

# absolute india

VOL. 8, ISSUE 58, BHOPAL | SUNDAY, JANUARY 08, 2023 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI



**NATION** > 02  
Mohan Bhagwat urges people to join Sangh for unifying society...



**HOLLYWOOD** > 06  
'We really struggled at first to get back into shape!'



**SPORTS** > 07  
Surya kumar yadav's blistering century powers India to 228/5 ...

## WINTER AT ITS BEST



(Photo: Nisar Malik)

■ Tourists enjoying next to a frozen waterfall in Drung village of Baramulla district on Saturday.

## FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS CAN BENEFIT PRODUCTIVITY, WORK-LIFE BALANCE: ILO

*Inclusive short-time work schemes with the highest possible allowances not only maintain employment but also sustain purchasing power and create the possibility of cushioning the effects of economic crises, the report emphasized, adding that public policy responses are needed to promote reductions in hours of work in many countries to promote both a healthy work-life balance and improved productivity.*

Geneva | Agencies

Reduced working hours and more flexible working time arrangements, such as those used during the Covid-19 crisis, can bring benefits for economies, businesses and workers, such as greater productivity and improved work-life balance, a new report released by the International Labour Organization (ILO) released.

The report, titled 'Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World', is the first of its kind. It provides a comprehensive review of both main aspects of working time -- working hours and working time arrangements -- and their effects on workers' work-life balance, reports Xinhua news agency.

According to the report, a substantial portion of the



global workforce is now working either long or short hours when compared to a standard eight-hour day or 40-hour working week.

More than one-third of all workers are regularly working more than 48 hours per week, while a fifth of the global workforce is working

short hours of less than 35 hours per week. The Covid-19 crisis measures yielded powerful new evidence that giving workers more flexibility in how, where and when they work can be positive both for them and for business, for example by improving productivity, the report said.

## NATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL LOGO AND MASCOT RELEASED IN K'TAKA

Bengaluru: Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai released a logo and mascot of the National Youth Festival to be held in Hubballi-Dharwad from January 12.

In a function held virtually on Saturday, Bommai thanked the Government of India for allowing Karnataka to host this year's National Youth Festival and Khelo India University Sports meet. The state has made all arrangements to host the Youth Festival on a grand scale. On the occasion, a discussion on the arrangements for the event was held, and it was decided to hold a meeting of young legislators, MPs and other elected representatives. The Railway Board agreed to attach special coaches for the youths coming to Hubballi-Dharwad from different parts of the country.



SEE YOU IN 2023

## TERM DEPOSIT INTEREST RATES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS CLIMBING UP

Chennai | Agencies

With credit disbursements picking up and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) increasing its lending rates to the banks (repo rate) banks and others are now offering higher interest rates on fixed deposits.

In the case of senior citizens, the fixed deposit rates touch 8 per cent in certain cases.

During the Covid-19 period, the interest on fixed deposits were in the 5% band and one year deposit and now it has climbed up to 7 per cent band.

The State Bank of India (SBI) offers 7.25 per cent for senior citizens on fixed deposits for a period 1 year to less than 2 years and also for 5-10 years tenure.

The interest rates go down to 6.75 per cent for senior citizens on fixed deposits for three years to less than five years.

On its part, the HDFC Bank offers senior citizens 7% on deposits for 1 year to 15 months and 7.75 per cent on term deposits for five years one day to 10 years.

If a fixed deposit is broken prematurely, then the banks will offer the interest rate applicable for the actual term.

The government has revised upwards the interest rates on Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (SCSS) to 8 per cent for the fourth quarter of FY23. The SCSS interest rate is reviewed quarterly and is subject to periodic change. Interest is also calculated and credited quarterly.



## FPIs sold for 11 consecutive days to the tune of Rs 14,300 cr

New Delhi: FPIs have turned sustained sellers in the Indian market and sold for 11 consecutive days taking the cumulative selling to Rs 14,300 crore, says V.K. Vijayakumar, the Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services. FIIs will sell stocks in which they are sitting on profits, like the banking segment. And this segment continues to be strong. Last year, too, selling by FIIs in banks turned out to be opportunities for domestic investors. Globally, the phenomenon of good economic news becoming bad news for markets might continue in the near term. The latest data from the US show increasing job creation and declining jobless claims, he added.

Share of Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) (which includes domestic Mutual Funds, Insurance Companies, Banks, Financial Institutions, Pension Funds etc. as a whole) along with retail and High Net-worth Individual (HNI) investors reached an all time high of 24.03 per cent as on September 30, 2022 from 23.54 per cent as on June 30, 2022, on the back of net inflows from DIIs of Rs 17,597 crore during the quarter, as per Prime info base, an initiative of Prime Database Group.

## RBI: OPTIMISTIC ABOUT GROWTH

New Delhi: The fundamentals of the Indian economy, according to the RBI, are sound and resilient and it is confronting strong global headwinds. These are the views of the central bank's Financial Stability Report, which expressed optimism over economic growth.

"The global economy is facing formidable headwinds with recessionary risks looming large. The interplay of multiple shocks has resulted in tightened financial conditions and heightened volatility in financial markets. "The Indian economy is confronting strong global headwinds. Yet, sound macroeconomic fundamentals and healthy financial and non-financial sector balance sheets are providing strength and resilience and engendering financial system stability," the RBI noted.

