

# absolute india

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ED seals Young Indian office in National Herald building

## GRAND OLD PARTY SEIZED



Team Absolute | New Delhi

In the latest development in connection with the National Herald matter the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday sealed the office of Young Indian Private Limited, situated on the fourth floor of the National Herald building here. ED sources said that senior Congress leader Mallikarjuna Kharge was called by them as he was the principal official in YI, but their request fell on deaf ears.

The ED sources said that they had asked Kharge to provide an official of YI so that they could go on with the search proceedings. But after hearing this Kharge left the National Herald office and didn't provide them with any official.

"We wanted to make the seizure memo in front of that official of YI. As we weren't provided anyone we had to seal it to keep the proofs intact," the source said.

The ED has said that if Kharge will provide them an official of YI who

### ADDITIONAL POLICE FORCE DEPLOYED OUTSIDE CONG HQ, SONIA GANDHI'S RESIDENCE

New Delhi: Additional police personnel have been deployed outside the Congress headquarters at 24 Akbar Road, and the residence of interim party President Sonia Gandhi at 10 Janpath, here on Wednesday evening. The police personnel could be seen manning the road leading to the party headquarters.

The presence of additional police force at the Congress headquarters could be a precautionary measure following the sealing of the Young India office.

will assist them in the search, they will open the sealed office.

Earlier in the day the ED sealed the office of YI situated in the building of Herald House at Bahadurshah Zafar Marg. The ED pasted an order

### ED FINDS YOUNG INDIAN AND KOLKATA FIRM CONNECTION

New Delhi: Enforcement Directorate officials probing the National Herald matter have also found that Kolkata based firm Dotex Merchandise Private Limited had allegedly laundered money by giving a loan of Rs one crore to Young Indian Private Limited in 2010. YI was just incorporated when Dotex gave it this loan and this has raised questions. Recently when Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi were grilled by the ED officials, both were asked about Dotex. The Gandhis were asked about several transactions by Dotex.

on the building of the Herald House. "This is hereby declared that this premises not be opened without prior permission from the Directorate of Enforcement," read the order. The sources had said that they did this so that the evidence was not tampered with.

On Tuesday, the ED had conducted a search operation at the Herald office. It was a day long search which began in the morning and went on till late night. Recently the ED questioned Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi for several days. The ED has not released any official statement in this regard.

### AMID CRISIS, NEW SET OF LEADERS EMERGES IN CONGRESS

New Delhi: After sealing at the Herald House and heavy police deployment at its party office, the residences of interim party President Sonia Gandhi and party leader Rahul Gandhi, and its war room, the Congress, putting on a strong face, on Wednesday said its not going to be cowed down by police and will go ahead with the August 5 agitation in which CWC members were supposed to protest at PM's residence. Amid the crisis, a new set of leaders have emerged to fire the onslaugth and carry on the party's fight. Among them is senior leader and former Union Minister Jairam Ramesh, who has become a key strategist and is also handling the media department while in the Parliament, the fight is being led by Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge and his team while the ground work is being done by Digvijaya Singh, and Ajay Maken is with other Delhi leaders, mobilising workers for protests. For the legal battle, Abhishek Manu Singhvi is fighting it out with his team. The ED onslaught has created a new crisis for the party - and also an opportunity. The way the agency is moving, the Congress is anticipating its moves and the party has issued a statement signed by 17 parties to keep the fight on in the courts and in Parliament. The party has also called a meeting of all Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha MPs at the Congress Parliamentary Party office on Thursday to discuss the future strategy.

## Centre to withdraw Personal Data Protection Bill



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The government on Wednesday said it will withdraw contentious Personal Data Protection (PDP) Bill 2019 that has seen 81 amendments in the past three years, and will introduce a new, sharper bill that fits into the comprehensive legal framework and protect the data of billions of citizens.

IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told members of the Joint Committee of the Parliament (JCP) that the decision has been taken to protect the digital privacy of individuals and ensure their data is handled by the internet companies with utmost responsibility.

The earlier bill drew intense scrutiny from privacy advocates, industry stakeholders and tech companies. The IT Minister said that the decision to formulate a new Bill is to create a framework for organisational and technical measures in processing of data, to lay down norms for social media platforms, cross-border transfer, accountability of entities processing data, remedies for unauthorised and harmful processing, to ensure the interest and security of the State and to establish a Data Protection Authority of India.

New Delhi-based privacy advocacy group Internet Freedom Foundation had said the bill "provides large exemptions to government departments, prioritises the interests of big corporations, and does not adequately

"The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 was deliberated in great detail by the Joint Committee of Parliament. 81 amendments were proposed and 12 recommendations were made towards a comprehensive legal framework on the digital ecosystem. Considering the report of the JCP, a comprehensive legal framework is being worked upon. Hence, in the circumstances, it is proposed to withdraw 'The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019' and present a new bill that fits into the comprehensive legal framework."

Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister, IT

respect your fundamental right to privacy".

The Bill was first brought in 2019 and was then referred to the Joint Committee.

The JCP report had identified many issues that were relevant but beyond the scope of a modern digital privacy law. According to experts, a strong data protection law is what can tame the social media platforms and internet platforms in the country, the way the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the EU has achieved. New Delhi-based cyberlaw expert Virag Gupta told reporter that several cases of data breach and tax evasion by Chinese companies have been detected by the Indian agencies.

### DELHI REPORTS 4TH MONKEYPOX CASE, NATIONAL TALLY AT 9

New Delhi: A 31-year-old woman tested positive for the monkeypox infection in Delhi on Wednesday, becoming the national capital's fourth case.

The woman is admitted into LNJP, Delhi's nodal hospital for treatment of the disease.

With this the nationwide tally has reached nine - five cases from Kerala, including one death, and four cases from Delhi.

Meanwhile, the Union government on Wednesday also directed three Centre-run hospitals to make isolation rooms for the monkeypox cases.

"In the wake of rising monkeypox cases, isolation rooms have been made operational in three hospitals - Safdarjung, RML, and Lady Hardinge," said a source.

The Delhi government on Tuesday had directed the three private hospitals of the city to create at least 10 isolation rooms each for the management of monkeypox cases.

## DRI detects customs duty evasion of Rs 2,217 cr by Vivo Mobile India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has detected customs duty evasion of around Rs 2,217 crore by Vivo Mobile India Private Limited. A show cause notice has been issued to Vivo India demanding customs duty amounting to Rs 2,217 crore, under the provisions of the Customs Act.

A DRI official said that Vivo Mobile India Private Limited is a subsidiary of Vivo Communication Technology Co. Ltd, Guangdong, China, and is engaged in the manufacturing, assembling, wholesale trading as well as distribution of mobile handsets and



accessories. During the course of investigation, searches were conducted by DRI officers at the factory of

Vivo India, which led to the unearthing of incriminating evidence indicating wilful mis-declaration in the

description of certain items imported by Vivo India, for use in the manufacture of mobile phones.

### FIVE CHILDREN DROWN TO DEATH IN GUJARAT VILLAGE

Ahmedabad: In a tragic incident, five children, including four girls, drowned to death in a pond near Methan village in Gujarat's Surendranagar district on Wednesday. The deceased have been identified as Priyanka Parsingbhai (5), Dinki Parsingbhai (7), Alkesh Parsingbhai (10), Lakshmi Pratabbhai (9) and Sanjala Pratabbhai (7). It has been learnt that deceased Parsingbhai were residents of Bod village in Chhota Udepur district, while Pratabbhais were residents of Gamta village in Harirajpur district of Madhya Pradesh.

According to the police, the children had gone to take bath in the pond located between Methan and Sarawan villages.

The deceased, all aged between five and 10 years, were the children of farm labourers working in the area.

### Biryani worth Rs 43 lakh that nobody saw or ate, J&K ACB on trail

Srinagar: Biryani purchased for Rs 43 lakh by J&K Football Association (JKFA) was never seen eaten by anybody, the Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has found out that unearthing a financial scam by the office bearers of the JKFA, the ACB has found that as per its records, the association purchased biryani for Rs 43 lakhs from a local eatery, 'Mughal Darbar' as refreshments for the youth, but the bill, on scrutiny, was found to be fake. "Nobody ever saw or ate that biryani for which the association claimed to have paid Rs 43 lakhs to Mughal Darbar. The bill turned out to be fake," an ACB source said.

"A receipt for Rs 1,41,300 was placed on record from a stationery and hardware shop named Jan Hardware shop, Bemina. Investigators have found out that the shop never existed," the source said. JKFA President, Zamir Thakur, Treasurer, S.S. Bunty, Chief Executive, Fayaz Ahmad and S.A. Hameed have been booked under different sections of criminal law pertaining to forgery and criminal conspiracy, ACB sources said.



### TWO SENIOR CONGRESS LEADERS IN GUJARAT TO JOIN BJP

Ahmedabad: Sidelined, dissatisfied and unhappy with the state leadership, two senior Congress leaders have announced that they are quitting the party and will be joining the BJP next month as they are impressed with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's development work. Naresh Rawal, former minister of state for home and three-term Congress MLA from Vijapur assembly seat of Mehsana district has stated, "I have many grievances with the party, but this is not the right time to talk about all these issues, but have decided to say 'Jai Hind' to the party. I will soon be joining the BJP and whatever the party leadership give the work, will do." Another Congress leader and former Rajya Sabha MP, Raju Parmar said, "I have been associated with the Congress for the last 35 years, I don't have any complaint against the party, but unfortunately, party leadership has started giving importance to newcomers. Many more senior leaders are going to quit soon."

## Centre says freebies economic disaster, SC suggests expert body to address issue

### LIVE DEBATE...

Chief Justice N.V. Ramana asked senior advocate Kapil Sibal, who was in the courtroom for another matter, to share his view on the matter. Sibal said the EC should not be involved in the matter, since the issue is political and economical in nature. "ECI is MFI (Most Favoured Institution)," he said, adding: "The Parliament will have to debate."

To this, the Chief Justice asked Sibal that "which political party will agree? Do you think there will be a debate in the Parliament? These days everyone wants freebies... no political party will take out freebies, as all want freebies".

The bench, also comprising justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli, said: "We take the side of the ordinary people, the downtrodden. Their welfare has to be taken care of...."



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said irrational freebies offered to induce voters during elections would not be effectively debated in the Parliament, since no political party would

like to take away freebies.

It recommended constituting an expert body having persons who could effectively scrutinise the problem and find a solution, while acknowledging that irrational freebies promises is a serious issue.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, in principle, supported doing away with the practice of promising freebies to voters, and emphasised that freebies were paving the way to an "economic disaster", and also distorting the informed decision-making of the voters.

He suggested that the Election Commission should apply its mind on the matter, and they can have a relook. However, the EC's counsel said that its hands were tied by a judgment of the apex court on freebies.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, representing petitioner Ashwini Upadhyay, said those in power in states burdened with debt should bring out in public the source of

money to fund freebies. He added that it should be revealed whose pockets would pay for these freebies.

Mehta said a poor person feels that what is put in his left pocket would be taken out of his right pocket.

The Chief Justice said the poor are entitled for the benefits and benefits should not just reach the rich. Singh then suggested that the EC could prepare a "model manifesto" to control freebies.

The bench said if the EC had taken up the issue, the court would not have intervened now, and its judgments against violence during elections continue to be ignored.

The bench scheduled the matter for further hearing next week.



## NIA FILES SUPPLEMENTARY CHARGE SHEET IN AL QAEDA RECRUITMENT CASE

Lucknow | Agencies

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday filed a supplementary charge sheet before a special court here against an Al Qaeda (AQIS/AGH) member in case of recruiting members for the proscribed terrorist outfit.

