-lived alliance between the BJP and the NCP leader. Commenting on Thackeray's statement, Pawar said, "I will make a statement on the matter at an appropriate time. Is this the most important issue before Maharashtra?" before adding, "I have already given my statement in the past."

On Saturday, launching a blistering attack on former chief minister Fadnis, Thackeray said, "Yes, we joined hands with the Congress for government formation. But it was all in the open. Not like yours when you secretly formed a government early in the morning."

Though the statement was directed at the BJP and Fadnis, the "early morning government formation" referred to a short-lived alliance in 2019 as part of which Ajit Pawar was sworn in as the deputy chief minister while Fadnis took oath as the chief minister. The alliance ended three days later when Pawar resigned citing personal reasons. While NCP MLAs had refused to support him, the alliance was also disapproved by party supremo Sharad Pawar.

# COVID-19: Maharashtra cumulative vaccination tally crosses 16.60 crore

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In the ongoing vaccination drive, Maharashtra on May 15 has inoculated 16,60,02,203 people.

As per the state government data, 7,14,47,126 individuals aged between 15 and 59 years received their first vaccine dose and 5,77,04,074 received their second dose and 1,63,845 received precaution dose since the inoculation drive for this age group began on May 1, 2021.

Similarly, 1,33,61,602 individuals above 60 years have received the first vaccine dose while 1,12,47,547 received their second dose. 15,40,113 of them received their precaution dose.

As many as 21,98,236 children in the age group of 12 to 14 years have received their first dose while 8,80,285 received their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

So far, 12,95,382 health care workers have been administered the first dose of the vaccine, while 11,90,966 of them have got their second dose. 3,77,781 health care workers have received their precaution dose so far.

Similarly, 21,49,640 front line workers in the state have till now received their first vaccine dose and of



them, 20,02,198 got their second dose. 4,43,408 front line workers have received their precaution dose so far. Maharashtra on Saturday reported 248 new coronavirus infections and one pandemic-related death, the state health department said.

The lone death was reported in Mumbai. The caseload in the state rose to 78,80,585 and death toll reached 1,47,854.

On Friday, Maharashtra had reported 263 cases and one fatality.

As many as 263 patients recovered during the day. So far 77,31,292 patients have recovered from the infection in Maharashtra.

The state has 1,439 active cases now.

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region -- comprising Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Kalyan-Dombivli, Ulhasnagar and other adjoining areas -- recorded 170 new cases, including 131 in the country's financial capital alone. The Pune division -- cov-

ering Pune, Satara and Solapur districts -- witnessed 63 fresh cases.

Maharashtra's recovery rate is 98.11 per cent, while the case fatality rate stands at 1.87 per cent.

As many as 28,032 coronavirus tests were conducted since Friday evening, taking the total of tests conducted so far to 8,05,37,502.

Maharashtra's coronavirus figures: New cases: 248; New deaths: one; Active cases: 1,439; New tests conducted: 28,032.

# No free BEST rides for Mumbai cops anymore

Mumbai police discontinues free transportation services, adds allowance to pay instead



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Starting June onwards, personnel of the Mumbai Police will have to purchase bus tickets to travel in BEST buses. The police department had previously tied up with BEST to give free ride services to around 40,000 police personnel. Police officials told mid-day that they decided to discontinue the service as only 20-30 per cent of the force uses BEST's services.

Earlier, the Home Department of the Maharashtra Government was allotted a fix transportation allowance of Rs 400 per police personnel. As per the new policy, they will receive a transportation allowance of Rs 2,700 as part of their salary. Speaking with mid-day, Joint Police Commissioner of Admin Rajkumar Vhatkar said, "Members of

the police department were not travelling in these buses, but we were giving a certain amount to the BEST every year, [which didn't make sense]."

"Recently, the government decided to raise the transportation allowance of the police department from Rs 400 rupees to Rs 2,700 rupees. It's a huge amount. If a constable takes a bus from his residence to the station, it will only cost him Rs 10 daily, which is Rs 300 a month," Joint CP Vhatkar explained, adding that this allowance will adequately compensate the force. "The allowance will be part of their salary, and they can use it accordingly. It will benefit everyone, from the constable to all rank officers in the police department," he said. A constable, on condition of anonymity, said, "We can use the money for train and bike travelling expenses as well."

# BN Vaidya Udyan - a tranquil zone for kids and the elderly in bustling Dadar

While senior citizens visit the Prof B N Vaidya Garden for a quiet stroll or to engage with their peers, toddlers and young children make the space come alive in the evenings.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Surrounded by palm trees, shrubbery, benches and a walking track, the triangular-shaped Professor B N Vaidya Garden is a tranquil space in bustling Dadar. It runs parallel to the Dadar central railway station and is located in the Hindu Colony close to BAPS Narayan Mandir, right opposite Dr BR Ambedkar's former residence.

The well-maintained garden with its manicured lawns and neatly trimmed shrubs gets busy as early as 8 am, when usually senior citizens turn up for a quiet stroll or to engage with their peers. As the afternoon heat starts kicking in, the visitors slowly trickle out.

The garden is divided into two parts - one

strictly for senior citizens and the other for children. The senior citizens' area has a walking track, benches and a fountain. They usually visit the garden in the mornings and the evenings and are seen sitting on the benches or swings engrossed in conversations or walking on the track. The other half of the garden has a sand bed meant to be a play area for children aged between two and eight who are often accompanied by their parents or grandparents. By 2-3 pm, students from the nearby IES School start coming in, and an even larger crowd arrives post 4 pm, when the space fills up with toddlers and kids who come to play on the slides and swings. Occasionally, non-residents visit the space to rest in the evenings or take a break before heading to Dadar station, which is a five-minute walk away.