It said that buoyant demand for bank credit and early signs of a revival in the investment cycle are benefiting from improved asset quality, return to profitability and strong capital and liquidity buffers of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs). The gross non-performing asset (GNPA) ratio of scheduled commercial banks fell to a seven-year low of 5.0 per cent and net non-performing assets (NNPA) have dropped to a ten-year low of 1.3 per cent in September 2022, said the report.

## 'RRR', 'All That Breathes' find a place each on BAFTA Film Awards

London | Agencies

After landing two Golden Globe nominations, making it to the Oscars long list and winning a handful of the early awards season trophies, 'RRR' is now one of the 10 films in the race for the prestigious BAFTA award in the 'Film Not in the English Language' category. And it is not the only Indian contender to figure on the long lists, which were released on Friday night by the British Academy for Film and Television Arts (BAFTA). Delhi-based Shaunak Sen's documentary, 'All That Breathes', is also on the long list in its category. 'RRR' is in competition with 'All Quiet on the Western Front', 'Argentina, 1985', 'Bardo, False Chronicle of a Handful of Truths', Cannes 2022 Grand Prix winner 'Close', 'Corsage', 'Decision To Leave' (which won Best Director for its helmer, Park Chan-



wook), 'EO', 'Holy Spider', 'The Quiet Girl' and 'RRR'. The BAFTA Film Awards unveiled this year's longlists for 24 categories, according to 'Variety', and in the lead are 'All Quiet on the Western Front', Netflix's World War I drama, with 15 nods and 'The Banshees of Inisherin' (Searchlight; starring Brendan Gleeson and Colin Farrell), which follows with

14. The final BAFTA nominations will be announced on January 19 at a live event and global livestream hosted by actors Hayley Atwell and Toheeb Jimoh. The awards ceremony will take place on Sunday, February 19, at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall -- a shift from the awards' usual home of Royal Albert Hall, notes 'Variety'.

## IAF, JAPAN'S AIR SDF SET TO EXERCISE JOINTLY IN JAPAN

New Delhi: To promote bilateral air defence cooperation, the Indian Air Force and Japan's Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) are all set to hold joint exercise, 'Veer Guardian-2023' at Japan's Hyakuri Air Base from January 12 to 26, a defence statement said.

The Indian contingent participating in the air exercise will include four Su-30 MKI fighters, and two C-17s and an IL-78 transport aircraft while the JASDF will be participating with four F-2 and four F-15 fighter aircraft. During the second Foreign and Defence Ministerial meeting held in Tokyo on September 8, India and Japan agreed to step up bilateral defence cooperation and engage in more military exercises, including holding the first joint fighter jet drills, reflecting the growing security cooperation between the two sides.

This exercise will thus be another step in deepening strategic ties and closer defence cooperation between the two countries.

## For Indian techies, is it the end of the great American dream?

As thousands of techies continue to lose jobs at Big Tech companies amid recession fears, most of them are finding it difficult to get jobs, as there is a freeze on new hirings at nearly every top firms, amid global macroeconomic conditions and recession fears.

- The application fees for employment-based visas, such as H1-B and L, are set to increase under a proposed US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) fee rule to recover operating costs and prevent case backlogs.
- Under the new proposal, which will be subject to a 60-day comment period before it takes effect, the application fee for H-1B visas for high-skilled workers would jump by 70 per cent to \$780.
- H-1B visa petitioners would also need to pay \$215 in pre-registration fees, up from the current \$10 fee.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amazon, Salesforce, Meta, Twitter, Uber and other tech companies have laid off employees as well as put a total freeze on new hirings. In some cheer for those who have lost jobs in the ongoing funding winter and global macro-economic conditions, most laid-off tech employees landed new

jobs within three months of starting their search for a new opening. A ZipRecruiter survey revealed that nearly 79 per cent of terminated staff in the tech industry landed a new job within three months.

Nearly four in 10 previously laid off tech workers found jobs less than a month after they began searching, the survey found. However, 2023 is set to become the worst year for tech layoffs and there may not be jobs available for those on H1-B visa anymore.

Several Indian-origin workers were left in the lurch in late 2022. Now, with the latest layoffs announced by Amazon and Salesforce, and Google soon joining the list, several of H-1B visa holders will be left in a precarious situation. They will again have 60 days to find a new job or leave the US, ending their American Dream. "Although an increase from \$10 to \$215 may appear dramatic at first glance, the \$10 fee was established simply to cover a small portion of the costs of the program, as opposed to no fee at all," the USCIS said in a statement. LinkedIn in late 2022 was flooded with stories of laid-off H1-B workers. It was an anxious time for tens of thousands of newly laid-off workers amid inflation pressures and recession concerns. Some people who were in earlier rounds of layoffs got jobs but even they were pessimistic about the current market.

## CAC RETAINS CHETAN SHARMA AS CHAIRMAN OF INDIA SENIOR MEN'S SELECTION COMMITTEE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Board of Control for Cricket in India's Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) comprising Sulakshana Naik, Ashok Malhotra, and Jatin Paranjape on Saturday recommended Chetan Sharma as chairman of the India senior men's selection committee. Sharma, who has 23 Test caps, had been holding the post in the previous selection committee since December 2020, when he replaced Sunil Joshi in the role.

He had re-applied for a role in the selection committee when the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) made an announcement for new appointments for a fresh five-member panel on November 18, 2022.

