

# absolute india

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**PM NARENDRA MODI HOSTS FAREWELL DINNER FOR PRESIDENT KOVIND**

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday hosted a farewell dinner for outgoing President Ram Nath Kovind.**



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday hosted a farewell dinner for outgoing President Ram Nath Kovind. President-elect Droupadi Murmu also attended the dinner along

with members of the Union Cabinet, Chief Ministers of various states and other dignitaries. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Leader of Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury were also present.

## India adds three new cultural sites to World Heritage list in reflection of its soft power

Team Absolute | New Delhi

By adding three cultural sites to the tentative list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites (WHS), India is reflecting its rich heritage and history as well as cultural and civilisational values.

The sites are Geoglyphs of Konkan region in Maharashtra, Meghalaya's Jingkieng Jri, a living root bridge, and Sri Veerabhadra Temple and Monolithic Bull (Nandi) from Andhra Pradesh, making the total in the tentative list as 49. Geoglyph is defined as a work of art which comes into being by moving or arranging objects within a landscape. What Konkan geoglyphs special and remarkable is that it is the only proof of human settlement in that region. They also depict some forms of fauna that have ceased to exist in this region.

A product of human endeavour and effort, Jingkieng Jri, is an aerial bridge, created by weaving and using roots of Indian Rubber tree. While the creation of such bridges may take 10 to 15 years, their life span is 500 years. These bridges built by Jaintia and Khasi tribes per-

sonify human-environment confluence.

Sri Veerabhadra Temple also known as Lepakshi temple is dedicated to an incarnation of Lord Shiva -- Lord Veerabhadra. Located in Andhra Pradesh's Anantapur district, this temple is well-known for its sculptures made by artists of Vijayanagara Empire.

Mount of Lord Shiva, the Nandi Bull's monolithic idol has been chiselled out of a single granite stone and represents the best of Vijayanagara style of architecture.

In case any of the sites among the 49 is selected as a WHS, India will better its existing total of 40 sites which includes Ajanta Caves, Buddhist monuments at Sanchi, the Harappan city of Dholavira, Elephanta Caves, Ellora Caves, Konark's Sun Temple, Taj Mahal and Jaipur's Jantar Mantar among others.

Explaining the advantage of being part of WHS list to India Narrative, seasoned archaeologist who retired as Regional Director, North from Archaeological Survey of India said: "The site benefits from this inclusion as it helps tourism, both domestic and international, to grow by leaps and bounds. Whenever a historical or natural place is given this tag, it sees a growth in tourist inflow." Going further, he

added that the tag reflects the site's "inherent heritage and historical value". "Moreover, as the list is well publicised it creates awareness about the selected place on a global scale, making many more people know about it. For instance, Ajanta and Ellora Caves in Maharashtra after inclusion in the WHS list, became immensely popular. Likewise, is the case with Tamil Nadu's Brihadeshwara Temple and the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram, and also Madhya Pradesh's Sanchi Buddhist monuments."

Muhammed said these sites add to India's soft power. Citing Bihar's Nalanda Mahavihara and Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhi Gaya, he said "these places are revered by Buddhists from across the world and specially people of those countries where Buddhism is the dominant religion like Japan, Myanmar, Cambodia, Mongolia, Singapore, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam among others. This facilitates people-to-people contacts making diplomatic relations stronger."

When asked why India whose past goes beyond 5,000 years has just 40 WHS, Muhammed said, "We joined on November 14, 1977 and by that time European nations had got a head start. Yet, when compared to other countries in the South Asian region we have done better and are in the sixth position after Italy, China, Germany, France and Spain." For making it to the list, there are several conditions to be fulfilled. To ensure that more places get included in the WHS list, Muhammed said steps must be taken to improve the condition of cultural and natural sites. "We need to invest more in them, especially the core conservation work. The heritage and history should be marketed in an effective and efficient manner. To do that, storytelling must be used to make them popular. Tourists and visitors must be told about the monument or place, its importance, and other details and stories, anecdotes, myths and legends connected with the site must be narrated, to develop a bond. For this qualified guides and efficient interpretation centres are required." He added that infrastructure like boarding, accommodation, seamless transport, food, etc at the site is necessary to make people's visit and stay comfortable and pleasant. "These measures can make these places attractive and help generate employment," Muhammed observed.

(The content is being carried under an arrangement with indianarrative.com)

## TATA SAVES AIR INDIA FROM BIDDING GOOD-BYE TO THE SKY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With the wide opening up of the aviation sector as millions troop out to fly for work or vacation after two years of Covid-19 curbs, airlines in India are experiencing a major boom not witnessed in the last 25 years.

Official data indicate that domestic passengers carried by Indian carriers shot up by 66.73 per cent - from 343.37 lakh to 572.49 lakh - in the first six months of 2022, marking a whopping monthly growth of 238 per cent.

The role played by Indian domestic carriers is phenomenal with major airlines like Air India, SpiceJet, IndiGo, Vistara, Go First, FlyBig, Alliance Air and StarAir virtually raking in the moolah with impressive passenger load factors.

In the past six months, even the erstwhile flag carrier Air India has not lagged behind after it changed hands to return to its old cradle - the Tata Group - where it was born 90

years ago as Tata Air Services and then renamed as Tata Airline.

Post-Independence, it was acquired by the government, renamed 'Air India' (AI) and it flew the Indian flag globally with the iconic, mischievous but lovable 'Maharajah' mascot. The airline is still among the most trusted in the industry. Whenever there was 'turbulence' in the aviation sector, stalwarts from Tata Group like its founding father JRD Tata and later Russi Mody were named AI Chairpersons by the government.

After the high-profile 'sale' back to the Tatas in January 2022, the venerable N. Chandrasekaran was appointed Chairman, with a professional team to assist him and guide a staff strength of around 10,000. "The entire focus of AI is to strengthen and enhance its functioning in every area of operations to become a world-class airline," said an AI official guardedly, on the airline's immediate and long-term plans.

The AI presently pilots a fleet of

113 aircraft comprising Boeing (777-200LR, 777-300ER and 787-800 Dreamliner) and Airbus (319, 320, 320Neo and 321) aircraft. Currently, it operates up to 320 flights daily, including 210 domestic, serving 50 Indian and 36 international destinations. Now, Tata boasts of a tiny bunch of airlines - Air India, Air India Express and the 8-year-old Vistara, a joint venture with Singapore Airlines - ranging from full-service to no-frills services compatible with all pockets.

As AI continues to soar the skies - it would have become an aviation history chapter if the Tatas had not taken it over - the challenge before the company is to make it extremely safe, punctual, professional and of course, profitable, in that order, according to aviation experts. The knives are out for a bigger piece of the diminishing pie in the sky - with Akasa Air launching operations in early-August followed by the revival of the former aviation roughie, Jet Airways come September, which at one time controlled more than one-

fifth of the total Indian market.

Recent months have witnessed a series of aircraft safety-related issues that have rattled the passengers and ruffled the different airlines, with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation mercilessly cracking the whip and ordering the carriers to tighten their belts. Experienced carriers like AI - the oldest in the pack - also have to contend with rising operating costs especially fuel, network expansion adding on lucrative international destinations, fleet improvement and augmentation to make it 'young, lean and mean', reasonable passenger fares amid recent suspicions of 'cartelisation' by the aviation players, improving the 'work culture' that was lacking in the state-owned AI. Though AI has categorically declined to reveal its route expansion or fleet augmentation plans, aviation industry sources said it may be compelled to go in for it sooner rather than later, with new players entering the market with gleaming new aircraft to grab the big chunks of the flying business.

## Grievance committee for street vendors to be set up soon

The Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri, on Saturday, assured the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) that a grievance committee will soon be set up for street vendors.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri, on Saturday, assured the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) that a grievance

committee will soon be set up for street vendors.

While addressing the 16th meeting of NASVI on Saturday, the minister said that street vendors were provided with capital working loans to help resume their businesses which were impacted by the pandemic.

As of July 11, Rs 3,661 crores have been provided as micro-credits to over 30 lakh street vendors which was a large figure, he added.

According to him, it is also important to have the meeting of about 4,500 Town Vending Committees, as these platforms will help address the local issues of others at the ground level.

Puri said that the design of the scheme was to offer collateral-free working capital loans of Rs 10,000, Rs 20,000

and Rs 50,000 respectively on repayment of the earlier loans to street vendors and help them plan their business expansion.

Under Phase 1 of 'SVANidhi se Samridhi', which was launched in January, 31 lakh street vendors and their families across 125 cities were covered, he added. Addressing the need to establish an egalitarian society, Puri said: "Our mantra is that dignity should be extended to everyone, and that the service and contribution of each individual should be recognised fairly. The vulnerable and marginalised sections of our society, especially in cities and towns, have benefitted immensely from various government-led interventions."

## Govt depts to list eligible staff for precautionary dose

The Ministry of Personnel has advised all government departments to make a list of the number of eligible employees and their family members to be administered the precautionary dose, separately for both types of vaccines (Covishield and Covaxin) so as to ensure optimum utilisation of resources.



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The Ministry said that as a part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations, the Centre has recently launched a new initiative -- 'Covid Vaccination Amrit Mahotsav' -- to provide free precautionary dose to all adult eligible persons who have completed six months (or 26 weeks) from receiving the second dose. The initiative would be implemented at government

Covid-19 vaccination centres for 75 days from July 15 to September 30.

"As advised by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, it has been decided that 'Covid Vaccination Amrit Mahotsav' camps at the workplaces are to be organised immediately," said an office memorandum issued recently.

"All the Ministries/Departments are advised to organise 'Covid Vaccination Amrit Mahotsav Camps' at the workplaces for providing free Covid precaution doses to the eligible employees and their family members. They are further advised to direct attached and subordinate offices and organisations under their control, including PSUs to organise vaccination camps as well," the Ministry said.

## Demand for India's rice likely to shoot up in global market as floods hit crop in Southeast Asian nations

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Demand for Indian rice is expected to increase amid heavy flooding in countries such as Thailand and Vietnam, which have been dominant players for this staple grain in the global export market. The heavy floods along the Mekong River belt have caused severe damage to crops in the two Southeast Asian countries. The paddy fields have been particularly washed away giving rise to concerns over food security amid surging global food prices driven by the Russia-Ukraine war.

Even as sowing of the grain in India this year is estimated to be 17 per cent lower due to inadequate rains in states such as Bihar and Orissa, analysts said that there is no cause for any worry as the country is sitting on adequate stocks from last year. However they maintained that New Delhi must refrain from taking any "sudden decisions."

"Such adhoc and knee jerk reaction and banning of outbound shipment create problems for Indian exporters, they find it difficult to get orders in the future," Anil Ghanwat, senior leader of Shetkari Sangathana, a Maharashtra based farmers union earlier told India Narrative.

India accounts for about 40 per cent of the global rice supply.

"India's rice #exports to benefit & rise to ~\$10-12 bn as key competitors ie Thailand & Vietnam suffer from loss in yields & cost surge. #India likely to #export 22 out of the 53 MT #rice demanded globally with market share of 40% in 2022," Sachchidanand Shukla, Chief Economist, Mahindra Group said in a tweet.

Indian rice is also less expensive compared to the grain sold by Thailand and Vietnam.

According to World Grain, an analysis website, shrinking the price spread with Thailand and Vietnam, Pakistani quotes



rose \$40 to \$420 per tonne amid steady demand from China. "Indian quotes rose minimally by \$5 to \$350 per tonne and remain the lowest globally with large supplies," it said.

Even as the price of Thai rice fell amid the uncertainties, it was more than the Indian rate. The problem of flooding is not specific to Southeast Asia. Even Bangladesh and parts of India -- especially the northeast have been in the grip of floods. But at the same time there are states which have received less rain.

"Sowing of paddy has been lower this year but a 17 per cent less sowing is nothing to cause any alarm. We have ample stocks left from last year's yields... in fact, due to large stocks, many farmers in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu are

also considering whether or not to sow paddy as then there will be problems related to storing. Our stocks are more than enough to feed our own people and export," Ghanwat said.

Meanwhile, news organisation, Vietnam Plus as the Mekong River water level is rising steadily and people living along its two banks in Thailand have been warned to be ready for dealing with floods that can happen at any time.

The Mekong River belt is crucial for multiple crops. Besides paddy, beans, leafy vegetables, watermelon, chilies, various herbs, and many other varieties of vegetables are grown.

(The content is being carried under an arrangement with indianarrative.com)

## Odia actor, wife, co-actor fight on Bhubaneswar street, video goes viral

In a shocking but embarrassing incident, Odia actor Babusan Mohanty, his wife, and co-actor Prakruti Mishra got into an ugly fight on a busy Bhubaneswar street on Saturday morning and the video has now gone viral.



Bhubaneswar | Agencies

Babushaan was seen sharing screen space with Prakruti in the recent Odia movie "Premam".