# PASSENGER BOAT SINKS OFF, CREW RESCUED

According to Mumbai Port Authority (MPA) officials, the incident occurred around 11am on Saturday when the 100-passenger capacity boat was cruising almost empty towards ferry wharf.



Mumbai: A passenger boat 'Mustaqueen' that ferried people between Elephanta and ferry wharf/gateway sank off the Ballard pier coast on Saturday morning. Fortunately there were no casualties as only a few people, mostly crew, aboard were saved by the boat nearby.

According to Mumbai Port Authority (MPA) officials, the incident occurred around 11am on Saturday when the 100-passenger capacity boat was cruising almost empty towards ferry wharf.

Sources said there were three crew members aboard. While two of them were saved by the boat cruising nearby as they jumped out with the help of a rope, the master of the ship dived at the end to save himself. Officials said the boat had developed a hole at the bottom and the water was gushing inside so fast that even the rescue team with the fire brigade could not get enough time to pump it out and save it from sinking.

Sources said they will take the sunken boat out soon as it may create hurdle for the ships passing by.

# Marathi signboards at Mumbai shops, establishments by May-end

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has said that all the shops and establishments in Mumbai will need to amend their signboards to incorporate Marathi in the nameplates, adding that the amendment has to be incorporated by May 31, 2022.

BMC has added that the font size of Marathi letters should not be smaller than the font size of letters in other languages. Further, the liquor shops cannot have the name of any great personality or forts on their signboards. A circular was issued recently by the Department of Shops and Establishments of BMC regarding the adoption of relevant procedures. Establishments that have names of established people or have names of forts or depictions have been given time till June 30. BMC has said that a meeting of members of trade associations in the divisional office



as well as owners of establishments will be convened to provide guidance on the implementation of the order.

"All the Divisional Assistant Commissioners have been directed to put up signboards at the entrances of the Divisional Offices as well as in crowded places to create awareness among the people regarding the amendment of signboards and its report should be submitted to the chief officers, shops and establishments," said BMC.

# STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART: TOP CARDIAC SURGEON GIFTS RESORT TO MP FOREST WORKERS

In a unique CSR-cum-passion initiative, India's leading heart surgeon, Dr Ramakanta Panda, will gift an eco-friendly holiday resort for the benefit of around 2,000 poor forest workers in and around the famed Bandhavgarh National Park (BNP) and sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a unique CSR-cum-passion initiative, India's leading heart surgeon, Dr Ramakanta Panda, will gift an eco-friendly holiday resort for the benefit of around 2,000 poor forest workers in and around the famed Bandhavgarh National Park (BNP) and sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.

The resort, with comfortable tent-cottages, will be set up jointly by the Asian Heart Institute (AHI) Mumbai of which Dr Panda is the Vice-Chairman and Managing Director, and his family-run Funding Asian Wildlife Charitable Trust (FAWCT), in collaboration with the MP government. "It's my pet project for which I am getting unstinting support from the Madhya Pradesh Government and the Forest Minister Dr Kunwar Vijay Shah. The proceeds will go towards employees who care for the BNP sanctuary, sensitize people towards conservation and other similar activities," Panda told IANS.

Unknown to many, Panda's heart beats for nature, flora and fauna. He is an avid wildlife photographer, who easily sheds his sterile surgical gloves, gown and scrub caps for coarse jungle outfits, sophisticated cameras and a keen eye for birds, animals, reptiles or other fascinating things to capture on film.

On weekends or on his breaks from AHI, he quietly disappears into the jungles of Maharashtra, other parts of India and even the forested havens of

South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya which abound in wildlife.

"In my many trips to Bandhavgarh, I noticed how hard the workers toil in the forests to protect our natural resources from poachers or smugglers, often at great risk to their lives... At the day's end, they can barely afford a meal of rice or chappatis with onions and chillies as accompaniments," Panda said.

Moved by what he witnessed, he decided to do something worthwhile for the long-term welfare of the forest workers and their families.

"I approached the MP government with my proposal to construct a resort, the proceeds of which will be donated to the forest workers. They readily agreed and allotted 11 acres of land near Tala Gate," he said.

Now, the designers are working on a plan centered on 'tent accommodation'. Panda has made an initial contribution of Rs 30 lakhs and will make more as needed in the future. The resort will be operational by the Diwali 2022 holiday season. "We are taking full care not to disturb or damage the local environment, so the tent-cottages, plus there will be a bird studio, organic vegetable garden, a bird hide and other attractions for commoners and wildlife enthusiasts," he explained. Present at the small launch ceremony held there recently were Dr Panda, Minister Dr Shah, BNP Field Director B. N. Annagiri and others. The MP Minister lauded

Panda's efforts and urged more wildlife lovers to step forward and support conservation activities with such novel initiatives.

Panda has successfully implemented similar ventures at the Kanha National Park and Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary by donating a petrol pump and erecting a boom barrier to create a parking lot, respectively, and the income generated resulted in a sea-change for the workers in both the reserves.

"The people in BNP are very hospitable, good cooks and managers. The resort will help boost their incomes and a part of it will go towards wildlife conservation programmes and kids' education," he smiled.

Considered the first of its kind experiment in India, Panda hopes it will become a 'role-model' for the CSR activities of other corporate houses at different wildlife sanctuaries in the country.

