

# absolute india



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▶ TO ACCELERATE THE PACE OF VACCINATION AND ENCOURAGE BOOSTER SHOTS, THE GOVERNMENT ALSO HAD INITIATED THE SECOND ROUND OF THE 'HAR GHAR DASTAK CAMPAIGN 2.0' ACROSS STATES AND UTS ON JUNE 1. THE TWO-MONTH PROGRAMME IS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.

# Centre to provide free Covid booster dose to 18-59 age groups for 75 days

Under the Amrit Mahotsav of Azadi, a 75-day free vaccination campaign will be conducted from July 15, in which all citizens above the age of 18 years will be given free vaccination doses at government centres.

Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Health Minister



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre will provide free booster doses of Covid vaccines for the 18-59 age group at government vaccination centres under a 75-day special drive from July 15, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya announced on Wednesday. The free booster dose drive will be held for next 75 days as part of the government's Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate the 75th anniversary of India's Independence and to boost the uptake of Covid precaution doses, he said. Urging eligible population to get the

precaution doses, he said in subsequent tweet: "With this decision, India's fight against Covid will be strengthened and additional security of citizens will also be ensured. I urge that all adult citizens must get the precaution dose." Less than 1 per cent of the target population of 77 crore in the 18-59 age group have been administered the precaution dose, as per a source. The initiative has been undertaken to increase the uptake of the precaution doses. However, around 26 per cent of the estimated 16 crore eligible population aged 60 and above as well as healthcare and frontline workers have received the booster dose.

# Biggest Supermoon of 2022 graces Delhi skies, will be seen till Friday

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The biggest supermoon of 2022 was seen in the sky over New Delhi today. Supermoons occur when a full moon is within 90 per cent of perigee or the point where the moon is closest to Earth in its orbit. This celestial phenomenon causes the moon to appear bigger and brighter than usual.

While supermoons aren't very rare, they are slightly bigger and brighter than regular full moons.

The July Supermoon is also called Buck moon as this is the time when the new antlers of the buck or male deer grow out of their foreheads. These deer shed their antlers every year that regrow again. The Supermoon is also named the Thunder moon as frequent thunderstorms are witnessed around this early summertime.

The moon is expected to appear full for the next three days, according to



NASA. People around the world will be able to witness it till Friday early morning. The full moon was also seen in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

According to NASA, there will be three more supermoons in 2022. The next one will make an appearance on August 12.

## INDIAN RUPEE WEAKENS AGAINST DOLLAR

Chennai: The Indian rupee slightly weakened against the US dollar on Wednesday, falling below Rs 79.65. The rupee movement against the dollar will be triggered by the inflation numbers of the US which are expected to be out later on Wednesday. "Rupee traded with minor losses falling below 79.65 as the dollar index traded positive above \$108 rupee range can be seen between 79.25-79.75," said Jateen Trivedi, Vice President, Research Analyst, LKP Securities. Trivedi said the crude price falling below \$100 can be a positive trigger for rupee, but inflation numbers in the evening from the US shall give a major trigger to rupee movement against the dollar.

## CHOLERA OUTBREAK KILLS 5 IN AMRAVATI; 2ND ZIKA VIRUS CASE DETECTED IN PALGHAR

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a major public health concern, cholera outbreak has been reported from Maharashtra's Amravati district, affecting 181 people and claiming five lives in four villages in the past one week, health officials said here on Wednesday.

Mumbai: The outbreak of Cholera has been reported from three villages in Chikhaldhara block -- Dongri, Koylari and Ghana, plus Amravati block's Nayaakola village. "Until now, 181 patients have been diagnosed and five have lost their lives to the disease," said a state government official. The victims include 3 men and three women, including senior citizens aged above 70 and the rest between the age group of 24-40. Besides, the state's second case of the vector-borne Zika virus has been reported in a minor girl in an Ashram School at Jhai village of Talasari block of Palghar district. These are stated to be a fallout of the torrential rains that the two districts have experienced in the past fortnight.

In Palghar, a 7-year-old girl has been afflicted by the Zika virus, sending the health offi-



cial in a tizzy. This is only the second case of Zika virus in the state after the first patient was detected in Pune in July 2021.

The health department is carrying out epidemiological surveillance on a war-footing in different

vulnerable areas lashed by the downpour. Medical teams have been deployed for round-the-clock monitoring in the cholera-hit villages, and all efforts are on for the prevention and control, while a state-level medical squad is camping there to investigate the outbreak and provide suitable guidance on further spread.

This includes water quality monitoring, patient surveillance, management and treatment, health awareness drives, etc, besides the Additional Health Secretary, Amravati Collector, Chief Executive Officer and others reviewing the situation regularly.

In Palghar, the administration has ordered preventive and control measures in terms of surveillance, Vector management, treatment and awareness efforts with the detection of the Zika virus case.

# Supreme Court on pleas against bulldozer action

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday queried counsel representing Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind, which has challenged the bulldozer action in Uttar Pradesh, how it can pass an omnibus order restraining the authorities from carrying out demolition of unauthorised constructions, even though the court concurred that the rule of law must be followed. The top court did not pass an interim order in the matter, and fixed the matter for further hearing on August 10.

A bench comprising Justices B.R. Gavai and P.S. Narasimha said there is no dispute that rule of law has to be followed. "If under the municipal law the construction is unauthorised, can an omnibus order be passed to restrain authorities?"

Senior advocate Dushyant Dave, representing Jamiat, cited a news report claiming house of a murder accused was demolished

and pressed the authorities should not take advantage of municipal laws. Dave said: "We are against this culture...it is happening across the country", and also claimed that the authorities are doing pick and choose action against a community. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said, "They're also Indians, we can't have community-based litigation".

Jamiat's counsel further questioned the validity of demolition of houses and establishment of riots accused by the Uttar Pradesh government, and urged the top court to pass a direction to stop such selective demolition drives in future.

The top court reiterated its query to the petitioner, whether the court can pass an omnibus order in a public interest litigation, restraining state authorities from acting against illegal buildings and constructions. It said, "There is no dispute that the rule of law has to be followed. But can we pass an omnibus order?"

# Jan 6 committee drops bombshell on Trump exposing his lies

Ashok Nilakantan | New York

The US Congressional committee probing the January 6 Capitol Hill "Insurrection" virtually dropped a bombshell on former president Donald Trump claiming evidence that he planned to lead a march of his supporters to the US Capitol as Congress was voting to certify the 2020 election, but did not want anybody outside of a few in his inner circle to know.

This was the bombshell revelation from the 7th hearing of the House January 6



Committee, which detailed how Trump wanted the mob descending on the Capitol to look spontaneous.

The committee disclosed an email from Katrina Pierson, a rally organizer, who informed fellow organizers

after a January 2 phone call with White House chief of staff Mark Meadows that Trump was planning to "call on everyone to march to the Capitol", news reports from major US media outlets revealed. Another rally organizer, Kylie Jane Kremer, wrote in a January 4 text message that it was important to keep the plan secret to avoid alerting the National Park Service. "This stays only between us, we are having a second stage at the Supreme Court again after the ellipse," Kremer wrote. "POTUS is going to have us march there/the

Capitol. It cannot get out about the second stage because people will try and set up another and sabotage it. It can also not get out about the march because I will be in trouble with the national park service and all the agencies but POTUS is going to just call for it 'unexpectedly'. "Not only would keeping the planned mob march on the Capitol a secret prevent a counter-demonstration, the secrecy would also, critically, keep the US Capitol Police in the dark as to what to expect in terms of its planning for security needs.

## 10 MAOIST LEADERS ARRESTED FROM BIHAR'S AURANGABAD

Patna: A total of 10 Maoist leaders, including one who was found to be Covid positive, were arrested in raids at different places in Bihar's Aurangabad district in the last three days, police said on Wednesday.

Superintendent of Police, Aurangabad, Kantesh Kumar Mishra, said that these Maoist leaders were involved in many incidents and were wanted in several districts of Bihar. The police also recovered huge cache of arms and ammunition as well.

The raids were conducted under the supervision of Superintendent of Police, Operations, Mukesh Kumar, and teams of Rafiganj, Pauthu, and Goh police stations were involved.

# Heavy rainfall over core monsoon zone to continue: IMD

▶ ISOLATED VERY HEAVY RAINFALL IS VERY LIKELY OVER WEST MADHYA PRADESH AND TELANGANA ON THURSDAY, EAST MADHYA PRADESH ON SUNDAY, VIDARBHA ON THURSDAY AND SUNDAY, CHHATTISGARH OVER THE WEEKEND, ODISHA TILL SATURDAY, KONKAN AND GOA, CENTRAL MAHARASHTRA AND GUJARAT REGION ON FRIDAY, SAURASHTRA AND KUTCH ON SATURDAY, AND COASTAL AND SOUTH INTERIOR KARNATAKA ON THURSDAY.

▶ ISOLATED HEAVY TO VERY RAINFALL WITH EXTREMELY HEAVY RAINFALL IS VERY LIKELY OVER GUJARAT, THE GHAT AREAS OF MAHARASHTRA, KONKAN, AND GOA ON THURSDAY AND OVER SAURASHTRA AND KUTCH TILL FRIDAY.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With the monsoon trough active and continuing to be at a position south of its normal, very heavy to extremely heavy rainfall is likely over Gujarat, the Western Ghat areas of Maharashtra, Konkan, and Goa on Thursday and over Saurashtra and Kutch till Friday.

"A well-marked Low Pressure Area lies over south coastal Odisha and neighbourhood with the associated cyclonic circulation extending up to upper tropospheric levels tilting southwestwards with height. The monsoon trough is active and south of its normal position," the India Meteorological Department (IMD) bulletin on Wednesday.

An east-west shear zone runs roughly along 20 degree North in middle and upper tropospheric levels tilting southwestwards with height across north peninsular India, the IMD said

"Under the influence above two systems, fairly widespread/light/moderate rainfall and thunderstorm/lightning with isolated heavy rainfall is very likely over Chhattisgarh, Vidarbha, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, and Mahe, coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, Telangana, and Karnataka during next 5 days."

Stating that scattered to fairly widespread light/moderate rainfall with isolated thunderstorm/lightning is very likely over Jammu, Kashmir,



Ladakh, Gilgit, Baltistan and Muzaffarabad, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand dur-

ing next five days and over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi & Rajasthan during next

three days, the IMD bulletin said, adding that there will be reduction thereafter.



# RAJ BJP LEADERS CLASH AHEAD OF SC to hear pleas challenging Agnipath scheme on Friday

Jaipur | Agencies

The Rajasthan BJP was left red-faced on Wednesday after an ugly war of words erupted between two senior BJP leaders in Jaipur over giving entry to some party workers at an event organised for NDA's Presidential candidate Draupadi Murmu.