The supplementary chargesheet was filed against Tawheed Ahmad Shah, a resident of Jammu and Kashmir, under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The NIA said that its investigations have revealed that Shah instigated Minhaj Ahmad to join the Al Qaeda and instructed him to recruit as many members as possible to join Al-Qaeda affiliate AGH (Ansaar Ghazwatul Hind) for commission of terrorist acts. Shah was working



as an overground worker for declared LeT/TRF terrorist Adil Nabi Teli, subsequently killed in an encounter, and for Syed Basharat Shah, a slain terrorist of AGH, an extended outfit of Al Qaeda.

Shah received funds from Ahmad in the account of persons known to him and funded terrorists Shah and Teli. The case was registered on inputs that Umar Halmandi, a member of Al Qaeda, based on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border,

was radicalising and recruiting members for AQIS (Al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent).

He was accused of raising an Al Qaeda and AGH modules in Lucknow to carry out terrorist acts.

The case was initially registered on January 10, 2021 at PS ATS, Gomti Nagar and re-registered by NIA on July 29, 2021. Earlier, the NIA had arrested and charge-sheeted five accused persons on January 5, 2022.

## Delhi HC suspends jail term of Haryana ex-CM Chautala in DA case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday suspended the four-year jail term of former Haryana Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala till the pendency of his appeal in a disproportionate assets case.

"The sentence of the appellant/applicant (Chautala) is suspended till the pendency of the present appeal, subject to payment of a fine of Rs 50 lakh as imposed by the learned trial court and also on his executing a personal bond of Rs 5 lakh, with one surety of like amount to the satisfaction of the learned trial court.

"The appellant shall not visit abroad except with the permission of the learned Trial Court," Justice Yogesh Khanna said in the order.

The court also observed that Chautala spent about one year and six months in custody and the appeal might take some time to come on board for a hearing.



In his earlier plea, Chautala had argued that he was convicted for a period of four years and he had already undergone imprisonment of five years and six months and the further jail term is a violation of set-

ted judicial decisions of the Supreme Court.

His plea stated that he is around 87 years old, and was suffering from multiple ailments and progressive permanent disability of residual

paralysis of both lower limbs and left upper limb, and even as per jail record, the petitioner, sentenced for RI of 4 years, has already undergone over 5 years in jail.

".. even as per jail record, the petitioner (sentenced for RI of 4 years) has already undergone 5 years 6 months and 14 days (as on May 1) but the petitioner is not released from the prison..," his plea read.

In pursuant to his petition, the jail authorities calculated the actual physical incarceration of the petitioner in the present case at 5 years 6 months. Still, instead of releasing the petitioner, they had forwarded a letter to the Special Judge, CBI, Rouse Avenue Court apprising that the actual period of custody undergone by the petitioner, it said.

On May 27, the city's Rouse Avenue Court sentenced Chautala to four years in prison and slapped a fine of Rs 50 lakh in connection with the disproportionate assets case, in which he was convicted earlier.

## Kolkata-based share broker held for 'delivering' cash to Jharkhand MLAs

Kolkata | Agencies

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of West Bengal police on Wednesday arrested Kolkata-based share broker Mahendra Agarwal, who, according to the agency, provided cash to three Congress MLAs from Jharkhand.

CID sources confirmed that Agarwal was arrested on Wednesday afternoon from an undisclosed location near the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass.

He was first taken to the CID headquarters at Bhabani Bhawan from where he was shifted to state-run SSKM Medical College and Hospital after he complained of chest pain during the course of interrogation. On Tuesday afternoon,



the CID sleuths had raided Agarwal's office at Bikaner House in central Kolkata and recovered

cash to the tune of around Rs 3.5 lakh along with 250 silver coins. A number of bank passbooks, passports and hard discs were also seized by the CID on Tuesday. Last week, three Jharkhand MLAs -- Irfan Ansari, Rajesh Kachhap and Naman Bixal Kongari -- were nabbed by the police from Howrah with large amount of cash to the tune of Rs 49 lakh in their vehicles.

The MLAs told the police that the cash was meant for purchasing sarees from the wholesale market at Burrabazar in Kolkata for distribution in their constituencies on World Tribal Day on August 9. The three MLAs along with two others have been remanded to CID custody till August 10.

## Chief Justice Ramana requested by Law Minister to nominate successor

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana, who is set to demit office on August 26 on superannuation, on Wednesday received a communication from the Law and Justice Minister to nominate his successor.

A communication from the apex court said: "Today (03.08.2022) at 2130 hrs, the Secretariat of the Chief Justice of India has received a communication dated 03.08.2022 from the Minister of Law and Justice requesting the CJJ to recommend



the name of his successor." Justice U.U. Lalit, who is the seniormost judge in the

Supreme Court, is in line to become the next Chief Justice of India. Appointed to the apex top court directly from the Bar, he would be having a short tenure of less than three months, as the Chief Justice of India as he is set retire on November 8.

According to the Memorandum of Procedure, the Law Minister seeks recommendation from the outgoing CJI to nominate his successor. Usually, the recommendation is sought within a month of the retirement of incumbent Chief Justice of India.

## AAP to support Margaret Alva for Vice President

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday decided to extend its support to the joint opposition candidate Margaret Alva for Vice President.

The decision was taken in the meeting of party's Political Affairs Committee.

"A meeting of the Political Affairs Committee was held under the chairmanship of Aam Aadmi Party's national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. It was discussed in detail who will the Aam Aadmi Party support in the election of the Vice President. Arvind Kejriwal and the members of the PAC have unanimously decided that we will support Margaret Alva, who is the opposition candidate, in the election of the Vice President. All our Rajya Sabha MPs will vote for them on 6th," party MP Sanjay Singh said after the meeting. The AAP had also backed joint



opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha in the Presidential election.

## MINOR GIRL GANG RAPED BY THREE YOUTHS IN BIHAR'S ARWAL

Patna: A minor girl was allegedly gang raped by three youths in Bihar's Arwal district on Wednesday, police said.

According to her statement, the victim, who is a resident of adjoining Patna district, was on her way to attend coaching classes in Arwal city, and when she reached Saren village, three youths overpowered her, dragged her in the nearby bushes, and raped her one by one.

The accused, after committing the crime, fled the spot. The victim reached the nearby police station and filed a complaint. The case was immediately transferred to the women police station for the investigation.

"We immediately sent a team which managed to arrest two of the accused. The third accused is absconding now," said an officer of the women police station. "We have conducted medical examination of the victim which confirms sexual assault," the official said.

Patna | Agencies

Amid speculation of a cabinet expansion of the Narendra Modi-led Central government, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is aiming for two ministerial posts this time.

Nitish Kumar, who has recovered from the Covid-19 infection, is likely to go to New Delhi after the Independence Day celebrations. Sources have said that the expansion of the Union Cabinet was put on hold due to the preparation of independence day and Azadi Ka Amrit mahotsav programmes.

At present, Nitish Kumar's JD-U has no representation in the Modi government after the resignation of R.C.P.

## Nitish seeking two cabinet berths in Modi govt's next expansion



Singh. This time, Nitish Kumar wants two Cabinet

Minister posts with probable candidates like his party's

national President Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh and Nalanda MP Kaushalendra Kumar. The name of Lalan Singh is almost final while the second name is either Kaushalendra Kumar or Santosh Kushwaha.

During the last cabinet expansion of the Modi government, Nitish Kumar had given R.C.P. Singh the responsibility to negotiate with the BJP for the two posts of Cabinet Ministers. Singh, however, put the party's interest aside and took one post for himself and became Union Steel Minister.

In wake of this, Nitish Kumar refused to renominate Singh to the Rajya Sabha after his tenure ended on July 6, forcing him to resign from the Union Cabinet.

## INDIA APPROVES NDC UNDER PARIS CLIMATE PACT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Climate Agreement.

According to the updated NDC, India now stands committed to reduce emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 per cent by 2030, from 2005 level, to achieve about 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030 and to put forward and further propagate a healthy and sustainable way of living based on traditions and values of conservation and moderation.

At the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Glasgow in last November, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had proposed a five-fold strategy for India to play its part in helping the world get closer to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

On October 2, 2015, India had submitted its NDC to the UNFCCC. The 2015 NDC had eight goals, three out of eight have quantitative targets up to 2030.

These were: cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil sources to reach 40 per cent, reduction of the emissions



intensity of GDP by 33 to 35 per cent compared to 2005 levels, and creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent through additional forest and tree cover.

Responding to the updated NDC, R.R. Rashmi, Distinguished Fellow, TERI, said: "The decision by India to update its NDCs in full line with the PM's Glasgow announcements.

"It reaffirms the ambition and yet puts sustainable development at the centre of the debate. It is clear that India does not envisage sectoral emission reduction obligations as part of its NDC at least till 2030. The NDC does not bind it to any sector-specific mitigation obligation or action.

"On the other hand, it rightly

emphasises the value of a sustainable way of living as an effective and just solution to the problem of climate change. It has also removed a lingering doubt by clarifying that 50 per cent of energy by 2030 is to be counted in terms of non-fossil fuel based electricity production."

Aarti Khosla, Director Climate Trends, told reporter, "Only a part of what was announced in Glasgow now gets enshrined in India's NDC. The target of having 50 per cent installed capacity of non-fossil fuel based targets by 2030, compared with 40 per cent non-fossil fuel based targets we have today shows that while the direction of travel is good, the pace could have been faster.

"The formal submission also

doesn't include the target of 500GW of non-fossil based and 450GW of renewables based energy which has also been often discussed as the country's stated ambition on climate targets."

Madhura Joshi, Senior Associate, India Energy Transition Lead, E3G, said: "At COP26, Prime Minister Modi announced ambitious Panchamrits focussing on actions required this decade to meet India's development needs and secure a low carbon future.

"These included 500GW of non-fossil fuel capacity, 50 per cent of installed renewables capacity, reducing 1bn tonnes of CO2 emissions intensity reduction over 2005 levels all by 2030, and achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. "India's updated NDC targets are a welcome move and include 50 per cent of non-fossil fuel capacity and 45 per cent emissions intensity reduction by 2030. These targets, while lower than the panchamrits, are actionable. A reiteration of the renewables focus would have provided a fresh impetus for the renewables sector."

For Vibhuti Garg, Energy Economist and India Lead, Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, "India's updated NDC does not include all the 'panchamrita' promises made at COP26 in Glasgow. India needs more demand side and supply side push."

## Amid rising tensions with China, India-US to hold military exercise near LAC



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid rising tensions with China, India and the US will come together for a two-week high altitude military exercise at Auli in Uttarakhand, less than 100 km from the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the central region.

The Indo-US joint exercise is known as 'Yudh Abhyas' which is in its 15th edition this year.

Sources in the defence and security establishment said a joint exercise is being planned from October 14 to

31, where both the forces will conduct 'maneuvers to exploit the full scope' of the high altitude warfare. The sources said that the location (at 10,000 feet) where the exercise will take place falls in Phase 1 of adaptation to high altitude.

"This time it is a very important exercise as the Indian side will be showcasing its high altitude warfare strategies, while the US will demonstrate a number of techniques that can be used in such scenarios. This exercise is planned in such a way that both the sides can come

together for any scenario," said a source.

Another source said that various activities have been planned for both sides to take full advantage of the two-week military exercise and to see how the troops can work together.

India and China have seen escalating tensions along the LAC in the last two years following the standoff in Ladakh.

Meanwhile, tensions mounted between the US and China over House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan on Tuesday.



# COLLECTOR'S ACT LIKE POLITICAL AGENT, SHOULD BE REMOVED IMMEDIATELY: HC

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Wednesday slammed the Panna district collector for not complying with 'natural justice' in the panchayat elections and declaring winner the candidate who had received lesser number of votes.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Wednesday slammed the Panna district collector for not complying with 'natural justice' in the panchayat elections and declaring winner the candidate who had received lesser number of votes.