In an official statement, the BCCI informed that the CAC had shortlisted 11 individuals for personal interviews after receiving 600 applications for the five posts. Based on the

interviews, the CAC has recommended Sharma, Shiv Sundar Das, Subroto Banerjee, Salil Ankola and Sridharan Sharath for being part of the selection committee.

Das, the former India men's Test opener, was previously the batting coach of the Indian women's cricket team while Ankola, the ex-India fast bowler, is the current chief selector of the Mumbai men's team in domestic cricket.

Banerjee is a former India pacer who has also been the coach of fast bowler Umesh Yadav. Sharath, hailing from Tamil Nadu, is the current chairman of the Junior Men's Selection Committee and under his panel, India won U19 Men's World Cup in West Indies in 2022.

The task of the new selection committee will be to pick the squads for India's white-ball series against New Zealand, set to happen later in the month.



# PM GATISHAKTI MAPS DATA LAYERS RELATED TO SOCIAL SECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Data layers on important assets related to health, education, culture, tourism, Gram panchayats, municipal corporation, social welfare housing, among others, are being mapped for optimum use of PM GatiShakti for social infrastructure planning.

A review meeting on this by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) at Vanijya Bhawan in New Delhi was attended by Ministry of Housing of Urban Affairs, Department of School Education and Literacy, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Rural Development and BISAG-N, among others, Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a statement on Saturday.



"The 12 Ministries and Departments onboarded are now in advanced stages of data integration onto the NMP Platform that include important layers such as schools,

hospitals, and anganwadi centres, among others," officials said. At the review meeting, the BISAG-N (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-

informatics) made a presentation on decision-making and planning tools, use cases such as connectivity to model schools and disaster management planning along with the advantages of adopting NMP by social sector Ministries or Departments.

The Ministries and Departments presented the progress of adopting GatiShakti, data layers that can be integrated onto the NMP platform and the challenges being faced by them during the integration process.

The presentations were followed by deliberations with the participants, interesting and socio-economically useful ideas were generated, for instance, mapping of anganwadi centres with respect to accessibility, evaluation of location for establishing a new technical institute for promoting linkage with industry, analysing locations of schools and identifying any connectivity issues and so on.

## Raju Bista-Bimal Gurung meeting sparks political speculations in Darjeeling

Kolkata | Agencies

A surprise meeting between BJP Lok Sabha member from Darjeeling Raju Bista and Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) chief Bimal Gurung at the latter's residence has sparked fresh political speculations in the hills.

Gurung, Hamro Party founder Ajay Edwards and Binoy Tamang, who had recently quit Trinamool Congress, have already given clear hints of an alliance against the joint front of the Anit Thapa-led Bharatiya Gorkha Prajatantrik Morcha (BGPM) and Trinamool Congress. In such a situation, the close-door meeting on Friday night have led to fresh speculations over Gurung to regain his old ties with saffron camp and thus give his newly formed alliance with Edwards and Tamang a backing of a national party like BJP.

On Saturday, Bista and Gurung described the meeting as a courtesy call and offered some subtle hints, making the speculation deeper for a renewed political equation in the hills. While acknowledging the role played by Gurung behind his victory from Darjeeling in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Bista said that despite not having an official alliance with BJP currently, the GJM chief's personal relationship with him is still intact. "Since I was in the hills, I went to meet him keeping in mind



those personal relations," he said.

On the other hand, Gurung said that during the meeting he reminded the local Lok Sabha member of his commitments towards the Gorkha community. "I requested him to work for the sake of Gorkhaland."

After remaining underground for a long time, Gurung returned to the hills soon after the 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections severing his ties with BJP and at the same time expressing solidarity towards the Trinamool Congress and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. In the recent past, he had been inactive in his active political life.

But during the last couple of months, he had become active again, first through his understanding with Edwards and Tamang and subsequently through his latest meeting with Bista.

## Two men with suspected IS links held near Kolkata

Kolkata | Agencies

The Special Task Force (STF) of Kolkata Police on Saturday arrested two persons with suspected links to Islamic State (IS).

The two men, identified as Mohammad Saddam and Syed Ahmed, were arrested from over the second Hooghly Bridge connecting Kolkata with Howrah. They were moving on a bike when STF officers chased and arrested them.

The duo was presented before a lower court in Kolkata, which remanded them to STF custody till January 19. Confirming the arrests, Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal said that further investigation in the matter is underway.

Sources in the city police said that one laptop and two



mobile phones have been seized from their possession.

"We had got a tip-off that Saddam and Ahmed were going to attend a secret meeting in the Khidirpur area. After arresting the duo, the police also conducted search operations at their residences and recovered some debit cards and electronic evidence from there. Some jihadi contents were also recovered from the laptop seized from them," a police officer said.

He added that preliminary

investigation has revealed that they were engaged mainly in brainwashing youths to join IS and also arrange for funds to spread their network in the state.

"Further investigation is on to identify their associates," the officer said.

Both Saddam and Ahmed are residents of Howrah district. Ahmed is a student of mechanical engineering at Aliah University. Both are known in their respective localities as well-mannered and soft-spoken.

## BHARAT JODO YATRA TO ENTER PUNJAB ON JAN 10

Chandigarh | Agencies

The Bharat Jodo Yatra being led by former Congress President Rahul Gandhi will enter Punjab on January 10, party leaders said on Saturday.