A few hours after the incident, actress Prakruti's mother, Krushnapriya Mishra, lodged a complaint at the Kharavela Nagar police station. As per the complaint, few people had stopped the vehicle, in which her daughter was traveling for work, and physically and mentally assaulted her, DCP, Bhubaneswar, Prateek Singh, said.

A case has been registered and an investigation has been started, he said.

On the viral video, the DCP said that the police has gone to the spot where the incident happened. "Investigation will be done based on the evidence we will find in this case," he added.

Trupti also stopped Prakruti from boarding an auto-rickshaw and accused her of ruining her family, while Prakruti indicated that Trupti has lost her mental balance.



## ANTI-CAA PROTESTS: SHARJEEL IMAM DENIED INTERIM BAIL IN SEDITION CASE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A Delhi court on Saturday dismissed the interim bail plea of activist Sharjeel Imam, who is in judicial custody under sedition charges, among others, for allegedly delivering inflammatory speeches at the Aligarh Muslim University and the Jamia Milia Islamia during the anti-CAA protests in 2019-20.

Additional sessions judge Amitabh Rawat dismissed the plea of Imam, who had approached the Karkardooma court on May 27 following Delhi High Court's direction to approach the lower court first for bail.

His counsel had withdrawn the interim bail appli-

cation from the Delhi High Court after the prosecution had raised the issue of maintainability.

Imam had approached the high court first for relief following the historic Supreme Court verdict that put on hold the colonial-era penal provision of sedition (Section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code).

In the fresh bail application, Imam said that since the top court has put sedition in abeyance, his case has improved for the grant of bail. "The appellant has been incarcerated for nearly 28 months since January 28, 2020 whereas the maximum punishment for the offences -- not including 124-A IPC -- are punishable for up to a maximum of seven years

imprisonment," the plea read. JNU scholars and activists Imam and Umar Khalid are among the nearly dozen people reportedly involved in the alleged larger conspiracy linked to the Delhi riots of 2020, as per the Delhi Police.

Imam and Khalid are facing charges in connection with making inflammatory speeches which allegedly fuelled the violence, as per the police. The riots broke out in the national capital in February 2020 as clashes between the anti-CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act) and pro-CAA protesters took a violent turn.

The mayhem saw more than 50 people lose their lives besides leaving over 700 persons injured.

## SRINAGAR COURT SUMMONS FAROOQ ABDULLAH IN CRICKET SCAM CASE

Srinagar: A Srinagar court on Saturday summoned National Conference chief and former J&K Chief Minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, and others in the cricket scam complaint filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).



Taking cognisance of the complaint filed by the ED against Abdullah and others in the J&K Cricket Association (JKCA) money laundering case, the principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar issued the summons for August 27.

Before issuing the summons, the court heard Additional Solicitor General Tahir Majid Shamsi, representing the ED, and also perused records produced by the ED. Abdullah was questioned by the ED for over 3 hours in connection with this case on May 31. The ED has alleged that despite the JKCA having a regular account, six new accounts were opened to park funds and finally siphon them off. This, the ED alleged, had been done under direction of Abdullah, who was then the President of the JKCA and also the beneficiary of the siphoned-off funds.

## India reports 21,411 new Covid cases, 67 deaths

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In the last 24 hours, India reported 21,411 new Covid-19 cases, a decline against the 21,880 infections registered the previous day, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

Also in the same period, there were 67 new fatalities which took the nationwide Covid death toll to 5,25,997.

The active caseload has increased to 1,50,100, accounting for 0.34 per cent of the country's total positive cases.

The recovery of 20,726 patients in the last 24 hours took the cumulative tally to 4,31,92,379. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.46 per cent.

While the daily positivity rate rose to 4.46 per cent, the weekly



positivity rate stood at 4.46 per cent. Also in the same period, a total of 4,80,202 tests were conducted across the country, increasing the overall tally to over 87.21 crore. As of Saturday morning, India's Covid-19 vac-

ination coverage exceeded 201.68 crore, achieved via 2,66,09,306 sessions. Over 3.84 crore adolescents have been administered with a first dose of Covid-19 jab since the beginning of vaccination drive for this age bracket.

## WBSSC Scam: ED arrests Partha Chatterjee's aide Arpita Mukherjee

Kolkata | Agencies

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) probing the multi-crore financial scam related to recruitment irregularities in the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) on Saturday arrested Arpita Mukherjee, a close aide of former West Bengal Education Minister and Trinamool Congress Secretary General Partha Chatterjee.

The ED move came hours after Chatterjee, who is currently the state Commerce and Industries Minister, was arrested by the financial probe agency in the same case on Saturday morning.

Mukherjee's arrest from her residence in South Kolkata was officially announced by the ED at 5.14 p.m. on Saturday, about seven hours after the probe agency nabbed Chatterjee.

The ED sleuths said that since it will not be possible to present her at any court on Saturday and Sunday, for these two days she will be lodged at the ED's office in the CGO complex in Salt Lake.

Incidentally, Chatterjee, following an order passed by a lower court, will also be lodged at the same ED office before being produced at a special PMLA court on Monday.

ED officials said that in the interim period, agency sleuths will integrate the duo by placing



them face to face.

While the ED sleuths were taking away Mukherjee from her residence, she kept saying "I am innocent. I am being unnecessarily framed by

the BJP". It is learnt that the ED has recovered cash and other items worth over Rs 40 crore from Mukherjee's residence, including cash in Indian and foreign currencies, gold ornaments, sales deeds of eight flats and two high-end Apple iPhones, among others. According to ED sources, Mukherjee was a small-time actress in Odia movies.

However, her fortunes changed after she was introduced to Chatterjee six years back following which the two were frequently spotted together at different public programmes.

She was even spotted at the inauguration of a Durga Puja where Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was also present.

Mukherjee reportedly told the ED sleuths that she was introduced to Chatterjee by a real estate promoter.

As per information available with the ED, she event went to a foreign tour with Chatterjee, when the latter was the state Education Minister.

Mukherjee's late father was a Central government officer. After his sudden demise, a job offer was also made to Mukherjee on compassionate grounds. However, she refused to accept the offer and claimed that she intended to make a career in the silver screen.

## 'Free to go anywhere': Akhilesh Yadav tells Shivpal, Rajbhar

LUCKNOW | Agencies

Signalling his exasperation, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday told his estranged uncle and Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party Lohia (PSPL) supremo Shivpal Singh Yadav and ally Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (BSBP) President Om Prakash Rajbhar that "they are free to go anywhere".

In the letter issued by the SP to Shivpal Yadav, who is an SP MLA from family borough Jaswantnagar in Etawah, it is mentioned that he is "free to join any party" where he "gets more respect."

The letter shot off to Om Prakash Rajbhar, states that: "Samajwadi Party is constantly fighting with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Since you have an alliance with the BJP and are constantly working to strengthen them, you are free to go if you feel you will get more respect there."

A copy of the letters issued from the SP's central office has been sent to the party's National General Secretary, Professor Ram Gopal Yadav, as well. Meanwhile, the political experts are awaiting Shivpal Singh Yadav and Rajbhar's next step.

However, after receiving the letter, Rajbhar said: "I kept giving suggestions to him (Akhilesh Yadav but he always misunderstood



me. We need a leader who talks in unison.."

"It is disagreeable for me to meet Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath but is okay for him or his father, Mulayam Singh, to do so. I get what I want. No one can point a finger at my loyalty. But if someone thinks that I should do what he asks me to, then he or she is wrong. I am no one's slave." Questioning Akhilesh Yadav's credentials, Rajbhar said: "I pray to god that he never has to step out of his air conditioned home. Fighting for the underprivileged is not their (SP's) cup of tea. I asked them to politically accommodate Dalits and the backward classes but they never took my advice seriously. I even suggested many names for Azamgarh (LS seat bypolls) but they wanted only Yadav and Muslim candidates."

## 11 kanwaris arrested in Bihar's Jamui for being drunk

PATNA | Agencies

Eleven kanwaris were arrested in a drunken state in Bihar's Jamui district on Saturday, officials said.

The devotees of Lord Shiva, travelling on two SUVs, were returning to their native places after offering water at Deoghar. They were intercepted during a vehicle checking campaign of Anti-Liquor Task Force (ALTF) at Mahesha Pather checkpoint near Chakai police station in the district, and four liquor bottles were seized from them.

Chakai SHO and ALTF in charge Chandeshwar Prasad Yadav said: "We were deployed at Mahesha Pather check post for the vehicle checking. The team has inter-



cepted two luxury vehicles having registration numbers BR30 PA 1637 and BR01 DJ 0662. When the officials asked those in it to step out from the car for checking, they smelled alcohol. During the breathing analysis test, they also found positive."

"During checking of the vehicles, the ALTF team also found 4 liquor bottles from their possession," he said. The arrested kanwaris were identified as Kishan

Kumar, Umesh Kumar Mahto, Ranjit Rao, Pankaj Gupta, Vishal Kumar Mahto, Ramu Mahto, all natives of Reega police station in Sitamarhi district while Gaurav Kumar, Shashi Bhushan Arya, Ranjit Kumar and Aman Kumar are the native of Parsa Bazar in Patna district. "They have been booked under the Liquor Prohibition Act (Amendment) 2018 in Chakai police station and arrested," Yadav said.

## How can EC question credentials of Balasaheb Thackeray's Shiv Sena: Sanjay Raut

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena MP and chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut criticised the Election Commission for raising questions on "the party that was founded by Balasaheb Thackeray".

He said that it is a sad development that the 56-year-old Shiv Sena launched by Balasaheb Thackeray - now led by his son and ex-Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray - on the Hindutva plank is now compelled to prove its credentials to the poll panel, and termed it shocking for the people of Maharashtra.

Raut's comments came against the backdrop of the EC asking the Shiv Sena and the rival faction led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to submit relevant documents to establish their claims over the party by August 8.

The poll panel has directed both claimants to furnish written statements, provide various documents including letters of support, the organisational wings and other details of the party, under the Election Symbols (Reservation & Allotment) Order, 1968.

The ECI move followed a representation made



by the Shinde group claiming it is the "real Shiv Sena", and demanding allotment of the party's iconic 'Bow and Arrow' poll symbol, on grounds

that the breakaway faction was accorded recognition by the Lok Sabha and the Maharashtra Assembly. In a pre-emptive move, the Thackeray-led Shiv Sena had earlier moved the EC, seeking a hearing before deciding on any claims made on the party, its logo and its poll symbol.

The Shinde faction step comes ahead of the upcoming 'mini-general elections' to over 350 local bodies after the Supreme Court last week ordered the polls to be notified within a fortnight on the basis of the OBC political reservations report of the state government.

The local bodies elections - including to the biggest and richest civic body, BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) as well as those of Thane, Pune, Nagpur and others would prove crucial for the two opposing factions as the outcome would indicate which group enjoys mass support.

After a major revolt, the Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress Maha Vikas Aghadi government of Thackeray collapsed on June 29, and Shinde was sworn-in as CM along with Bharatiya Janata Party's Devendra Fadnis as Deputy CM on June 30.

## Congress infighting escalates; K'taka president says 'zip your mouth' and bring party to power

Bengaluru | Agencies

Congress infighting has escalated regarding the leadership row in Karnataka. After declaring his candidature for the post of Chief Minister, State Congress President DK Shivakumar on Saturday told the leaders to zip their mouths and bring the party to power in the state.

"If you have real respect for the party, stop worshipping individuals and worship the party. Focus on bringing more people to the fold of the party. Let all leaders organise their communities and bring the Congress to power in Karnataka," Shivakumar stated.

He slammed the statement of Congress MLA and Siddaramaiah's close associate Zameer Ahmed Khan, that Muslim community has more voters than dominant Vokkaliga community and he is also in the race for the post of Chief Minister. "The CM post is not vacant now. Everyone should zip their mouth."



I am telling this to everyone," he underlined.

Shivakumar defended his statement of expressing his wish to become CM as there is no harm in any candidate winning out of 224 assembly constituencies in the state wishing to become CM.

Congress party Campaign Committee President MB Patil had earlier stated that he will not identify himself with either Shivakumar camp or Siddaramaiah camp as he has his own identity. The statement of Shivakumar stands contradicted by party leaders leading to more confusion in the present circumstances, insiders in Congress said.

## Woman raped at New Delhi Railway Station, all 4 culprits held

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In another incident of capital shame, a 30-year-old woman was sexually assaulted by four Railways employees at New Delhi Railway Station's train lighting hut on the pretext of providing her a job in the Railways. Police said that they got a call regarding the incident on Friday.

DCP of Railways, Delhi Police, Harender K. Singh said that all the four accused have been held, adding that all the accused are railway employees in the Electrical Department.

The accused are identified as Satish Kumar, Vinod Kumar, Mangal Chand Meena and Jagdish Chand.

"The call was earlier received at 2:27 p.m. The staff there checked for the caller but could not find her. Upon contacting her on the given



mobile number, it was known that she is standing at PF No. 8-9 of the station. Immediately, the SHO along with the staff reached platforms 8-9 where he met the victim," police said.