Hearing the petition, the court asserted that "this person is not fit for the post of collector and he should be removed from the post immediately."

The court said that Panna district collector Sanjay Kumar Mishra has "acted like a political agent. He conducted himself to be a political agent by passing this order and he has no regard for the natural justice. This man should be removed from the collector's post," the court said. The court's observation came



while hearing an election petition filed by Parmanand Sharma, who was one of the candidates for the post of vice-president in Panna Janpad panchayat.

After the process of electing janpad panchayat members through

direct voting, the elected members had to vote to elect the president and vice-president of the particular janpad panchayat. The elections for the post of president and vice-president were held in July 27. Parmanand Sharma had received 13 out of the

total 27 votes against his opponent Ram Shiromani. Accordingly, the presiding officer had handed the winner's certificate to Sharma.

Soon after the election results were announced, Ram Shiromani had challenged the outcome. Shiromani had approached Panna district collector Sanjay Kumar Mishra. The collector called both the parties and conducted a lottery to declare the winner for the vice-president's post. And Shiromani, who had secured less number of votes, was declared the winner. Subsequent to that, Sharma filed a petition before the High Court to challenge the outcome from the lottery system. After hearing the petition on Wednesday, the High Court said the collector is not fit for the post and he should be removed. The court also made the collector a party in the case.

# Govt official attempts suicide during EOW raid

A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, POSTED IN THE MEDICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF MADHYA PRADESH, ATTEMPTED SUICIDE ON SEEING THE ECONOMIC OFFENCE WING (EOW) OFFICIALS AT HIS DOOR HERE EARLY ON WEDNESDAY.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A government official, posted in the medical education

department of Madhya Pradesh, attempted suicide on seeing the Economic Offence Wing (EOW) officials at his door here early on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, two sons Hero Keswani (posted as UDC in medical education department) also locked the house and fled.

Sources told reporter that Keswani attempted suicide by consuming a floor cleaning chemical and is undergoing treatment at Hamidia hospital.

EOW officials had to suspend its raid at Keswani's house until he gets discharged from the hospital.

A case of attempt to suicide will also lodged against him.

Keswani's role was already under scanner in connection with EOW's ongoing investigation into a case of alleged financial irregularities against renowned charitable trust - Jeev Seva Sansthaan at Bhopal. The office-bearers of the trust have already been summoned for questioning on alleged swindling of money.

Meanwhile, another team of EOW raided the house of an assistant engineer of Jabalpur municipal commissioner, Aditya Shukla, who is an accused of earning huge money by manipulating the procurement of medical equipment during pandemic.

# Released on bail, accused rapes victim again

A 19-YEAR-OLD WOMAN WAS ALLEGEDLY RAPED BY A PERSON WHO WAS RELEASED ON BAIL RECENTLY FOR RAPING THE SAME WOMAN TWO YEARS BACK. THEN THE VICTIM WAS A MINOR.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The incident was reported in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district. An FIR has been registered at local police station and the police has started the investigation in the matter.

The victim claimed that she was sexually assaulted around one month back by

the same person, who threatened her to withdraw the complaint against him, otherwise she will face dire consequences.

However, the matter came to the light after the victim lodged a complaint on Tuesday, police said.

The victim told the police that ever since the accused, who was identified as Vivek

Patel, came out on bail, he had been forcing her to withdraw her complaint.

"Victim has alleged that accused Vivek Patel, who had raped her in 2020, committed the same crime along with his two friends.

We are investigating the matter and also searching the accused person," the police said.

# 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav': MP gears up to commemorate 75th I-Day

Madhya Pradesh unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has geared up to commemorate the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' with the celebrations to mark 75th anniversary of the Independence Day began across the country on Tuesday.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The state ruling saffron party has decided that all of its offices, from state party headquarters to district and block level offices, will have stock of Tri-colours, which will be distributed to the people under the Centre's 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative.

The state government has fixed a target to hoist 1.51 crore 'Tiranga' (Tri-colours) across the state, one crore of them will be prepared in the state, while 51 lakh Tri-colours



would be received from the Central government. To promote patriotism among the people, different departments of the state government have either have started organising

'Har Ghar Tiranga' programmes or have prepared for the same. The nationwide programme, that commenced on Tuesday will continue till August 15. While, the distribu-

tion of the Tri-colours will be done between August 13 to 15. As Prime Minister Narendra has urged the citizen of the country to change social media profile picture to the national flag, Madhya Pradesh cabinet ministers, including Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan changed pictures on their twitter handles.

Like other departments in the state, Madhya Pradesh Police too have prepared itself to mark the occasion by organising a well decorated march.

# ANKUR ABHIYAN IS A CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE EARTH: CM

- Plantation done simultaneously at 7 thousand 738 places in Gwalior and Chambal division
- CM Chouhan joins virtually
- Plantation mega campaign will continue during Hariyali Amavasya from July 28 to August 15
- Plantation with national flag commendable
- People of the state should participate with pride and dignity in the "Har Ghar Tiranga" Abhiyan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that "Ankur Abhiyan" started for plantation with public participation is a campaign to save the Earth. In this, work is being done to plant 75 saplings each in all panchayats of 8 districts of Gwalior and Chambal division and each ward of urban area. In the urban and rural areas of Gwalior, Shivpuri, Guna, Ashoknagar, Datia, Morena, Bind and Sheopur districts, massive plantation is being done simultaneously at 7 thousand 738 places in Ankur Abhiyan. This work of conser-



vation of nature started with public participation is exemplary. Other divisions and districts of the state will also follow this work of nature conservation. CM Chouhan was addressing plantation programmes in 8 districts of Gwalior and Chambal division virtually from the residence office. Farmers Welfare and Agriculture Development Minister Kamal Patel, Minister of State for Horticulture and Food Processing Bharat Singh Kushwaha and Principal Secretary Environment and Director General EPCO Aniruddha Mukherjee were present. Environment Minister Hardeep Singh Dang virtually participated in the programme. CM extended his best wishes for the maximum number of 59 thousand 442 registrations in Shivpuri district in the plantation campaign that started from July

28. Chouhan virtually joined the programme held in all the 8 districts. He said that a large number of people are planting saplings in other districts as well. Chouhan said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given the gift of Pancharmit in the Glasgow Conference of the United Nations to resolve the crisis of global warming and climate change. Plantation has an important role in achieving the goal set by India in Pancharmit. He said that trees and plants not only give us oxygen, but also a tree is the source of life for many animals. A plantation mega campaign is being run in the state during Hariyali Amavasya from July 28 to August 15, in which various communities, students, voluntary organisations, social and religious organisations, resident welfare committees and religious

leaders are involved and general public is being inspired to plant saplings. CM motivated the people of the state to plant saplings on their birthdays, marriage anniversaries and in the memory of their family members.

CM Chouhan said that planting saplings along with the national flag by the people involved in the plantation mega campaign during the Amrit Kaal of Independence would motivate people to participate enthusiastically in the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign. Chouhan inspired the people of the state to participate with full enthusiasm and zeal in the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign. CM said that the country is celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav of freedom. We all should buy the tricolour on Independence Day and hoist the flag at our home with pride and dignity.

# Education in mother tongue is helpful in intellectual and character development: Governor

- Education in mother tongue is an opportunity for better contribution in the development of the nation and society
- Governor participated in the state level book release and distribution programme of technical course books translated in Hindi

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that education in mother tongue is an unprecedented opportunity to enable the students of rural and deprived sections living in remote areas to contribute better in the development of the country and society with knowledge and science. Governor has appealed to the people of the state to demonstrate sense of pride towards

motherland by unfurling tricolour in "Har Ghar Tiranga" Campaign from August 13 to 15.

Governor Patel was addressing the state level release, distribution and award ceremony of Hindi translated technical course books of Rajiv Gandhi Technological University. Patel said that significance of language is not only for intellectual development but for enhancement of character too. It is scientifically accepted that a person's understanding of the subject, the ability to learn comes easily in the mother tongue. In fact, the teaching in mother tongue is not only an opportunity to impart knowledge, but a means to initiate the child into human life. Education in the mother tongue is a symbol of the resolve to build a capable and efficient young generation for the global competition of the 21st century. Efforts should be made to achieve the National Education Policy target of 100 percent gross enrollment by 2030 by

expanding education in mother tongue. He said that for the success of the National Education Policy, efforts should be made to provide opportunities for upgradation of skills according to the talent and desire of the students. The campus environment should be such that it makes the students efficient, self-confident, practical and judgmental. Inspire and encourage research and investigation to solve the challenges and problems of the nation, society.

Governor Patel inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp in front of the idol of Maa Saraswati. The Governor was welcomed with a shawl, shrifal and sapling. Tribal artwork and national flag were presented as memento. Patel distributed sets of translated books in Hindi to the principals of five technical educational institutions as a symbol. Coordinators, translators and reviewers associated with translation work were honoured with certificates.

# CM PLANTS SAPLINGS WITH THE STUDENTS OF CM RISE SCHOOL

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Banyan, Neem and Maulshree along with students of Mahatma Gandhi CM Rise School, Bhopal Prachi Vishwakarma, Shreyansh Khare and Rachna Azad in the Smart City Garden. A young boy Kushagra Gupta also planted saplings with Chief Minister Chouhan on his birthday.



Importance of plants Banyan plants planted today have religious medicinal importance. According to Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of Banyan leaves, bark etc. Its decoction helps increase immunity. Rich in antibiotic elements, Neem is known as the supreme medicine. Maulshree is a medicinal tree which has been used in Ayurveda for centuries.

# HIKE IN DEARNESS RELIEF TO PENSIONERS

Hike of 174 percent on 6th pay scale, 22 percent on 7th pay scale. Instructions issued to make immediate payment of approved dearness relief.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The state government issued instructions to all the departments to pay the approved dearness relief soon after sanctioning dearness relief on pension to the pensioners.

At present, dearness relief at the rate of 164 percent on basic pension / family pension in the sixth pay scale and at the rate of 17 percent in the seventh pay scale is approved for the pensioners / family pensioners of the state government from October 1, 2021.

According to the order issued by the state government, the rate of dearness relief payable to pensioners / family pensioners at present has been increased from May 1, 2022. At present the

rate of growth of dearness relief was 10 percent on 6th pay scale and 5 percent on 7th pay scale. According to the new order, the revised dearness relief rate will be 174 percent on the 6th pay scale and 22 percent on the 7th pay scale. The increased rate will be applicable from the pension of May 1, 2022 which is payable in June 2022.

According to the order, dearness relief will also be payable on the additional pension payable to the pensioners of the age of 80 years or more.

Dearness relief will be payable on superannuation, retirement, disability and compensation pension. Employees dismissed or removed from service will also be eligible for dearness relief on the compas-

ionate allowance accepted. Dearness relief will also be payable to the pensioners receiving family pension and extraordinary pension as per the relevant orders of the Finance Department.

If a person is placed in service on compassionate grounds due to the death of his/her spouse, dearness relief on family pension will not be eligible in such cases.

If the person is in service at the time of the death of the spouse, he/she will be entitled to dearness relief on the family pension payable on account of the death of the spouse.

To such pensioners who have got a part of their pension commuted, dearness relief will be payable on their basic pension.

# Van Vihar Bhopal gets tremendous response from wildlife lovers

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Van Vihar National Park Bhopal is getting a tremendous response from wildlife lovers. In the last 6 months, Van Vihar has earned a good income from the toy train, golf cart, cycle facilities provided by Van Vihar to the tourists. During this period, an income of Rs 9 lakh 24 thousand 210 was generated with the arrival of 12 thousand 270 tourists.