Addressing the media here, state Congress President Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, along with the Secretary in-charge Harish Chaudhary and Leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa announced that the yatra will enter Punjab through Shambhu border on January 10 and will straightway go to Fatehgarh Sahib.

On January 11, after paying obeisance at the Gurdwara Sahib, Gandhi will address a public meeting before embarking on foot on his Punjab leg of the yatra.

The Congress leaders reiterated that this was not a partisan yatra. It is only that Gandhi is leading it and the logistic support is being provided by the party and workers, Chaudhary said, pointing out that people from a cross-section of society - leaders of various political parties, film person-



alities, artistes, economists and industrialists - had participated in it.

Chaudhary specifically appealed to the Punjabi NRIs who are right now visiting Punjab to participate in the yatra. He said those staying abroad can mark their participation online.

Raja Warring said the yatra will remain in Punjab for seven days and

a mega-rally will be organised at Pathankot on the concluding day before it leaves for Jammu and Kashmir from Madhopur on its last leg.

Replying to a question about some people opposing the yatra, he said Punjabis by nature are most hospitable and they welcome their guests

with open arms irrespective of which party, caste or creed he belongs to.

Bajwa said that this yatra had left its mark among the people across the country and had provided "voice to the voiceless".

He said the yatra will set the tone for the 2024 elections and it will make history.

## COURT GRANTS BAIL TO ONE OF THE ACCUSED IN ANJALI'S DEATH CASE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi court on Saturday granted bail to Ankush Khanna, who is accused of tampering evidence in the brutal death of Anjali (20), who met a painful end after being dragged by a car for around 12 km on the outskirts of the national in the early hours of January 1.

Khanna has been booked by Delhi Police under Sections 201 (disappearance of any evidence, with the intention of screening the offender from legal punishment) and 212 (harbouring offender) of the Indian Penal Code. The Rohini court granted him bail on a personal bond of Rs 20,000.

Ankush is the seventh accused to be nabbed in



connection with the death of Anjali. The other six accused -- Ashutosh, Deepak Khanna, Amit Khanna, Krishan, Mitthun and Manoj Mittal -- are presently in police custody.

Ankush, who was on the run after his name popped up during the investigation, had surrendered at Sultanpuri police station on Friday evening. Sources said that Ashutosh, the owner of

the Maruti Baleno car that dragged the woman, and Ankush, who is also the brother of another accused, Amit, had talks with the five persons accused initially.

## NIDHI WAS EARLIER ARRESTED IN DRUGS SMUGGLING CASE

New Delhi: Nidhi, the prime witness in the death case the 20-year-old Anjali who met a painful end after being dragged by a car in Delhi's Kanjhawala area for about 12 km in the early hours of January 1, was earlier arrested in a drug smuggling case, police sources said.

According to the sources, she was intercepted at the Agra railway station for bringing drugs from Telangana, following which Nidhi was placed under arrest.

Earlier, it was said that she had no previous police record.

Bengaluru | Agencies

Karnataka Police cracked the case of hoax bomb threat to the reputed National Academy for Learning (NAFL) School in Bengaluru on Saturday.

The police picked up a minor boy from the school in this connection and handed him over to custody of the State Juvenile Justice Board.

According to police, the police detected the boy through an IP address and when questioned, the boy maintained that he did it for having some fun. He told police that he got the official email ID of the school from the Google search.

Tension prevailed in the premises of the NAFL School run by the National Public School (NPS) group following the bomb threat in Basaveshwara Nagar locality of Bengaluru on Friday.

The bomb threat was given through the official email ID of the school. The email claimed that four gelatin sticks have been kept in the premises, which are going to explode at the time of lunch.



The school staff had immediately informed the jurisdictional police. About 1,000 school children were sent out of the classrooms and taken to safe places. The development had also triggered panic among parents and local residents. Hundreds of parents rushed to the school and expressed their concern over the development and demanded that they should be let inside the school premises to see their children. Later, the children were sent with them.

Bomb disposal and dog squad had combed the school premises and declared it as a hoax threat later.

## MAN INJURED AFTER HOUSE COLLAPSE IN DELHI'S SADAR BAZAAR



Team Absolute | New Delhi

A man was injured after a house collapsed in Delhi's Sadar Bazaar area, officials said.

According to Delhi Fire Service (DFS) Director Atul Garg, a call regarding a fire in a house adjacent to Khurshed market on Qutub road was received around 6.29 p.m. following which two fire tenders were rushed

to the spot.

However, no fire and smoke were seen at the spot and it seemed to be a structure collapse. The injured was sent to hospital for treatment, said the official.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner of Police, North, Sagar Singh Kalsi, said that they are trying to ascertain the cause and prima facie, it seems to be water pump pipe rupture.

## Mohan Bhagwat urges people to join Sangh for unifying society, strengthening nation

Panaji | Agencies

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday appealed to people to join the Sangh to unify the society and make India 'Vishwaguru' for a happy and secured nation.

Addressing a volunteers' meet of the RSS here, Bhagwat said: "By strengthening the society, we can see good things happening in the nation. We need to achieve this goal. We need to take it ahead, not to strengthen the RSS, but the nation. If we work together, it will be written in history that the nation became 'Vishwaguru' only because the society reached greater heights."

The event was attended by the BJP MLAs and party office-bearers. Bhagwat had arrived in Goa on January 2 to hold an all-India coordination meet.