The victim told that she is separated from her husband for the last one year and was

seeking divorce. Around 2 years back, she came in contact with Satish through a common friend. He told her that he is a railway employee and can arrange a job for her. Both continued talking over phone calls. On July 21, he asked her over a call to come to his home as he was

hosting his son's birthday party and house-warming. She came via metro to Kirti Nagar at around 10:30 p.m. from where she was picked up by the accused and brought to PF 8-9 of New Delhi Railway Station. He asked her to sit in a hut meant for electrical maintenance staff.

"Then he and his friend came inside the room and bolted it from inside and sexually assaulted her one after another. Two of his accomplices facilitated the assault by guarding the room from outside," the police said.

She was then taken to a nearby government hospital where she was made to undergo a medical test. Rape was established in her medical report.

The FIR was lodged with relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.

## Anurag Thakur accuses Kejriwal of patronising corrupt ministers

Team Absolute | New Delhi

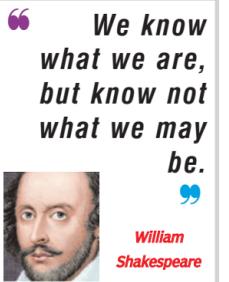
Accusing Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of patronising his corrupt ministers, Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur has said that the former has no right to continue in power. He said Kejriwal's corrupt ministers should also resign immediately.

Accusing the Kejriwal government of giving benefits to the liquor mafia, Anurag Thakur said that Kejriwal could not answer the serious allegations made by the BJP in this case, this proves that Lieutenant Governor Vinay Kumar Saxena's recommendation to the Union Home Ministry to hand over the case to the CBI has strength, facts and truth. "The Chief Minister does not have any portfolio but scams are happening in one department after the other. Under Kejriwal's nose, his people are doing scams together," the Union Minister said.

He added that Kejriwal had also made tall claims about Satyendar Jain but he is in jail in a serious corruption case and has not got bail for two months. Thakur sarcastically said is Manish Sisodia going to lose his memory in the same way Satyendar Jain lost his memory as soon as he went to jail.

Continuing his attack on the Aam Aadmi Party and Kejriwal, Thakur said that new dimensions of corruption are emerging in the government of Kejriwal, who talked about corruption-free India before joining politics. "Sometimes the MLA and sometimes the minister are being accused but instead of giving concrete answers, Kejriwal is silent and is giving protection to the corrupt," he stated. Recently, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinay Kumar Saxena recommended a CBI inquiry to the Union Home Ministry over complaints of irregularities in the excise policy of the Delhi government.

# absolute india



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## CHIEF JUSTICE NV RAMANA SLAMS 'MEDIA TRIALS,' TERMS IT 'KANGAROO COURTS'

Chief Justice NV Ramana on Saturday hit out at electronic and social media 'trials', saying that media run 'kangaroo courts' at times on issues and even experienced judges find it difficult to decide.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chief Justice NV Ramana on Saturday hit out at electronic and social media 'trials', saying that media run 'kangaroo courts' at times on issues and even experienced judges find it difficult to decide.

Speaking at the inaugural 'Justice SB Sinha Memorial Lecture' on 'Life of a Judge' organised by National University of Study & Research in Law, Ranchi, the Chief Justice stressed the need to ensure proper judicial infrastructure, the problems created by media trial in judicial administration, future challenges of the judiciary and the importance of judicial review in protection of the Constitution.

Asserting that we are living in a complex society, Ramana said that the role of a person holding a position



in the judiciary or governance becomes extremely crucial as their decisions at critical junctures influence the growth and progress of humanity.

"Doing justice is not an easy responsibility. It is becoming increasingly challenging with each passing day," he said, pointing out the increasing number of media trials.

"New media tools have the enormous amplifying ability but appear to be incapable of distinguishing between the right and the wrong, the good and the bad and the real and the fake. Media trials cannot be a guiding factor in deciding cases," he said in the speech.

Rapping the biased views appearing on social media, he said: "Ill-informed and agenda-driven debates on issues involving justice delivery are proving to be detrimental to the health of democracy."

He said further that biased views propagated by media are affecting people, weakening democracy, and harming the system.

In the process, justice delivery gets adversely affected. "By overstepping and breaching your responsibility, you are taking our democracy two steps backward," he blasted.

## POLL PANEL ASKS FOR DOCUMENTS IN THACKERAY VS SHINDE FIGHT OVER SENA

**▶ THE POLL PANEL HAS ASKED BOTH FACTIONS - UDDHAV THACKERAY AND EKNATH SHINDE TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE TO PROVE THEIR CLAIM OF HAVING MAJORITY MEMBERS IN THE SHIV SENA.**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The poll panel has asked both factions - Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde to submit documentary evidence to prove their claim of having majority members in the Shiv Sena.

As per the Commission, both the groups have been asked to submit a reply by 1 p.m. on August 8 after which the Election Commission will hold a hearing regarding the claims and disputes between both factions of the Shiv Sena.

Both the factions have written to the poll

panel staking claims to the party. The Uddhav Thackeray faction had written to the Commission on multiple occasions claiming certain members of the party had indulged in anti-party activities. It had also raised objections to the Shinde faction establishing any political party using the names 'Shiv Sena' or 'Bala Saheb.'

The faction had further sought removal of Eknath Shinde, Gulabrao Patil, Tanji Sawant, and Uday Samant from party posts.

On the other hand, Shinde camp had also approached the poll panel staking claim under Para 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation & Allotment) Order, 1968, to declare the group led by Eknath Shinde as Shiv Sena and also allot the party symbol 'Bow and Arrow' to the group.

Shinde has also told the Election Commission that 40 out of 55 MLAs, various MLCs, and 12 MPs out of 18 are with him.

When two factions stake claim to the same symbol - the EC first examines the support each faction enjoys, both within the party's organisation and its legislature wing.

In such cases, the commission can also freeze the party's symbol and ask the two factions to register with new names and symbols. In case polls are around the corner, it can ask the two groups to choose a temporary symbol.

## Trinamool's decision to abstain from voting disappointing: Margaret Alva

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Margaret Alva, the Opposition candidate for the Vice Presidential poll scheduled on August 6, on Friday termed the Trinamool Congress' decision to abstain from voting as disappointing, adding that this is not the time for 'whataboutery'.

"TMC's decision to abstain from voting in the VP election is disappointing. This isn't the time for 'whataboutery', ego or anger. This is the time for courage, leadership & unity. I believe, @MamataOfficial, who is

the epitome of courage, will stand with the opposition," Alva tweeted.

The Trinamool Congress said on Thursday that its MPs in both the Houses of the Parliament will abstain from voting in the poll to elect the next Vice President of India.

The decision was taken on Thursday afternoon at a meeting chaired by party supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, which was attended by 33 out of the 35 Trinamool MPs.

"Each member was given the opportunity to present his/her views in front of the Chief Minister. Thereafter,

85 per cent of the MPs present at the meeting voiced their view in favour of abstaining from voting in the Vice Presidential poll," Trinamool's national General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee told mediapersons after the meeting.

He said while the question of supporting NDA nominee Jagdeep Dhankhar does not arise, Trinamool has strong objections to the opposition parties announcing the candidature of Margaret Alva as their candidate without consulting the Trinamool leadership or Mamata Banerjee.

## K'taka HC serves notice to ruling BJP on promulgation of ordinance on Anti-Conversion law

**■ Debate on Anti-Conversion Bill is back in Karnataka with the High Court accepting a PIL and issuing a notice to ruling BJP on the implementation of the law by promulgating an ordinance.**

Bengaluru | Agencies

Debate on Anti-Conversion Bill is back in Karnataka with the High Court accepting a PIL and issuing a notice to ruling BJP on the implementation of the law by promulgating an ordinance.

On Friday, the High Court directed the government to file objections with regard to the Public Interest

Litigation (PIL) challenging the government's move. The petition claimed that Anti-Conversion law (Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill 2021) exhibited intolerance and questioned its constitutional validity.

The petition filed by All Karnataka United Christian Forum for Human Rights and Evangelical Fellowship of India from New Delhi stated that the bill is an attack on democratic values which unites the country.

A bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice J.M. Khazi issued notice to the Secretary of Home department and Principal Secretary of Law Department. The bench has asked them to file objections within four weeks.

The laws formulated under the Anti-Conversion Bill violate the right of choice of an individual, right of

liberty and right to practice religion. The provisions of ordinance violate Section 21 of the Indian constitution as it gives liberty to the state to violate individual rights of citizens, the petition claims. After the ruling BJP in the state brought the Anti-Conversion law into force by promulgating an ordinance, the state Congress had announced to launch a Jan Andolan (people's agitation) against it. Congress stated that it will never allow the misuse of The Karnataka Protection of Rights to Freedom of Religion. "Our party will firmly stand with each individual belonging to the minority community, those who are threatened by the government. The party will launch 'Jan Andolan' against the proposed bill, the Congress had announced." The Karnataka government had tabled the proposed con-

troversial Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill, 2021 popularly known as Anti-conversion bill in Legislative Assembly in Suvarna Vidhana Soudha at Belagavi on December 21, 2021. However, it is yet to come before the Legislative Council. All legal entities, educational institutions, orphanages, old age homes, hospitals, religious missionaries, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) are brought under the purview of the institutions. According to new law, any converted person, his parents, brother, sister or any other person who is related to him by blood, marriage or adoption or in any form associated or colleague may lodge a complaint of such conversion which contravenes the provisions. The offense is made to be non-bailable and cognizable offence.

## WBSSC SCAM: TRINAMOO CONGRESS DISTANCES ITSELF FROM PARTHA CHATTERJEE

**■ Crisis seems to be deepening for state minister and Trinamool Congress secretary general Partha Chatterjee as the party leadership seems to be distancing itself from the issue of his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials on Saturday in connection with West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) recruitment scam.**

Kolkata | Agencies

Crisis seems to be deepening for state minister and Trinamool Congress secretary general Partha Chatterjee as the party leader-

ship seems to be distancing itself from the issue of his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials on Saturday in connection with West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) recruitment scam. For the first two hours of the commerce & industries minister's arrest from his residence in South Kolkata's Naktala, there was no statement from the party. Finally at around 12.15 p.m., Trinamool Congress's state general secretary and the party spokesman Kunal Ghosh came out with an extremely loaded statement denying any association of the party or the state government with the development especially with the issue of recovery of huge amount of cash from the residence of Chatterjee's confidante and close aide Arpita Mukherjee. "The onus is on the person or her counsel

from whose residence the huge amount of cash has been recovered. The onus is also on those and their counsels whose names are surfacing in the case. Neither Trinamool Congress as a party nor the state government has any connection with the cash recovery by the ED. The party is keeping a close watch on the entire issues on why unnecessarily a campaign is going on involving the party. The party leadership will give the reaction at the right moment," he said.

This is not the first time that Ghosh has made a loaded statement that caused embarrassment for Partha Chatterjee. Earlier, he commented that only Partha Chatterjee and not the current state education minister Bratya Basu was answerable for the WBSSC scam, since the alleged irregularities took place when

Chatterjee was in charge of the state education department. Political observers feel that Ghosh's statements as a party spokesman after Chatterjee's clear indication that the party leadership has clearly started distancing itself from the entire issue. Meanwhile, the ED has come across more treasures from the posh residence of Arpita Mukherjee at Diamond Park housing complex in south Kolkata. As per ED estimates, besides Rs 21.20 crore in cash, gold ornaments of estimated market value of Rs 89 lakhs, foreign currency of value of Rs 54 lakhs and sale deeds of eight flats have been recovered so far from her residence.

"So far, we have just detained Arpita Mukherjee. But she is in a total non-cooperation mood. If necessary, we might arrest her as well and interrogate taking her in our custody.

## First ship to berth in Vizhinjam Port in March 2023

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

Kerala's much-delayed flagship project, the Vizhinjam Port finally appears to be nearing completion as state Ports Minister Ahamed Devarkovil on Saturday said the first ship will berth in March 2023.

"While the first ship will berth in March 2023, the first phase of the port will be commissioned in September 2023," he said.

The port is built by Adani Ports and at the time of commencement of work on the port on December 5, 2015, group chief Gautam Adani

had announced then that the first ship will berth there on September 1, 2018, in a record time of less than 1,000 days. The port project was inked when the Congress-led UDF government under Chief Minister Oommen Chandy was in power.

The project got stalled in 2017 after Cyclone Ockhi hit the construction site and a portion of the constructed breakwater was washed away and since then the shortage of limestone, the most important raw material for the project caused yet another delay.

The total cost of the port project is Rs 7,525 crore and

the state government has contributed 500 acres of land.

According to the plan, once completed, this would be one of India's deepest ports and 80 per cent of the country's cargo transshipments will go through here. Adani Ports, which was the lone bidder for the project, had sought a Rs 1,635 crore grant for the construction purposes.