Once a hunting ground of the erstwhile Maharajas in central India, Bandhavgarh has now been declared a national park, sprawling over more than 700 sq kms and is home to the Royal Bengal Tiger, leopards, deer and 35 other species of mammals, 250 species of birds and 80 species of butterflies.

Ranked as the world's safest cardiac surgeon who performed complicated and high-risk surgeries with ease, Padma Bhushan laureate Panda shot into the limelight when he operated on former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2009.

# No more changes to ward demarcation, says PCMC

▶ THE ELECTION OFFICE OF THE PIMPRI-CHINCHWAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (PCMC) ON SUNDAY SAID THAT THERE WILL BE NO MORE CHANCES TO WARD DEMARCATION. BALASAHEB KHANDEKAR, ASSISTANT MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER, PCMC SAID THAT THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION HAS DECIDED THE NEW WARD BOUNDARIES. ON FRIDAY, THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION APPROVED THE DRAFT DELIMITATION PLAN AND THE BOUNDARIES ARE FINAL NOW.

Team Absolute | Pune

The election office of the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) on Sunday said that there will be no more chances to ward demarcation even if citizens make any suggestions or take objections. Two days ago, the PCMC on its website, published the ward demarcations.

Balasaheb Khandekar, Assistant Municipal Commissioner, PCMC said that the State Election Commission has decided the new ward boundaries. On Friday, the State Election Commission approved the draft delimitation plan and the boundaries are final now. Henceforth, there will be no more changes. Khandekar further said that updating the voters' list is the immediate task before them. The PCMC is waiting for the EC's directives to update the voter's list as per the ward delimitations. For the draft delimitation plan of the PCMC, 5,684 suggestions and objections were received.

Approval to changes in boundaries of Charholu, Bhosari, Chikhali, Indrayani Nagar and Prelok Park (Chinchwad) panels or wards are included in the final delimitation plan. In 8 prabhags or panels the changes have been made, including prabhags 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 12, 26 and 27.

Some parts of a prabhag have been attached to others said election officials. An official said that there will be changes in voter population of the prabhag which has been attached to a new area.

In terms of population, Talwade-Rupeenagar Prabhag number one will be the biggest, as per the final delimitation plan, said election officials. The prabhag number one has a population of 40,737. The lowest population is in prabhag number two, Chikhli-Morevasti at 32,161. Similar to Pune Municipal Corporation, three corporators will be elected from on prabhag in PCMC. 139 corporators will be elected in the 2022 civic elections, in 2017 polls the number of corporators was 128. There will be one prabhag which will elect four corporators, while 45 prabhags will choose 3 corporators, the officials said. The prabhag which will elect four corporators will be in Sangvi and has a population of 46,979. The maximum population set for a prabhag is 40,000 while the minimum is 32,000 said the officials. 22 seats will be reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates, 3 for candidates belonging to Scheduled Tribes category, and 114 for general category candidates. An official said that regarding reserving seats for SC and ST, the decision will be taken through a draw of lots on the instructions of the State Election Commission.

# MACHINE GUN KELLY HINTS, HE AND MEGAN FOX COULD ELOPE TO GET MARRIED

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Machine Gun Kelly dropped subtle hints that he and actress Megan Fox were considering eloping. He kept very tight-lipped about their wedding plans as he stepped out at the premiere of his new directed movie, reports mirror.co.uk.

When asked if he and Fox would "pull a Travis and Kourtney" and elope, MGK, whose real name is Colson Baker, said: "I want to kind of just let the world see that as it comes."

Speaking to James Cordon about the finer details of his big day he said: "The location is hard, trying to find

a spot that's matching my artistic (vision)." He was asked when they planned on getting married, and replied: "When they can build me, like, a red river with gothic.." before he trailed off.

The 32-year-old met Fox on the set of 'Midnight In The Switchgrass'. He directed Fox for her role in his new film, adding: "She didn't let me lead her character too much in any direction."

"She was like 'I got this. I understand what this character is.'" She improvised and brought Kennedy to life, and I've heard a lot of people say that that's their favourite character in the movie," he noted.

MGK is also featuring in the film as character

London Clash, who finds himself choosing between love and a movie role.

Fox revealed that she made a slightly odd request for what she wanted for her birthday.

She said that she asked her fiancé that she didn't care what they did on her birthday, so long as there were no phones. "My main request is always just no cell phones," she told Directo.

"So, whatever we do, wherever we go, I just want there to be no phones."

She gushed over MGK's work on set: "He was amazing, so was Mod.

He wrote the whole movie in, like, three days,



which is incredible. He gets these bursts of creativity where he sort of downloads something from the universe and puts on an amazing product really quickly."

MGK was equally as complimentary of his future wife.

"I just think she's comedically genius. I think she's so underrated as a comedic actor and just as an actor who can adapt to different faces and phases, so, it was an honour."

## Rose Leslie on 'The Time Traveler's Wife' role

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Rose Leslie says the stability of her marriage to Hollywood star Kit Harrington helped her make her lovesick character in 'The Time Traveler's Wife' convincing.

She said: "I think being in a relationship and knowing that you have a supportive partner can only lend itself to feeling more secure in in yourself, and therefore, hopefully, kind of growing together into two people who are more anchored."

Leslie's sculptor character Clare endures long stretches without husband Henry in 'The Time Traveler's Wife' as he's afflicted with a genetic disorder that causes him to unpredictably travel through time, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The actress, who married 'Game of Thrones' star Harrington in 2018, said there were limits to patience in reality.