Van Vihar Director HC Gupta said that the toy train, golf cart, cycle trail provided by the Forest Department were liked and enjoyed by the tourists. About 1693 tourists enjoyed the toy train. Due to this Van Vihar got revenue of 86 thousand 200. Maximum tourists arrived in the month of February.

Director Van Vihar said that 947 tourists enjoyed the golf cart facility provided by the Forest Department. Maximum tourists visited in the month of February. There was an income of 61 thousand 750 rupees from these tourists. Around 3781 tourists enjoyed the facility of con-



tracted golf cart, which earned Van Vihar revenue of Rs. 2 lakh 93 thousand. Van Vihar earned an income of Rs. 1 lakh 22 thousand as entry fee from tourists who came to Van Vihar on outside bicycle and Rs. 3 lakh 62 thousand 200 from the cycle facility provided by the Forest Department.



EDITOR'S SPECS

ANOTHER FEATHER IN THE HAT

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will fly its small rocket with a long winding name, Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV), for the first time on August 7. According to the ISRO, the rocket SSLV-D1 (Developmental Flight 1) will blast off from the launch pad at Sriharikota at 9.18 a.m. The rocket with a maximum luggage carrying capacity of 500 kg will be carrying an earth observation satellite-02 (EOS-02) formerly known as Microsatellite-2A

weighing about 142 kg. The satellite will carry an infrared camera with six metre resolution. Piggybacking on that will be the eight kg AzaadiSat built by 750 students of government schools facilitated by SpaceKidz India. According to SpaceKidz India, the significance of this project is that it has been conceptualized as a tribute to mark the 75th anniversary of Independence. Niti Aayog has partnered for this project to bring this opportunity to students of the government girl schools across India. Hexaware is supporting by funding the project. Now ISRO will have three rockets - Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle and SSLV.

# THE ENIGMATIC INDIAN FILM INDUSTRY & ITS EXPANSIVE REACH

India is home to one of the largest and most vibrant film industries in the world. The country is famous globally for its movies and songs. Citizens of several nations, irrespective of the relations between India and their country, recognise India for its films. Such is the prominence of tinsel town internationally!

Bollywood or the Hindi film industry occupies a pivotal position. However, some regional movies including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Bengali and Punjabi films among others have also made it big abroad. India has 22 official languages and more than 19,500 dialects are spoken here as mother tongues. Hence, there are numerous varieties of films from different languages.

The Indian film industry generates nearly USD 2 billion a year. According to Britannica, Bollywood, Hindi-language sector of the Indian film industry began in Bombay (now Mumbai) in the 1930s and developed into an enormous film empire.

After early Indian experiments with silent films, in 1934, Bombay Talkies, launched by Himansu Rai, spearheaded the growth of Indian cinema. At the turn of the 21st Century, the Indian film industry - of which Bollywood remained the largest component - was producing as many as 1,000 feature films annually in all of India's major languages and in a variety of cities. International audiences began to develop among south Asians in the United Kingdom and in the United States.

The Indian Media and Entertainment (M&E) industry is a sunrise sector for the economy and is making significant strides. Proving its resilience to the world, Indian M&E industry is on the cusp of a strong phase of growth, backed by rising consumer demand and improving advertising revenue. According to a FICCI-EY report, the advertising to GDP ratio is expected to reach 0.4 per cent by 2025 from 0.38 per cent in 2019.

According to a BCG report, India's M&E industry is expected to grow between USD 55-70 billion by 2030. India's digital advertising industry is expected to grow to Rs 23,673 crore (USD 3.09 billion) in 2022 from Rs 18,938 crore (USD 2.47 billion) in 2021.

Television would account for 40 per cent of the Indian media market in 2024, followed by print media (13 per cent), digital advertising (12 per cent), cinema (9 per cent), and the over-the-top (OTT) and gaming industries (8



per cent). The market is projected to increase at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17 per cent between 2020 and 2023.

According to India Brand Equity Foundation, within the M&E sector, animation, visual effects, gaming and comic (AVGC) sector is growing at a rate of 29 per cent, while the audio-visual sector and services is rising at the rate 25 per cent; is recognised as one of the champion sectors by the Government of India. The AVGC sector is estimated to grow at 9 per cent to reach Rs. 3 lakh crore (USD 43.93 billion) by 2024, as stated by Piyush Goyal, India's Minister of commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs & Food & Public Distribution and Textiles. The music industry is expected to reach Rs. 23 billion (USD 330 million) by 2023, from Rs 15 billion (USD 210 million) in 2020 at a CAGR of 15 per cent between 2020 and 2023. Several Bollywood stars like Amitabh Bachchan, Hema Malini, Shahrukh Khan, Aamir Khan and Salman Khan are household names in various countries. Numerous Bollywood movies are also shot abroad, which has made the industry along with its stars popular globally. Salman Khan Katrina Kaif-starrer spy-thriller 'Ek Tha Tiger' was shot in Istanbul and near the border with Syria and Iraq. Several more Bollywood movies were shot aboard and many in Middle East, including United Arab Emirates. Saif Ali Khan and Katrina Kaif-starrer political thriller

Phantom was shot in in Lebanon, including downtown Beirut, the nearby area of Khandaq Al Hameeq and the mountain town of Kfardebian. A spy-thriller 'Baby' starring Akshay Kumar was shot in multiple locations in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Turkey and the UAE. Akshay Kumar-starrer war thriller 'Airlift' was reportedly partially shot in Al-Hamra Palace Beach Resort in Ras Al Khaimah. Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan-starrer Guru's famous song 'Mayya Mayya' was picturised in Istanbul's Nuruosmaniye Mosque. A lot many Bengali and South Indian movies are shot in Thailand, Singapore and US among other destinations.

Indian movies are filmed across the world and several are shot in across European locations like the UK, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Spain, Greece and Amsterdam. Also, southeast Asian countries are another favourite destination for shooting. Some movies are also filmed in Australia.

Apart from Bollywood, at present, South Indian movies are topping the chart. In the recent 68th National Film Awards in the country, movies from south swept the award ceremony. The jury had received around 305 movies from 30 languages. The films from the southern region of the country dominated the National Film Awards. As many as 19 top awards across various sections

went to south Indian films. During last year's ceremony, south Indian films won as many as 15 awards in various categories.

Some very famous south Indian movies of recent times which made it big in domestic market as well as abroad are 'Bahubali' and 'RRR'. Apart from the over-arching Bollywood all the other regional film industries also have a distinctive name. Bengali film industry in West Bengal and Telugu film industry in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are both called Tollywood. Similarly, Malayalam film industry in Kerala is known as Mollywood, film industry in Karnataka as Sandalwood, Assamese language film industry as Jollywood, Tamil film industry is called Kollywood and film industry in Odisha as Ollywood. The future of Indian cinema will remain entwined with OTT platforms.

According to a Deloitte study, 83 per cent of India watches video content on their mobile phones. This still makes the cinema experience a unique one. The story lines of Indian cinemas are undergoing a change. From love stories and family issue-based content, it is now moving towards other social issue-based stories and this trend is more perceptible in regional movies.

## international

## NO OFFER OF TALKS FROM US ON NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL TREATY: LAVROV

Moscow | Agencies

The US has not yet offered any new talks on nuclear arms control, according to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. "They have not even proposed to resume these talks," Lavrov said on Wednesday during a visit to Myanmar, according to Russian state news agency TASS.

At issue is a replacement for the New START disarmament treaty, the only remaining major arms control agreement between the US and Russia. The treaty limits the nuclear arsenals of both countries to 800 delivery systems and 1,550 operational warheads each, dpa news agency reported.

In February 2021, US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin had agreed on an extension of New START.

Earlier in the week a month-long UN conference to review the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) got under way. Biden said at the UN conference that his administration was ready to negotiate "expeditiously" on a new arms control framework to replace the New START treaty when it



expires in 2026. "But negotiation requires a willing partner operating in good faith," Biden had stressed.

And Russia's war on Ukraine represents an attack on the cornerstones of the international order, he added.

## US Speaker Pelosi assures Taiwan of Washington's support

Taipei/Beijing | Agencies

Taipei/Beijing: US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Wednesday pledged Washington's support for Taiwan during a visit to the island that has drawn Beijing's ire.

"Today, our delegation... came to Taiwan to make unequivocally clear: we will not abandon our commitment to Taiwan, and we're proud of our enduring friendship," Pelosi said at a joint press conference with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen.

"Today, the world faces a choice between democracy and autocracy," Pelosi said, as she praised Taiwan as "one of the freest [democracies] in the world, proudly to be led by a woman president."

"Now more than ever, America solidarity with Taiwan is crucial. And that is the message we are bringing here today," dpa news agency reported quoting Pelosi. Tsai said Russia's invasion of Ukraine has highlighted security concerns about Taiwan. "Aggressions against a democratic Taiwan would have a tremendous impact on the security of the entire Indo-Pacific," she warned.

"Facing deliberately heightened military threats, Taiwan will not back down. We will firmly uphold our nation's sovereignty and continue to hold the line of defence for democracy," Tsai said, adding



"We will do whatever it takes to strengthen Taiwan's self-defence capability."

Pelosi arrived in Taiwan on Tuesday despite stern warnings from Beijing, making her the highest-level US official to visit the island in 25 years. The trip has drawn outrage from Beijing, which views the self-governing island as part of the People's Republic and rejects official contacts between its diplomatic partners and the government in Taipei. US National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby on Tuesday said that Washington was expecting that China would "continue to react over a longer-term horizon ... even beyond [Pelosi's] trip."

Kirby, who stressed that Pelosi's visit was "totally consistent with our long-standing 'One China' poli-

cy," said that China's reaction was "unfortunately, right in line with what we had anticipated."

"There is no reason... for Beijing to turn this visit, which is consistent with long-standing US policy, into some sort of crisis, or use it as a pretext to increase aggressiveness and military activity in or around the Taiwan Strait, now or beyond her travel," Kirby said during a press briefing in Washington. "We are prepared to manage what Beijing chooses to do," he went on. "We will not engage in sabre-rattling," he said.

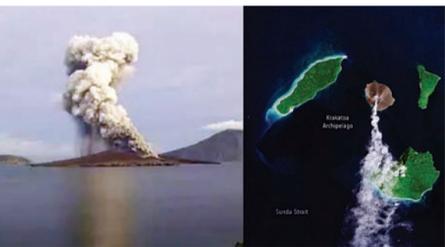
For days, Pelosi had declined to confirm news reports that she would visit and Taiwan was not on her official itinerary. An editorial by Pelosi was published in the Washington Post minutes after she arrived in Taipei. "We cannot stand by as the CCP (the Chinese Communist Party) proceeds to threaten Taiwan - and democracy itself," she wrote.

"Indeed, we take this trip at a time when the world faces a choice between autocracy and democracy. As Russia wages its premeditated, illegal war against Ukraine, killing thousands of innocents - even children - it is essential that America and our allies make clear that we never give in to autocrats." "By travelling to Taiwan, we honour our commitment to democracy: reaffirming that the freedoms of Taiwan - and all democracies - must be respected," Pelosi wrote.

## 17 KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENT IN EGYPT

Cairo: At least 17 people were killed and four others injured in an accident involving a micro bus and a truck on the desert road of Sohag Province in southern Egypt. The accident occurred late Tuesday, Xinhua news agency reported. "Fifteen ambulances rushed to the scene of the accident to take the injured to the Sohag Public Hospital," Tarek al-Figy, governor of Sohag, told Xinhua. "Initial investigations blamed the high speed of the microbus driver for the accident when he attempted to avoid collision with the coming truck from the opposite side," he added. Road accidents are common in Egypt because of poorly maintained road infrastructure and loosely enforced traffic regulations. Over the past few years, Egypt has been upgrading its road network, building new roads and bridges, and repairing old ones to reduce traffic accidents.