The Sangh chief also said that RSS wants to unify the nation and society. "We want to connect all in one force. I appeal to all of you to join the Sangh. There are no rules. You can



leave whenever you wish. But come and experience the Sangh for six months, one year or two years... Know the Sangh well. Then if you feel that whatever I am saying today is correct, become a 'karyakarta'. You have the freedom to make your own decision. But I'm sure that you will not leave the Sangh once you know the things well," he said.

According to Bhagwat, although the RSS is well-known across India, there may be few people who are unaware of its functions, especially those who don't have any contact with social activities.

"If we want to be happy, the nation will have to be happy. If we want to get secured, the nation will have to be secured. Hence, we need to strength-

en the society to achieve the goal of becoming 'Vishwaguru'. Only then 'parivartan' will take place in the country," the RSS chief said.

He also said that if we want to work for the nation, we must know about it first.

"When people ask me what they will get by joining the RSS, I say they will get nothing. Even if they have (something), it will go (to the society). If they dare, then they can come. The selfish should stay away from the Sangh... It will be good for them, and also for us," Bhagwat said.

"We want to unify the nation. The nation progresses only when the vision of the society is clear, and the understating is rich. If you see the journey of the nation from Independence till now, you will find that the progress line of the nation is parallel to the society," he added.

"We should contribute to the nation and work for the betterment of society with our thoughts or by being a part of Sangh. We all together need to move ahead, irrespective of caste, traditions etc.," he concluded.

## 'MULTIPLE EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST RECEIVED FOR IDBI BANK STAKE'

Chennai: Several bids have been received for acquiring controlling stake in the IDBI Bank, said a top official in the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM).

"Multiple Expressions of Interest received for the Strategic Disinvestment of Govt and LIC Stake in IDBI Bank. The transaction will now move to the second stage," tweeted Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary, DIPAM.

The Central government and the Life Insurance Corporation of India hold 45.48 per cent and 49.24 per cent stake respectively, in the IDBI Bank.

The government wants to divest 60 per cent stake and the management control to the successful bidder.

# absolute india

VOL. 8, ISSUE 58, BHOPAL | SUNDAY, JANUARY 08, 2023 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI

“ If you want to shine like a sun, first burn like a sun.”



A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

## DELHI SHIVERS AT 2 DEGREES, FOG DELAYS FLIGHTS AT IGI AIRPORT

❑ The minimum temperatures are in the range of 1-5 degree Celsius in many parts of northwest India and in isolated pockets of Madhya Pradesh.

❑ The lowest minimum temperature of 0 degree Celsius was observed at Bikaner in Rajasthan, India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Friday.

❑ "Cold wave to severe cold wave conditions prevailed in many parts of east Madhya Pradesh; in some areas of East Rajasthan; isolated pockets of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, West Rajasthan and Cold Wave conditions in many parts of West Madhya Pradesh; isolated pockets over Punjab, West Uttar Pradesh," the IMD said.

❑ The Department predicted that the due to continuation of prevailing light winds and high moisture near surface over the Indo-Gangetic plains, dense to very dense fog very likely to continue in some/much parts during night & morning hours over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh during next 24 hours and over Uttar Pradesh during next 48 hours; in isolated pockets thereafter for subsequent 3-4 days over the region.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Residents of Delhi woke up to cold morning on Saturday with the minimum temperature plunging to 2 degrees Celsius, while dense fog delayed flights at the



Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport.

The weather stations at Safdarjung, Lodhi Road and Ridge recorded the minimum temperatures at 2.2 degrees Celsius, 2 degrees and 1.5 degrees, respectively.

These are the lowest temperatures in these respective areas this season. However, the Ayanagar weather station recorded a minimum temperature of 3.5 degrees Celsius on Saturday morning.

Some 34 domestic flights were delayed due to fog and other weather related issues. Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that cold day to severe cold day conditions prevailed in many parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, West Madhya Pradesh; in some areas of East Rajasthan; isolated pockets of West Rajasthan, Bihar and cold Day conditions in iso-

lated pockets over Uttarakhnad.

The IMD said that due to approaching of two Western Disturbances in quick succession, minimum temperatures are very likely to rise gradually by 3-5 degree Celsius over many parts of Northwest India during next three days and no significant change during subsequent three days.

As a result of this, IMD said, cold wave to severe cold wave conditions in isolated pockets are very likely to prevail over Rajasthan and cold wave conditions in isolated pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh during the next 24 hours.

### 36 TRAINS DELAYED DUE TO FOG

New Delhi: Railways spokesperson said 36 trains were delayed by one to seven hours due to the foggy weather. According to officials of Northern Railway, Prayagraj-New Delhi Humsafar Express, Saharsa-New Delhi Vaishali Superfast Express, Rewa-Anand Vihar Terminal Superfast Express, Kathgodam-Jaisalmer Ranikhet Express, MGR Chennai Central-New Delhi Tamil Nadu Express, and Hyderabad Deccan Nampally-New Delhi Telangana Express were running late by up to 1:30 hours.

The officials added that Puri-New Delhi Purushottam Express, Gaya-New Delhi Mahabodhi Express, and Barauni-New Delhi Clone Special, were late by 3:30 hours. Malda Town-Delhi Farakka Express, Gorakhpur-Bathinda Gorakhdham Superfast Express, Amzargarh-Delhi Kaifiaat Superfast Express, Pratapgarh-Delhi Padmavat Express, Lucknow Charbagh-New Delhi AC Superfast Express, Vasco-da-Gama-Hazrat Nizamuddin Goa Express, and Rani Kamalapati-Hazrat Nizamuddin Shaan-E-Bhopal Superfast Express were running late by 1:00 hours.

While Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus-Amritsar Express, Kamakhya-Delhi Brahmaputra Mail, and MGR Chennai Central-New Delhi Grand Trunk Express are late by 3:00 hours. Cold wave conditions and the dense fog is being witnessed all over North India and according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), similar conditions will continue in the first half of the next week as well.

## Evacuation ordered from Joshimath, Choppers ready

▶ THE CENTRE HAS FORMED AN EXPERT PANEL TO CONDUCT A "RAPID STUDY" OF LAND SUBSIDENCE. A COMMITTEE WILL STUDY THE EFFECTS OF THE SINKING OF LAND ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, BUILDINGS, HIGHWAYS, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND RIVERINE SYSTEMS, OFFICIALS SAID.

▶ MEDICAL TREATMENT FACILITIES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE ON THE GROUND AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR AIRLIFTING PEOPLE SHOULD ALSO BE MADE, THE CHIEF MINISTER FURTHER SAID, WHILE ORDERING TO EXPEDITE WORK ON THE TREATMENT OF DANGER ZONES, SEWER, AND DRAINAGE.



and Gandhi Ward. Along with this, the residential colony of Jaypee Group located in Marwari has also come under threat. Water is seeping from the wall of some structures in Jaypee premises. If it rains even a little, water filling the big cracks in the ground can cause havoc.

Chief Minister Dhami held a high-level meeting at the Secretariat on Friday to review the current situation in Joshimath. In the meeting, Dhami directed the officials to set up a large temporary rehabilitation centre at a safe place with immediate effect where the people of Joshimath can be shifted. SDRF IG Riddhim Agarwal said that the SDRF has also been deployed in the town. About 50 SDRF personnel are deployed in Joshimath as the first team. Along with this, the surrounding four posts of SDRF have been asked to remain on alert. Within an hour, all the jawans will get involved in relief and rescue work.

Chamoli | Agencies

Panic heightened among the residents of Uttarakhand's Joshimath as cracks developed in hundreds of houses and other structures due to the soil shifting in the holy town. Many houses have reached the verge of collapse while a temple here collapsed on Friday. The only good thing is that there was no loss of life in the temple collapse. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami held a high-level meeting at the Secretariat on Friday to set up a rehabilitation centre where the people of Joshimath can be shifted immediately. Terrified and scared, many people have left their homes. At the same time, people are being shifted to municipal buildings, gurudwaras and schools by the administration.

Big cracks have appeared in many houses of Joshimath's Sunil Ward, Manohar Bagh Ward,

### DEEPLY DISTURBED: RAHUL GANDHI

“ The pictures coming from Joshimath in Uttarakhand are horrifying... I am deeply disturbed. Going against nature by continuous digging and unplanned construction on the mountains has led to the people of Joshimath facing a terrible crisis today.”

## Maha govt 'on ventilator', may not see February: Sanjay Raut

Nashik | Agencies

Mounting another blistering attack on Maharashtra's Eknath Shinde government, Shiv Sena-UBT MP Sanjay Raut on Saturday claimed here that it is "on a ventilator" and would not even survive to see February.

Raut told media persons that after the Supreme Court verdict, 16 MLAs of the Balasahabnchi Shiv Sena (BSS) will be disqualified and the government will collapse as it is illegal and unconstitutional.

"There will be a change very soon... They are only extending the date of their death. Entire Maharashtra is with the Shiv Sena-UBT which is like a giant tree and only the rubbish has gone over to the BSS," Raut said, referring to the spate of defections from his party to the Shinde side in recent weeks.

Hitting out at Shinde's "puppet regime", the Sena-UBT chief spokesperson said that everyday corruption cases against various ministers are coming to the fore, but the government is unaffected and "like a thick-skinned rhinoceros".

"In the past, if there were any corruption allegations against ministers or the CM, or they faced court strictures, they would immediately resign, like A.R. Antulay or Shvaji Rao Patil-Nilangekar had done. Now, even when half a dozen ministers have graft cases against them, they are sitting tight like buffaloes in the



water," Raut said.

Referring to the statements made by Union MSME Minister Narayan Rane and BSS Minister Deepak Kesarkar that Raut is laying the ground for going back to jail, he hit back, warning them against making such threats.

"Don't threaten us. The central probe agencies are being misused against the Opposition parties. Simply because you are in government doesn't mean you are the law," warned Raut.

"As far as I know, Rane will cease to be a minister soon... his performance is a big zero and he is a scared ('darpok') person, that's why he is creating this ruckus. I have never met him after he left (Shiv Sena, in 2005) the party," Raut declared dismissively.



### PUNJAB MINISTER DROPPED FROM CABINET, 2ND IN NINE-MONTH GOVT

Chandigarh: Punjab Horticulture Minister Fauja Singh Sarari on Saturday resigned from the Cabinet, the second one to be dropped in the just nine-month old Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government led by Bhagwant Mann.

Sarari's name had surfaced in a case of devising an extortion plan. After his resignation, the state government decided to go in for a Cabinet expansion. Sources in the government said a time has already been sought from the Governor for its expansion.