In a video that has gone viral on social media, BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Kirodi Lal Meena Meena could be seen slamming Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore for not giving entry to some party leaders and workers from the tribal belts of the state. In response, Rathore advised Meena to be mind in his tone.

The war of words between the two leaders went on for some time before Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat intervened and pacified the two parties.

At the reception programme for Draupadi Murmu in Hotel Clarks Amer, entry was given only to those leaders who carried valid passes.



Meena had arrived for the programme along with some leaders and workers from the tribal belts. When the workers accompanying him were stopped at the entry gate, they got angry.

Meena then intervened and took the tribal leaders inside. Some leaders were seen carrying the BJP flag. Seeing this, Shekhawat and Rathore asked them to leave the flags out-

side. Shekhawat also advised them not to raise slogans in favour of BJP. After this a heated argument broke out between Meena and Rathore.

Soon after the video of the incident went viral, the two leaders explained the situation and ensured that all is well between them.

Meena tweeted, "It was natural for an emotional person like me to get angry when the tribal workers, who

came to Jaipur from Dungarpur-Banswara and other remote areas to felicitate NDA's Presidential candidate Draupadi Murmu, did not get entry into the programme. I put forth the suffering of my tribal brothers and sisters in front of Rajendra Rathore.

"If you don't share your problems with your loved ones, whom would you tell? There is no question of any difference of opinion with my brother Rajendra Rathore."

Rathore on his part said, "The video has been presented in a wrong way. Me and Kirodiji have been friends for the last 30 years, and we are more like brothers. He presented his thoughts to me as a brother."

Meanwhile, state Congress chief Govind Singh Dotasra shared the video and quipped that everyone is claiming to be fit for the CM's chair and hence are throwing mud on each other and roaring, raising infighting in the party.

They are least worried about the people, he said.

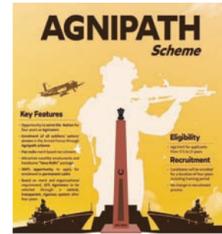
Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court will hear on Friday a group of petitions, challenging the newly-launched Agnipath recruitment scheme for defence forces.

The batch of pleas will be heard by a bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and A.S. Bopanna.

These include a plea by armed forces aspirants seeking an urgent hearing in the matter stating the scheme should not be made applicable to those who are already undergoing the selection process. It further contended that the matter was urgent, as the career of several aspirants was at stake, and pointed out that implementation of the scheme will cut short the tenure of the aspirants to 4 years from 20 years.

Advocate M.L. Sharma also mentioned his plea seeking direction from the



top court to quash the notification by the Ministry of Defence on June 14 announcing the scheme.

Sharma said the government can bring out any scheme but it is about right and wrong. He added that more than 70,000 are still awaiting appointment letters.

After hearing the arguments, the vacation bench had said: "List it before the appropriate bench after reopening."

Sharma's plea said a large section of youth have started protesting against the scheme in various parts of

the country.

It said: "According to the impugned press note... dated June 14, 2022 after 4 years out of 100 per cent selected candidates for Permanent Commission in the Indian Army, 25 per cent will be continued in Indian Army force and the rest 75 per cent will be retired/denied jobs in the Indian army. During 4 years they will be paid salary and perks, but after 4 years denied candidates will get no pension etc." Another plea has been filed by advocate Vishal Tiwari seeking a direction to set up a committee to examine the scheme and its impact on national security and the Army. The Central government has filed a caveat in the Supreme Court regarding the petitions in connection with the 'Agnipath' scheme, saying that it should be heard before taking any decision.

## 13 AD stone pillar with Jewish trade inscriptions found in TN

Chennai | Agencies

History and archaeology researchers stumbled upon a 13 AD stone pillar, which reportedly had information on Jewish trade links, in Tamil Nadu's Ramanathapuram district.

Scholars and students of the Ramanathapuram Archaeological Research Foundation said that the stone pillar, which was unearthed at Valantharavai in Ramanathapuram, is a pointer to the trade that had taken place in this area with foreign areas.

The pillar is three feet long and one foot wide and on all four sides, there are inscriptions. The first side, according to scholars, has 21 Tamil lines, the second side has 14 lines while the third

side has 15 lines. The inscriptions on the fourth side are not clear.

"The inscriptions begin with 'swasti shri' and mention the boundaries of the land donated to Suthapalli or Ainutruvan Perumpalli," scholar and Ramanathapuram Archaeological Research Foundation President V. Rajaguru told reporter.

He said that Suthapalli is a Jewish worship place and according to the Archeological Survey of India records on epigraphy had mentioned a Hebrew epitaph of a Jewish woman named Mariam at Periapattanam.

He also said that based on the writing style the inscriptions apparently dated between 1200-1250 AD.

## Congress mulling action against Manish Tewari for defying party line

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress has sought a report on party MP Manish Tewari for his alleged anti-party line on key issues. The party is mulling action as Tewari recently defied the party line on the Agnipath scheme and supported it despite the party being against it.

Sources say that a senior Congress leader close to the Gandhis called Tewari and persuaded him not to go against the party line.

However, the next day Tewari did not sign the memorandum seeking immediate withdrawal of the Agnipath scheme, submitted by the Opposition MPs during a crucial meeting with



members of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee on Defence on Monday, sources had said.

This is not the first time that Tewari has taken an

independent view on issues where the Congress is targeting the government. Earlier party general secretary Jairam Ramesh distanced the party from his support to

the scheme.

Tewari is one of the most vocal voices of G-23 and feels that since 2014 he is being ignored and after his electoral win in the Lok Sabha polls in 2019 he is not being given key positions in the party nor in the parliamentary party despite having a good grip over various issues. Tewari, who is considered close to former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, has a long association with the Congress starting from the NSUI, Youth Congress and was Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting in UPA-2. Tewari has been part of the meeting of the parliamentary strategy group which is chaired by Sonia Gandhi.

## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IN COLLEGE: OPPN DEMANDS ACTION AGAINST PRINCIPAL, BJP LEADERS

Mehsana:

Opposition in Gujarat is demanding action against BJP leaders for conducting a membership drive in Government Arts College, Becharaji, here, without permission.

Photographs and video clips in which the BJP leaders can be seen asking students to become members of the saffron party, have gone viral. The opposition has demanded action against the BJP leaders for entering the college campus without permission and conducting the membership drive. "On Monday afternoon, I along with other BJP leaders, entered the Arts college campus and asked the college students to join BJP," party's Becharaji general secretary Bhavesh Chauhan said.

"We wrote party phone numbers for membership drive on the blackboard, asked students to give a missed call on the number and fill the forms online," he said.

"We did not conduct the membership drive during the teaching hours," he pointed out. College principal Alpesh Joshi claimed that he was on leave.



## Protesting low salary, IndiGo, Go First technicians go on 'sick leave'

Chennai | Agencies

Continuing their protest against low salaries, the aircraft maintenance technicians (ATMs) of two airlines -- IndiGo and Go First -- have reportedly gone on mass sick leave.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) hopes the situation will get back to normal soon.

However, when contacted by reporter, a Go First spokesperson said: "We would like to clarify that there has been no general protest/ agitation by the technicians as construed."

"There are a few technicians who were absent for 2-3 days. We are in constant discussion with our employees, explaining the present situation and addressing all concerns, if any." Additionally, it is also clarified that unlike as perceived or as in some other cases, we have reinstated employees from 'leave without pay' to normal working condi-



tions and restored salaries to pre-Covid level since August/September 2021," the official said.

The official also said that the airline has adequate technicians to

manage the present operations and like any growing airline, it is also constantly reviewing, recognising the present team and recruiting new talents. On the other hand, it is learnt

IndiGo has started taking disciplinary action against the protesting aircraft maintenance technicians. The officials of IndiGo were not reachable for comments.

## DRI unearths customs duty evasion of Rs 4,389 cr by Oppo India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has detected that Oppo Mobiles India Private Limited has evaded Customs duty of around Rs 4,389 crore.

"During an investigation pertaining to Oppo Mobiles India Private Limited, a subsidiary company of "Guangdong Oppo Mobile Telecommunications Corporation Ltd, China, we have detected Customs duty evasion of around Rs 4,389 crore. Oppo India is engaged in the business of manufacturing, assembling, wholesale trading, distribution of mobile handsets and accessories thereof, across India. Oppo India deals in various brands of mobile phones, including Oppo, OnePlus and Realme," said the DRI.

It further said that during the course of investigation,

searches were conducted on the office premises of Oppo India and residences of its key management employees, which led to the recovery of incriminating evidence indicating wilful mis-declaration in the description of certain items imported by Oppo India for use in the manufacture of mobile phones. This mis-declaration resulted in wrongful availment of ineligible duty exemption benefits by Oppo India amounting to Rs 2,981 crore. Among others, senior management employees and domestic suppliers of Oppo India were questioned, who in their voluntary statements accepted the submission of wrongful description before the Customs Authorities at the time of import. Investigation also revealed that Oppo India had remitted, made provisions for payment of 'Royalty' and 'Licence Fee' to various multi-

national companies, including those based in China, in lieu of use of proprietary technology/brand/IPR license etc. The said 'Royalty' and 'Licence Fees' paid by Oppo India were not being added in the transaction value of the goods imported by them, in violation of Section 14 of the Customs Act, 1962, read with Rule 10 of the Customs Valuation (Determination of Value of Imported Goods) Rules 2007. The alleged duty evasion by M/s Oppo India on this account is Rs 1,408 crore. A sum of Rs 450 crore has been voluntarily deposited by Oppo India, as partial differential Customs duty short paid by them.

After completion of the investigation, a show-cause notice has been issued to Oppo India demanding Customs duty amounting to Rs 4,389 crore.

## 45 hand guns seized from 2 passengers at IGI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Customs department has seized as many as 45 hand guns from two passengers -- both Indian nationals, here at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, an official said on Wednesday.

The guns were seized from Jagjit Singh and his wife Jaswinder Kaur, who arrived here from Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam) on July 11 along with their infant daughter.

"The passengers were intercepted by the Customs officers when they had crossed the green channel of the arrival hall and were approaching the east gate," the official said.

"Jagjit Singh was carrying two trolley bags which were handed over to him by his



elder brother Manjit Singh, who had arrived from Paris almost at the same time and day Jagjit and Jaswinder arrived from Vietnam," the official said, adding after this Manjit managed to slip out of the airport.

He said that Jaswinder Kaur was also an active part of the plan and helped remove and destroy the tags of both the trolley bags con-

taining 45 guns. "Both the accused passengers have admitted their previous indulgence in smuggling of 25 pieces of assorted guns from Turkey," said the official. Accordingly, the two trolley bags along with recovered guns were seized and the passengers were arrested under section 104 of the Customs Act.