## INDONESIA'S ANAK KRAKATAU VOLCANO ERUPTS 7 TIMES IN 2 DAYS



Jakarta | Agencies

Anak Krakatau volcano in Indonesia's Sunda Strait has erupted with seven explosions in the last two days, unleashing hot ash by up to some 1,500 metres high into the sky, Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) said on Wednesday. "The volcano is currently graded at level three of a four-tiered volcanic alert system," the agency said in a statement.

The seismic activity of the volcano has increased since

two weeks ago, according to the BMKG. The authorities have ordered people to stay out of a five-km exclusion zone around the volcano, Xinhua news agency reported. Anak Krakatau, which means Child of Krakatau, has been sporadically active since it emerged from the sea at the beginning of last century.

The volcano is located far from the densely-populated Java island and Sumatra island. However, it is near the busy shipping line connecting the islands.

## Japan approves smallpox vaccine to prevent monkeypox

Tokyo | Agencies

Japan's health ministry has approved the use of a smallpox vaccine believed to be effective against monkeypox.

The smallpox vaccine approved by the ministry is thought to be 85 per cent effective against monkeypox, health officials said.

The move came after Japan confirmed two cases of the disease in late July in men in their 30s, who had both travelled overseas, and the government announced preemptive measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

As for treatment, the health ministry is looking into a medication called tecovirimat, which is an oral medication also used to treat smallpox, Xinhua news agency reported.

Symptoms of the tropical disease, spread through close physical contact, are similar to those of smallpox and include fever, extensive rashes, skin lesions and swollen lymph nodes, following an incubation period of five to 21 days, health officials here said.



The health ministry also said it is creating a system whereby local health authorities will be able to test for monkeypox and is urging further domestic cases of the disease to be promptly reported.

Whether to provide vaccinations for medical staff, laboratory personnel and health centre workers requesting to be vaccinated will also be discussed by officials, the ministry said.

The World Health Organisation has declared monkeypox a global health emergency amid a global outbreak of the disease. As for Japan's supply of the smallpox vaccine, the ministry said it is currently sufficient.

A task force to deal with the outbreak of monkeypox has been formed in Japan. It is headed by Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary for Crisis Management Takashi Murata.

## FLOODS IN IRAN LEAVE AT LEAST 90 DEAD, 8 MISSING



Tehran: At least 90 people have been killed and eight others went missing in floods across Iran.

Relief operations are underway, Iran's Red Crescent Society (IRCS) chief Pir-Hossein Kolvand told the official IRNA news agency on Wednesday.

The floods, which began in Iran two weeks ago and were caused by the monsoon phenomenon, have affected 24 provinces across the country, Xinhua news agency reported quoting Iranian media.



# INDIAN NAVY BUSTS FAKE RECRUITMENT SCAM IN MUMBAI



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Naval Police have busted a fake recruitment scam allegedly perpetrated by a self-styled 'Captain' of the Indian Navy, who lured young candidates with job offers as naval security guards, officials said here on Wednesday. The mastermind of the racket has been identified as "Captain" Sameer Singh, who used a fake letter from the Ministry of Defence, indicating that INS Kunjali in Colaba was the recruitment and workplace.

Hailing from Ambernath in Thane, the accused used to collect money from poor and gullible applicants as fees, issued fake identity cards, provided the uniforms and other necessary 'paper work' in the scam for the promised employment.

Following a tip-off, a Naval Police team

swooped at Singh's residence in Ambernath on Tuesday and conducted a preliminary probe and confirmed the murky goings-on. They later approached the Shivajinagar Police Station and lodged a formal police complaint seeking a full-fledged probe, and arrest of the impersonator for cheating people. According to official sources, they were alerted by a retired naval officer on the fraudulent jobs-for-money racket and they in turn informed the Naval Police which swung into action early this week. The sources have also learnt of similar job rackets being carried out in the name of the 'Agniveer' scheme by unscrupulous persons who are cheating the unemployed youth. Details of the antecedents of the accused, how many persons he has duped, the amounts collected and swindled, his probable associates and other angles are being probed, said police.

# Intra-party dispute, not falling within the scope of defection: Shinde counsel to SC

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's counsel on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that there is no split in the political party rather, there is a dispute over its leadership, which can be said to be an "intra-party" dispute, not falling within the scope of defection. Shinde's counsel added, "no two Shiv Senas, two groups in a political party..."

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's counsel on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that there is no split in the political party rather, there is a dispute over its leadership, which can be said to be an "intra-party" dispute, not falling within the scope of defection. Shinde's counsel added, "no two Shiv Senas, two groups in a political party..."

A bench headed by Chief Justice N.V. Ramana and comprising Justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli was hearing petitions filed by the Shiv Sena and its rebel MLAs on constitutional issues of splits, merger, defection, and disqualification.



After hearing arguments, the top court asked Shinde's counsel to redraft the submissions on petitions filed by the Uddhav Thackeray faction on constitutional issues, which arise out of the political crisis in Maharashtra.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing the Thackeray faction, said the rebel MLAs, Shinde's faction, can save themselves from disqualification under the tenth schedule of the Constitution only by merging the splinter group with another party, otherwise there is no defence for them. He added that the rebel group violated the chief whip, and they are disqualified as per the tenth sched-

ule. Senior advocate Harish Salve, representing Eknath Shinde, said there can be a dissenting member in the political party and there has to be democracy within the party. He said, "No two Shiv Senas, two groups in a political party..."

Salve argued that there is no split in the party, instead there is a dispute over its leadership, which can be termed an "intra-party" dispute, not falling within the scope of defection. He said the anti-defection law will apply only to those who have given up the membership of a political party, and his client has not given up the original membership of the party. Salve said anti-defection law is not

a weapon for leaders to lock up members after losing the majority. He added that if there are a larger number of MLAs who are not satisfied with the way the chief minister is functioning and want a change, why can't they say there should be a fresh leadership contest? And, changing CM is not anti-party, rather intra-party.

Chief Justice queried Salve, can you form a new party saying the leader did not meet you? Salve replied, "I am within the party... I am the dissenting member within the party," and also cited the split in Congress in 1969.

The Chief Justice further queried Salve, "What is the purpose of you approaching the ECI (Election Commission of India)?" Salve said after Thackeray resigned there were political developments and municipal elections were near, and who should get the symbol?

Salve added that it is not the case that the MLAs have voluntarily given up their party's membership. "Not a case of defection... Today it is the case of intra-party rebellion and nobody has given voluntary membership from the party," he submitted.

The top court, asking Salve to redraft the questions of law, scheduled the matter for further hearing on Thursday.

# RBI names minority-dominated regions for banks' priority lending schemes

*In a significant move, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released a list of states, Union Territories and districts dominated by different minority communities for extending priority lending schemes implemented by scheduled commercial banks in the country.*



Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a significant move, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released a list of states, Union Territories and districts dominated by different minority communities for extending priority lending schemes implemented by scheduled commercial banks in the country. Presently, the Union Ministry of Affairs has classified Sikhs, Muslim, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, and Jains as "minority communities". The RBI has listed 121 districts where the minority population component is at least 25 per cent, plus the states of Punjab, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and Lakshadweep.

As per the latest RBI Master Circular, dated August 2, partnership firms where the majority of the partners belong to any one or more of the specified minority communities, then advances can be granted to them and shall be treated as "advances granted to minority communities". Similarly, if the majority beneficial ownership in a partnership firm belongs to the minority community, it will be classified as advances to that specific community.

However, since a company is "a separate legal entity", the loans given to it

cannot be classified as advances to the specified minority communities, from the current fiscal, 2022-2023.

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led NDA government is desirous of special monitoring of credit flow to these minority-dominated districts, UTs and states, and ensure these under-represented categories "get a fair and equitable share of the credit within the overall target of the priority sector". Welcoming the government's move, the Nagpur-headquartered Council for Protection of Rights (CPR) President, barrister Vinod Tiwari said that this will prevent big companies run by certain minorities like Jains from cornering a big chunk of the priority sector lending extended by banks.

"Now, the government and RBI should disclose the actual data of which minorities have benefited and to what extent under this policy from 2014, when the Jains were also declared as a 'minority community' for the first time in India," he demanded.

Lauding the initiative, prominent stock markets consultant Rajesh Shah from Mumbai said with the "big fish" moving out, the genuinely deserving minorities will get bank loans easily.

"Several companies, particularly Jains in the realty sector have picked up huge loans, many have even defaulted, but now with the new directives, such per-

sons will not be entitled to loans due to their 'minority' status alone," he said.

Pune-based Muslim Chamber of Commerce & Industries (MCCI) President Nisar Sagar said he would study the new directives properly before commenting.

"Nevertheless, I can confidently say that Muslims have not been discriminated against on this count... Depending upon their business plans and collaterals, and if they fulfil other criteria, they are extended business loans as needed," Sagar told IANS.

Nationalist Congress Party Minority Cell President Mohammad Khan-Pathan said while government schemes are available, the awareness is very low, especially among the Muslims, owing to lack of education and guidance, thus they remain deprived of these benefits always. Tiwari said considering the new rules, "what will be the fate of those border-line districts where the minority population falls short by one or two per cent", and why a prominent minority community like Sindhis have been excluded from this "inclusivity" scheme.

"To make complete sense, the government and RBI must publish details of how many people from different minorities have been the real beneficiaries of this scheme, and whether its proportionate to their population or not," he urged. The RBI list of 121 districts where the minorities are minimum 25 percent is led by Uttar Pradesh with 21 districts, Kerala (14), Assam (13), West Bengal (12), Maharashtra (9), Arunachal Pradesh and Bihar (7 each), Manipur (6), Jharkhand and Sikkim (4 each), Karnataka (3), Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Uttarakhand, UT of Andaman & Nicobar Isles (2 each), Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and UT of Ladakh (1 each).

# NIA DETAINS TWO SUSPECTS IN UMESH KOLHE MURDER CASE

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday detained two persons in connection with the killing of Umesh Kolhe (54) in Amravati district of Maharashtra.

Kolhe was murdered on June 21 after he wrote a post in support of former BJP leader Nupur Sharma on Facebook.

The NIA has not disclosed their names as of now. In its FIR, the probe agency has mentioned about a group of people who hatched a conspiracy to send message to the people supporting Sharma and another BJP leader Naveen Jindal.

"They conspired to strike terror amongst a sec of people of India & with their assertions attempted to promote enmity on grounds of religion. Kolhe's murder was carried out as part of the conspiracy to "terrorize a section of the people of India," the NIA has claimed in the FIR.

The accused in the case might be having international link, it said.

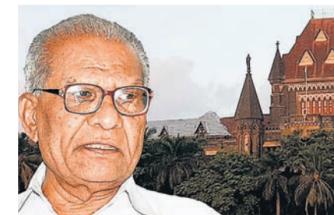
Earlier, the NIA had conducted searches at 13 locations in Maharashtra which led them to the recovery of incriminating documents.

During the searches on the premises of accused and suspects, digital devices (mobile phones, SIM cards, memory cards, DVRs), pamphlets spreading hate messages, knives and other incriminating documents and materials, were seized.

The case relates to killing of a pharmacist Umesh Kolhe that took place on June 21, 2022 in Amravati. He was killed for his social media post in which he had supported Nupur Sharma.

The case was initially registered with Police Station City Kotvali on June 22 and later on the probe was taken over by NIA on July 2. Further investigations in the matter is on. Notably, BJP leader Nupur Sharma was suspended from the post of party's spokesperson after her controversial comments about Prophet Muhammad had created nationwide stir in June.