When asked about true love, she said: "I think there is a time limit on that... twenty years is a long time to wait."

The actress was speaking alongside Theo James, 37, her co-star in 'The Time Traveler's Wife'.

Theo said: "What we wanted to do was make the time travel feel as urgent and as dangerous as possible when he travels, it's not for fun, it's because it's an affliction, it's a disease, and he gets thrown around in time and he lands in a place he doesn't know where he is, he's got no clothes, he's physically exhausted, he's sweating he's got to kind of survive."

She told ExtraTV they strived to make the series more in-depth than the film version released in 2009, which starred Rachel McAdams as Clare and Eric Bana as Henry.

She added: "We have more time to kind of delve into the characters and who they are and the kind of intricacies that they then have with one another."

Speaking about her plans for the rest of the year, Rose revealed she wants to spend time with Kit, 35, "hunkering down and being with our boy".

Theo said his marriage to actress Ruth Kearney, 37, also influenced the way he played Henry.

He said: "I definitely think being married having children, having, you know, being a little bit hopefully older and wiser that enables you to inform a story like this. I think it would have been harder, for me at least, to play this part when I was younger because I was too much more of the younger Henry, you know?"

"I recognised the kind of young, dumb, impulsive guy, and I remember him, but I feel like I'm less him now, even though I still make those mistakes, but then I'm old enough to know that I'm kind of heading in the direction of, you know, just being a bit more relaxed in myself."

Theo also insisted the nudity in the show, which starts streaming on HBO Max on May 15, is essential to the plot.



Los Angeles | Agencies



Katie Price has expressed her outrage at her late friend Sarah Harding's name being mentioned in the Wagatha Christie libel trial at the High Court this week. Rebekah Vardy, 40, and Girls Aloud star Sarah - who died at the age of 39 from breast cancer in September last year - got into a heated argument at the 2018 National Television Awards after Sarah caught Rebekah taking pictures of the contents of the pop star's handbag. Wife of footballer Jamie Hardy, Rebekah, denies leaking stories to the media and is suing her fellow footballer's wife for libel, while Coleen is defending the claim on the basis her post was 'substantially true' and in the public interest.

Taking to Instagram this weekend to show her disappointment that Sarah's name had been dragged into the trial, Katie shared a picture of a newspaper cutting that and wrote: 'How dare anyone bring up Sarah.'

## Liam Gallagher remains hopeful of Oasis reunion

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Liam Gallagher hasn't seen his estranged brother Noel Gallagher in "about 10 years." Despite his infamous feud with his older brother following the band's acrimonious break-up in 2009, the Oasis rocker shared "it's a shame" they haven't been able to let things slide. he said: "The last time I saw Noel was at a football match about 10 years ago. It's a shame, isn't it? The good times outweigh the bad times. I think it's best to just leave it at that." Liam said he's still hopeful for an Oasis reunion one day, but he warned fans not to expect the 'Don't Look Back In Anger' hitmakers to return any time soon, reports aceshowbiz.com. He claimed: "I like to think Oasis will get back together, but not this week. The door is ajar on everything. I wouldn't be surprised if space aliens landed tomorrow. I wouldn't be surprised if they were already here. I wouldn't be surprised if God walks among us. I wouldn't be surprised by all sorts." And while the Britpop legends have gone down as one of the biggest bands in the world, the singer played down their legacy. He said: "Everyone goes on about us being the biggest. There were plenty of places where we could've been bigger. We were the biggest thing in England. And we were pretty big in Japan. But we weren't that big in America, not at all. We never played stadiums in Spain. There was a lot more work to be done, so we shouldn't have split up, because we could have made more records. It's a shame." Meanwhile, Liam insisted it was his destiny to be a performer. He added, "I do believe I was supposed to be on a stage singing songs. I've got some good lungs on me."



## KISSING IN THE STREET?

Los Angeles | Agencies

He earned heart-throb status as lovestruck Connell in the steamy hit TV drama Normal People. And two years on, actor Paul Mescal is clearly still keen on a clinch - if this very public display of passion with his pop star lover is anything to go by.

The 26-year-old Irish actor was spotted canoodling with singer-songwriter Phoebe Bridgers last week in Los Angeles. The couple were seen strolling from their car to a fitness studio, with Paul carrying the pair's yoga mats in readiness for a morning exercise session. There was no sign of an engagement ring on the beaming singer's finger despite reports she referred to Paul as her fiancé during a weekend of partying at last month's Coachella music festival in California. The couple, who have been dating for two years, were dressed casually in T-shirts for their yoga class.

In an interview, the Californian star, 27, later said she thought Paul was a 'cute boy' after becoming a fan while watching the BBC's adaptation of Sally Rooney's novel Normal People. She followed him on Instagram, with the actor quickly returning the favour: 'I got a little pitter-patter in my heart when I saw,' she told a music magazine. Paul has also opened up about his romance, telling GQ magazine: 'To have someone to lean on through such a mad time has been invaluable. I don't know where I'd be without her.' Earlier this month, the couple were rather more smartly dressed when they enjoyed an evening with other A-listers at the Met Gala, the glitzy New York fundraising event.



Megan McKenna



## Thomas Cup:

# INDIA CLINCH MAIDEN THOMAS CUP TITLE WITH STUNNING 3-0 WIN OVER INDONESIA

The Indian men's badminton team lifted their Thomas Cup title after registering a resounding 3-0 win over defending champions Indonesia in the final, here on Sunday.