## Attempt to target Ansari, Sonia worst form of character assassination: Cong

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress on Wednesday termed the BJP's charges against former Vice President Hamid Ansari, and the party's interim president Sonia Gandhi as the worst form of character assassination and insinuations.

Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh in a statement said: "Insinuations and innuendos by a spokesperson of the BJP against Sonia Gandhi and Hamid Ansari, former Vice-President of India, are to be condemned in the strongest possible language."

"The facts regarding the International Conference of Jurists on International Terrorism and Human Rights held on December 11, 2010 in New Delhi are already in the public domain. The insinuations and innuendos of the



spokesperson of the BJP are character assassination of the worst form. The levels that the Prime Minister and his party colleagues will stoop to debase public debate and spread their patented brand of lies is staggering. It reflects sickness of mind and lack of any form of integrity whatsoever," he said.

The BJP on Wednesday slammed Hamid Ansari and the Congress, and sought their clarifi-

cation over claims by a Pakistani journalist that he had visited India five times during the UPA rule, and shared sensitive information collected during his visits with the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) back home.

BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia said this while referring to Pakistani journalist Nusrat Mirza's claims that he had visited India on Ansari's invitation and also met

him. Addressing a press conference, Bhatia said, "If Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, and then the Vice President remain silent on the questions raised by the ruling party, it will amount to their admission to these sins."

"People of India are giving you (Ansari) so much respect and you are betraying the country. Isn't this treason? Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Hamid Ansari should come out and reply to this," Bhatia said. He said that journalist Mirza has claimed in an interview in Pakistan that Ansari had invited him five times to India during 2005-11 and shared extremely sensitive and classified information, which he passed on to the ISI.

"Mirza collected the information from Ansari and it was used against India," Bhatia claimed.



# HEAVY RAIN FLOODS HARDA, 200 PEOPLE RESCUED

Team Absolute | Bhopal

At least 200 people, including children and women were rescued and shifted to safer places in Madhya Pradesh's flood-hit Harda district.

Heavy rain since Tuesday caused flooding in the district and more than 70 houses got submerged.

The Highway connecting Bhopal-Betul has been closed due to overflowing Mancha river.

Several teams have been deployed to rescue people caught in floods and take them to safe places, the chief minister's office said on Wednesday.

The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has already warned that heavy rain



would occur in Harda district. Observing the situation, the district administration has ordered schools to be shut for the day.

As per the IMD's report, in the last 24 hours, Betul district has

received 140 mm rain, Pachmarhi 111 mm, Khandwa 68 mm, Seoni 58 mm, etc. The department has issued yellow alerts in districts such as -- Raisen, Bhopal, Neemuch, Narsingpur, Balaghat and Mandla.

Similarly, moderate to heavy rain has been predicted for Wednesday afternoon in districts such as -- Sehore, Indore, Dhar, Shajapur, Ratlam, Alirajpur, Jabua, Mandasaur and Ujjain.

The IMD has issued red alert in districts for districts like Harda, Betul, Chhindwara, Seoni, Narmadapuram, Dewas, Khargone, Badwani and some more. As per the reports, at least 47 people in Madhya Pradesh have been killed due to lightning strikes in a span of just a week taking the toll to 111 in the last one-and-a-half months. State capital Bhopal has alone reported around 7,000 lightning strikes, according to scientists at Regional Meteorological Centre, Bhopal in two days on July 11 and 12.

## LIGHTNING CLAIMS 47 LIVES IN A WEEK IN STATE; ADVISORY ISSUED

**Bhopal:** At least 47 people in Madhya Pradesh have been killed due to lightning strikes in a span of just a week, while 111 others lost lives in the last one-and-a-half months, officials said on Tuesday. State capital Bhopal has alone reported around 7,000 lightning strikes, according to scientists at Regional Meteorological Centre, Bhopal. Heavy rainfall since Sunday has thrown normal life out of gear in several parts of Madhya Pradesh, particularly Bhopal, and Chhindwara district. Sausar in Chhindwara reported heavy rainfall, causing flash floods in low-lying areas, forcing closure of traffic on the main highway linking the town to Nagpur for around an hour. Bhopal recorded 92 mm rain since Monday night, which was 133 per cent more than the same period last year. According to data released by the Met department on Monday, out of 52 districts of Madhya Pradesh, 27, including Bhopal had reported excess rain and seven districts reported normal rainfall. The state Health Department has issued guidelines for preventive measures and emergency services for people hit by lightning, storm and weather related disasters. Deputy director (disaster management) of the state directorate of health services, Pragna Tiwari, came out with the guidelines for chief medical and health officers and civil surgeons of the all the districts, detailing the steps to be taken to prop up emergency services and the precautionary measures that could be disseminated to the public.

# Amaravati-Akola highway construction completed in 105 hours



## CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN CONGRATULATED NHAI

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has congratulated the team of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Road Transport and Highways for speedy construction of Amaravati-Akola road. He has described the work of setting a world record by NHAI by laying this 75 km highway in 105.33 hours as an unparalleled achievement. This work

completed last month has been recorded in the Guinness Book.

Chief Minister Chouhan has said that this is an incredible example of commitment towards development under the guidance of the successful and visionary Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. A network of roads is being laid in the states all over the country. He said that Amravati and Akola both important cities become twins after getting intercon-

ected by a spectacular road. The world record of speedy construction of this road has once again proved the strong willpower of the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and his commitment to the welfare of the general public.

It is noteworthy that the NHAI team had constructed the 75 KM bituminous concrete road between Amravati-Akola on a single lane highway in a record 105 hours 33 minutes.

# Weird statement of ADM Shivpuri, 'Corrupt leaders produced by voting'

Team Absolute | Shivpuri/Bhopal

Giving a strange statement, an officer of Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh has termed democracy as the biggest mistake. At the same time, it has been said that "by casting votes, we have made only corrupt leaders".

A video is going viral on social media which is being told of Umesh Shukla posted in Shivpuri district, in which he is questioning democracy.

In this video, ADM Umesh Shukla is saying that - Democracy is the biggest mistake of our country, by casting votes we have produced corrupt leaders.

Not only this, Shukla is further saying that what will you do by voting and till now what we have also done by voting.

It is said that some employees had gone to discuss about the duty ballot paper, when a candidate was also there and that candidate talked about giving duty ballot papers to these employees. After the ballot paper was over in Shivpuri tehsil office, some employees had gone to discuss with the ADM regarding the



duty ballot paper, only then this video was made. In this video, ADM Shukla is seen saying that the camera should be turned off, Shukla felt that the camera was turned off and he spoke.

With this video going viral on social media, Congress state president Kamal Nath's coordinator Narendra Saluja has written that this video is being told of Shivpuri Additional Collector Umesh Shukla, in which people come to get their names added in the voter list. How many corrupt leaders were produced by casting votes. Voting is the biggest mistake, now when the officials say this to the public, then how will the voting percentage increase.

# ONE AND A HALF THOUSAND WEAPONS AND LIQUOR WORTH 7 CRORE SEIZED

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In the campaign run to maintain law and order during the urban and panchayat elections being held in Madhya Pradesh, in addition to about one and a half thousand weapons, illegal liquor worth more than seven crores has been confiscated. Continuous action is being taken by the police in view of law and order in the state under Panchayat and Urban Bodies General Election-2022. So far, 1473 unlicensed arms have been confiscated in the state. 2 lakh 58 thou-

sand 131 licensed arms have been deposited in the state.

Action has been taken against one lakh 89 thousand 833 persons under the Preventive Section of CrPC. So far 24 thousand 6 non-bailable warrants have also been served. State Election Commission Secretary Rakesh Singh has informed that from June 1 to July 11, 2022, 64 thousand 773 bulk liters of liquor have been confiscated in the state.

The estimated value of the seized liquor is seven crore seven lakh 99 thousand 344 rupees.



# Man allegedly threatens people to return money after poll loss

Team Absolute | Neemuch

A case has been filed against a man who lost the panchayat elections for allegedly threatening people to return the money he had distributed during the polls in Neemuch district of Madhya Pradesh, police said on Wednesday.

The case was registered on Tuesday after a purported video surfaced on social media, in which the man identified as Raju Dayma is seen asking people to return the money following his loss in the elections for the post of sarpanch of Devran village panchayat in Manasa tehsil, an official said.

An offence under sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 294 (obscene act) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC has been registered against Dayma and his associate Kanhaiya Banzara at Rampura police station for threatening and beating up people, Additional Superintendent of Police



(ASP) Sundar Singh Kalesh said. More charges can be added against the accused for allegedly distributing money during the polls, he said.

The video shows the accused threatening people while asking them to return the money, he said, adding that the video was probably shot last week.

Meanwhile, senior lawyer Mahesh Patidar said the video clearly showed that Dayma had distributed money during the polls and he was seen asking for the same after his loss.

According to sources, the accused had allegedly recovered around ? 4 lakh from people following his defeat in the panchayat polls.

# CM Chouhan plants saplings of Neem, Banyan and Karanj

Representatives of Prajapati Brahma Kumari Ishwariya Vishwavidyalaya also planted saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Neem, Banyan and Karanj saplings in the Smart City Garden. Sushri Neeta Behen, Aradhana Behen, Hema Behen, Ram Kumar Bhai, Harish Bhai and Dr. Sanjeev Jayant of Prajapati Brahma Kumari Ishwariya Vishwavidyalaya also planted saplings.

Internationally reputed university is operating in 140 countries, it has more than 9 thousand branches. The basic objective of the university is to restore the values of life through the knowledge of Raj Yoga. The university is also active in the fields of



## IMPORTANCE OF PLANTS

The banyan planted today has religious and medicinal importance. According to Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of banyan leaves, bark etc. Drinking its decoction boosts the immunity. Rich in antibiotic elements, Neem is known as the supreme medicine. Karanj sapling is used in Ayurveda as well as in religious works.

education and medicine. Besides, on the 75th anniversary of the country's independence, the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence is

being celebrated with the cooperation of the Central Government, State Governments and public participation.

# Welder's son excels in JEE Mains

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Welder's son has done wonders by securing 99.938 percentile in JEE Mains exam, Deepak Prajapati, who has done this wonders, has a mobile phone with pad till now. Deepak belongs to a poor family and his father does a welding job in Dewas, Madhya Pradesh. Deepak's family is originally from Deoria district of Uttar Pradesh, but his father had come to Dewas in search of a job, he also got a job in a company. After that there were problems in front of the family, because the father had lost his job, after that he worked in many places.

Deepak studied up to class VIII in a school near his home and due to financial difficulties, he had to study ninth and tenth in government school, but he studied 11th and 12th in private school, in 12th board examination. He secured 92.6 per cent marks.