Earlier, Vijay Singla was dropped from the Cabinet on corruption charges.

Sarari was inducted into the Cabinet in July 2022.

## AIR INDIA 'PEE-GATE' Shankar Mishra arrested, sent to 14-day judicial custody

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Patiala House court on Saturday sent Shankar Mishra, who's accused of urinating on an elderly female co-passenger in a drunken state on a New York-New Delhi flight in November last year, to 14-day judicial custody. He has been arrested from Bengaluru by Delhi Police.

The police had moved the court seeking three-day remand of Mishra. However, the court sent the accused to 14-day judicial custody.

The court noted that prime facie, it seems that the accused was deliberately avoiding joining the investigation.

Metropolitan Magistrate Anamika said that physical presence of the accused is not required to question other witnesses and statements under Section 164 CrPC can be recorded without taking him into police



custody.

"Just because there is public pressure, don't do this. Go by the law. Perusal of records shows that the accused was deliberately avoiding joining the investigation. In order to make further investigation, physical presence of the accused is not required during

the recording of statements of the flight's crew members," the court observed. During the arguments, the court asked the police as to why Mishra's police custody is required. The public prosecutor submitted that Mishra was not cooperating with the probe.

## EX-NEPAL PM OLI AGAIN VENTS HIS IRE AGAINST INDIA

Kathmandu: Chairman of Nepal's ruling party UML and former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli once again vented his ire against India on Saturday, saying that the neighbouring countries are taking unnecessary interest in the formation of the government in the Himalayan country. At a programme organised here, Oli said that some neighbours are still trying to cross the wall and interfere with the internal affairs of the country. "This is a government formed by Nepalis. There were some attempts not to allow Nepal to form the government," Oli said, without naming India.

This is not the first time that Oli had vented his ire against India.

Nepal had issued a new map in May 2020, when Oli was the Prime Minister, incorporating a disputed territory which falls in India, leading to a territorial dispute between the two neighbouring countries.

# BIND scheme: FM coverage to be expanded to over 80% of population

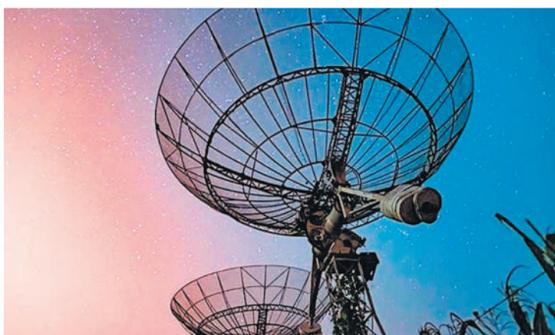
Development of high-quality content for both domestic and international audiences, availability of diverse content by upgrading the capacity of the DTH platform to accommodate more channels will expand the choice available to the audience. The plan also aims at expansion of the FM network primarily in tier II and tier-III cities with focus on LWE and aspirational districts.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Expansion of FM coverage to over 80 per cent of population and face-life of DD and AIR Channels by installing latest broadcasting and studio equipment comprise the Centre's Broadcast Infrastructure Network Development (BIND) Scheme.

The Cabinet this week approved the BIND Scheme with an outlay of Rs 2,539.61 crore for modernisation, upgradation and expansion of All India Radio and Doordarshan for the five-year period ending 2025-26.

The plan includes priority projects of AIR and Doordarshan with focus on expansion and strengthening of the FM radio Network and Mobile TV



Production facilities amounting to Rs 950 crore which are to be completed on fast-track mode. Officials said that the plan aims at

major upgradation to create better infrastructure and widen the public broadcaster's reach in LWE, border and strategic areas.

For All India Radio, the plan includes increasing the FM coverage in the country to 66.29 per cent by geographical area and 80.23 per cent by population up from 58.83 per cent and 68 per cent respectively. It also includes increasing the coverage of AIR FM to 63.02 per cent from the existing 48.27 per cent at the India-Nepal border and increasing the AIR FM coverage from 62 per cent to 76 per cent along the border areas in Jammu and Kashmir. For Doordarshan, it includes facelift of DD and AIR Channels by installing latest broadcasting and studio equip-

ment at Prasar Bharati facilities, upgradation of Earth Stations at DDK Vijayawada and Leh to 24 hours channel, rolling out of Fly away units for covering the prestigious National Ceremony/ events and VVIP coverages and 28 Regional Doordarshan channels to be migrated as High-Definition program production capable 'Kendras'.

It also includes expansion of DD Free Dish capacity from existing 116 channels to about 250 channels for providing a rich and diverse bouquet of channels free of cost. Besides, free distribution of over 8 lakh DD DTH Receiver sets is planned for Remote, Tribal, LWE and border areas to enable the audience in these areas to access television and radio services.

## MHA declares LeT operative Arbaz Ahmad Mir a terrorist



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Union Home Ministry has declared Arbaz Ahmad Mir, who has been working for Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) from across the border in Pakistan, as a terrorist under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in a notification released

on Friday, said that Mir was involved in promoting terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Ministry stated that the government had declared Mir as a terrorist, exercising the powers conferred by clause (a) of sub-section 1) of section 35 of the UAPA, 1967.

Mir belongs to Kulgam district of J&K and currently resides in Pakistan.