# Govind Pansare killing: Bombay HC transfers probe from CID to Maha ATS



Team Absolute | Mumbai

In an important development, the Bombay High Court has transferred the probe into the killing of Communist Party of India leader Govind Pansare from the Maharashtra Police's CID to the state Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS).

A division bench of Justice Revati Mohite-Dere and Justice Sharmila Deshmukh gave the ruling in a plea filed by Smita Pansare, the daughter of Pansare who was shot on February 16, 2015 in Kolhapur and succumbed to his bullet injuries on February 20.

The court had earlier indicated its intentions to either form a fresh team of police officers to probe the case or transfer it to the ATS.

Special Public Prosecutor and senior advocate Ashok Mundargi, appearing for the state, said that it was agreeable to either of the two arrangements, but suggested it would be better if the ATS could handle the investigations.

Pansare's lawyer, Abhay Nevagi had pointed out how the probe was proceeding at a snail's pace with no significant breakthrough although it is over seven years since the killing of the CPI leader.

He pointed out that after the ATS solved the sensational Nala Sopara

*In an important development, the Bombay High Court has transferred the probe into the killing of Communist Party of India leader Govind Pansare from the Maharashtra Police's CID to the state Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS).*

(Palghar) arms haul case of 2018, they identified the sharpshooters who had masterminded the murder of rationalist Dr. Narendra Dabholkar in Pune on August 20, 2013.

Smita Pansare's plea contended that there was a larger conspiracy in the murders of her father, Dabholkar, M. M. Kalburgi and Gauri Lankesh which needs to be thoroughly investigated as they are inter-linked with a common conspirator.

She said that the alleged killers of her father - hit-men Sarang Akolkar and Vinay Pawar - are still on the run, and with some of the other co-accused in the case filing for discharge, if immediate steps are not taken, the probe to bring the two fugitive accused may not happen.

Intellectual and Left leader Pansare, 82, was shot at when he was returning after a morning walk along with his wife Uma, by two motorcycle-borne killers near their home in Kolhapur.

While the critically injured Pansare succumbed to his wounds after four days in a Mumbai hospital, his wife Uma survived and recovered, even as the killing sparked off a major political row.

# Maha Congress: National Herald raids aimed at eliminating Oppn

Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole has accused the BJP government at the Centre of trying to 'eliminate' the Opposition parties with acts such as the raids at the National Herald's office in Delhi on Tuesday.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole has accused the BJP government at the Centre of trying to 'eliminate' the Opposition parties with acts such as the raids at the National Herald's office in Delhi on Tuesday.

Patole said the central probe agencies like the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or the Income Tax Department have now become branches of the BJP government which are being misused at the behest of saffron party leaders.

"After repeatedly harassing Congress President Sonia Gandhi and Rahul

Gandhi in the name of investigation, they have now carried out raids at the National Herald office. This crackdown is nothing but an outcome of political vendetta," Patole said.

He also accused the BJP of taking away the independence of the central probe agencies, which are now only busy harassing the Opposition parties across the country in the name of alleged corruption.

"National Herald is an institution founded by great leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Purushottam Tandon, Acharya Narendra Deve and Rafi Ahmad Kidwai during the British rule. Post-Independence, it continued despite losses to support the idea of democracy, Constitution and the Congress," Patole

pointed out. He claimed that not a single rupee has been transacted in the National Herald case and the Gandhi family is being harassed to divert the country's attention from major problems like inflation and unemployment.

Patole also slammed BJP President J.P. Nadda's recent statement that all political parties in the country will be wiped out and only his party would remain, claiming that the actions against the Opposition are intended to suppress their voices.

"The Congress is not scared of these tactics and it will continue to speak out in the interest of the people. The BJP must remember that the mighty British were finally compelled by the Congress to leave the country. No matter how many atrocities are committed by the BJP, the Congress will reply to them through the democratic process," said Patole. Several other Congress leaders from all over India have slammed the BJP for the recent interrogation of the Gandhis by the ED and for the raids at the National Herald office on Tuesday, terming them as an outcome of the ruling party's policy of 'revenge' against the Opposition.

# SENSEX RISES FOR SIXTH STRAIGHT SESSION; NIFTY UP JUST 42 POINTS

The benchmark indices ended higher for the sixth straight session on Wednesday, with Sensex rising more than 200 points and Nifty just over 42 points.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The benchmark indices ended higher for the sixth straight session on Wednesday, with Sensex rising more than 200 points and Nifty just over 42 points.

At close, Sensex ended 214.17 points or 0.37 per cent up at 58,350.53, while Nifty was up 42.70 points or 0.29 per cent at 17,388.15.

The IT Index ended with a gain of 1.3 per cent, with Tech Mahindra, Infosys and TCS being the major contributors to the surge.

Tech Mahindra, TCS, Infosys and Asian Paints were among the major gainers in Nifty on Wednesday. About 1,370 shares advanced, 1,975 shares declined while 139 shares remained unchanged on Wednesday.

The BSE Mid-cap Index fell 0.6 per cent, while the Small-cap Index was down 0.28 per cent.



"Bulls and bears slugged it out in a volatile charged session, but eventually the former maintained their winning streak on Dalal Street on buying in IT and select finance stocks. Even as FII buying into local equities has resumed after a gap of three months, traders are taking a stock-specific approach ahead of the RBI's policy decision on Friday," said Shrikant Chouhan,

Head of Equity Research (Retail) at Kotak Securities Ltd. Nifty opened lower and witnessed volatility on account of weak global cues and ahead of weekly expiry. However, the index recovered in the last hour of the session.

Tensions surrounding Taiwan was shrugged off by the global as well as Indian markets which ended higher on Wednesday. Strong

momentum in the market over the last few days has helped pull up Nifty by more than 1,000 points in the last six trading sessions.

"Strong macro data, positive FII flows, steady earnings and healthy progress in monsoon have been some of the key factors supporting the market. In the near term, it could be a tug-of-war between domestic and global factors which could determine the market direction," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head of Retail Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.

The Shanghai Composite Index was down 0.7 per cent to 3,163.67 points, and the Chinese stocks also traded lower. Tokyo stocks ended up on Wednesday. The benchmark Nikkei 225 Index added 0.53 per cent while the Topix Index rose 0.27 per cent.

Amid US-China tensions, European stocks began the day on a negative note.



# TOM CRUISE STUNS COUPLE AS HE INTERRUPTS THEIR CASUAL HIKE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Tom Cruise usually likes to perform his own dangerous stunt and this time the actor has made a couple's day by filming one in front of them.

The star has left a couple named Sarah and Jason Haygarth in awe after he interrupted their casual hike with a

paragliding stunt, reports aceshowbiz.com.

According to the couple from the UK, who detailed their encounter with Cruise to The Sun, they were enjoying a hike around the English Lake District with their dog Edward when they spotted and spoke with the 60-year-old hunk. The actor reportedly arrived at the top of High Crag by helicopter and apol-

ogised to the couple for ruining their hike with the noise.

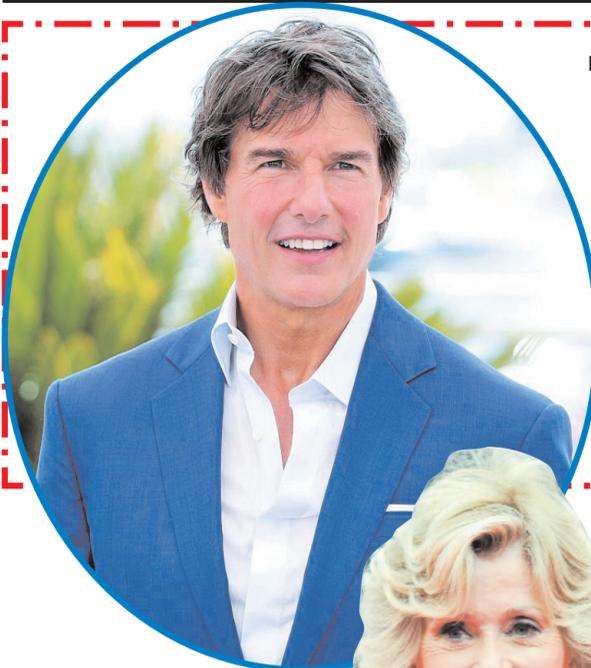
"Sorry for disturbing your peaceful walk with all the noise," he reportedly told them.

"I like your dog." As Tom prepared to jump off the cliff, Sarah asked him, "Are you really going to jump off there?"

The actor reportedly smiled and nodded. He then began running towards the

edge, shouting: "See you later, folks."

Despite the intense stunt, Sarah described Cruise "as cool as a cucumber." It is believed that the star was filming the stunt for the next 'Mission: Impossible' movie. The film, in which Tom will reprise his role as Ethan Hunt, is slated to hit theaters on July 14, 2023, with the second part being scheduled to be released on June 28, 2024.



## Jane Fonda is 'not proud' of her facelift

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Jane Fonda is "not proud" that she had a facelift and is unsure she would go under the knife again if she went back in time but she's thankful she stopped having cosmetic surgery as she didn't want to "look distorted". She told America's Vogue magazine, "We all know a lot of women who are wealthy who've had all kinds of facelifts and things like that and they look terrible." She admitted, "So, I had a facelift and I stopped because I don't want to look distorted. I'm not proud of the fact that I had (one). Now, I don't know if I had it to do over, if I would do it. But I did it. I admit it, and then I just say, okay," she said. The 'Grace and Frankie' actress warned people not to get carried away if they do have cosmetic surgery, reports aceshowbiz.com.

She added: "You can get addicted. Don't keep doing it. A lot of women, I don't know, they're addicted to it."

These days, Fonda keeps her beauty regime simple.

She said, "I stay moisturised, I sleep, I move, I stay out of the sun, and I have good friends who make me laugh."



## Kendall Jenner sits pantless on beau Devin Booker's lap



Los Angeles | Agencies

After confirming they are back together, model Kendall Jenner shared a PDA-filled picture with her beau and basketball player Devin Booker on social media.

Kendall has shared and deleted a PDA picture from their retreat on her Instagram Story. In the intimate snap, the reality TV star went pantless

as she appeared to only wear bikini bottoms underneath an oversized white graphic tee while sitting on Devin's lap, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The NBA star, meanwhile, went shirtless and sported blue swim trunks and black slides while sitting in a wooden chair on a porch. He fully supported the brunette beauty, who sipped on a bottled beverage as the pair looked at something in the distance.

Kendall confirmed their reconciliation late last month by sharing a video of Devin with her on holiday.

The 25-year-old basketball star could be seen in a field as he enjoyed a vacation with the 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians' alum in the clip she posted on her Story on July 31. He was seen throwing an axe at a tree in woods, while Kendall was filmed doing ziplining and hiking.

## Selena Gomez to soon produce 'Working Girl' reboot

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-actress Selena Gomez is set to produce the reboot of the 1980s classic 'Working Girl'. Gomez is in the final stages of the negotiations with Ilana Pena adapting the script, reports Deadline.

The film would likely premiere on streaming platform Hulu. Exact plot details for this pic are unknown but the 1988 pic starred Melanie Griffith, Harrison Ford, Sigourney Weaver and Joan Cusack and revolves around an ambitious secretary (Griffith) who takes on her boss' identity while the latter is laid up with a broken leg.

According to Deadline, the film was not only one of that year's breakout hits bringing in more than \$100 million at the domestic box office, but it also was critically hailed and earned six Oscar nominations including a Best Picture noms, Best Actress



nomination for Griffith and Supporting noms for Cusack and Weaver.

Gomez remains busy on the acting and producing fronts as she is an executive producer and star of the Hulu comedy 'Only Murders in the Building', which is coming off a number of Emmy nominations including Best Comedy following its first season and is currently in the middle of its second season. She is also starring and producing the HBO Max reality series 'Selena + Chef'.