According to the agreement, Adani will operate the port for 40 years, extendable by 20 more years, while the state government will get a portion of the revenue from the port after 15 years.

## Bad news for air travellers: Ticket prices to soar as fuel prices rise

**▶ THE IATA CHIEF RECENTLY WARNED THAT THE PRICES OF AIRLINE TICKETS WILL GO UP "WITHOUT DOUBT" AS FUEL COSTS RISE. OIL PRICES HAVE JUMPED AS ECONOMIES RECOVER FROM THE COVID PANDEMIC AND ALSO DUE TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE.**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The IATA chief recently warned that the prices of airline tickets will go up "without doubt" as fuel costs rise. Oil prices have jumped as economies recover from the Covid pandemic and also due to the war in Ukraine.

These costs will be passed on to consumers, Willie Walsh, director general of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), said, reports BBC. "Flying will be more expensive for consumers, without doubt", he said, adding that the "high price of oil" will be "reflected in higher ticket prices".

Due to the rise in fuel prices, domestic and international air fares in India have witnessed a surge by up to 50% in the last few months. Air fares at American Airlines, Delta Air Lines and United Airlines - the three largest US domestic carriers - shot up nearly 50 per cent for the week ending May 23 compared to a year ago, according to an analysis by Cowen, a financial serv-

ices firm. Cowen tracked nearly 300 routes across four different fare categories for the carriers using data from New York-based Harrell Associates, which tracks airline pricing trends, CBS reported.

A 0.3% MoM decrease was registered in India in May, in YoY terms traffic increased by 405.7% in this domestic market, as per IATA. Oil prices were already rising as demand picked up again in economies that had started recovering from the Covid pandemic. The fallout from the war in Ukraine has pushed prices up further. The US has announced a complete ban on oil imports from Russia, while the UK is to phase out Russian supplies by the end of the year, BBC reported. European Union leaders have said they will block most Russian oil imports by the end of 2022.

This means demand for oil from other producers has increased, leading to higher prices. Walsh said fuel prices were at record highs, and that "oil is the single biggest element of an airline's cost base",

BBC reported.

"It's inevitable that ultimately the high oil prices will be passed through to consumers in higher ticket prices." International revenue passenger kilometres (RPKs) continued to drive the global industry's recovery in May when the global domestic market trended sideways, IATA said. Several major international route areas overperformed 2019 levels while many others likely reached pre-pandemic RPK levels in June.

The global industry's recovery accelerated and global international RPKs are now at 64.1% of pre-crisis levels. Global domestic RPKs reached 76.7% of the 2019 level in May. Compared to April 2022, global RPKs grew 10.7% month-on-month (MoM).

The rebound continues despite inflation, high jet fuel prices and low consumer confidence. International bookings briefly exceeded domestic bookings in May, confirming that a high willingness to travel abroad persists, IATA said.

## RJD Bihar chief accuses RSS of anti-national activities

Patna | Agencies

In remarks which could spark off controversy, RJD's Bihar unit chief Jagadanand Singh claimed that those involved in anti-national activities and working as spies for Pakistan are Hindu and connected to the RSS.

Interacting with media persons in Patna, he alleged: "Whenever dangerous persons are in reaction to queries relating to the busting of the Phulwari Sharif suspected terror module last week.

Noting that during the investigation, one of the accused, Margoob, alias Tahir, was said to be in a telephonic conversation with a Pakistani national named Faizan, he said: "They (investigating agencies are claiming that a person has a telephonic conversation with a Pakistani

national. The investigators should release the transcript of the conversation in public domain.

"They should reveal what the act was done by youths of a particular community which turn to be a threat for the nation. During partition, a large number of Muslim family went to Pakistan and their relatives are living in both the countries. Can they clarify whether interacting with our relatives in Pakistan is a crime?" Accusing the investigative agencies of working on the direction of the Centre, he said: "We are not accepting whatever they (BJP) are doing in the country." Citing the case of Alt News co-founder Mohammad Zubair, he said Zubair claimed that he tweeted the content which was tweeted numerous times by other persons, but the BJP leaders tagged him as a fanatic.

Jagadanand Singh also targeted Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, comparing him to a pendulum.



# WE MADE EKNATH SHINDE CM 'WITH HEAVY HEART', SAYS BJP MAHA CHIEF

Creating a major flutter in Maharashtra politics, state Bharatiya Janata Party president Chandrakant Patil said that it was "with a heavy heart" that his party decided to make rebel Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde the Chief Minister last month instead of Devendra Fadnavis.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Creating a major flutter in Maharashtra politics, state Bharatiya Janata Party president Chandrakant Patil said that it was "with a heavy heart" that his party decided to make rebel Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde the Chief Minister last month instead of Devendra Fadnavis.



His comments came at the BJP state executive meeting in Panvel town of Raigad district on Saturday, sparking a furore in political circles. "We have made Shinde the CM, instead of Fadnavis (now the Deputy CM), with a heavy heart... We had to give a stable government and to convey a message. We have digested that agony and now move ahead with joy," said Patil.

The Shinde faction of the Shiv Sena, with support from the BJP, toppled the Maha Vikas Aghadi government headed by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray last month.

Patil also lauded Fadnavis' role as the ex-Leader of Opposition and how he con-

stantly exposed the "misdoings" of the Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress alliance for the past two and half years.

Attacking Patil, Shiv Sena spokesperson Kishore Tiwari said that the BJP has finally opened up about its dislike for Shinde and how they

were compelled to support him owing to political compulsions.

"Shinde is clearly put on notice period. The BJP will tie a mill-stone around Shinde's neck at the first opportunity, take away his rebel legislators and dump him unceremoniously. Then, the Shinde and rebels will view the true face of BJP," he said.

NCP chief spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said Patil has blurted out the truth since he has realised that "this government of Shinde-Fadnavis" is illegal and unconstitutional. "The future of this regime hinges on the Supreme Court verdict... It may fall later, that's why BJP says it had to put a stone on its heart and make Shinde the CM," said Tapase.

Targeting Patil, Congress chief spokesperson Atul Londhe said that its "the people of the state who are toler-

ating this illicit government with a heavy heart" and indicates that Shinde could face a bleak future.

"After the SC judgement, it's quite possible that the masses will throw stones at this government, which is completely paralysed, with no cabinet expansion for 24 days and no relief in the rain havoc which has killed over 100 people so far," he said sharply.

In his address, Fadnavis slammed the MVA government and accused it of an "undeclared Emergency" in the state with all development activities coming to a standstill during its tenure.

He alleged that the MVA only indulged in politics of vendetta against the opponents, and claimed that the government change was inevitable to help put the state back on the course of progress and development.

## 'DELHI WANTS TO DESTROY SHIV SENA, BUT...', SANJAY RAUT'S BIG CHALLENGE AMID EC ROW

▶ THE ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA ASKED BOTH UDDHAV THACKERAY AND EKNATH SHINDE TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT THEY HAVE THE MAJORITY MEMBERS IN THE SHIV SENA



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Delhi wants to destroy Shiv Sena, it's shocking for the people of Maharashtra, said party chief Uddhav Thackeray's close aide and former state minister Sanjay Raut in a searing criticism to the Election Commission of India. Raut's statements came as the poll body asked both the factions of Shiv Sena - Eknath Shinde camp and Uddhav Thackeray camp - to prove the majority in order to assume control of the party. Slamming the central body's ask, Raut said, "Balasaheb Thackeray formed the party 56 years ago to promote Hindutva and EC is now raising questions on his organisation. Delhi wants to destroy our party. Uddhav Thackeray is the only leader of Shiv Sena today. Earlier today, the Election Commission of India asked both Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde to submit documentary evidence to prove that they have the majority members in the Shiv Sena to assume control over the election symbol of the political out-

fit. This comes as Eknath Shinde, who won the Maharashtra assembly floor test approved by the Supreme Court with the majority, approached EC to claim control of the Shiv Sena symbol "bow and arrow." The Shinde camp says that they have a clear majority in the legislative wing.

The EC also sent to the Thackeray camp the letter written to them (EC) by the Shinde faction and the Thackeray camp's letter to the Shinde faction and sought replies from both the camps by August 8. Sources in ECI informed that the two sides have been asked to submit documents, including letters of support from the legislative and organisational wings of the party and the written statements of the rival factions. They said the requirement was made in line with Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968. Meanwhile, Elections are due in several civic bodies in Maharashtra, including the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), which would indicate which Sena faction gets the popular support.

## Won't contest 2024 Lok Sabha polls as part of UPA: Shewale

Shewale said the MPs discussed the party's prospects in the 2024 LS polls during a meeting to urge Thackeray to back the NDA's presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu

Team Absolute | Mumbai

New Sena group leader in the LS Rahul Shewale claimed that at the party MPs' meet earlier this month, they had made it clear that they will not accept Rahul Gandhi's leadership and fight the 2024 polls as part of the UPA. Party parliamentarian Sanjay Raut then indicated Uddhav Thackeray could be pitched as the party's national face.

Shewale said the MPs discussed the party's prospects in the 2024 LS polls during a meeting to urge Thackeray to back the NDA's presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu. "We had told Uddhavji that in 2024, it would be very difficult to win without the BJP. Issues like Ram Mandir and Uniform Civil Code would be taken up. Like Sri Lanka, Pakistan's economy could crash and that also would have an impact on the polls. We said we can't accept Rahul's leadership. There will be a Modi tsunami and the UPA has no face to take him on. Then Raut indicated that

Uddhav ji could be the face. We told them that while we had immense respect for Uddhav ji, realistically speaking, he could not be the national face. So it was very important to back Murmu and realign with the NDA. All the Sena MPs were of the view that we must go back with the BJP keeping in mind our poll prospects. We even told them that the Sena was still not part of the UPA anyway," Shewale said.

A day after 12 of the party's 19 MPs wanted the Sena to back Murmu, Thackeray declared his support for her.

Meanwhile, hitting out at Aaditya Thackeray over his barbs against rebel MLAs and MPs asking them to resign and fight polls again, Shewale said, "We fought the Lok Sabha and state elections in 2019 in alliance with the BJP. If he has guts, he should resign as MLA and fight polls. Since he was elected as a joint candidate of the Sena-BJP, he should resign and ask the voters of Worli if they have accepted the Sena's alliance with the Congress and the NCP," Shewale said.

## Salman Khan meets Mumbai top cop; applies for weapon license

The actor and his father had received death threat letters threatening that they would meet the fate of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Salman Khan has been in the news for reasons beyond the film industry. The actor and his father received death threat letters threatening that the father-son duo would meet the fate of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala. Khan reportedly visited the Mumbai Police Commissioner Vivek Phansalkar on Friday, 22 July.

This comes after reports have suggested that the Bollywood superstar has also applied for gun license following these threats.

On Friday, the actor arrived at the Mumbai police headquarters, located opposite Crawford Market, in his car around 4 pm and met Phansalkar, an official said, adding that it was just a courtesy visit and had nothing to do with any case, according to news agency PTI.



Khan also met Joint Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Vishwas Nangre Patil there. Salman Khan's security cover had also been increased after the threats he received last month.

A case was registered against an unknown person for allegedly issuing a threat to Salman and Salim Khan. According to the Bandra police,

Salim Khan was on his daily morning walk on the Bandstand promenade along with his security. At 7.40 am, he sat on a bench for a break when his security personnel found a chat with the words, "Moosewala jaisa kar doonga (You will suffer the same fate as Moosewala)."

Following the case, Salman Khan had applied for gun license citing

security issues. Today's visit to the Police Commissioner seems like a routine visit regarding the same application. His visit to the police headquarters was for physical verification before the licensing authority, a mandatory step in applying for a gun licence, people familiar with the situation said.

Lawrence Bishnoi's death threat to Salman Khan was linked to the black buck poaching case of 1998, in which the actor was one of the accused.

Moosewala was shot dead in Mansa village by alleged members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. Earlier in 2018, Bishnoi had threatened Salman Khan when the blackbuck poaching case was in court. Lawrence, who belongs to the Bishnoi community, considers the blackbuck to be a sacred animal, and Salman's involvement in poaching had hurt the community's sentiments.

Lawrence Bishnoi, who had been serving time in Delhi's Tihar Jail, is in Punjab Police custody in connection with the investigation into the murder of Sidhu Moosewala.

## New Maharashtra Government Born Out Of Demonic Ambition: Jr Thackeray

"This government, which has been formed due to demonic ambition, is unconstitutional and illegal. This is a temporary government and will collapse," Aaditya Thackeray said.



Team Absolute | Aurangabad

The new government in Maharashtra under Chief Minister Eknath Shinde is unconstitutional and has been born out of demonic ambition, Shiv Sena leader and former state minister Aaditya Thackeray said in Aurangabad on Friday. Mr Thackeray was speaking during the two-day Aurangabad leg of his 'Shiv Samvad Yatra', during which he visited Vijapur, Khultabad and Ellora. "This government, which

has been formed due to demonic ambition, is unconstitutional and illegal. This is a temporary government and will collapse," he said.