Bangkok | Agencies

The Indian men's badminton team lifted their Thomas Cup title after registering a resounding 3-0 win over defending champions Indonesia in the final, here on Sunday.

Victories from Lakshya Sen, the doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty and former World No 1 Kidambi Srikanth guided India to the coveted trophy, the most prestigious title in men's team badminton.

Indian men had previously reached the Thomas Cup semis in 1952, 1955, and 1979 while Indonesia are the most successful nation in the history of the tournament, with 14 titles to their name. The high-flying Indian team began their maiden Thomas Cup final tie at the Impact Arena with world

championship bronze winner Lakshya Sen, ranked nine in the badminton world rankings, taking on world No 4 and Tokyo 2020 bronze winner Anthony Ginting. Sen went into the match with a 1-0 head-to-head advantage, having beaten Ginting at the German Open in March. However, the 20-year-old Indian had only won once in the ongoing Thomas Cup and lost thrice.

The young Indian went toe-to-toe with the Indonesian in the early exchanges, but Ginting switched gears to win 12 straight points and pocket the opening game with ease in just 17 minutes. In the second game, the momentum was with Ginting, who was playing on the more favourable side of the court, playing against the drift, and brimming with confidence but India's top-ranked Sen responded well and



upped his pace and attack to win the second game force a decider.

Despite trailing in the opening half of the third game, Lakshya dug deep to churn out some brilliant winners and matched Ginting's immaculate net game. Sen eventually prevailed 8-21, 21-17, 21-16 to put India ahead in the

tie. Thereafter, the doubles team of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy produced a brilliant comeback behind win against Mohammad Ahsan and Kevin Sukamuljo to put India firmly in the driver's seat.

After going down in the opening game, Chirag-Satwik came up with a

herculean effort in the second, saving three match points to win and take the contest into the decider. In the decider, the Indians held the upper hand early but Ahsan and Sukamuljo levelled at 11-11 and moved into the lead. But there was nothing separating the two pairs as they drew level again at 17-17.

Rankireddy and Shetty, who survived four match points in the second game, finally had their first match point opportunity but Ahsan smashed the Indonesians to safety. But on the second time of asking the world No 8 pairing held through to register an 18-21, 23-21, 21-19 win for India.

Meanwhile, the third rubber saw world championship silver medallist Kidambi Srikanth beat Jonatan Christie in comfortable fashion to guide India to the historic win. Srikanth, ranked 11 in the world, cruised to an easy win in the first game but faced a strong resistance from world No 9 Jonatan Christie in the second game.

The Indonesian produced a remarkable run to take the lead towards the end and even had a game point opportunity. But Kidambi held his nerves and found his groove to see out a 21-15, 23-21 victory.

Voot shared the video of the historic moment with IANS. Players and coaches were seen dancing after the win.

## PM MODI, ANURAG THAKUR, ABHINAV BINDRA HAIL MEN'S TEAM FOR HISTORIC TRIUMPH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sports minister Anurag Thakur and the country's first individual gold medal winner at the Olympics, Abhinav Bindra on Sunday led the nation in hailing the men's badminton team for winning a historic maiden title in Thomas Cup World team badminton championships in Bangkok.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sports minister Anurag Thakur and the country's first individual gold medal winner at the Olympics, Abhinav Bindra on Sunday led the nation in hailing the men's badminton team for winning a historic maiden title in Thomas Cup World team badminton championships in Bangkok.

India scripted history with a dominant 3-0 victory over 14-time winners Indonesia in their maiden entry into the Thomas Cup final, becoming only the sixth nation to win the title in the seven-decade history of the tournament.

"The Indian badminton team has scripted history! The entire nation is elated by India winning the Thomas Cup! Congratulations to our accomplished team and best wishes to them for their future endeavours. This win will motivate so many upcoming sports persons," PM Modi said in a tweet on Thursday.

Anurag Thakur was quick to announce a cash award of Rs 1 crore for the team.

"HISTORY CREATED! Congratulations to the Indian men's badminton team for winning the Thomas Cup! This extraordinary feat, with successive victories over Malaysia, Denmark and Indonesia, calls for matching honour by the nation," Thakur said in his tweet celebrating India's brilliant win.

Bindra led the sports persons in hailing the team, calling it an incredible achievement.

"What a historic day! An incredible achievement by an incredible Team India to win the #ThomasCup for the first time ever! Bounced back from tough situations on numerous occasions to win Gold. Kudos to all the players and coaches. Champions, all of you!" said Bindra in his tweet.

Former Women's No 1 Saina Nehwal termed it a great win, tagging Kidambi Srikanth, Lakshya Sen and the doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty in her tweet. "Congratulations TEAM INDIA Men's Team for winning the THOMAS CUP Title Great win #ThomasUberCup2022," Saina said. Former India hockey captain Viren Rasquinha noted the transformation in Indian badminton in the last couple of decades as he congratulated the team on its historic win.

"When I played the Olympics at Athens 2004, India had 1 player in the men's badminton draw who lost very early. Today we are Thomas Cup Champions in 2022. What depth in Indian badminton. What a transformation. Winning mentality," said Rasquinha.