## BULLET TRAIN: A NEVER-ENDING JOURNEY OF BRILLIANCE



SHACHI CHATURVEDI

**Directed by:** David Leitch

**Runtime:** 2 hrs 6 mins

**Cast:** Brad Pitt, Bad Bunny, Joey King, Sandra Bullock, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Karen Fukuhara, Logan Lerman, Brian Tyree Henry, Zazie Beetz, HiroYuki Sanada, Andrew Koji, Michael Shannon

**Rating- 3.5/5**

**Synopsis :** Five assassins board a bullet train travelling from Tokyo to Morioka with only a few stops in between. They learn that their missions are not unconnected.

**Review :** Assume you need to board a train to complete a task, and that life-changing decision sends you on a new adventure. This is what happens when dangerous assassin Ladybug (Brad Pitt) enters a Japanese bullet train to do a job. He's been instructed to grab a briefcase and depart at the next stop. However, this basic chore places him in the company of some intriguing weird personalities, each of whom is on a different task.

Throw in a number of hilarious cameos from rapper Bad Bunny and Hollywood A-listers Channing Tatum and Ryan Gosling, and you've got yourself a potent combination to give you a head rush.

While assembling this group was a brilliant concept, your attention is mostly drawn to the film's main attraction - Brad Pitt. Despite his fame, Pitt seemed to be having a good time in most of the sequences as Ladybug.



Despite the complexities of the action sequences (which are all shot in this tiny capsule), the actor manages to escape the grips of the tags that follow his name. Brad is undoubtedly a significant reason why, despite its slightly slow trip, Bullet Train manages to be an engaging journey.

When it comes to the supporting characters, 'the Twins' Lemon (Brian Tyree Henry) and Tangerine (Aaron Taylor-Johnson) are the standouts. The film's highlights are Lemon and Tangerine's outstanding performances (including the latter's perfect suit) and their never-ending banter.

Joey King appears to be a vulnerable child on the train, yet her character surprises everyone. It's a real delight to see Pitt and Tatum in the same shot. I only wish we had more screen time with

Sandra Bullock, whose presence is mostly limited to a phone call.

The amazing cinematography in the film, definitely shines the camera bends and back flips to keep the viewer fascinated and delighted. The superb and precise editing complements the cinematography admirably.

Bullet Train isn't a "deep" film since its knowledge of both human nature and its location is purely inadequate. But it is jam-packed with jokes and segments, so many that they are certain to be successful.

**Final Verdict :** The bullet train is a journey that will make you experience all of your emotions at once. You will not be bored for a single second. The film is a collaborative effort by the whole cast, however, Brad Pitt shines above all. The movie is worth a watch.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Julianne Hough



## Commonwealth Games 2022

# INDIAN MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM WIN OVER CANADA BY 8-0, TOPS THE POOL B

Birmingham | Agencies

The Indian men's hockey team continued the unbeaten run at the 2022 Commonwealth Games after thrashing Canada 8-0 in its third Pool B match, here on Wednesday.

Harmanpreet Singh (7', 56'), and Akashdeep Singh (37', 60') scored a brace each, while Amit Rohidas (10'), Lalit Kumar Upadhyay (20'), Gurjant Singh (27'), and Mandeep Singh (58') scored one goal each for India.

With the win, India climbed to the top of the Pool B table with seven points in three games courtesy of their superior goal difference over England. Both England and India have two wins and a draw under their belt but India hold the edge with a goal difference of +19 compared to England's +8. Meanwhile, Canada are yet to win a match at Birmingham 2022.

The match started with India attacking down the left flank straightaway with Hardik Singh and Akashdeep Singh threatening Canada's defence. Captain Manpreet Singh slipped an excellent pass to Lalit Kumar Upadhyay inside the striking circle, but the shot from the latter just went wide.

Harmanpreet Singh put India in front as he scored the first goal from a Penalty Corner. Minutes later, Amit Rohidas broke past the Canadian defence from the left flank as he struck



a powerful hit into the nets to extend India's lead to 2-0 before the end of the first quarter.

India continued threatening penetrations inside the circle in the early minutes of the second quarter as Canada went deep into their own half to defend their goal. After India received another Penalty Corner, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay scored from a rebound to further extend India's lead to 3-0. India gave no respite to Canadian defence, continuing to attack in numbers, as the second

half kicked off Akashdeep Singh struck a snapshot from the edge of the circle into the nets as India extended their lead to 5-0.

With only minutes left on the clock, Mandeep Singh struck a tomahawk into the nets to get his name on the score-sheet, while Akashdeep Singh added another goal in the final seconds, as India went on to win the match 8-0.

India will play their last pool match against world No 13 Wales on Thursday.

## WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM QUALIFIES FOR SEMIS

Birmingham:

The Indian women's hockey team played a high octane match and booked a place in the semifinal at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games after defeating Canada 3-2 on Wednesday.

Salima Tete (3'), Navneet Kaur (22') and Lalremsiami (51') found the back of the net for India, meanwhile, Brienne Stairs (23') and Hannah Haughn (39') scored for Canada. The Indian team's opponent for the semifinal will be decided after the final Pool A match between England and Wales on Thursday. However, India have confirmed a top-two finish in their Pool.

The Indian team got off to an aggressive start and earned a Penalty Corner in the third minute of the match. Navneet Kaur produced a fantastic ball from the left flank and Salima Tete tapped the ball into the goal to help India take a 1-0 lead in the match. India rode on the momentum and held most of the ball possession at the start of the second half. In the 22nd minute, Lalremsiami carried out a spectacular pass from the right flank to Navneet, who struck the ball into the goal to help India extend their lead at 2-0. In the 39th minute, Canada earned a Penalty Corner and Hannah Haughn found the back of the net to equalize the score at 2-2. Lalremsiami converted a Penalty Corner in the 51st minute as India took the lead at 3-2.



## LOVEPREET SINGH CLAIMS BRONZE IN MEN'S 109 KG IN WEIGHTLIFTING

Birmingham | Agencies

Heavyweight weightlifter Lovepreet Singh added to India's rich haul from weightlifting at the Commonwealth Games by claiming a bronze medal in the Men's 109 kg division at the National Exhibition Centre here on Wednesday.

The 24-year-old Lovepreet Singh lifted 163 in snatch and added 192 kg in clean and jerk for a combined total of 355 kg, which put him behind Junior Periclex Ngadjia Nyabeyeu of Cameroon, who had a total of 361 and Jack Hittila Opeloge of Samoa who had a total of 358.

Though he had a clean series of lifts and succeeded in all six attempts, Lovepreet was totally conservative in his approach and worked with the aim of securing a bronze medal. This was India's ninth medal from the 2022 Commonwealth Games at Birmingham and the 14th medal overall, five gold, five silver and four bronze.



## AUSTRALIA WOMEN BEAT PAKISTAN BY 44 RUNS

Birmingham: An unbeaten 141-run partnership between Beth Mooney and Tahlia McGrath helped Australia Women beat Pakistan by 44 runs in their group A match and remain unbeaten at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, here on Wednesday. A promising start with the ball turned into a nightmare for Pakistan as Australia established their supremacy and registered their third consecutive win in the tournament. Before Pakistan, the Meg Lanning-led side had beaten Barbados and India in their first two matches. Having opted to bat first, Australia lost Alyssa Healy and Meg Lanning in the Powerplay, and ambled along to 22/2 at the end of the six-over mark. If Pakistan thought they could tighten the screws from there, Tahlia McGrath and Beth Mooney quickly shut down such thoughts. The duo put on 36 runs in the four overs after the Powerplay, scoring at least one

## Judoka Tulika Maan reaches final in heavyweight division

Birmingham | Agencies

Launching a superb attack at the stroke of two minutes in her semifinal bout with New Zealand's Sydnee Andrews, Tulika Maan assured India the third medal on the judo mat at the 2022 Commonwealth Games at Victoria Park, Coventry, as she stormed into the final of the women's heavyweight division (+78kg) comfortably winning two bouts in the process.

The attack at one minute and 53 seconds bagged Tulika an Ippon, the highest point bagged by a judoka in an international match that signals the end of a bout.



Tulika was trailing in the bout as her opponent had bagged a Waza-ari with an attack on 57 seconds. The Indian judoka had also been warned by the referee for being passive (Shido) before she came back brilliantly to win the bout and secure a place in the final. In the final,

Tulika will meet Sarah Adlington of Scotland on Wednesday evening to decide the colour of the medal. Earlier, Shushila Devi Likmabam had won a silver medal in the women's 48 kg class while Vijay Kumar Yadav claimed a bronze medal in the men's 60kg division. Tulika will be going for India's maiden gold medal on the judo mat as India have bagged three silver and five bronze medals in judo at the Commonwealth Games so far.

Judo is an optional sport at the Commonwealth Games and has been held at 1986, 1990, 2002 and 2014 editions before Birmingham.

## BOXERS NITU, HUSSAMUDDIN REACH SEMIS, ASSURED A MEDAL

Birmingham | Agencies

Indian boxers Nitu and Hussamuddin Mohamad assured themselves at least a medal in the Commonwealth Games as they reached the semifinals in their respective weight divisions, overcoming their quarterfinal opponents in contrasting styles at the National Exhibition Centre, Hall No 4, here on Wednesday.

Nitu reached the last-four stage of the women's minimum weight division (over 45-48kg) when her opponent Nicole Clyde of Northern Ireland abandoned the bout. The pull-out by the Northern Ireland boxer meant Nitu made it to the semifinals and ensured that she will leave Birmingham with at least a bronze medal as both semifinals get a medal in boxing. Hussamuddin advanced into the semifinals by defeating Namibia's Tryagain Morning Ndevelo 4-1 on points. The place in the semi-



nals assured him at least a medal in the men's 57kg division.

While she reached the semifinals because her opponent abandoned the bout, Nitu said she prepared well for her quarterfinal bout and was looking forward to winning it, adding

that she is aiming to win the gold medal in Birmingham.

"I was prepared physically and mentally for this fight. The training camp over here in Northern Ireland before the Games helped me massively. I am very happy to be making

my family proud who have sacrificed a lot for me to be here. I am doing myself and them proud by advancing through to the semi-finals. I am aiming to get the gold here in Birmingham and don't want to settle for less," said Nitu after advancing to the last-four stage. India have three more competitors attempting to reach the semifinals on Wednesday. Reigning World Champion Nikhat Zareen, Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain and Ashish Kumar are scheduled to participate in their respective quarterfinal bouts later in the afternoon. India had a very successful outing in the 2018 Commonwealth Games four years ago winning nine medals -- three gold, three silver and three bronze each, finishing tied with England, who however topped the list as they had won six gold medals. India are hoping to emulate if not better their Gold Coast CWG haul of nine medals.

## RENUKA SINGH NOMINATED FOR ICC PLAYER OF THE MONTH AWARDS

Los Angeles | Agencies

Indian fast bowler Renuka Singh, along with five other cricketers, has been nominated for ICC Player of the Month awards for July, the world cricket governing body said on Wednesday.

The ICC Men's Player of the Month for June, Jonny Bairstow, is nominated once more following stellar performances at the crease for England, while Sri Lanka's Test debutant and spin maestro Prabath Jayasuriya finds himself on the shortlist for the first time. Completing the men's lineup for July is France's record-breaking teenage star, Gustav McKeon.

Nat Sciver is no stranger to being nominated for the ICC Women's Player of the Month award, and her second successive appearance on the shortlist follows her outstanding performances across the ODI and T20I series against South Africa. England's Emma Lamb enjoyed a very success-



ful month with the bat and ball and is named on the shortlist which is completed with the addition of dangerous India seamer Renuka.