The planning of the rebellion began around the time of Diwali last year when then chief minister Uddhav Thackeray was recuperating from two surgeries, he claimed. "What these people (Shinde faction) did was against humanity. When their leader (Uddhav) fell ill due to

coronavirus, they (rebels) went to Surat (in June)," he claimed. The decision to halt the process to rename Aurangabad as Sambhajinagar by the new government and then issuing it again (by adding 'Chhatrapati' to the name) was childish, he said, adding that renaming of the airport here continues to hang in the balance. "These legislators rebelled despite getting more in two-and-half years (of

Maha Vikas Aghadi rule) than what they did in the last three to four terms. Let the people decide about them (in polls)," he said, adding that the doors of 'Matoshree' (the private residence of the Thackerays and also seat of power of the party) will remain open for those who left. Former Sena Lok Sabha MP Chandrakant Khairre said the Bharatiya Janata Party got hold of Mr Shinde as it was finding it tough to dislodge the MVA government, while Kannad MLA Udaysingh Rajput said the Thackeray brand was always enough to win polls.

Maharashtra Legislative Council member Ambadas Danve, speaking on the occasion, said the MVA government had given ₹ 2,600 crore for development works in the Aurangabad region. He claimed that none of the legislators who joined the Shinde camp will win Assembly polls henceforth.

## BULLET TRAIN PROJECT PICKS PACE AFTER CHANGE OF REGIME

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A week after the state government announced all clearances for the Mumbai Ahmedabad bullet train project, the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Ltd has floated bids for the design and construction of the corridor's underground terminus at Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC).

The first bids, floated in November 2019, were scrapped by NHRCL in February since land at BKC had not been handed over by MMRDA. The said land is at present being used for a Covid care centre, but MMRDA has asked BMC to clear the area by September.

An NHRCL spokesperson said, "The station will have six platforms, with the length of each being approximately 425 metres (sufficient to accommodate a 16-coach bullet train). The station will have connectivity with Metro and roads." It will be the only underground station of the corridor and the platform will be 24 metres below ground level.

Besides two platforms for the Ahmedabad route, it will have four platforms that may serve other routes in future.

The bid will be opened on October 21 and after completing the process on



technical and financial assessment, the contractor may be appointed by early next year soon after which the work will start. With a change in government in the state, the bullet train project, which lost a couple of years, has gained momentum.

The project had stalled because of differences between the Centre and the state after the MVA came to power.

On July 22, the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHRCL) invited bids for the design and construction of the BKC terminus, which will be the only underground station on the corridor. The terminus project will include related cut-and-cover work and the creation of a ventilation shaft (also to be

used for TBM access).

Land of 4.2 ha at BKC was allotted by the state in 2018 on the condition that the feasibility of the proposed International Finance and Service Centre (IFSC) should not be compromised. The state insisted the land cost be adjusted against its equity contribution. The NHRCL has designed the BKC station as an integrated structure (with IFSC above it) to take a load of a 60-metre high building above it. The tender for the station was proposed to be floated in 2018.

Later, the plan was changed to increase the height of the IFSC building to 95 metres, which required a change in design.

## PROBE INTO TWO CASES LINKED TO BJP LEADERS, INCLUDING FADNAVIS, TRANSFERRED TO CBI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra government has issued an order directing the state police to transfer the investigation of a case concerning sensitive call recordings being leaked from the State Intelligence Department (SID). The Mumbai Police had recorded the statement of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis while probing the case.

The case involving Fadnavis revolves around the leak of sensitive call recordings from the SID. In March

last year, the Mumbai police had registered an FIR against unknown persons under the Official Secrets Act (OSA) after Fadnavis had alleged that IPS officers were lobbying for plum postings in exchange for money with politicians in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, the Indian Express had reported. The MVA, an alliance of non-NDA parties including the Shiv Sena and Nationalist Congress Party, was led by the then chief minister, Uddhav Thackeray.

Fadnavis claimed that he had 6.3

GB worth of data of call records obtained from phone tapping allegedly conducted by the then SID commissioner Rashmi Shukla, in which names of several prominent police officers were discussed. The police recorded Fadnavis's statement regarding this in March this year.

A report pertaining to this leak of information by then additional chief secretary (home) Sitaram Kunte alleged that Shukla had deliberately misled the government into tapping phones, said a news report. The Colaba police, which was

investigating the case, filed a 700-page chargesheet against Shukla in April. In the chargesheet, the police stated that Shukla had illegally tapped the phones of Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut and NCP leader Eknath Khadse under the pretext that they were "anti-social elements". This was possibly done on the "instructions of a political leader or to benefit a political party" according to the charge sheet, as per a news report.

The second case that has been transferred to the CBI involves BJP leader and former minister Girish

Mahajan. The Jalgaon police registered an FIR against Mahajan and 28 others in January 2021 following an allegation of extortion and criminal conspiracy, among others, by Vijay Patil. Patil, a lawyer and director of the Jilha Maratha Vidyaprasarak Sahakari Samaj - an education society worth over Rs 1,000 crore in Jalgaon - alleged that Mahajan had asked him to force every member of the society to resign and sell the society to him, according to a news report.

Patil also mentioned in the FIR that he was threatened and asked to

resign. During his visit to Pune in 2018, he alleged that he was forcibly taken to a flat, confined there and threatened for money. He claimed to have been threatened to be booked in false offences, as per another news report. Among the other allegations, Patil also claimed that he was extorted for Rs 5,00,000 from time to time. All these offences occurred between 2018 and 2020.

In December 2020, Mahajan refuted the allegations, calling them "vendetta politics" and claimed that the case was fabricated against him.



Statue of Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad will be installed in Bhopal

ONE LAKH GOVERNMENT JOBS IN A YEAR, RECRUITMENT FROM AUGUST 15: CM

Two lakh youths will be linked with self-employment every month

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that a grand statue of Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad will be established in Bhopal. At the base of the statue, soil brought from Bhabra (Alirajpur), the birth place of Azad, will be used and the statue site will be developed as a source of inspiration for the youth. I will not let the dreams of youth die at any cost. Recruitments on one lakh government jobs will be done in a year in the state, its process will start from August 15. Along with this, two lakh youths will be linked with self-employment every month. The benefits of various schemes will be made available to the youth by celebrating Employment Day every month. A new youth policy will be prepared incorporating the suggestions of the youths in the state, which will be implemented from January 12, the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. Yuva Puraskar will be established and State Youth Advisory Council will also be set up to encourage the creativity of youth. There will be a Yuva Panchayat every year in the state. In order to instill the spirit of patriotism among the youth, the district level winners of Yuva Panchayat will be sent to the international borders of the country under the "Maa Tujhe Pranam" scheme. Youth Cells will be formed in all departments and colleges. Yuva Mahapanchayat will be developed as a



platform for Youth for Atma-nirbhar Madhya Pradesh. Chouhan was addressing the inaugural session of the first state level Youth Mahapanchayat at Ravindra Bhawan Convention Hall, Bhopal on the 116th birth anniversary of Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad. Chouhan inaugurated the Yuva Mahapanchayat by lighting a lamp along with Vande Mataram and Saraswati Vandana. The bike riders of Bhopal handed over soil and Jal Kalash (water urns) brought from Bhabra (Alirajpur), the birth place of Amar Shaheed

Chandrashekhar Azad, to Chief Minister. Referring to the valour, bravery and dedication of Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad, Chouhan told the youths that the state government has done the work of bringing to light the struggle and sacrifices of many unnamed freedom fighters. Memorials have been set up in the memory of freedom fighters at various places in the state. India, propounding the principle of Vasudhev Kutumbakam, is giving practical shape to the idea of Sarve Bhavantu Sukhin, Sarve Bhavantu Niramay (May everyone be happy, may everyone be healthy), under the

leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. In this spirit, Prime Minister Shri Modi took the initiative of making Corona vaccine available to the citizens of many poor countries of the world along with the people of India. Chouhan said that efforts are being made to involve youth in the process of policy making through Youth Mahapanchayat. Our aim is that this Mahapanchayat should become a platform to connect the youth with the government and society. The youth have done wonderful job by commencing new start-ups in the state. The state cricket team showed its talent by winning the Ranji Trophy. The youth of the state are proving their ability and potential in every field. With the cooperation of the youth we'll have to develop a roadmap of what best we can do for the country and the state. By sharing the roadmap of self-reliant Madhya Pradesh with the youth, their all possible cooperation will be taken in this direction also. In the State Level Youth Mahapanchayat, 6 youths each selected from 52 districts and cadets of NCC, National Service Scheme etc. and students of various colleges participated. Youth from all the districts of the state participated in the programme online. The Second-day of Mahapanchayat sessions would be on Environment and Youth, Next Zen Startups, Mera MP-Mera Gaurav, Youth and Social Development, Youth Champions of MP and Youth and Democracy.

Man rapes 8-year-old girl in school toilet

THE POLICE HAVE ARRESTED THE ACCUSED AND HE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS LAKSHMINARAYAN DHANAK (26). THE ACCUSED IS THE HUSBAND OF AN EMPLOYEE OF THE SCHOOL WHO WORKS AS A SWEEPER IN THE SCHOOL AND THEY LIVE ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES ONLY.

the husband of an employee of the school who works as a sweeper in the school and they live on the school premises only. According to police, the victim is a student of class 4th and she took admission in the school six days ago. The incident occurred on Friday afternoon. The victim went to the bathroom during lunch time and in the meantime, the accused caught her from behind. He raped the victim and then fled from the spot. The other students informed the teacher after watching the victim crying. The minor told the teacher that an uncle wearing a yellow shirt took her in the bathroom. Following which the school staff informed the police about the incident. The police rushed to the spot and questioned the school employees. During questioning, the police came to know about the accused and later arrested him.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A man allegedly raped an eight-year-old girl in a government school toilet in Khoefiza locality of the state capital Bhopal, the police said on Saturday.

The police have arrested the accused and he has been identified as Lakshminarayan Dhanak (26). The accused is

17 INJURED AS INDORE BOUND BUS OVERTURNED IN SEHORE

Bhopal: A bus going from Bhopal to Indore overturned in Sehore on Saturday. As many as 17 passengers were injured in the mishap, said police. Of these, the condition of five is said to be serious. Those injured have been referred to Hamidia Hospital in Bhopal. Treatment continued in Hamidia hospital till reports last came in. Several bus mishaps have jolted the state in the recent past. Days ago, 13 passengers had died as a Pune bound bus carrying them had fallen into river Narmada in Dhar.

Scindia inaugurates direct flight between Jabalpur, Kolkata

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Minister of Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia on Friday inaugurated the direct flight between Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal capital Kolkata. Spicejet will be operating daily flights and deploy its Q400, 78-seater turbo prop aircraft designed for shorter distance flights on the route. This new flight route is a part of 26 new domestic flights that Spicejet is launching on Friday. Speaking on the occasion, Scindia said that there has been massive expansion in the air services in the country in the last one year, particularly in Madhya Pradesh where there were



554 aircraft movement per week in July 2021 and the figure has now gone up to 980. Providing details, he said that Jabalpur is now connected to 10 cities, and aircraft movement has gone up to 182. Similarly, Gwalior was connected to 4 cities in July 2021 with 56 aircraft movement, and the figure has gone up to 100. Indore with 308 aircraft movement has leaped to 468 and is now connected with 20 cities. The state capital Bhopal, which

had air links with 5 cities in July 2021, is now connected with 13 cities and has 226 aircraft movements. Khajuraho airport is also connected with Delhi, having 4 flights per week. The Minister said that Jabalpur airport was established in 1930, and was used in the second world war. Now, the airport is being expanded, with runway length going up from 1,988 metre to 2,750 metre. Terminal building capacity is being expanded from 200 passengers in peak hours to 250, and its area will go up from 2,600 sq mt to 10,713 sq mt. Also, 3 aero bridges are being built, and a new ATC tower and fire station are being built.

CROSS-VOTING IN PRESIDENTIAL POLL A CAUSE OF WORRY FOR MP CONGRESS

After NDA's nominee Droupadi Murmu defeated joint Opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha in the Presidential poll held on Thursday, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan claimed that many non-BJP MLAs from the state had voted for Murmu.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

After NDA's nominee Droupadi Murmu defeated joint Opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha in the Presidential poll held on Thursday, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan claimed that many non-BJP MLAs



from the state had voted for Murmu. In a video message, Chouhan thanked the non-BJP MLAs in Madhya Pradesh for cross-voting, saying, "I extend my heartfelt thanks to the MLAs of other parties who, after listening to the voice of their conscience, decided to make Droupadi Murmu the next President of India." Though it was suspected that around five to six Congress MLAs might indulge in cross-voting, the results suggest that over 10 of its legislators have likely cross-voted, which

might be a cause of worry for the party. As per reports, Murmu polled 146 out of the 225 valid votes cast in Madhya Pradesh. With 230 MLAs, Madhya Pradesh had reported 100 per cent voting in the Presidential poll. Five votes were found invalid. The BJP has 127 MLAs in the state and thus 146 votes to Murmu means 19 cross-votes. However, the recent defection of one MLA each from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP) and one Independent MLA technically took BJP's support tally to 130.