## MINISTER ANURAG THAKUR ANNOUNCES RS 1 CRORE CASH AWARD FOR MEN'S BADMINTON TEAM

The Central Government has announced a cash award of Rs 1 crore for the Indian men's team that defeated 14-time champions Indonesia 3-0 in the final to win a historic maiden title in the Thomas Cup world team badminton championships.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Central Government has announced a cash award of Rs 1 crore for the Indian men's team that defeated 14-time champions Indonesia 3-0 in the final to win a historic maiden title in the Thomas Cup world team badminton championships. After Lakshya Sen, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty and Kidambi Srikanth won their respective matches to give India a dominant, memorable victory in their maiden entry in the final, Sports Minister Anurag Thakur announced the cash award of ₹1 crore for the team.

"As #TeamIndia defeats 14-time #ThomasCup Champions Indonesia to win its 1st ever #ThomasCup2022, @India\_Sport is proud to announce a cash award of ₹1 crore for the team in relaxation of rules to acknowledge this unparalleled feat! Congratulations Team India!!," the Minister said in his tweet.

India on Sunday became only the sixth country ever to win the Thomas Cup, joining Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Japan, and Denmark to win the Thomas Cup. India had defeated Malaysia and Denmark by an identical 3-2 margin in the quarter-finals and semi-finals respectively before getting the better of Indonesia in the final.

## PRESIDENT KOVIND, AMIT SHAH, BCCI SECY CONGRATULATE INDIAN TEAM ON THOMAS CUP WIN

President Ram Nath Kovind, Home Minister Amit Shah and BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Sunday congratulated the Indian men's badminton team, who etched its name in the history books by lifting the maiden Thomas Cup title with a dominant 3-0 win over Indonesia in the final in Bangkok.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

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Victories from Lakshya Sen, the doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty and former World No 1 Kidambi Srikanth guided India to the coveted trophy, the most prestigious title in men's team badminton.

The President of India appreciated the skill, resilience & temperament of the Indian men's team.

"Heartiest congratulations to the Indian badminton team for first-ever Thomas Cup victory! The team has created history, setting highest standards for the future. I have high appreciation for the skills, resilience & temperament shown by the team. India is proud of the champions," said President Kovind in a tweet.

The Home Minister called it a momentous day

for the Indian badminton team.

"India clinched the Thomas Cup. A momentous day for the Indian Badminton team that will be etched in the annals of our sport's history. I congratulate our entire team on this great accomplishment. Every Indian is immensely proud today," tweeted Amit Shah.

Meanwhile, the BCCI secretary also congratulated India on their historic success.

"History Scripted by #TeamIndia! This win in #ThomasCup is a historic one for Indian Sports. What a dominating performance to beat the 14 times champion by 3-0. Congratulations to all the team members," said Jay Shah.

Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar also called it a historic moment.

"Historic moment for all Indians! What a day for Indian Badminton. Congratulations to the whole team on winning our maiden #ThomasCup title," tweeted Tendulkar.

According to Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, president, Badminton Association of India, India's historic win shows the depth of talent. He also credited players and coaching staff for the win.

"It's a very proud moment for Indian badminton. We have had many individual triumphs but winning the Thomas Cup crown is very special. This shows the depth of talent we have among the men and full credit to the players and coaching staff for giving their ultimate best through this week and beating some of the biggest badminton powerhouses on their way to the title win," said Sarma in a statement.

Indian men had previously reached the Thomas Cup semis in 1952, 1955, and 1979.

## IPL 2022:

# RAJASTHAN ROYALS WIN BY 24 RUNS DESPITE HOODA'S HALF-CENTURY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Deepak Hooda's fighting half-century went in vain as Lucknow Super Giants kept losing wickets at regular intervals against clinical bowling by Rajasthan Royals to eventually lose by 24 runs in Match 63 of the IPL 2022 at the Brabourne Stadium here on Sunday.

Chasing 179 for a victory that would have secured them the second spot in the points table, Lucknow were in trouble at 29/3 in the 6th over after Trent Boult sent back Quinton de Kock and Ayush Badoni off successive deliveries. Though Lucknow survived the hat-trick ball, Hooda (59 off 39 balls) came to their rescue as he held one end up, raising 65 runs for the fourth wicket partnership with Krunal Pandya (25 off 23 balls), they could manage 154/8 in 20 overs, losing their second successive match. The win took Rajasthan to the second spot in the points table with 16 points, the same as Lucknow Super Giants, but with an inferior net run rate. Hooda and Pandya kept Lucknow's hopes alive as they stitched a good partnership. But the rate of scoring was not as high as they would have loved and LSG was always playing the catch-up game.

After Pandya was out to an excellent relay catch by Riyan Parag after Jos Butler had pounced the ball at long-off and threw it up in the air before falling over the boundary rope. Parag completed the catch off Ravi Ashwin as Lucknow Super Giants slumped to 94/4 in the 14th over.

Hooda, who struck Yuzvendra



Chahal for a six and four off successive deliveries in the 11th over and had pulled a short one on leg-side by Obed McCoy for a six earlier in his innings, kept plugging for runs as he kept Lucknow Super Giants in the hunt despite the soaring asking rate. He completed his half-century off 33 balls, hitting four boundaries and two sixes.