Deepak tells that the family financial problem is the biggest in front of him, that's why he wants to overcome it, a student from where he lives studies in IIT Indore. For a long time, Deepak did not even know about engineering, only then he decided to become an engineer.



Deepak tells that to prepare for JE he came to Indore to study and his aunt helped him in getting admission in a coaching class here. The family situation can be gauged from the fact that he does not even have a TV in his house and he uses his own pad phone, but he continued his studies continuously for 10 to 12 hours, when he used to go to class, he used to go to class for an hour. He used to arrive earlier and return after an hour.

Deepak tells that he has a dream of studying in IIT, Kanpur which he will fulfill. On the success of Deepak Prajapati, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan tweeted and congratulated him and wrote, "You have shown that if there is desire in the mind, then there is a way. Madhya Pradesh is proud of your achievement."

# RESULTS FOR JANPAD MEMBER'S POST WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON JULY 14

**Bhopal:** Secretary State Election Commission Rakesh Singh has informed that the tabulation of counting of votes for the posts of Panch, Sarpanch and Janpad Panchayat member and election result will be announced from 10:30 am on July 14. Along with this, block-level tabulation of votes for District Panchayat member will also be done on July 14.

Result of District Panchayat Member on July 15 The tabulation of votes for the post of District Panchayat Member at the District Headquarters and the declaration of the election result will be done on July 15 at 10:30 am.



# Madhav Science College of Ujjain awarded highest A++ grade by NAAC

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhav Science College of Ujjain has become a government college in the state to secure the highest A++ grade awarded by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). The college has got a CGPA of 3.58, which is the highest mark received by any government college in the state so far.

Higher Education Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav, while con-



gratulating the principal, teachers and students of the

college, said that this time also the college has made

the state proud by securing the highest A++ grade by NAAC. He said that the grading of the college was done wrongly by NAAC in the past. NAAC had wrongly counted the PhD holder professors and guest faculty of the college. An appeal was made by the college, which was examined and the college has been awarded A++ grade by NAAC. Higher Education Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav informed that only 28 colleges in the entire nation are in this category.

# CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN GREETES ON GURU PURNIMA

**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has extended best wishes and greeted the people of the state on Guru Purnima. CM Chouhan, in a congratulatory message issued through social media, has said that - "With the blessings and grace of your Guru, you should move forward on the path of continuous progress and lead a successful and meaningful life. May Guru's grace always be with everyone."





EDITOR'S SPECS

## Asia to supply oil to EU!

With the embargo on imports of Russian oil by the European Union (EU) to kick in by the year end, the region has to look at other sources, mainly China. Global investment firm UBS had recently hosted a call with Jonathan Leitch, Director of EMEARC (Europe, Middle East, Africa, Russia and Caspian) Consulting at Turner Mason & Company. According to Leitch, the loss of Russian imports to the EU could exceed 700kb/d, and other sources are needed to fill the shortfall. As per the UBS report, the direct impact of sanctions on the EU will be somewhat limited because of blending and redirecting of Russian diesel and fuel oil exports. This in turn will significantly complicate logistics and should push freight prices higher. There will be additional pressure from the ban on insuring Russian oil cargoes. On importing oil from Asian countries like India and China, The former had recently introduced export limits and tax changes in order to ease domestic pressure of high prices. However, he expects an impact of less than 100kb/d on diesel export decrease from India in 2H22. On the other hand, China has high levels of spare capacity. "While the country's export quota has been recently increased, the expert does not believe that the country will materially raise exports as environmental concerns and retail fuel price caps discourage companies from increasing capacity utilisation," UBS report notes. On the possibility of European refineries increasing diesel output, while high margins incentivise them to maximise runs, the closures done in recent years as well as underinvestment in the sector are now reflected in crude runs remaining below historical highs. With higher crude runs year-on-year, additional supply of diesel is seen at about 250kb/d versus last year. Given that loss of Russian imports could exceed 700kb/d, other sources to compensate for the drop are needed.

# SKILLS ENHANCEMENT: WAY FORWARD FOR INDIAN MADRASSAS

Asad Mirza

Ever since their emergence, the Madrassas in India have persisted with a curriculum that has seen few changes. The fact that literally, lakhs of Muslim children acquire their primary, and perhaps their only formal education in these Madrassas where only literature and Islamic studies with a cursory knowledge of social sciences are taught, should be a matter of concern not only to their parents, but also to anybody concerned with education in any manner. The format of education imparted to the students of Madrassas ought to be modified keeping in view the shifting demands of the job market -- a concern that can no longer be under-played. And this is perfectly possible without an erosion of the cultural and religious identity. Developing suitable answers for today's dilemmas requires an examination of the essentials of education. Education involves transference to others, of knowledge and values accumulated by mankind. Even though schools and teachers have been part of the process of education for hundreds or even thousands of years, it is the spirit of enquiry that has enriched mankind with knowledge. We learn through reading, experience by watching others and by observing the world in general. Inculcating a spirit of scientific enquiry in students will perhaps be the best manner of propelling them on the path of learning. Even though this may be the general agreement, it is a fact that in this country particularly, whenever an attempt is made to institute any profound change, a resistance begins to act from its very inception. The critics flinch at the vision of a Madrassa system where modern education or skills enhancement would jettison religious knowledge

and make education "worldly" and "impersonal". It is a matter of satisfaction to note that of late, some Madrassas, have realised the significance of modern education, and have introduced teaching science, English and Computer skills in their curricula. For example the two largest Madrassas in India, Darul Uloom-Deoband and Nadwa-tul Ulema-Lucknow have braced themselves to be the harbinger of change and have introduced English language teaching and computer skills as part of their curriculum. But both have not been able to bring about any noticeable improvement in the quality of education they impart to their students. It is often argued that if modern education is so sensational, why hasn't it brought any notable improvement to education in the few Madrassas that have adopted it? In reality, in spite of modern education being imparted, thousands of Madrassas don't have a well-formulated curriculum, and/or couldn't implement it even if they wanted to, as they don't have sufficiently trained and proficient staff. It is also a fact that in the earlier years of madrassa education, the founders of Darul Uloom-Deoband, insisted on imparting skills enhancement to their students. Thus enabling them to earn their livelihood and also continue with their religious duties. These skills enhancements included calligraphy, book binding, printing and tailoring. However, over time these components were removed from the madrassa training. But as it is the wheels of history continue turning round and round, and indeed now-a-days Skills Enhancement has become a buzzword for the whole world not just for madrassa students. In the given scenario, madrassa authorities could very well take



advantage of different skills enhancements programmes run by the GoI, government and private institutions and different universities and colleges throughout the country. Madrassa authorities across India can collaborate with National Skills Foundation of India, National Skill Development Corporation, NSIC, Delhi Skill & Entrepreneurship University, Jamia Millia Islamia, AMU and Jamia Hamdard University to name a few, to initiate skills enhancement and development programmes for their students. In addition, madrassas can also collaborate with various NGOs, who have a credible record of delivering

Skills Enhancement and personality development courses over the years. Madrassa students have an edge over students of modern education system, their memorisation capacity is honed so well that this capacity can be utilised to guide them through various skills enhancement courses related to computers and IT, like data analytics and programming. In the past, organisations, which had embarked on this path, report of highly encouraging results. If the madrassa authorities in collaboration with central bodies like the Ministry of Minority Affairs and

Maulana Azad National Foundation carry forward such successful programmes, whose results have been quantified and documented well, then this could augur well both for the country and madrassa. It will also ensure taking the sting out of the critic's blame that madrassa students are inferior to the students who have pursued courses under the modern education system. (Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He writes on Muslims, educational, international affairs, interfaith

international

## SRI LANKAN PM RANIL WICKREMESINGHE APPOINTED ACTING PRESIDENT

Colombo | Agencies

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was on Wednesday appointed as the acting President of Sri Lanka after Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled to Maldives. As per reports, President Rajapaksa informed this to Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena. Soon after taking charge, Wickremesinghe imposed curfew in the Western province where the capital Colombo is and declared emergency regulations island wide. Protesters have surrounded prime minister's office and tense situation prevails with police resorting to tear gas and firing in the air. Protesters who have occupied President's house, his office and PM's official residence have called the public to gather to Colombo despite the emergency and the curfew. He has also ordered the security to arrest people acting riotous manner and blocked vehicles coming to Colombo. National Television station has



stopped transmission. A committee, comprising of Chief of Defence Staff, Tri force Commanders and IGP, had been appointed to ensure the security and safety of the citizens and to restore law and order in the country, Acting President Ranil

Wickremesinghe announced on Wednesday. He said the committee will be given every authority to act without interference from politicians, Daily Mirror reported. As curfew has been imposed in the Western

province at the moment and following instructions from the Prime Minister's Office, trains reaching Colombo Fort from distant places, have been halted until further notice, the Railway General Manager (GMR) Dhammika Jayasundara said.

## SRI LANKAN PREZ TO LEAVE FOR SINGAPORE FROM MALDIVES



Colombo: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who left for Maldives early Wednesday morning will leave for Singapore later in the day, sources in Maldives told Daily Mirror. Rajapaksa fled Sri Lanka on a military jet reportedly accompanied by his wife, days after thousands of protesters entered his residence. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has been appointed the acting President and has declared a state of emergency in the country following a stand-off between police and military personnel with angry protesters which tried to enter the Prime Minister's office, the Daily Mirror reported. Thousands have taken to the streets in Sri Lanka in recent weeks, with many blaming the Rajapaksa family and their government for the economic crisis plaguing the nation.

## I will run the economy like Margaret Thatcher: Rishi Sunak

Ashis Ray | London

Rishi Sunak, the Indian origin contender for the prime ministership of the UK, said he will run the British economy like former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, if he wins. In his first campaign interview to The Daily Telegraph, the pro ruling Conservative party daily broadsheet, he remarked: "We will cut taxes and we will do it responsibly." He added: "That's my economic approach. I would describe it as common sense Thatcherism. I believe that's what she would have done." He continued: "If you read her speeches -- and I've quoted her and Nigel Lawson (an erstwhile Conservative chancellor of the exchequer) in other lectures I've given -- her approach to these things was to make sure that as a nation you have to earn what you spend." Sunak was speaking in the context of a serious cost of living crisis gripping Britain, with a recession feared by economists. This has catapulted the UK's economy as the main issue in the ballots to determine who will be the next leader of the ruling Conservative party and therefore the prime minister. Thatcher was a shrill right-wing, pro-market leader, who served as Britain's prime minister between 1979 and 1990. She is a



revered figure in Conservatives circles; but generally reviled in the now opposition Labour and Liberal Democrat parties. As chancellor of the exchequer in the government, Prime Minister Boris Johnson -- until he resigned a little over a week ago to signal the beginning of Johnson's end -- he raised taxes after borrowing heavily to protect lives, livelihoods and businesses in the face of the Covid-19 challenge. Unlike his rivals in the leadership contest that is underway, he has refused to cut taxes until national debt is brought down. In the newspaper interview, published on Wednesday morning, he likened his upbringing to Thatcher's. He cited that akin to her upbringing above her father's grocery shop, in his childhood he helped out at his mother's pharmacy.