Also, Sachin Birla, the Congress MLA from Barwaha in Khargone, had jumped ship to the BJP last year and his disqualification plea is pending before the court. Add to this three Independent MLAs and one BSP legislator, which will take the NDA Presidential candidate's tally to 135. However, the fact that 146 out of the 225 valid votes went to Murmu suggests that 11 Congress MLAs cross-voted apart from Sachin Birla. The Congress has 96 MLAs in the state, including Birla. The fact that Madhya Pradesh has a large tribal population with 47 tribal MLAs including 31 from the Congress and 16 from the BJP -- might have favoured Murmu, who is from the tribal community, sources said. While it will be difficult for the Congress to identify the MLAs who cross-voted as the election was held through secret ballot, the party leadership will hold a meeting of its MLAs to get to the bottom of the matter.

CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO TILAK AND AZAD



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to the great social reformer, thinker and freedom fighter Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad on their anniversary. Chouhan offered floral tributes by garlanding at their portraits in the auditorium at his residence office. Reminiscing Tilak, Chief Minister said that his spirited and virtuous thoughts will always inspire us to serve the nation. The people of India will always be indebted to Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad for his amazing valour, sacrifice and martyrdom.

HOWEVER THE WEATHER, DAILY TREE PLANTATIONS WILL CONTINUE: CM

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of peepal, neem, karanj and gulmohar in the Smart City park amidst incessant rains. Chouhan said that whatever be the weather, the process of planting saplings every day would continue. Shri Eric Solheim, Executive Director of Environment Programmes at United Nations, Neliswa Nkani, Hub Head of South African Tourism and Saurabh Dwivedi of India Today Group also participated in the plantation. Peepal planted today is a shady tree. It purifies the environment. It has religious and Ayurvedic significance. Rich in antibiotic elements, Neem is known as the supreme medicine. Karanj plant is considered important in Ayurvedic medicine. It is also used for religious purposes. Gulmohar is considered one of the most beautiful trees in the world. Flowers blooming in large clusters among the leaves of Gulmohar give a different attraction to the tree. It is also rich in medicinal properties.

CM EXPRESSES GRIEF OVER THE DEATH OF KANWAR YATRIS

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the untimely demise of Kanwar Yatris of the state in a road accident on Agra-Aligarh road in Uttar Pradesh. CM Chouhan has prayed to God to grant peace to the departed souls and strength to the family members to bear this loss. CM Shri Chouhan wished speedy recovery of the injured Kanwariyas. It is noteworthy that on the mid-night of 22-23 July, at around 2:30 am, 6 kanwariyas coming to Gwalior with water from Haridwar near Chandla border on Agra-Aligarh road tragically died in a road accident.

Monsoon will be active again in State



Team Absolute | Bhopal

In the month of July, successive low pressure areas in the central Bay of Bengal continued to move westwards affecting central India. Due to their impact, heavy rains were seen in most of the states of Central India. Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh also received heavy rains several times. West Madhya Pradesh has received 43% more rainfall than normal in the monsoon so far. East Madhya Pradesh has seen normal rains but it has received 8 per cent less rainfall than normal. Whereas Chhattisgarh has received 5 per cent more rainfall than normal.

The monsoon line is now again moving towards central India. Under its influence, there is a possibility of moderate to heavy rains in many districts of Madhya Pradesh during the next 4 or 5 days. Many districts of Chhattisgarh may also receive heavy rains during the next few days. These upcoming rains may cover whatever rain deficit is being seen in East Madhya Pradesh. Monsoon line will once again move towards north India from July 27 and will reach over the Gangetic plains. There may be some reduction in rain activities over Central India during that time. The intensity of rainfall will decrease over Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh but light

rain will continue with moderate rain at few places. The month of July will prove to be very good for Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in terms of rainfall. As per Skymet in the month

of August, Central India including Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh will continue to receive good rains.

TWO SLUICE GATES OF BHADBHADA DAM OPENED AFTER UPPER LAKE ATTAINS FULL TANK LEVEL

Bhopal: Two sluice gates of Bhadbhada dam were opened on Saturday after Upper Lake attained Full Tank Level (FTL) of 1666.80 ft. Minister for Medical Education Vishwas Sarang, Mayor Malti Rai and others were present on the occasion as the gates were thrown open and the water gushed out in ferocious manner offering a visual spectacle for locals. Sarang speaking to the media said, "As it rained heavily and Kolansh River swelled, we decided to open sluice gates in noon."

Ajay Solanki, BMC official, said, "Two gates-- no 5 and no 6 have been opened after Upper Lake attained FTL 1666.80 ft." In 2006, 11 gates were opened at one go while in August of 2020, 10 gates were opened at one go after gap of 14 years, officials added. The Bhadbhada dam has a set of 11 sluice gates at the south-east corner of Upper lake in Bhopal. It was constructed in 1965. The gates are used to control the outflow of water from the lake to Kaliasot river, and are usually opened only when the city receives heavy rainfall during the monsoon season. Notably, the city in last 24 hours was under an incessant spell of rains which ultimately stopped this afternoon.



Workshop on promotion of new technology of building construction and increasing energy efficiency of buildings held

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A workshop was organised in Bhopal by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Directorate of Urban Development and Housing in collaboration with GIZ, a German-Indo joint venture. It was inaugurated by Satyendra Singh, Mission Director, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) by enlightening a lamp. Singh encouraged all the participants present to adopt new techniques of construction and implement them at

the ground level. Urban Administration and Development Superintending Engineer Shri GS Saluja gave a presentation on new technologies and demonstration housing project (DHP) being implemented in Bhopal. In the workshop, information regarding the new technology of pre fabricated sandwich panels for the construction of light house project (LHP) of Indore was given. It is noteworthy that light house projects are being implemented in 6 cities of the country including Indore,

with different technologies. The entire technology of the light house project is being implemented at a speedy pace and on the basis of the concept of thermal comfort in the buildings. The Central Government has appointed the GIZ institution to promote the new technologies being implemented in the light house project. Subject experts Gagandeep Singh, Yatin Chaudhary and Jitendra Vyas also addressed the workshop and suggested to implement new technologies in the state.

45 lakh saplings provided through social forestry

Team Absolute | Bhopal

As many as 45 lakh saplings of different species of high quality have been made available by the forest department from forest nurseries to the government department, public and farmers for planting. Chief Conservator of Forests Social Forestry HC Gupta informed that in 18 forest plantations of 5 districts of Bhopal division, 5 lakh saplings of teak, bamboo, fruit-bearing, shady and ornamental species are available at the rate of Rs. 12 for farmers and general public. Apart from this, about 1.5 lakh saplings from various

plantations of social forestry have been purchased by the farmers under Agro Forestry. Under the Bamboo Mission scheme, 130 farmers have purchased 40 thousand bamboo saplings. Most of these farmers are from Bhopal district. For purchase of Bamboo Mission saplings, Usha Mishra, Publicity Officer can be contacted on mobile number 9993709284. In the Social Forestry Circle, Bhopal, 13 different species of plants are available at nominal rates. These include Katang bamboo, native bamboo, teak, guava, pomegranate, jamun, jackfruit, lemon, amla, bael, cilantro and other species of plants.



# Big Sean & Pregnant Jhené Aiko Strip Off Their Clothes For Sexy Maternity Photo

Los Angeles | Agencies

There's no going back for Big Sean and Jhené Aiko! The comely couple, both 34, are documenting Jhené's pregnancy, and that involves a jaw-dropping new nude maternity shoot! In pics posted jointly to both their Instagram accounts on July 21, the duo appeared alongside one another, stripped down as Sean looked at the camera, and Jhené looked lovingly down at her growing belly. They clasped hands in front of her stomach, with Jhené's long hair flowing down her back and makeup flawlessly done. The pic appeared to be photo-shopped to show light dramatically cracking out from her breasts, thighs, and stomach.

"Thankful For My family," Sean commented on the ethereal photo, along with an additional comment of, "Tried to post this so many times," alongside black heart and laughing emojis. Jhené's 14.7M followers, and Sean's 15.2M followers, went wild in the comments section. "Just fell to my knees at target," one fan hilariously commented. "This baby is gonna be a masterpiece," wrote another. "Ain't ever been happier to see someone pregnant," wrote a follower.

"Yessss King!" another fan reacted. "Congratulations! So happy for you guys! @bigsean." "Absolutely beautiful that's what real love is about that connection with," wrote another. "I love y'all together!!! That baby is going to be gorgeous," commented a fan. While most reactions were positive, a few had a scolding vibe, with multiple posters commenting "put a ring on it," and one writing, "Now it's time for y'all to get married fr." The pregnancy surprised many when the couple first stepped out in Beverly Hills, with Jhené visibly showing a baby bump, in early July. It's unclear how far along the singer is, or when her due date might be. Jhené and Sean have been together since 2016, and Sean once said in an April 2020 Instagram live chat that a wedding was, "in the works." Still, no formal engagement announcement has been made, and aside from the maternity photo, no formal announcement has been made on the pregnancy, either.



## Angelina Jolie Wins Contentious Battle Against Ex Brad Pitt Over French Winery

Los Angeles | Agencies

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt have been embroiled in a legal battle over their Chateau Miraval winery, which is a company they took control of in 2008. Angelina Jolie has won a legal battle against ex-husband Brad Pitt involving the Chateau Miraval winery. While initial drama pertained to figuring out ownership between the actors, Angelina shockingly sold her 50% stake to Russian Oligarch Yuri Shefler, who owns Russian vodka Stolichnaya (also known as Stolli). The sale caused a number of lawsuits across various countries - including one from Brad himself, who sued the Lara Croft: Tom Raider actress for the move, claiming he had no idea she was doing so.

Angelina's legal team has now subpoenaed documents from Brad, 58, per Page Six - as well as his company Mondo Bongo and his business manager on Friday, July 22. The move comes from a judge in Los Angeles, who says that Brad and his partners must turn over documents to Angelina's team - despite Brad's legal team requesting courts to deny Angelina and her team's

request for any correspondence and papers. Even if Brad and his legal team wished to appeal, the judge ruled that they can not wait until that appeal decision is made - and everything must be turned over. HollywoodLife has reached out to Brad's rep for comment.

The couple bought the winery in 2008, which is known for their world class rosé, for \$28.4 million. The massive property was later where they tied the knot in 2014 in the presence of their kids Maddox, 21, Zahara, 17, Pax, 18, Shiloh, 16, and twins Vivienne and Knox, 14.

Previously, Brad accused his Oscar winning ex of "inflicting harm" on him, per the documents obtained on HollywoodLife, after she sold her 50% share. Notably, the winery is now worth \$167M. "Jolie consummated the purported sale without Pitt's knowledge, denying Pitt the consent right she owed him and the right of first refusal her business entity owed his," the past documents said. "She sold her interest with the knowledge and intention that Shefler and his affiliates would seek to control the business to which Pitt had devoted himself and to undermine Pitt's investment in Miraval."

The winery has been a bone of contention in the couple's on-going split, which happened in 2016. Although they wed in 2015, the duo first linked up romantically in 2005.

## 'JOHN WICK 4' TRAILER PACKED WITH SKULL BASHING, GUN-FU

Los Angeles | Agencies

Brand new footage for Chad Stahelski's 'John Wick: Chapter 4' was released on Friday night (U.S. Pacific Time) as Keanu Reeves surprised the crowd at the San Diego Comic-Con with a fresh look at the beloved action hero, who's back in action yet again, reports Variety. After appearing at a Comic-Con panel for his Boom! Studios title 'BRZRKR', Reeves crashed a Directors on Directing panel, where Stahelski was a panelist, to debut the footage. The trailer, reports Variety, "finds Wick doing what he does best: enacting revenge via any weapon he can get his hands on". As CinemaCon footage confirmed back in April, the film's newest installment is sure to include as much skull bashing and gun-fu as its previous chapters. The last time audiences saw the formidable assassin was in 2019's 'John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum', a box-office hit that featured ninjas on motorcycles, a fight in New York City horse stables, and Halle Berry commanding a gruesome twosome of German Shepherds. Now, stuntman-turned-director Stahelski is upping the ante, according to Variety.



## KARJENNER SISTERS' SEXIEST SHEER LOOKS: PHOTOS OF KIM, KOURTNEY & MORE STUNNING IN SEE-THROUGH LOOKS

Los Angeles | Agencies

The Kardashian and Jenner sisters love to wear sexy sheer outfits, and it's resulted in some of their most revealing looks of all over the years! The look lends itself to so many sultry styles, so it's no wonder.