Hooda was out trying to shore up the scoring as he jumped out to Chahal and Rajasthan skipper Sanju Samson completing the stumping despite a fumble. Hooda was out for 59 off 39 deliveries, hitting five boundaries and two sixes. Lucknow needed 63 runs off 24 balls and the task got further difficult with the fall of each wicket as Rajasthan Royals bowled and fielded well. From 63 off 24 balls, LSG progressed to 34 off the last six deliveries and Marcus Stoinis (27) hammered Prasad Krishna for a six off the first

ball but holed out to the next, ending their hopes. Trent Boult was the best Rajasthan bowler on the day with 2/18 off four overs while Prasad Krishna (2/33) and Obed McCoy 2/35 were also among wickets. Rajasthan's par score of 178/6 in 20 overs was built on useful knocks by Yashasvi Jaiswal (41 off 29 balls), skipper Sanju Samson (32 off 24), and Devdutt Padikkal (39 off 18), who got starts but could not go on to score a big one.

### Brief scores:

Rajasthan Royals 178/6 in 20 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 41, Devdutt Padikkal 39, Sanju Samson 32; Ravi Bishnoi 2/31) beat Lucknow Super Giants 154/8 in 20 overs (Deepak Hooda 59, Krunal Pandya 25, Marcus Stoinis 27; Trent Boult 2/18, Prasad Krishna 2/33, Obed McCoy 2/35) by 24 runs.

# India clean sweep Women's 25M Pistol at Suhl Junior World Cup

India's pistol girls affected a clean sweep of the Women's 25M Pistol competition on the penultimate day of the ISSF Junior World Cup shooting championships in Suhl, Germany, to further consolidate their lead at the top of the medal tally.

New Delhi: India's pistol girls affected a clean sweep of the Women's 25M Pistol competition on the penultimate day of the ISSF Junior World Cup shooting championships in Suhl, Germany, to further consolidate their lead at the top of the medal tally. Rhythm Sangwan won gold, Manu Bhaker silver and Naama Kapoor bronze, as India completely dominated the Olympic event on Sunday.

The Indian trio was head and shoulders above the field from the qualification round itself. Rhythm topped the round with a score of 588 while Manu was second with 584 and Naama third with 583.

Then in the eliminators, Naama topped with 12 hits while Rhythm followed her to the medal round in second with 11 hits. Manu topped the second eliminator comfortably with 17 hits as German Michaela Boesl won a shoot-off to become the fourth finalist with nine hits to her name.

Then Naama ensured an Indian sweep of the medals, taking out the German in a tense three-shot shoot-off after both had tied on 10-hits after four 5-shot series rounds.

Meanwhile, there was a battle at the top, as Manu initially led from Rhythm, but the latter caught up by the fifth series and then surged ahead after the seventh as Manu registered a blank. Eventual scores read 31 hits for Rhythm, and 26 for Manu, while Naama finished with 16 hits to her name. Shivam Dabas also won India a silver in the Men's 50M Rifle 3 Positions Junior competition, going down 15-17 to Italian Danilo Sollazzo where the Italian also had to survive a shoot-off against the Indian to win in what was a very close final. With a few more events to be decided, India have now amassed nine gold, 10 silver and one bronze for an overall haul of 20 medals so far.

## BCCI awards title sponsorship rights of Women's T20 Challenge 2022 to My11Circle

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Sunday awarded the title sponsorship rights for the Women's T20 Challenge 2022 to Indian fantasy sports platform My11Circle after successfully participating in the bidding process.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Sunday awarded the title sponsorship rights for the Women's T20 Challenge 2022 to Indian fantasy sports platform My11Circle after successfully participating in the bidding process. The Women's T20 Challenge this year will comprise four games which will be played from May 23 to May 28 at Pune's MCA stadium.

Twelve international players from South Africa, England, West Indies and Australia will compete in the Women's



T20 Challenge 2022. Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur, Shafali Verma, Laura Wolvaardt, Sophie Ecclestone and Deandra Dottin will be among the many prominent players.

"It is our mission to promote and nurture the sport we love across all formats and the Women's T20 Challenge has always been key to that endeavour. The continued success of the tournament both on and off the field is encouraging and gives us immense confidence that we are heading in the right direction," said BCCI president Sourav Ganguly in a statement.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah said, "India has a rich vein of cricketing talent and the continued growth of the Women's

T20 Challenge serves as the ideal platform for the players to test themselves against the very best, at a world-class tournament. The appetite for Women's cricket has grown significantly and having My11Circle on board as the title sponsor of the 2022 edition, is a testament to that. The BCCI is committed to promoting women's cricket in India and we look forward to a fruitful partnership with My11Circle." Bhavin Pandya, Co-founder and Co-CEO, Games24x7 said: "We are very excited to be title sponsors of the upcoming Women's T20 Challenge 2022. One of the most endearing developments in the cricket world in the last few years is the growing popularity of women's cricket. This contest, which will feature some of the finest cricketers in world cricket, will give a further fillip to the rising popularity of women's cricket, and will offer immense excitement to fans and supporters of the game of cricket worldwide."



# IIFA POSTPONED TO MID-JULY 2022

Team Absolute | Abu Dhabi

This year's IIFA has been postponed as the International Indian Film Academy and the Indian film industry express their deepest condolences to the people of the UAE and the world on the passing of the President of the UAE, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan. With this sad news, the UAE nation is in a state of mourning and has declared a 40-day mourning period.

In solidarity with the people and Government of the UAE and with the national mourning being observed, the 22nd edition of the IIFA Weekend & Awards to be held on Yas Island, Abu Dhabi from the May 19 to 21 has been postponed.

The International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) has



decided that the 2022 IIFA Weekend & Awards will be

held instead from the 14th to 16th of July 2022. Further confirmations and updates on the new IIFA schedule will be shared soon.

IIFA expresses its apologies to all the fans and ticketholders and promises a bigger, more exciting celebration of the India-UAE friendship at the later date.