## N.KOREA FIRES ANOTHER APPARENT ARTILLERY SHOT ON MONDAY: SOURCE

Seoul: North Korea fired an artillery shot into the Yellow Sea earlier this week, presumably from a multiple rocket launcher, a defence source said here in Wednesday, as the US has deployed six F-35A stealth fighters on the peninsula for combined drills. The South Korean military had detected a single trajectory believed to be an artillery shot on Monday morning, the source said without providing additional details, including where it was fired, Yonhap news agency reported. On Sunday, North Korea fired two suspected artillery shots from multiple rocket launchers.

## Palestinians disappointed with US policy ahead of Biden's visit

Ramallah | Agencies

Ahead of US President Joe Biden's first visit to the Middle East, the Palestinians are disappointed with the US' failure to present any new peace initiative and fulfill its promises on the Palestinian cause. Biden is scheduled to visit Israel, Palestine and Saudi Arabia during his first trip to the region which starts on Wednesday, Xinhua news agency reported. In the past weeks, the Palestinians



ramped up their voices calling on the Biden administration to deliver its promises by reopening the US consulate in East Jerusalem and the office of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in

Washington, and removing the PLO from the US terrorism list. Meanwhile, the Palestinians criticized the US for its silence over the escalation of Israeli unilateral practices in the occupied

West Bank and East Jerusalem. Ramzi Rabah, a PLO executive committee member, said that within the PLO executive committee, there is widespread criticism of the US policy as its members urged the Palestinian Authority "not to bet on any actual US role in the region". The Palestinian leadership "must go to alternative options in dealing with Washington," Rabah told Xinhua in an interview. He said that as the US refuses to take any serious steps to

stop Israel from escalating its practices against the Palestinians, "there is a need to go to the UN and the UN Security Council to create an international political initiative." "I think that the essence of Biden's visit to the region is to arrange a regional alliance, to secure the American interests and confront Iran," Rabah noted, expressing the Palestinians' disappointment at the US inaction to break the protracted stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

## At least Six killed in shootout in Rio de Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro:

At least six people were killed and two others were wounded after a shootout between police officers and alleged criminals in a favela in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil's second-largest city, police sources said.



The Rio de Janeiro Civil Police said the event took place in the favela of Manguinhos in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro on Tuesday morning when a group of agents were shot at as they passed nearby, Xinhua news agency reported. When police reinforcements

arrived at the scene, a fierce shootout ensued, with at least six dead and two wounded, which also caused the interruption of train service in the area. The Manguinhos favela is very close to the headquarters of the Rio de Janeiro Civil Police.



# EIGHT KILLED AS RAIN HAVOC CONTINUES IN MAHARASHTRA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

At least 8 persons perished in different rain-related incidents as torrential rains continued to lash large parts of Maharashtra, Disaster Management officials said here on Wednesday.

Six persons travelling in a SUV in Nagpur were washed away while crossing a small bridge over the heavily flooded Bhrahmanmari Nalla near Kelvad late on Tuesday.

While 3 bodies have been fished out of the flood waters, a search is underway to recover the others missing.

This morning, a hill-slide along with several boulders tumbling down, was reported on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Highway, choking traffic for several hours before vehicular movement resumed.

A minor landslide was reported at Moroshi on the Kalyan-Murbad Road, disrupting traffic for a couple of hours.

In Mumbai, waterlogging was reported from several parts like Malaxmi, Andheri, Jogeshwari, Kurla, Ghatkopar, Gamdevi, Mankhurd, Khar, Vakola, Deonar, resulting in vehicular snarls, diversions, and delays.

As Palghar continued to be clobbered with heavy rains, the district administration ordered the closure of all schools for Wednesday-Thursday to prevent any untoward incidents.



ward incidents.

The Pune district, ravaged by rains since a week, has declared closure of all schools and junior colleges till July 16 as a precautionary measure. The BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) announced that one of the major lakes supplying drinking water to Mumbai - Modak Sagar - started overflowing this afternoon.

With this and the storage in other 6 lakes, Mumbai - which needs around 3,850 MLD

daily - has achieved around 57 percent of its annual water requirements, proving a relief to Mumbaikars.

The IMD has forecast rains of varying intensity in different districts across the state till the weekend, with Red or Orange alerts in Palghar, Thane, Mumbai, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Pune, Satara, Nashik, Kolhapur, though the situation has eased in parts of western Maharashtra, Vidarbha, Marathwada, and north Maharashtra.

## BOULDER CRASHES ON BYPASS ROAD AMID HEAVY RAINS IN THANE

A boulder crashed on a bypass road between Panvel and Thane in Maharashtra amid heavy rainfall on Wednesday, a civic official said. No one was injured in the incident that took place on Mumbra bypass road around 11.30 am, said Avinash Sawant, the chief of the regional disaster management cell (RDMC) of the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC). Local firemen and the RDMC rushed to the spot at Sainik Nagar and began clearing the road, he said. The district administration has alerted people residing on the banks of Ulhas river in Badlapur town, as the water levels rose to 16 metres due to rains, an official said. Chief officer of the Badlapur civic council Yogesh Godse is keeping a tab on the situation, it was stated. Firemen were taking stock of the low-lying areas, including Dubey Baugh, Ersan School, Ritu World and 18 bunglows to alert, as the water level in the river was on the rise due to heavy downpour since Tuesday night, the official said.

## RHEA CHAKRABORTY LINKED TO DRUGS SUPPLY RACKET IN BOLLYWOOD: NCB

Team Absolute | Mumbai



In a startling development, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has claimed that actress Rhea Chakraborty and others were allegedly involved in a major criminal conspiracy to run a drugs racket, for Bollywood and other high society people.

In its draft charges filed before a Mumbai Special NDPS Court on Tuesday, the NCB has detailed how between March-December 2020, Rhea, her brother Showik and 34 others accused in the death case of the late Sushant Singh Rajput, were part of a plot to finance, procure, sell, transport and distribute drugs like Ganja, Charas, Cocaine, LSD to the high-profile end-users.

As part of the plot, from January-August 2020, Siddharth Pithani -- a friend of Rajput, found dead in his rented Bandra home on June 14, 2020 -- was in regular touch with the actor (Rajput) and his girlfriend Rhea, her brother Showik, domestic aides like Samuel Miranda, Dipesh Sawant and others to procure Ganja, as per the NCB draft charges. The probe agency revealed how Pithani had

used a private bank app of Rajput to source Ganja and other drugs from his bank account, describing them as 'puja samagri' (prayer materials) and accordingly abetted Rajput's extreme addiction to drugs. The NCB contended that the actress' brother Showik Chakraborty was also allegedly linked with drug peddlers from whom he received packets on behalf of Rajput. While Rhea was arrested in September 2020 and released on bail after almost a month in October 2020, Pithani was nabbed in May 2021 and released on bail last week, as part of the NCB's avowed probe to uproot what it termed athe drugs citadel Mumbai, especially in Bollywood'.

After hearing the arguments from both sides in the case, the Special NDPS Judge V.G. Raghuvanshi will decide on which of the 38 charges shall be framed against the 35 accused.

## Shiv Sena stakes claim for LoP in Maharashtra Council

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After being dislodged from power in Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena has staked claim for the post of leader of opposition in the state Legislative Council.

A delegation of Shiv Sena MLAs - Manisha Kayande, Sachin Ahir, Ambadas Danve, Vilas Potnis and Sunil Shinde - met Council Deputy Chairperson Neelam Gorhe on Monday and submitted a letter staking claim for the post of the LoP and chief whip. The race is between the NCP and the Shiv Sena, amid fears that some of its members may switch sides.

The Sharad Pawar-led NCP is just two short of the Sena's tally in the Upper House of



the state legislature.

As on July 8, the 78-member Maharashtra Legislative Council has 24 BJP members, 12 of the Shiv Sena and 10 each of the Congress and NCP. The Lok Bharti, Peasants and Workers Party of India and the Rashtriya Samaj Paksh have one member each. The Council also has four independents, while 15 seats are vacant.

The Sena's move comes

following a rebellion in the party, which led to its 55 MLAs splitting into two factions. The camp led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has the support of 40 MLAs, while 15 have sided with former CM Uddhav Thackeray.

The revolt had also led to the collapse of the Thackeray-led tripartite government comprising the Sena, NCP and Congress.

Subsequently, the Shinde faction in coalition with the BJP formed government in the state.

The NCP, which has 53 MLAs in Maharashtra, leads the opposition in the legislature's Lower House. Earlier this month, NCP's Ajit Pawar was elected the leader of opposition in the state Assembly.

## CRACKS IN MAHARASHTRA ALLIANCE AHEAD OF MUMBAI CIVIC POLLS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Cracks in Maharashtra's erstwhile ruling coalition Maha Vikas Aghadi became visible today with Congress's senior leader Milind Deora taking a hard line over the coming civic elections in Mumbai. Accusing alliance partner Shiv Sena of gerrymandering -- redrawing wards to reap benefit in elections -- he indicated that the party has not maintained coalition dharma. The Congress, he added, is "ready to walk out" if its interests are not looked after.

"If the Congress fighting for its rights is a risk to MVA, we are ready to take the risk... If someone has violated coalition dharma, the Congress is ready to walk out," Deora said in an exclusive interview to a news channel.

Deora -- who has been critical of the Shiv Sena even when the Congress was sharing power in the ruling alliance -- has written to the state's new Chief Minister Eknath



Shinde and his Deputy Devendra Fadnavis, accusing the Sena of gerrymandering wards. The Brihanmumbai Corporation,

dominated by the Sena, is the country's richest civic body. "There is no accountability in the BMC right now and democratic elec-

tions are needed. The redrawing of wards has been done to suit the interests of the Shiv Sena," said Deora, who was recently appointed an observer for the assembly elections in Gujarat, due later this year.

The Congress, he added, has opposed this earlier.

Asked about the Sena's sudden decision to support NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu in the Presidential elections, he refused to comment. Then added, "Perhaps Sanjay Raut can comment".

The Congress and Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party have supported Uddhav Thackeray over the recent turmoil in Sena that ended with the toppling of the MVA government.

Both allies had even suggested that Eknath Shinde, who was leading the rebels, be received the Chief Minister. There were reports that the Congress had even offered to quit the government and lend outside support to the Sena and NCP.