Kendall and Kylie Jenner both rocked sheer ensembles when they attended the 2019 Met Gala. Kylie's strapless dress featured a mesh style, and the top of the dress's train was completely see-through. While the bottom of the gown had feather detailing, the area at the top of Kylie's legs was on full display through the see-through fabric! Kendall also wore a feathered design that sat atop sheer fabric. The embellishments covered up the dress, but the plunging neckline and sheer sleeves definitely allowed Kendall to show some skin. Both sisters also accessorized their looks with dramatic wings and sleeves. Keep clicking through the gallery to check out these gorgeous ladies and their famous sisters in some of their sexiest sheer looks ever.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck are taking Paris by storm! The Bronx native, 52, and her new husband, 49, looked so in love as they held hands heading to the trendy Manko restaurant on July 22 in the photos below and a posted video. The newlyweds were joined by her child Emmie, 14, who identifies as non-binary, and Ben's daughters Violet, 16, and Seraphina, 13.

The "Jenny From The Block" singer looked stylish as she braved the French heatwave in a sleeveless black dress. The flowy ensemble featured wide straps and a subtle bustier cut. Jennifer paired the dress with platform black sandals and a black bag with a white pattern. She opted to keep her highlighted locks down and in a sleek blowout, allowing her signature silver hoop earrings to peek through. The couple and their three children arrived to the trendy restaurant, located on Paris' historic Montaigne Avenue, in a black SUV. Ever the romantic, Ben exited the car first, then offered a hand to Jen as she took a large step down onto the sidewalk! The chic restaurant serves up traditional Peruvian cuisine - and is particularly famous for their quinoa burger - so there's no doubt Bennifer and their kids had a delicious dinner!

Ben was also looking handsome in a light blue shirt without a tie, and a pair of dressy pants. The family arrived to Paris by surprise on July 21, kickstarting their trip with a night out at dinner and nightclub Le Matignon. The group of five were at the eatery for two hours and thirty minutes on the terrace, an eyewitness told HollywoodLife EXCLUSIVELY. Ben and Jen also weren't shy about PDA, as they made out right in front of an unphased Violet, happily displaying their love for the world.

## JENNIFER LOPEZ & BEN AFFLECK HOLD HANDS AS THEY HEAD TO DINNER IN PARIS WITH THEIR KIDS



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Eva Longoria



## IND v WI, 2nd ODI:

# INDIA SEEK TO AVOID LATE MIDDLE-ORDER WOBBLE IN BID TO CLINCH SERIES

Port of Spain (Trinidad) | Agencies

In its humdrum of a victory against West Indies in the first ODI at Queen's Park Oval, India got many things right.

Like the top-order batters, captain Shikhar Dhawan, who fell three runs short of a century, his opening partner Shubman Gill and number three batter Shreyas Iyer scoring half-centuries. Then, there was Mohammed Siraj defending 15 runs in the final over and Yuzvendra Chahal backing his strengths to pick 2-58 in the middle overs.

Now, with the visitors 1-0 up in the three-match series, they would be seeking to improve on their middle-order meltdown, where they slipped from 213-1 in 33 overs to end up with 307-8 in 50 overs, a total way below the mark projected in the first half of their innings. In the second match on Sunday at the Queen's Park Oval, India will be aiming to improve on the late wobble and seal the series to make Wednesday's match a dead rubber. Amongst the boxes India ticked on Friday, the opening stand between Dhawan and Gill was a huge one. There had been a question mark



on the stand-in skipper's form after he looked a little rusty in the ODI series against England.

But Dhawan put all those questions to rest with a fantastic 97, where he played the second fiddle to a glorious Gill and after the youngster fell, he maintained the flow of attacking batting for India. On the other hand, Gill justified his selection ahead of

Ruturaj Gaikwad and Ishan Kishan for a fluid knock in what was his maiden ODI fifty.

Iyer took his time to find a rhythm but reached his fifty. From there though, the West Indies bowlers mixed their line and lengths and varied their pace as Sanju Samson, Suryakumar Yadav, Deepak Hooda and Axar Patel didn't get big knocks

using the platform laid by Dhawan, Gill and Iyer.

The late wobble will be something India will be keen to avoid against Alzarri Joseph, Jayden Seales, Akeal Hosein and Gudakesh Motie. With the ball, Siraj was the standout, with his yorkers and holding his nerve in the final over, so was Chahal.

West Indies, on the other hand, are on a seven-match losing streak in the format. But they will be delighted with the fact that they batted for full 50 overs, something which they have consistently struggled with and came close to achieving the highest chase at Queen's Park Oval. Kyle Mayers marked his return from injury with a splendid 75 while Brandon King made a good 54.

West Indies will be pleased by the fact that Shamrah Brooks, captain Nicholas Pooran, Hosein and Romario Shepherd chipped in with batting contributions to last their full quota of overs with the bat. Their catching was superb too though they may look at improving on some misfields.

Sunday will see both teams step up on the field, with fans expecting a thrilling clash again at Queen's Park Oval.

# SYDNEY MCLAUGHLIN SETS WORLD RECORD IN WOMEN'S 400M HURDLES WIN AT WORLD ATHLETICS

Eugene | Agencies

Sydney McLaughlin of the United States shattered the women's 400m hurdles record in her victory at the World Athletics Championships on Saturday (IST). Double Olympic champion McLaughlin timed 50.68 seconds in the race, bettering her own world mark of 51.41 seconds set at the USA Track and Field Outdoor Championships on the same track in June.

Dutch runner Femke Bol finished runners-up in 52.27, and McLaughlin's compatriot Dailiah Muhammad took bronze in 53.13.

This is the fourth time in her amazing 400m hurdles career the 22-year-old has broken the world record. "It's unreal," McLaughlin was quoted as saying by World Athletics. "I just wanted to run and go for it."

She shaved a whopping 0.73 seconds from her previous world record, set on the same track less than a month earlier, leaving her rivals -- including two of the three fastest hurdlers the world has ever seen -- shell-shocked with her pace.

This is the third world record that McLaughlin has set at Hayward Field. Her first came at the 2021 US Olympic Trials, when she clocked 51.90 to improve on the 52.16 global mark that Muhammad had achieved when winning the 2019 world title ahead of her compatriot, according to the website.

Just over a month later, McLaughlin ran 51.46 to win the Olympic title in Tokyo, and she broke the record for a third time at this year's US Championships in Eugene on 25



June, clocking 51.41.

Since 2019, the world record has been improved by almost two seconds. That mark of 52.34 had stood for 16 years before Muhammad took it to 52.20 and then 52.16. On June 27 2021, McLaughlin began her reign. Now that previous world record mark of 52.34 is just 14th on the world all-time list.

"The time is absolutely amazing and the sport is getting faster and faster," McLaughlin said of her performance on Saturday. "Just figuring out what barriers can be broken. I only get faster from here."

"I executed the race the way Bobby (Kersey, her coach) wanted me to. I knew coming home that if I just kept my cadence and stayed on stride pattern, we could do it and it happened. The level in the 400m hurdles is certainly improving. We have a full group of girls that are willing to push our bodies to the next level and we are seeing times drop."

# Ibrahim, Davlish to represent India in inaugural Sim Racing World Cup



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Producing brilliant performances, Muhammad Ibrahim and Davlish Singh secured themselves spots in the Indian team for the inaugural Sim Racing World Cup after clinching the Top position by securing the same points (43) at the National Esports Championships (NESC), concluded in Mumbai in hybrid mode.

The National Esports Championships, conducted by the Esports Federation of India (ESFI), witnessed the participation of the country's 250 top sim racing drivers including Sai Prithvi, Prathamesh Yedre, Hari Krupandam and Jamie Shaw. The tournament was conducted in a hybrid mode - online as well as offline - with

the offline playoffs taking place at Mumbai's INOX Megaplex and IISM Campus. The duo will now represent India at the prestigious tournament and fight against players from teams like Thailand, Chinese Taipei, Uzbekistan, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Syria and Sri Lanka in the Asian Continental Qualifiers, scheduled from July 26 to 29. There are 2 slots given to Asian Continent for the grand finals and the two winning sim racers of the Asian Continental Qualifiers will earn themselves a place in the Global Finals to be held in Monaco.

Organised by the International Esports Federation in association with Monaco Esports Federation, Sim Racing World Cup will feature one of the world's most popular sim

racing titles, Assetto Corsa.

With both Ibrahim and Davlish tied on 43 points each in the summit clash, both emerged as joint winners of the national qualifiers.

"This is an excellent opportunity to represent your country on an international platform. Winning the qualifiers amongst 250 players overall gives me immense satisfaction and feels like a huge achievement but it also increases the pressure of performing well in the next stage for me. Undoubtedly, I will be practising a lot to achieve the best for my country with the upcoming Continental Qualifier also on my mind," said an elated Ibrahim, who has also won the McLaren Logitech G Challenge earlier this year.

Davlish, who has been playing sim racing since 2019, added: "I believe this was one of the largest sim racing events in India yet where ESFI gave participants from all over the country a chance to fight for a spot to represent their country on the international stage. The event was very well organised with some very quick, competitive and fair racing from all the top drivers. The double sprint race formats with reversed grids made the races even more exciting."

# Swiss Open: Matteo Berrettini storms into final with win over Dominic Thiem

Gstaad (Switzerland) | Agencies

Continuing his magical European summer, World No. 15 Matteo Berrettini stormed into the final of the Swiss Open with a straight-sets semifinal victory against 2015 champion Dominic Thiem, here on Saturday.

The Italian dominated the pair's sixth ATP head-to-head meeting at the clay-court ATP 250 event in Switzerland, where he struck the ball with power and accuracy throughout to charge to a 6-1, 6-4 victory. Berrettini raced to a 5-0 lead early in the first set and gave Thiem few opportunities to establish a foothold in the match thereafter, going on to seal victory in 78 minutes.

"I'm really happy with my performance. I knew that I had to play my best tennis to beat him," said Berrettini, the 2018 champion in Gstaad, after the match.

"I think my game, in general, was working pretty well. I was serving well, and returning well. I was being aggressive. I don't think I gave him the time to play his game and that was the key today," he added.



Having won his previous two tournaments in Stuttgart and at The Queen's Club, the win extends Berrettini's winning streak since returning to Tour in June after a hand injury to 12 matches. With the win, the second seed also extended his ATP head-to-head series lead against Thiem to 4-2. Berrettini did not hold

back in the early stages against Thiem. The second seed hit cleanly through the ball off both wings to pile the pressure on the Austrian, and his aggressive tactics saw him ease to the first set after breaking his opponent's serve in the second and fourth games.

The seven-time tour-level titlist Berrettini continued to target the Thiem delivery

early in the second set and he moved within a game of a quickfire victory at 5-2.

A series of trademark-searing backhand winners from the former World No. 3 Thiem pegged the Italian back as he was broken when serving for the match, but the Italian was not to be denied. He wrapped up a comfortable triumph having won 85 percent (29/34)

of points behind his first serve, compared to Thiem's 55 percent (18/33).

Standing between the second seed and his third Tour title of 2022 in Sunday's championship match will be defending champion Casper Ruud or 2019 titlist Albert Ramos-Vinolas. "It's going to be tough. I was actually thinking about it yesterday. The four semifinalists all won the title here, so we definitely like to play in Gstaad. We like the altitude. I won in 2018, Albert in 2019, and Casper in 2021, so I guess we like it here. It's going to be a really tough match between them and I'm going to see what to do tomorrow," said Berrettini.

Despite Saturday's defeat, Thiem's semifinal run in Gstaad represents another promising sign for the 17-time Tour titlist as he seeks to regain his best form after returning to competitive action in March following a nine-month layoff due to a wrist injury. His victories against Hugo Gaston, Federico Delbonis and Juan Pablo Varillas in Switzerland this week have lifted the Austrian 77 spots to No 197 in the ATP Live Rankings.

# Women's T20, Basketball 3x3 make their debut at CWG 2022

New Delhi | Agencies

Women's Cricket, Basketball 3x3, Wheelchair Basketball 3x3 and Para Table Tennis are among the new sports, which have been added to the 2022 edition of Commonwealth Games (CWG) and will make their debut at the highly anticipated event, scheduled to take place in Birmingham between July 28 and August 8.

A total of 72 nations are participating in the upcoming CWG. This will be the third time England will be hosting the prestigious event following the London 1934 and Manchester 2002 Games.

In every edition of CWG, organizers and the committee decide about removing and adding a few sports. This year the Birmingham 2022 organisers decided to drop archery and shooting and have instead included a few new games.

IANS takes a look at the newly included events in Commonwealth Games 2022.

## Basketball 3x3:

Making its CWG debut, this format of the sport is up for some fast paced action and the event will be held at the Smithfield site. A 5x5 version of the game was earlier included twice at the Games, in Melbourne 2006 and

Gold Coast 2018. This time, there will be a total of eight Commonwealth nations, who will be taking part in this 3x3 event - the host, top nation in the FIBA 3x3 Federation Rankings from each of the six Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) regions and the highest-ranked nation not already qualified. Only half a court and one hoop will be used for both teams with just 12 seconds on the shot clock in this event instead of the 24 in full court basketball. As the name suggests, every team should have three players and one substitute, while shots scored from inside the arc shaped zone are one point each and those taken from behind the arc put two points on the board.