# AKSHAY TEST COVID POSITIVE SECOND TIME

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Akshay Kumar, has tested positive for Covid-19 for the second time. In an announcement made on Twitter, Akshay said he would not be able to join the delegation of film personalities that Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur is leading to the Cannes Film



Akshay was to walk the Cannes 2022 red carpet alongside music maestro A.R. Rahman, actors R. Madhavan, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Nayanthara and Tamannaah Bhatia, filmmaker Shekhar Kapur, Censor Board chief Praseon Joshi and two-time Grammy winner Ricky Kej, among others.

The star had previously tested Covid-19 positive last year in April. He then had to be hospitalised, as a precautionary measure, after being in home quarantine.

While looking forward to shooting for our cinema at the Cannes Film Festival at #Cannes2022, but have tested positive for Covid," the actor said on Saturday night. "I am sorry to miss out. Loads of best wishes and your entire support is appreciated. I will be there."

# Divya Dutta: Never have I ever played a badass as I did

Team Absolute | Mumbai

It was not even a week ago when cine-goers have seen her portraying the character of a mother in her latest released Punjabi film 'Maa'. Now that actress Divya Dutta is gearing up to flaunt her on-screen avatar as a mafia in the upcoming 'Dhaakad' she shares her reasons to love her job that allows playing a plethora of emotions from a mother to a mafia.

Divya told: "I have never played a badass like Rohini in the film. She is a mafia, she is mean, delicious, dark and sexy at the same time. I do not know how but every time between the action and cut, something different, something very mean traits of the character will come out in my performance and our director would ask me, 'where is this meanness coming from Divya?' I would laugh and reply, 'don't make me feel guilty about it!' "Honestly speaking, the more we explore character I realised, we get a deep understanding of the human mind and for an actor, it is also a self-discovery. On one hand, I am playing the character of Manjit Kaur in 'Maa', my Punjabi film that was released a week ago; and then it's the same me, playing Rohini, a mafia! I live my job, therefore, that gets me a chance to play from Maa to mafia!" smiled the actress.

# SURAJ NAMBIAR:

HOW HE COULDN'T TAKE HIS EYES OFF

Mouni Roy



Team Absolute | Mumbai

As Mouni Roy's husband Suraj Nambiar couldn't make it to the 'DID L'il Masters Season 5', he surprised her by sending a video message. In the video, Suraj mentioned: "I had met Mouni four years back during a party with my friends, and I couldn't take my eyes off her, she was looking so beautiful. One of her friends helped me start a conversation with her, and we ended up exchanging numbers."

"Slowly and steadily, we started dating each other and one fine day, when Mouni, I, and a couple of friends went on a vacation, we planned a little surprise for her. She didn't have any idea that I was about to propose to her, but I arranged for her favorite song to play in the background, and with a beautiful sunset in the backdrop, I proposed to her. It's been three months now since the time we got married, and I must say that it has been a lot of fun being with her." Mouni added how Suraj inspired her in life: "Before meeting Suraj, I was a bit lost, however, he showed me the right path to live my life. He mentioned to me that I need to broaden my mind, be present in the current scheme of things, and look for the magic. I believe he is someone who introduced me to the true magic of life, and I am so grateful to have him in my life. He is my soulmate, and I love him so much."

# Living in a joint family made me stronger

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As May 15 is celebrated as the International Day of Families, this day provides a chance to increase awareness and promote the importance of family. TV star Devoleena Bhattacharjee reveals that living in a joint family has made her stronger to face the world. She says: "In my hometown in Assam we still stay as a joint family. I personally feel living in a joint family means adjusting with all the uncles, aunts, and cousins. But, growing up with a set of different individuals, sacrificing our needs for the happiness of a loved one, and fighting over little things, pretty much makes you ready for the world. Joint families still prevail in India, but the number has depleted. But I feel fortunate that we as a family always stand united." She continues: "I'm glad that I belong from a country like India, that has always been known for its rich culture, and for the system of living in a joint family. A joint

family does not only mean a group of people living together, it means that these people are tied with love and care for each other."

Devoleena who rose to fame after playing Gopi Bahu in 'Saath Nibhaana Saathiya' and later on earned a lot of appreciation for her participation in 'Bigg Boss' adds one understand the importance of family during bad times. She shares: "I personally feel a family is that 'umbrella' whose value is not realised until the stormy clouds loom over us. But, when you look up with a hope that someone will come to your rescue, the first silent approaching steps will be of your family members. This is 'Family'. You grow up together, learn together; agree-disagree; fight and make-up, move on in your lives, but in the end, when you need someone, you know your siblings and your family will be right there."



WAMIQA GABBI GET A CHANCE TO WORK WITH VISHAL BHARADWAJ

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Wamiqa Gabbi will be seen in the upcoming crime thriller, 'Khufiya' and 'Modern Love Mumbai' - both of these projects are being helmed by Vishal Bharadwaj. She feels fortunate to have gotten the opportunity of working with such an experienced and talented filmmaker twice already.

Wamiqa says, "I am half-way through 2022 and it's already turning out to be a fabulous year for me! With 'Mai' getting a phenomenal response from all over, I am all the more excited for what's more in store in the next half this year, and two of these major projects being with Vishal sir is like a dream come true."

"She added: "I feel fortunate to have gotten the opportunity of working with such an experienced and talented film maker twice already, so early on in my career! Blessed to be starting my journey in the industry with some of the best and biggest names in the industry."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Kiara Advani