The winner of the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for June, Bairstow continued where he left off with blis-

tering performances in multiple formats in July. He reasserted his sublime form with the bat during his side's final Test showdown with India at Edgbaston, scoring 106 and 114 to claim another historic Test victory and seal a 2-2 series draw against the

odds during more final day drama.

His notable exploits with the bat during his side's white ball series against South Africa, including a 53-ball 90 in the first T20I, strengthens his claim to win a second successive award for July.

## Chess Olympiad

## Humpy, Vaishali help India beat Georgia in women's section

Mamallapuram (Tamil Nadu) | Agencies

Koneru Humpy pulled off a thumping victory over one of the top players in the women's circuit, Nana Dzagnidze as India A defeated third-seeded Georgia 3-1 in the sixth-round match of the women's section at the 44th Chess Olympiad here on Wednesday.

Apart from Humpy, R Vaishali also thrashed a higher-rated player in Lela Javakhishvili while Tania Sachdev and Harika Dronavalli secured draws to help India win the match. Humpy, by the middle-game, was in complete command with one passed pawn pushed to the sixth and her queen, bishop and rooks threatening to grab more material. Playing cautiously, she periodically forced the exchange of pieces and Dzagnidze resigned on the 42nd turn when the Indian's bishop and queen threatened to win a piece.

Humpy, wielding Whites, later admitted that she was completely surprised by the



choice of Benoni defence by Nana and played a couple of dubious moves in the Opening. Dzagnidze got a pleasant position but it soon turned ugly with some precise positional play by Humpy who got her act together.

On the other hand, Vaishali and Javakhishvili battled in the Spanish Opening with the former on the aggressive side. Play was focussed on the queen-side for most part and Vaishali sacrificed a rook for a bishop on the 17th turn and netted two pieces for it. She pocketed a point after 36 moves.

## Kidambi Srikanth suffers shock defeat as India settle for silver in Mixed Team badminton

Birmingham | Agencies

PV Sindhu was the only one to win her match while former world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth suffered defeat as India went down to Malaysia 1-3 in the final of the mixed team competition to settle for silver in the 2022 Commonwealth Games here.

The Indian contingent had reached Birmingham as defending champions in three categories but has been able to retain the gold medal in only one. The Indian women's table tennis team had earlier failed to defend its title as it went down to Malaysia in the quarterfinals, leaving the Men's TT team as



the only side to retain the gold medal it had won at Gold Coast in 2018.

Sindhu levelled the score by beating Jin Wei Goh 22-20, 21-17 in the women's singles, quelling the challenge put up by the Malaysians. The first game was tight as the Malaysian put up a good fight

but in the second, Sindhu was in total control to emerge victorious. The biggest disappointment for India, which virtually sealed its fate, was the defeat Kidambi Srikanth suffered at the hands of Ng Tze Yong, ranked 44th in the world as compared to Srikanth's 13th.

## INDIA WIN BY SEVEN WICKETS IN 3RD T20I AGAINST WEST INDIES

Basseterre (St Kitts) | Agencies

Suryakumar Yadav finally succeeded at the top of the order after two successive below-par scores as India defeated the West Indies by seven wickets in the third T20 International at Warner Park to take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

On a day when the visitors had a major injury scare with Rohit Sharma retiring hurt while batting due to a back spasm, Suryakumar took off smashing a 44-ball 76 as India overhauled West Indies' score of 164/5 for the loss of just three wicket and an over to spare.

All-rounder Hardik Pandya, while not quite contributing much with the bat or ball, however achieved the rare double of 500 runs and 50 wickets.

Pandya dismissed Brandon King after a fifty-run opening stand between him and Kyle Mayers to become the sixth India men's player to 50 T20I wickets. Ravindra Jadeja, who completed the feat in the previous T20I, was the last to get to the landmark. However, by completing 50 T20I wickets,



Hardik Pandya also completed a double of 500 runs and 50 wickets in T20Is, becoming the 11th men's player and 30th overall to the feat. Pandya has a

total of 806 T20I runs.

The only other Indian to achieve this rare double in T20Is is Deepti Sharma, who currently has 65 T20I wickets and 521 runs.

Among the men's players to get to this double, Hardik is the latest to make his T20I debut, having first played for India in 2016, according to ICC.

Pandya has been in good form with the ball this year in limited-overs cricket. He has eight wickets in T20Is and six in ODIs with two four-wicket hauls. In St Kitts on Tuesday, Pandya bowled a spell of 4-0-19-1 to restrict the West Indies. Importantly, he drew the breakthrough for India after the West Indies openers put on a half-century stand.

West Indies skipper Nicholas Pooran rued the fact that his bowlers couldn't make early breakthroughs.

## Brief scores

West Indies 164/5 in 20 overs (Kyle Mayers 73, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 2/35) lost to India 165/3 in 19 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 76, Rishabh Pant 33 not out) by seven wickets.



## Ranveer Singh to reunite with Bear Grylls to face some more deadly challenges

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Ranveer Singh is one of the industry's most brilliant actors. He captivated audiences with his impeccable acting chops. Ranveer has teamed up with British explorer, journalist, and television presenter Bear Grylls for a programme titled Ranveer Vs Wild, which debuted on July 8. Now, the actor is going to return to Ranveer versus Wild with

Bear Grylls for season 2.

Following the popularity of the first season, it appears that the show's creators have approved two additional seasons. According to the reports in a news portal, a source revealed, "Ranveer is going off on a big adventure and this time it's going to be bigger and better. It seems like Ranveer is going to shoot two back-to-back seasons of Ranveer vs Wild with Bear Grylls this September. The first

season became the talk of the town and is being hailed as a brilliant interactive show which made all the right headlines, thanks to Ranveer. He will turn on his charismatic energy again for the next two seasons that will blow people's minds in terms of scale and action."

Meanwhile, on the work front, Ranveer will next be seen in Cirkus and Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani.



## ALIA BHATT: RANBIR DOES MANY THINGS TO MAKE ME FEEL SPECIAL

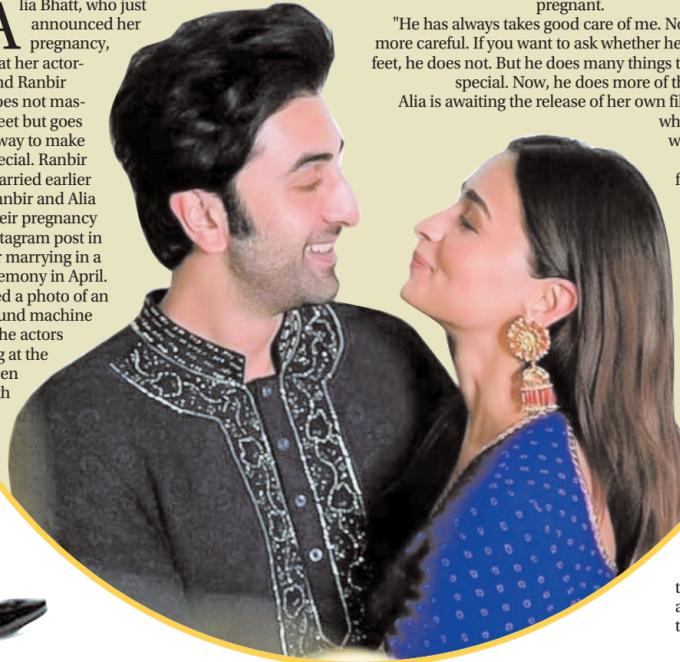
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Alia Bhatt, who just announced her pregnancy, stated that her actor-husband Ranbir Kapoor does not massage her feet but goes out of his way to make her feel special. Ranbir and Alia married earlier this year. Ranbir and Alia revealed their pregnancy with an Instagram post in June, after marrying in a secret ceremony in April. She posted a photo of an ultrasound machine with the actors staring at the screen with

their backs to the camera. Alia informed a top portal that Ranbir Kapoor is taking care of her now that she is pregnant.

"He has always taken good care of me. Now, he is even more careful. If you want to ask whether he massages my feet, he does not. But he does many things to make me feel special. Now, he does more of that."

Alia is awaiting the release of her own film, Darlings, in which she co-stars with Shefali Shah. Ranbir was last featured in Karan Malhotra's Shamsheera, which was severely panned and had a poor box office result.



## Kiara Advani clicked making her way to Sidharth Malhotra's residence

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Sidharth and Kiara have been rumoured to be dating for quite a while now. The duo has neither confirmed nor denied their relationship. However, their adorable chemistry in real life, their spottings together, and their frequent vacations act as fuel to the ongoing speculations and only strengthen them further.

Recently, the Shershaah actors were spotted at the airport, as they jetted off to Dubai ahead of Kiara's 30th birthday. They are back to the bay and were papped at the Airport on

the night of August 1.

Earlier today, the Jugjugg Jeeyo actress was spotted outside the rumoured boyfriend's residence. Kiara was clicked in casuals as she was getting down of her luxury car. She kept her hair tied in a ponytail. The actress didn't greet the paparazzi stationed outside Sidharth's house and directly made her way to his building while being on a call.

On the work front, her upcoming projects include 'RC-15' with Ram Charan, Satyaprem ki Katha with Kartik Aaryan and 'Govinda Naam Mera' with Vicky Kaushal and Bhumi Pednekar.

Meanwhile, Sidharth Malhotra will be seen in Sagar Ambre and Pushkar Ojha's directorial Yodha, which is set to release on November 11 this year.

## SAVI THAKUR: I'M NOW AFRAID OF ENTERING AN ONGOING SHOW

Team Absolute | Mumbai

TV actor Savi Thakur has wrapped up the shoot for his comedy drama "Maddam Sir". He called it quite unfortunate as he joined the show a few months ago and said that he is now a bit skeptical about joining any show when it is already on air. He was

seen playing Haseena Malik's (played by Gulki Joshi) love interest. Savi said: "I'm now afraid of entering an ongoing show. As my experience with this serial (Maddam Sir) makes me realise that the role may end anytime and is not a positive feeling."

About wrapping up his shoots, he said: "My character's journey in

the show has now come to an end. I have already wrapped up my shooting. I enjoyed playing a cop on screen. It was one among the lovely experiences working in the show."

"I do not want to limit myself as I'm up for playing any interesting role offered to me but of course it needs to be a central character in

the story," said actor. After being part of a number of TV shows, Savi now wants to do music videos. "I'm always keen on doing music videos. They are amazing."

I previously featured in Sunanda Sharma's music video, 'Sandal' and have just completed shooting for the other one which will be announced soon."

## Janhvi reveals how her films have helped her cultivate self-confidence

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Janhvi Kapoor has cemented her position as a star with five diverse films in her journey of four years which started with "Dhadak". But, despite all the noise around nepotism, she has had her fair share of emotionally taxing experiences that have added to her performances on a subconscious level in her opinion.

The actress, who made her digital debut with her second anthology "Ghost Stories", has recently come out with yet another streaming film titled "Good Luck Jerry" which like her debut, is a remake of a Tamil film "Kolamaavu Kokila" starring Nayanthara.

Janhvi spoke about her journey, so far, the emotionally draining moments and her vision towards her filmography.

The actress wants her filmography to be defined by scripts that appeal to the audience on an emotional level, as she said: "The kind of films that I gravitate towards, have an emotional connect, I want to make people laugh and cry but more than anything, it's important for me that I move people with my ability as an actor. I try to include those films in my filmography that can move people and I choose my scripts, accordingly. Having said that, I really want to do a full fledged front foot comedy." Janhvi said: "You can't only rely on luck, it makes you complacent. Luck does play a part in a person's life and success but, hard work is something that materialises the success, also your outlook is an important factor."



## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Jasmin Bhasin