The first team to touch 21 points wins. If no team reaches the score after ten minutes, the team in the lead claims victory.

## Women's T20 Cricket:

Cricket will return to the Commonwealth Games for the first time in 24 years and just the second time ever. However, it will be first appearance for women's cricket and that too in the T20 format. Prior to this, a men's cricket competition was held at the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur, with South Africa taking gold by beating Australia in the final in the men's 50-over

competition. There are eight teams who have qualified and Edgbaston Cricket Ground in Birmingham will host the matches. England as the host qualifies automatically, along with the top six ranked teams as of April 1, 2021 as direct qualifiers. The last place was awarded to winners of the CWG Qualifier tournament, Sri Lanka. The six direct qualifiers' allocation will depend on their representation of at least four out of the six Commonwealth Games Federation regions (Africa, Americas, Asia, Caribbean, Europe and Oceania). If the criteria isn't met, then teams ranked below were considered. The six direct qualifiers include Australia, India, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan and Barbados.

## Wheelchair Basketball 3x3:

Played for the first time in the history of the Commonwealth Games, the Wheelchair Basketball 3x3 is to be held at the Smithfield site.

The International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) announced that six teams will take part in the Games. The six men's teams are England, South Africa, Northern Ireland, Australia, Canada, Malaysia - and the six women's teams are

England, South Africa, Scotland, Australia, Canada, Kenya. The wheelchair basketball competition will run in a two-group format followed by the knockouts and finals.

## Para Table Tennis:

In August 2019, Para Table Tennis was announced as one of sports to be added to the Birmingham 2022 programme. The competition will be held at the NEC Hall 3 along with table tennis. A total of 32 players with 16 of each gender can qualify to participate at the Games.

The criteria for qualification include - players on the ITTF Table Tennis Rankings as of May 1, 2022 with only one per CGF region, a player on the aforementioned ranking not already qualified and recipients of CGF/ITTF bipartite invitations.

Esports: Esports would be also included in the CWG 2022 as a demonstration event and there's a high likelihood of it being added to the Games programme in future editions. The inaugural Commonwealth Esports Championship will have separate branding, medals, and organisation and will include both men and women's Dota 2 (Valve), eFootball (KONAMI) and Rocket League (Psyonix) events.



# Fancied players reach final qualifying round of AITA Super Series U-16

Bengaluru: All the fancied players in the boys' category except fourth seed Charan Vardham posted easy wins to enter the final round of qualifying in the Karnataka AITA Super Series U-16 being played at the KSLTA Stadium here on Saturday.

In a close encounter, Kaushikh Rajesh edged out the fancied Charan 9-8 (7-3) in a tie-breaker. The first qualifying round was played on a best of 17 games format while the second and final round, to be played on Sunday, will be based on the best of three sets.

Meanwhile, all the top eight seeds in the girl' category did not have to break a sweat as they earned byes to advance to the second round of qualifying.

Results (seedings in the prefix, states in bracket except for players from Karnataka)



## 'Khatron Ke Khiladi' star Anushka Sen to host 'Not Just A Chat Show'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Anushka Sen, who was on the cast of the historical drama 'Jhansi Ki Rani' and was also seen in the stunt-based reality show 'Khatron Ke Khiladi 11', will host a talk show titled 'Not Just A Chat Show'. Mumbai, July 23 (IANS) Anushka Sen, who was on the cast of the historical drama 'Jhansi Ki Rani' and was also seen in the stunt-based reality show 'Khatron Ke Khiladi 11', will host a talk show titled 'Not Just A Chat Show'. In the four episode show, Anushka will have conversations with celebrities such as Krystle D'Souza, Ridhima Pandit, television chef Shipra Khanna, and the aesthetic physician, Dr. Monica Jacob.

The show's format is informal and celebrities will be seen sharing BTS moments and

gossip. In a candid conversation with the host, they will be discussing their work, food habits, skincare and personal life. Anushka says: "I am all excited and jittery as this is my first show as an anchor. I have never hosted a chat show before and therefore when the offer came to me, I said yes without batting an eyelid. The concept of the show is extremely unique, without a set of pre-drafted questions." "So, guys stay tuned for me asking some masaledaar questions to our guests. I promise the audience will see me having a candid chat with the guests as they spill the beans on their personal and professional lives. The show will give the audience what they really

want to know about their favourite celebs. What better than that, right?," she adds while briefing about the concept of the show. 'Not Just A Chat Show' is starting on July 24 on Zee Cafe.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The 68th National Film Awards were announced on Friday afternoon at the National Media Centre in New Delhi, with the honours for films from the year 2020. The event is organised by the Directorate of Film Festivals, which comes under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Talents from all realms of film-related categories are awarded for their commendable work. Ajay Devgn responded to his third best actor prize for 'Tanhaji - The Unsung Warrior'. Ajay also won for Sooraj Potru. I thank everyone, most of all my creative team, the audience and my fans. I also express my gratitude to my parents and the Almighty for their blessings. Congratulations to all the other winners." Aparna Balamurali from Sooraj Potru gets the best actress at the National Film Awards 2022. Where Biju Menon was named Best Supporting Actor for his work in 'Ayyappanum Koshyam'. Satchidananda KR receives an award for best director for his work on the Malayalam film 'AK Ayyappanum Koshyam' posthumously.

Ajay Devgn's film 'Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior' receives the 68th National Film Awards for best feature film at the National Film Awards 2022. "One day you will make it big... One day you will win... one day everything will happen the way you want... And after a long wait finally, the day arrives." Music Director Vishal Bhardwaj bagged the award for best music direction for '1232 Kms: Mareng Toh Wahin Jaake' (1232 Kms - Will Die there only). Elated on receiving the award, Vishal Bhardwaj said, "I'm so happy to get an award for the film which represents and acknowledges the pain that the whole country and especially the migrant workers went through in the Covid-19 pandemic. The song was actually a poem that Gulzar Saab wrote to express the suffocating feelings of not being able to do anything to help the migrants. It was a catharsis for both of us which we expressed through Sukhwinder's voice in Vinod Kapri's shear-wrenching documentary '1232 KMs'. Overall, this year's submissions included 305 feature films in 30 different languages. In the non-feature film category, 148 films from 28 languages were submitted. Entries were accepted in 15 languages other than those authorised in the Constitution's 8th schedule.

**Amitabh Bachchan-Rashmika Mandanna starrer GoodBye to release on this date!**

Mumbai:

Pushpa actress Rashmika Mandanna is set to make her Bollywood debut with Mission Majnu and another hindi film Goodbye. The shoot of the film wrapped up a few days back, and today (23 July), the release date of the film was revealed by the makers. GoodBye is all set for worldwide release on 7th October, 2022. Touted as a celebration of life, this film stars the Legendary Superstar Amitabh Bachchan, Neena Gupta, Pavail Gulati. Apart from them,



the film also stars Elli AvrRam, Sunil Grover, Sahil Mehta in pivotal roles. Helmed by Vikas Bahl, the flick is bankrolled by Ektaa R Kapoor. Talking about Goodbye, it is a heart-warming story about life, family & relationships. The film will take the audiences on a roller-coaster of emotions filled with laughter, warmth & tears.

**Ajay Devgn on winning national award with Suriya: I am elated**

**Co-star and producer mourn the sudden demise of Bhabiji Ghar Par Hain fame Deepesh Bhan**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a tragic piece of news, the popular sitcom Bhabiji Ghar Par Hain's Deepesh Bhan aka Malkhan, passed away today (July 23) in the morning leaving everyone shocked. This news came as a jolt to his family, co-stars and fans of the show. The actor was playing cricket with a bunch of his friends close to his house when he suddenly collapsed and fell to the ground. He was rushed to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead. The news of his death was confirmed by the show's producers, Sanjay & Binaifer Kohli. The statement read, "Deeply saddened & shocked by the sudden demise of our beloved Deepesh Bhan. One of the most dedicated actors in 'Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai' and is like our family. He will be deeply missed by all. Our heartfelt condolences to his family. May his soul Rest In Eternal Peace. God give his family the strength to cope with this great



loss. Sanjay & Binaifer Kohli. And the Entire Team of "Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai". Anghished by his demise, his close friend and co-star Charrul Malik expressed her grief and said, "I got a call from my co-star Vaibhav and he informed me about Deepesh's demise. Initially, I thought he is playing a prank with me." Recalling fond memories with Deepesh, the actress said, "I remember making reels and shooting with him just yesterday so it was hard for me to believe this. We knew each other since 7-8 years and he was the closest friend of mine. He was always high on energy. I looked up to his perfect comic timing, also he was a nice person. He is someone who paid attention to his fitness regime and took care of his health. I advised him to not go on a crash diet. He also used to overthink and he shared with me that he is looking forward to doing a lot of things like web series." For the unversed, Deepesh has been a part of many other popular shows like May I Come In Madam, and FIR to name a few.

**Kartik Aaryan shoots for his first song with 'Master Ji' Ganesh Acharya, shares a glimpse**

Mumbai:



Kartik Aaryan is one of the most bankable stars right now and there are no two opinions on that. The actor has a slew of interesting projects in his kitty, one of which includes Rohit Dhawan directorial Shehzada. For the film, the actor will be seen shaking a leg as guided by Ganesh Acharya for a high-voltage dance number. Elated about the same, Kartik shared a picture and wrote, "First song with Master Ji ?? Actually Master G - G for Genius ?? Something really different from what I have done till date Wait for it ?? @ganesacharyaa #Shehzada #RohitDhawan ??." In the picture, Kartik is seen sporting a checkered shirt with trousers and he has a group of dancers dressed in blue, green and white in the backdrop. The dancers are seen playing trumpets. Kartik and Ganesh are flashing their smiles as they pose for the camera. The film will also star Kriti Sanon, Paresh Rawal, Manisha Koirala and Ronit Roy. It is the Hindi remake of the Telugu blockbuster 'Ala Vaikunthapuramulo', which starred Allu Arjun. It will hit theatres on 10th February 2023. Apart from Shehzada, Kartik has films like Freddy, Satyanarayan ki Katha, Captain India, Luv Ranjan's next yet-untitled. Recently, his yet another mammoth project in collaboration with Kabir Khan and Sajid Nadiadwala was also announced.

**INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY**



Khushali Kumar

## RANBIR'S REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE FAILS TO SAVE THE DROWNING SHAMSHERA

FILM REVIEW

-BY SHACHI CHATURVEDI

Directed by - Karan Malhotra  
Run time- 159 minutes  
Rating - 2/5

Cast - Ranbir Kapoor (dual role as Shamsheera and Balli), Sanjay Dutt (Daroga Shuddh Singh) Vaani Kapoor (Sona), Ashutosh Rana, Saurabh Shukla, Ronit Roy, Tridha Choudhury, Pitobash Tripathy

Shamsheera is a Hindi-language period action film. The plot is set in the 1800s and follows a dacoit tribe as they strive for independence from British authority.

**Story:** The tale begins with an introduction to the characters, which serves as the plot's foundation. Ranbir plays Shamsheer the 'Dakot', who robs the affluent and benefits the underprivileged.

The film is divided into two portions, each with its own interwoven tale. The first half of the film depicts the collapse of the Khamerans (the tribe) and how they ended up in British custody. The first half also intro-



duces Shamsheera's son Balli (also played by Ranbir) and his ambition to join the British forces.

Balli realises in the second half of the film how his father has sacrificed his life to these British. The film's second part is about Balli battling against the storm to gain freedom for his people.

The writing lacks the polish necessary to

keep the audience engaged throughout. The picture appears to have lost its sparkle as a result of providing so many stunning moments. Although the editing was good, for example, the entrance of crows, Ranbir leaping from a mountain, or Balli and Sona having love underwater.

**Songs:** Concerning the film's music. The film contains several pretty wonderful songs,

particularly Ji Huzoor and Fitoor, which have an influence on the audience.

**Performance:** Shamsheera was definitely a Ranbir Kapoor show, with his outstanding performance carrying the film on his shoulders. With his endearing flair, the actor depicted every emotion. When it comes to Ronit Roy, the actor is known for delivering his all in a minimalistic manner, which he has done here as well. He has created an impression on the audience despite having very little screen time.

Vaani Kapoor gave her best shot to the film and she gracefully succeeded as well. What was a little disappointing was Sanjay Dutt, known for his amazing performance as a villain; Sanjay somewhere has failed as Shuddh Singh. Coming to the people in supporting roles, all of them has given a decent performance.

**Technical aspects:** In terms of technical characteristics, the picture succeeds in engrossing you with various moments, but it looks like the editing might have been better; tighter cuts and a shorter running time would have made this film more likeable.

**Final Verdict:** If you are a fan of Ranbir Kapoor, you will enjoy this flick. Otherwise, the story that the film follows is not one we would recommend to others. However, if you have decided to watch the film then it is just a one-time watch.