## 2 arrested for burglaries in Mumbai, used money for family trips

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 42-year-old man and his brother-in-law were arrested for a string of thefts and burglaries in Mumbai who used to spend money on sightseeing with their family members after committing the crime, police said on Wednesday.

Rasheed Khan and his brother-in-law Ibrahim Khan alias Taklya are involved in multiple cases of burglaries, according to police.

"Each time after committing the crime, the duo used to take their family members for an outing at various places, mostly in Uttar Pradesh," a Mumbai Police official said.

He said the duo was using multiple mobile phones to evade arrest. The official said police traced the mobile number of one of the accused, following which



they were arrested. Police have recovered cash and several mobile phones from their possession. "The duo used to do recon of commercial establishments and flats before targeting them," the official said explaining their modus operandi. Police came to know about their splurging spree

with family members after arresting them for burgling a medical store, he added.

A case was registered against them under various sections of the Indian Penal Code including 380 (theft in dwelling house). Further investigation is underway, the official added.

## WOMAN FOUND DEAD IN HOTEL ROOM, 1 ARRESTED

Mumbai: A 47-year-old woman was found dead in a hotel room in Mumbai on Tuesday, the police said.

Soon after the information was received in the matter, the police reached the spot and found a woman in an unconscious state.

The Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Vishal Thakur said, "A call was received at Malwani PS yesterday (Tuesday) that a 47-year-old woman who was staying in a hotel with a man was found in an unconscious state." "She was immediately shifted to a hospital where the doctors declared her brought dead," Thakur said. During the investigation, it was found that both of them had an argument after which the man killed the woman, the police said. The duo were friends and had checked into the hotel room on Monday night and began fighting. Later, the police arrested the man who confessed his crime and said he strangled the woman to death.

## Mumbai Court allows plea seeking return of Aryan Khan's Passport

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A special court in Mumbai on Wednesday allowed the plea of Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan, who has got a clean chit from the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in the last year's 'drugs-on-cruise' case, seeking the return of his passport.

Aryan Khan had submitted his passport before the court as part of his bail conditions. He was arrested in October last year in the high-profile drugs case. However, in its charge sheet filed in May, the probe agency did not name him as an accused.

The NCB let off Aryan Khan and five others due to "lack of sufficient evidence".

On June 30, he had moved an application before the special court hearing cases related to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act through his lawyers Amit Desai and Rahul Agarwal of Desai Desai Carrimjee and Mulla, a law firm, seeking the return of his passport, citing the charge sheet that did not name him.

The anti-drug agency, in its response to the



actor's plea, said it has no objection to returning his passport.

The special court judge, VV Patil, then allowed Aryan's plea to take his passport back. The 24-year-old was arrested by the NCB on October 3 last year, following a raid on a cruise ship off the coast of Mumbai.

Aryan Khan had spent over 20 days in prison before being granted bail by the Bombay High Court.

# WITH SKY-HIGH INFLATION, INDIA AWAITS SL'S FATE: MAHA CONGRESS

The Maharashtra Congress on Wednesday urged the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government at the Centre to pay urgent attention to the galloping inflation failing which matters could become explosive and India would head the Sri Lanka way.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a statement, the party's chief spokesperson Atul Londhe said that India is encountering the same situation that Sri Lanka faced three years ago that has culminated into a crisis in the island nation now.

"The BJP is neglecting the fundamental problems of the citizens and instead raking up religious and communal political issues. Inflation is on the rise, but the BJP government painting a false picture to mislead the country," said Londhe sharply.

He cautioned that if urgent steps are not taken considering the gravity of the country's economic situation "it won't be long for the situation in the country to become explosive". He narrated how the prices of all essentials have skyrocketed in the past 4-5 years under the BJP rule. "In Nagpur, an LPG cooking gas cylinder which cost just Rs 410 in 2014 has shot to Rs 1,100, petrol-diesel cross the Rs 100-mark long back edible oil prices have hike up from Rs 70 to Rs 200, CNG rates have gone up from Rs 36 to Rs 90 and prices of all other vegetables and grocery have



also gone up hugely," said Londhe. All this have immensely overburdened the common masses but the government is playing with numbers to portray a misleading picture that 'inflation is under control', and attempts are made to convey a contrary image that prices have gone down by reducing the prices of some food-grains. "The government may create such falsehoods by playing with numbers but the reality is very different. Today, the country's debt has risen to 92 per cent of the GDP and they will have to repay a debt of \$267 billion by next month," he said. Londhe alleged that the government is not allowing these facts to emerge on the public domain, and instead diverting public attention by dragging in religion and communal passions, but the people have realised it.

"All this will cost us dearly... The Congress has been protesting against the wrong policies of the BJP government and demands that it should tackle the basic problems hitting the masses on priority, or there will be serious consequences," said Londhe. In the past year, the state Congress carried out a series of anti-inflation agitations across Maharashtra and joined similar national level protests organised by the central party leaders.



## JESSICA SIMPSON WRITES LOVE LETTER TO HERSELF

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Jessica Simpson has written a love letter to herself for her 42nd birthday. The singer shared the tribute on Instagram alongside a picture of her wearing a black dress, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She told her 6.1 million followers: "Oh lil Mrs 42 look at you leanin' into the moonbeams to recharge and radiate a purposeful glowing heart. I am very proud of my faith, resilience and strength over the last 4 decades. "Everything in my life that has or hasn't happened yet makes turning 42 very exciting because I know what it takes personally to remain inside of DETERMINED PATIENCE. I know myself and I do love her very much."

"I know my purpose and I must say that ladies and gents I am equipped to waltz within every dream I own confidently. I am humbled and honoured to finally be my own best friend. Ok 42 time to Rock 'n' Roll." The 'Employee of the Month' actress also shared a look at her birthday party, posting photos with friends and family, including her husband Eric Johnson and parents Tina and Joe Simpson. They included a shot of Simpson blowing out a sparkler candle on a birthday cake.

She posted about a gift from her nine-year-old son, Ace, who gave her a robot costume made from cardboard boxes and a note that said: "Best mom ever in the world. I love you so much." Simpson, who has daughters Maxwell, 10, and Birdie Mae, three, with Johnson as well as Ace, also showed off her bikini body in posts about a Fourth of July break to Lake Austin, Texas. She said: "We asked the kids where they wanted to go for their summer trip and out of everywhere, they chose Texas to be with their cousins." It was a sentimental and nostalgic blast of a week."

## Chris Hemsworth ditched meat for 'Thor: Love and Thunder' kissing scene with Natalie Portman

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Thor' star Chris Hemsworth briefly stopped eating meat before his kiss with Natalie Portman in the recently released superhero film 'Thor: Love and Thunder' in order to respect Natalie's vegan diet. The 'Black Swan' star made the revelation on UK's Capital FM (via Uproxx) about Hemsworth ditching meat temporarily as the former didn't eat meat during the day of shoot. Meat otherwise makes up a lot of Hemsworth's diet when he's bulking up to play the God of Thunder. Quoted by Variety, Portman said, "He's really nice. The day we had a kiss scene he didn't eat meat that morning because I'm vegan. And he eats meat like every half hour. Like, that was so thoughtful. That's not something I'm angry about or care about, but he was just being thoughtful. He's just a very nice person." Her Thor: Love and Thunder co-star Tessa Thompson added: "I didn't even know he could go without eating meat. He's just like eating bison in the morning. That's so sweet."

## Kim gets a piggyback ride during beach vacay

Los Angeles | Agencies

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian got a special piggyback ride from her eldest daughter North while enjoying on a beach in the Turks and Caicos. 'The Kardashians' star was caught on camera getting a playful piggyback ride from North West, reports aceshowbiz.com.

In the photo, the mother-daughter duo were seen goofing around on the beach. Kim raised her hand and gave a peace sign as she playfully climbed the back of her 9-year-old.

She wore a black bandeau top that she paired with black bikini bottom. Her young daughter, in the meantime, opted for a black single-shoulder one-piece suit with a cut over her side, reports aceshowbiz.com. Kim did not enjoy the time under the sun only with North. The two were also joined by her other kids, 6-year-old Saint, 4-year-old Chicago and 3-year-old Psalm, who also wore similar black-coloured swimwear.

At one point, as seen via Daily Mail, they were seen posing for a picture taken by a woman in pink T-shirt and camouflage shorts.

Back in June, Kim celebrated North's ninth birthday by throwing her a Halloween-themed camping trip in Wyoming. The former 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians' star used her private jet, which was dubbed "KIM AIR", to fly her little girl and her friends over to the camp. To fit the spooky theme, she had her jet interior decorated with fake cobwebs and pieces of wood. The birthday trip saw North being joined by Kourtney and Scott Disick's daughter Penelope as well as Selena Gomez's 9-year-old half-sister Elliot Teefey. They enjoyed outdoor activities, such as zip-lining and wake-surfing, and spent their night in indoor tent that was decorated with stuffed toy deer heads and fake blood.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Ever since the finale of season 3 of the anti-hero series released on OTT, one question has been raging in the sub-conscious of the audience -- will Soldier Boy return in Season 4? The character had a major showdown with The Boys, but Grace Mallory laid him on the ice to save him. Actors from the show -- Jensen Ackles, Claudia Doumit and Erin Moriarty recently spoke about the future that the fourth season of the show holds for their respective characters.

Erin Moriarty, who plays Starlight, said that her character has become more powerful than ever before, which will be a gamechanger. "She has powers maybe that are beyond what she's even aware of," Moriarty said. "The cool thing is Hughie is the person who

'The Boys 3' cast opens up on fate of their characters in upcoming season

makes her aware of that and empowers her at that moment. They go through a hiccup where he feels emasculated by her power, and this is him making the redemptive move of empowering her in this amazing moment, where she's able to fly." Jensen Ackles, who plays the character of Soldier Boy, has "no answer" for the question of Soldier Boy's future.

Another question bothering viewers is: Will Victoria Neuman rule over the Vice President's chair? Things will turn dirty if this super-powerful villain does and Homelander supports her in all her evil actions.

## Ryan Gosling rules out starring as Marvel's Nova

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Ryan Gosling's name was brought up as a possible strong contender to play Marvel's Nova, who is said to be getting a live-action movie.

However, the actor has apparently shut down the speculation. In an interview with 'Happy Sad Confused' host Josh Horowitz, the 41-year-old actor ruled out the possibility of him playing the member of the Nova Corps, though he revealed his interest in playing another superhero, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"Ryan and I chatted about the Nova rumours yesterday which he said aren't true," Horowitz shared on Twitter. "BUT this morning Ryan reached out to me to say there is one superhero he wants to play...GHOST RIDER."

Rumours emerged earlier this week that Marvel Studio is developing a Nova project, though details were scarce.

Later, it was reported that the project will take the form of a limited series on Disney+, akin to 'Moon Knight'. Further fuelling the speculation that the project would be brought to life as a series is the fact that 'Moon Knight' writer Sabir Pirzada is attached to the Nova project.



## Finn Wolfhard, Billy Bryk to turn directors for 'Hell of a Summer'

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Stranger Things' actor Finn Wolfhard is set to make his directorial debut along with his 'Ghostbusters: Afterlife' co-actor Billy Bryk. The two will be directing the film 'Hell of a Summer' which is touted to be a contemporary horror-comedy based on their original script. They will also star alongside Fred Hechinger, reports Deadline.

Details about the film's plot are being kept under wraps. But Deadline states that Hechinger will produce alongside Aggregate Films' Jason Bateman and Michael Costigan, and Parts and Labor's Jay Van Hoy. 30West is fully financing and exec producing the film, and co-repping worldwide rights with CAA Media Finance. Production kicks off in Ontario,

Canada this month.

Wolfhard said in a statement accessed by Deadline: "I am so excited to be co-directing my first feature film. I get the chance to work with an incredible cast and crew, and to work with a company like 30WEST and Aggregate is a real dream."

Wolfhard is best known for his starring roles as Mike Wheeler on Netflix's Stranger Things, which recently returned for its penultimate season, and as Richie Tozier in New Line Cinema's It films, which together have grossed over \$1.2 billion worldwide.

Bryk is an actor and producer who appears alongside Wolfhard in Ghostbusters: Afterlife and Eisenberg's 'When You Finish Saving the World', which opened this year's Critics' Week section at the Cannes Film Festival.



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Irina Shayak



## Changwon Shooting World Cup

# MEHULI GHOSH, SHAHU TUSHAR MANE GIVE INDIA THEIR SECOND GOLD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Mehuli Ghosh and Shahu Tushar Mane won India's second gold medal of the ongoing ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun stage in Changwon, Korea, beating Hungary's Eszter Meszaros and Istvan Peni 17-13 in a hard-fought 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team gold medal encounter.

It was a profitable day five of competitions for India at the Changwon International Shooting range as the Men's Trap team also won a silver, while Shiva Narwal and Palak blitzed Kazakhstan 16-0 to claim bronze in the 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team event.

India thus cemented joint second place on the medals tally with a total haul of two gold, one silver and one bronze medal. Arjun Babuta had won India's first gold on day three in the 10m Air Rifle Men competition.

Serbia leads the tally with three gold while China shares second place with India with the exact same medal haul. Both India's golds have come in Olympic events. Shooting early Wednesday morning, Mehuli and Shahu had to ward off a late surge by



the Hungarians to put finally put it across the line. The pair began the final, carrying on from where they had left off on Tuesday, shooting consistently high scores to open up a 11-7 lead over the strong Hungarian pair. However, Eszter and Istvan fought back admirably to tie the match at 13-13 before Mehuli and Shahu dug deep to take the next two single-shot series and strike gold.

Incidentally both Mehuli and Shahu had won individual silver medals in Air Rifle at the 2018 Buenos Aires Youth Olympic Games. Since then, while Mehuli has had some success at this level, it was Shahu's senior team debut and as such his first senior ISSF medal for India.

The Men's Trap team of Prithviraj Tondaiman, Vivaan Kapoor and Bhowneesh Mendiratta also won sil-

ver late in the day, going down 2-6 to Slovakia in the gold medal match.

The trio had shot brilliantly to reach the final, winning the first and second qualification stages with combined scores of 213 and 629.7 respectively. Slovaks Michal Slamka, Hubert Olejnik and Adrian Drobny joined them finishing second in qualification stage two with a score of 627.3. It was touch-and-go in the gold medal match as both sides were locked at two points apiece after the first two series of shots. The Slovaks won the third series 13-11 and the fourth 13-12 to seal gold thereafter as the Indians came up with misses at the wrong time.

Each team member shoots five single series shots and the team with the higher cumulative hits are awarded two points. The first team to six points wins the match.

In what was the day's most sensational performance however, youngsters and India debutants Shiva Narwal and Palak, stunned the crowd as they blanked Kazakhstan's Irina Loktionova and Vladimir Rakhimzhan 16-0 in a bronze medal encounter.

# SINGAPORE OPEN: SINDHU, PRANNOY, SAINA ENTER SECOND ROUND; SRIKANTH SUFFERS UPSET

Singapore | Agencies

Top Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu, HS Prannoy and Saina Nehwal sailed into the second round but Kidambi Srikanth suffered a shock defeat against compatriot Mithun Manjunath in the first round of the Singapore Open 2022, here on Wednesday.

Sindhu, seventh in the badminton world rankings, proved too strong for Belgium's world No 36 Lianne Tan and won the women's singles match 21-15, 21-11 in 29 minutes.

The two-time Olympic medallist took time to settle into the match. After the scores were tied at 7-all in the first game, the Indian shuttler, seeded third, found her footing and dominated the match from there on.

Sindhu will take on world No 59 Thuy Linh Nguyen of Vietnam in the second round of the BWF Super 500 badminton tournament on Thursday.

In the men's singles, India's Mithun Manjunath brought out his A-game against his higher-ranked



compatriot Kidambi Srikanth to pull off a major 21-17, 15-21, 21-18 upset in the opening round contest, which lasted exactly an hour.

World No 11 Srikanth, who did not compete in the Malaysian leg of the BWF tour, looked rusty and conceded the first game. He took charge in the next game to stretch the match into a decider.

However, world No 77 Mithun, who overcame two qualifying rounds on Tuesday, came from being 15-16 down in the third game to go on and win the match against

Commonwealth Games-bound Srikanth.

Later in the day, India's Thomas Cup hero HS Prannoy beat Thailand's Sittikorn Thammasin 21-13, 21-16. The Indian, ranked 19th, will face world No. 4 Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei, next. London 2012 bronze medallist Saina Nehwal also got the better of Malvika Bansod with a 21-18, 21-14 win to make it to the second round. But, former Commonwealth Games champion Parupalli Kashyap lost to fifth seed Jonatan Christie of Indonesia 14-21, 15-21.

# Rohit Sharma's six into stands injures young spectator

London | Agencies

India skipper Rohit Sharma's return to form following his below-par showing in the T20I series against England was as much the talking point in the first ODI against the hosts as Jasprit Bumrah's six-wicket haul.

But what also caught the attention of the spectators and commentators alike was a massive six from Sharma, which landed in the stands and injured a young spectator, who received immediate medical attention and recovered quickly.

Sharma returned to form with a brilliant unbeaten 76 in the first ODI against England as he and Shikhar Dhawan stitched together a 114-run partnership to guide India to a 10-wicket win against the Jos Buttler-led side.

Sharma clobbered five maximums and seven boundaries as the visitors completed the chase of 110 runs in just 18.4 overs.



# Jasprit Bumrah regains top spot in ICC ODI rankings for bowlers

Dubai | Agencies

India pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah on Wednesday regained the top spot in the ICC Men's ODI Player Rankings after a career-best haul of 6 for 19 that helped India defeat England by 10-wicket in the first ODI at the Kennington Oval on Tuesday.

Bumrah had lost the top spot to New Zealand's Trent Boult in February 2020 after being No. 1 for most of the preceding two years. He has been at the top for a total of 730 days, more than any other Indian and the ninth-most in history.

Bumrah, who has been No. 1 in T20Is in the past and is currently at a career-best third position in Tests, is only the second Indian pacer after Kapil Dev to be No. 1 in the ODI rankings. Maninder Singh, Anil Kumble and Ravindra Jadeja are the other India bowlers to have attained top ranking.

Bumrah's new-ball partner Mohammad Shami too has gained after grabbing 3/31 and playing his role in bundling England out for 110 in 25.2 overs. Shami has progressed three spots to reach joint-



23rd position along with team-mate Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

The Indian opening batting pair too has some improvement to show after taking the team through to their target in just 18.4 overs. Captain Rohit Sharma has bridged the gap with third-placed Virat Kohli to just one rating point after his quick-fire 76 not out while left-hander Shikhar Dhawan has

inched up one slot to 12th position after his unbeaten 31.

In the latest weekly rankings update that also considers performances in the first two Ireland versus New Zealand matches that are part of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League, and the first West Indies versus Bangladesh match, England captain Jos Buttler has moved up one slot to 24th after top-scoring for England with 30.

In the ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings, India batter Suryakumar Yadav has gained 44 slots to reach a career-best fifth position after his 117 in the final match of a three-T20I series against England. Nicholas Pooran of the West Indies is up five places to eighth after a match-winning 74 not out in the final match of their series against Bangladesh.

India seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar has surged seven places to a career-best seventh position after a haul of 3/15 in the second T20I in Birmingham, while India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal is up two places to 19th. Harshal Patel (up 10 places to 23rd) and Bumrah (up six places to 27th) have also progressed.

# Domestic cricket: Rayudu returns to Baroda, Arun Lal steps down as Bengal head coach

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Veteran Indian cricketer Ambati Rayudu has been signed up by Baroda as a professional player for the upcoming domestic season.

Rayudu's decision to join Baroda comes after he was given a no-objection certificate from the Andhra Cricket Association. The batter is available to play all formats, though in recent years, he has mostly made himself available for white-ball cricket and last played a first-class game in November 2017.

The 36-year old Rayudu has travelled a fair bit in domestic cricket in recent times, having represented Hyderabad and Andhra and



Vidarbha, apart from a two-year stint with Baroda from 2012 to 2014. His return will boost the batting department of Baroda, who are trying to convince India all-

rounder Deepak Hooda to return too. Hooda left Baroda in late 2020 after a fallout with then captain Krunal Pandya. He spent a successful season with Rajasthan after

that, which resulted in his India call-up. Since February this year, the cricketer has been a regular member of India's white-ball squads. He also had a breakthrough IPL season with Lucknow Super Giants, where he teamed up with Krunal. Meanwhile, Arun Lal has stepped down as head coach of the Bengal senior men's team after three seasons in charge. He cited the "taxing" nature of the job as the primary reason for his exit. While the 66-year-old Lal has enjoyed the full support of the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) during his tenure, there have occasionally been murmurs among the players of his "old-school ways". However, Bengal became a formidable force under his watch.

## Women's hockey world cup

# India finish campaign with 3-1 win over Japan

Terrassa (Spain) | Agencies

Indian women's hockey team picked up a 3-1 win over Japan in the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup Spain & Netherlands 2022 at Estadi Olimpic de Terrassa, Spain on Wednesday.

Navneet Kaur (30', 45') starred for India, scoring two goals, while Deep Grace Ekka (38') also scored a crucial goal in the match. For Japan, Yu Asai (20') scored the sole goal for her team. India started the match on front foot. But Japan averted the danger and the first quarter ended with both teams at 0-0.

India began second quarter from where they had left off. A Penalty Corner in the 20th minute led to Yu Asai opening the scoring for Japan. Navneet Kaur equalised the score with a stunning late goal and the two teams went to halftime at 1-1. The second half started with both teams keeping the ball in the midfield



and trying to maintain possession. An early Penalty Corner attempt from Gurjit Kaur went wide off the target. But a few minutes later, Deep Grace Ekka converted from another Penalty Corner, hitting the ball towards the bottom right corner to give India a 2-1 lead. Japan conceded once again in the final seconds of the quarter as Navneet Kaur scored her second goal of the match, and India increased their lead to 3-1.

# CSA CONFIRMS WITHDRAWING FROM ODIs AGAINST AUSTRALIA TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY OF NEW T20 LEAGUE

Johannesburg | Agencies

Cricket South Africa (CSA) on Wednesday confirmed that the men's team will not be playing the ODI series against Australia in January 2023 in order to ensure "long term sustainability of new T20 League".

The three ODIs against Australia were a part of the ICC World Cup Super League matches that determine direct qualification for the 2023 Men's Cricket World Cup in India. The series was supposed to take place in 2020. But the Covid-19 pandemic forced its postponement. Now, with CSA confirming that the series won't take place means it is a major setback to their hopes of qualifying directly for the 50-over World Cup in India. South Africa are currently placed at 11th spot in the ICC World Cup Super League points table with 49 points and face the possibility of playing a qualification tournament to enter the



World Cup. "As difficult as this decision has been for CSA, the long-term sustainability of our new T20 League is reliant on having all our domestic players available for this exciting new addition to the CSA calendar. CSA is looking forward to be hosted by Cricket Australia for an enticing blend of cricket in the three-Test series which includes the Boxing Day and New Year's Tests in Melbourne and Sydney," said Pholetsi Moseki, Chief Executive Officer, CSA in a statement. The upcoming T20 League, which CSA will organise in

association with broadcasters SuperSport in the form of a new company, will be the third time South Africa would be attempting to launch a franchise T20 league in the country. In its previous attempts, the attempt to start Global League T20 failed to happen in 2017, while its replacement, the Mzansi Super League was held in 2018 and 2019 but didn't get the big broadcast rights, with the free-to-air South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) getting broadcast rights for a much smaller sum.

## ENG v IND, 2nd ODI

# CONFIDENT INDIA TARGET SEALING SERIES WIN OVER RATTLED ENGLAND

London | Agencies

The chatter ahead of the start of ODI series between England and India was all about thrilling cricket. But on Tuesday, at The Oval, India were dominating in their ten-wicket thrashing of England, with Jasprit Bumrah scything through the top-order and ended with 6-19, his best-ever show in ODIs.

With confidence high after a comprehensive show at The Oval, India will be targeting to seal the series quickly in the second ODI at Lord's on Thursday, just like what they did in the preceding T20I series, which they eventually won 2-1.

For India, apart from Bumrah being at his menacing best in terms of skill and control on a greenish pitch offering seam, swing and extra bounce, Mohammed Shami and Prasidh Krishna provided him with ample support to bowl out England for just 110, after being 26-5 at one



point. With the bat, Rohit Sharma was at his glorious best, using his pulls and hooks to precision against the short-ball strategy from the England bowlers to remain unbeaten on 76, it allowed Shikhar Dhawan, his long-standing opening partner and playing his first ODI since February this year, to settle in and find his groove, which he did by hitting the winning boundary.

The availability of Virat Kohli for the second ODI still remains doubtful after he missed the first match due to a groin strain. On the other hand, England welcoming Ben Stokes, Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow into the ODI set-up under Jos Buttler's first match as the skipper in this format did not as they would have liked and now face an uphill task of keeping the series alive on

the third anniversary of their dramatic 2019 World Cup triumph at the very same venue.

While Stokes, Root, Liam Livingstone and Jason Roy fell for ducks, Bairstow could crawl his way to single digit. Buttler, though, hanged around to top-score with 30, being one of four batters alongside Moeen Ali, David Willey and Brydon Carse to reach double figures for England. With the ball, England were simply ineffective as they couldn't separate Sharma and Dhawan pairing. Lord's as a venue provides the challenge for the bowlers to adapt quickly to the natural slope which runs diagonally across the pitch. For India, the opportunity is to adapt to conditions quickly and do an encore of performance at The Oval. For England, it is a chance to push the series into a decider at Manchester by sealing a win at Lord's, which sounds a little tough after the shellacking received in the first game.



## ATHIYA SHETTY BREAKS SILENCE ON HER WEDDING

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**A**thiya Shetty and KL Rahul's relationship is the talk of the town, and the two look great together. There are no second opinions about it that fans have been waiting for the couple to marry for a long time. Recently, rumours about the two soon getting married were doing rounds on the internet. It was reported that their wedding will take place in three months. On 12 July, the bride-to-be's father Suniel Shetty reacted to his daughter's wedding rumours. While talking to a leading Radio channel, when Suniel Shetty was asked if the family had started preparations for the said wedding, he responded, "No, nothing has been planned yet!" Athiya's brother and actor Ahan Shetty had also reacted to the same a few days back and told Dainik Bhaskar, "As far as the wedding is concerned, no arrangements are being made. There is no such ceremony, these are all rumours. When there is no wedding, how can we give you a date?" Now, Athiya Shetty who is an avid social media user, has broken her silence on this news. Taking to her social media handle she penned, "I hope I'm invited to this wedding that's taking place in 3 months, lol. ???" For the unversed, Athiya Shetty is often seen accompanying KL Rahul on his cricket tours. They have been dating each other for over three years now. They made their relationship public last year when KL Rahul accompanied the Shetty family to the screening of Ahan Shetty's debut movie Tadap. That also marked the couple's first public appearance together.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**W**hen it comes to Hindi films about road travel, you can easily count them on your fingers. Films that immediately spring to mind include Dil Chahta Hai and Zindagi Milegi Na Dobaara, both of which were liked by audiences and critics alike and are still remembered by viewers.

Another road trip-themed film is set to enter the theatres on August 5, 2022. The film, titled Miami ?? Newyork, is about four friends who decide to take a road journey from one city (Miami) to another (New York) and, along the way, seek the assistance of a young and handsome guy. Though Maimi Newyork is a road trip film, it contains a wonderful love tale at its centre that will touch everyone's heart and make you smile in unexpected ways.

Four pals, Nihana Minaz (Anshu), Nikhar Krishnani (Shaina), Janelle Lacle (Millie), and Rohini Chandra (Asha), decide to go on a road trip and enlist the assistance of Arjun Anand (Ravi). As the long road journey progresses at its own pace, various facets of their friendship and bond with the young boy emerge, making the picture more fascinating and compelling.

Raakesh U Saakat, the film's producer, announces the release date of the comedy/adventure picture, which will be widely distributed on August 5th. Raakesh U Saakat says, "Though there have been few films based on road trips which became cult in their own ways, our film Miami ?? Newyork is different from all such films. I am very sure that audiences are going to enjoy this ride which has a very unique storyline made with fresher and younger

talents."

Miami Newyork was directed by Joy Augustine, whose portfolio includes Tere Mere Sapne, Paagalpan, and others. Joy is a prolific filmmaker who is also a writer, producer, and commercial filmmaker. Joy Augustine has created several highly and critically praised commercials throughout his 30-year career.

**JOY AUGUSTINE'S UPCOMING ROAD TRIP DRAMA IS SET TO RELEASE ON AUGUST**



## Ranveer Singh reacted to Martin Scorsese's decision to Restore a Classic Malayalam Movie

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**K**ummatty, a classic Malayalam film, made by G Aravindan in 1979 is being restored by Hollywood filmmaker Martin Scorsese. He took to his social media and announced that he will present the restored version of Kummatty in, The Film Foundation Restoration Screening Room.

For those who are unaware, The Film Foundation is a non-profit organisation, which was founded by Scorsese in 1990, and it works with archives and studios to restore and preserve films from all over the world.

As soon as he shared a post announcing this, Malayalis from all corners were quick enough to comment and express their gratitude and joy. One fan responded to the news and said, "Thanks Marty for preserving our films. Always been a huge fan of your works from India." Another called it a proud moment, meanwhile, one more sent tremendous love from Kerala to the filmmaker. In addition to this, Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh also reacted to the news by dropping a red heart emoticon in the comment section of the post.

Talking about this Malayalam classic cult, the film follows a magician, named Kummatty, who travels from place to place and entertains children with dancing, singing and performing magic. During one such performance at a village, Kummatty turns a group of children into animals.



## MANDIRA BEDI REUNITING WITH EKTA KAPOOR FOR COMEBACK ON TV?

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**M**andira Bedi is one of the most popular actresses. She started her career on television and continued to make a name in Bollywood.

She is popularly known for her stint in Ekta Kapoor's show 'Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi'. Recently, the actress is keeping busy by focusing on her fitness regime. If recent reports are to be believed, Mandira Bedi will soon make her comeback with Ekta Kapoor's upcoming family drama, tentatively titled 'Sansaar'. The show is along the lines of the 1994 movie 'Raja Babu' starring Karisma Kapoor and Govinda. Till now there has been no official statement from the makers or the actors but if the sources are to be believed, then Mandira has joined the cast of the show. The source said, "The makers have made Mandira Bedi play a negative lead role in the show. She will portray one of the major characters. The actress will play a business tycoon, who is the mother of the female lead. She will be seen as a possessive mother."

Team

Absolute | Mumbai

**J**anhvi Kapoor, who was last seen in the 2021 release horror-comedy Roohi, is now making the headlines for the next project GoodLuck Jerry. Helmed by Siddharth Sen, the movie is a dark comedy and will also star Deepak Dobriyal, Mita Vashisht, Neeraj Sood, and Sushant Singh in pivotal roles. In the flick, Janhvi essays the role of Jerry, an ordinary girl from a small town in India. For the portrayal, it

## JANHVI KAPOOR UNDERTAKES A DICTION CLASS FOR HER UPCOMING FILM

was important to grasp the dialect for the role of the town she represented. Commenting on the training she underwent to get her diction for the film, Janhvi said: "I trained extensively for the Bihari dialect. We had a few coaches namely Ganesh Sir & Mr Vinod. We attended a workshop and listened to all those songs, he even made me do an exercise wherein he would make me say Bihari abuses as a part of the training." She further said, "The whole process was a lot of fun eventually. I am so thankful about getting to know the syntax of that section of our country." To note, GoodLuck Jerry is a remake of the Tamil film Kolamaavu Kokila.



Priya P Varrier