# TIGERS & LEOPARDS BEHIND MOST OF 105 DEATHS CAUSED BY WILD ANIMALS IN MAHA

- State forest officials said that there are Primary Response Teams to warn people against entering forests during wildlife movements, or after dark, when the big cats are always on the prowl.
- In case of any tragedies, there are the Rapid Rescue Teams whose clear objective is "to save both humans and animals", though it is not always possible, said a forest officer from Yavatmal.
- Experts regularly appeal for an all-round long-term strategy to reduce man-creature skirmishes, with the onus on humans to respond to the needs of animals and avoid confrontations in each other's territories.
- Hoping to give more 'breathing space' and 'elbow room' to the big and small wild animals, till 2022 Maharashtra has declared 52 wildlife sanctuaries/reserves across the state with plans to add seven more soon.



increasing human casualties, especially leopard attacks, in and around the concrete town settlements. From January to December 2022, there were a shocking 105 human deaths due to attacks by wild creatures, chiefly tigers and leopards, and the rest by other jungle residents. In 2022, tigers burned bright to kill 77 people and leopards snuffed out 17 humans -- with the maximum eight deaths in Nashik, six in Chandrapur, plus one each in Nagpur, Kolhapur and Thane, said Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Mahip Gupta. Recently, Forest Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar had revealed the figures of such conflicts with the graph inching north in the past three years in the state -- in 2019-20, 47 people were killed in attacks by wild animals, 80 in 2020-21, 86 in 2021-22, and 105 in 2022, the worst year for human deaths cause by wild animals. In Mumbai, the forests of Sanjay Gandhi National Park, the adjoining Aarey Colony, and the sprawling Film City and IIT-B campuses are the main leopard hotspots,

though they have strayed far outside including on highways, in vehicles, buildings, bungalows or posh housing complexes. There were around half a dozen conflicts with leopards, including at least two fatal involving kids, as the region is populated by an estimated 60-plus leopards, one of the largest urban concentrations of these spotted big cats in the country. Presently, the highest risk from leopards is witnessed in the lush forested Satara region, and the adjoining sugarcane fields, besides adjoining Pune, according to Rohan Bhatte, BNHS Governing Council Member and a Honorary Wildlife Warden. Wildlife expert and former PCCF Sunil Limaye said humans continually stray into or encroach on wildlife territories though there are clear do's and dont's in place, particularly in the regions adjoining animal sanctuaries/reserves dotting the state. Though terming the man-animal conflict as 'not so good but not so bad either', he said it is more for the humans to beware of the dangers lurking in the wild than to expect appropriate behaviour from the animals. "Conflicts occur as humans

trespass into their territories or the animals stray outside the jungles in search of food... For the past few years, there is concern about the growing menace of elephants romping here from Karnataka or Odisha, causing huge havoc on fertile farmlands and crops," said Rithe. "Besides, humans keep grabbing more and more space from wildlife, hinder wild animals on using their regular forest corridors or even chase them off when they are seen, leading to avoidable conflicts, often with casualties or fatalities," Limaye explained. Bhatte recalled that over two decades ago, following a big leopard hazard, around 110 were trapped from the infested Nashik, tagged with tracking devices, and released in different forest regions of the state. "Surprisingly, it was found that after some time, around a dozen had returned to Nashik, their original habitat! Leopards seem to have the 'homing instinct' and go back to their place of birth, including the cubs born in the sugarcane fields, which keep returning there frequently as they find it cozier with lot of big and small prey around, compared with the jungles," said Bhatte. It has also been found that the survival rate of the cubs is increasing from around 40 per cent to 50 per cent or higher, female leopards which earlier used to give birth to 2-3 cubs are now delivering three-four cubs, adding to the population, he said. This has taken the physical area of protected regions up to 13,000 sq. km to secure the flora and fauna, especially in the territories adjacent to national parks/sanctuaries/reserves or the critical 'jungle corridors' linking them, said Mungantiwar. In a laudatory move last year, the Maharashtra government hiked the compensations given to victims of all wildlife attacks, humans as well as their cattle or fowl and farm animals which are a source of livelihood.

## STABBING OF 2 DOCS: Maha medicos want central law, action against culprits

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Outraged by the stabbing of two resident surgeons by an unruly patient in a Yavatmal hospital, the Association of Medical Consultants (AMC) Mumbai shot off a letter to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde seeking his immediate intervention in the matter, here on Saturday.



In the memo, AMC President Nilima Vaidya-Bhamare referred to the incident of January 5, when a mentally unstable patient pounced on two first year on-duty resident surgeons and stabbed them brutally. The patient, identified as one Suraj Thakur, was arrested soon afterwards on Thursday night. The incident sparked a furore in medical circles across Maharashtra and the resident doctors carried out protests on Thursday night and Friday outside the hospital. On Friday, after the Vasant Naik Government Medical College and Hospital authorities refused to open the gates for the agitating resident doctors, a scuffle broke out in which one security personnel was injured. The 50-year-old AMC - with over 13,000 members - said that resident doctors are the backbone of the healthcare delivery system, and the state must take responsibility for their security. "They cannot be expected to give service and study to be qualified health personnel under such a dangerous environment... We shall take up the matter at the Central level to put up a Central law in place,"

pointed out Vaidya-Bhamare in the AMC plea. She added that for two years, the AMC has been pursuing the need to set up SOPs for police personnel in case of such violent acts in healthcare facilities. The AMC Secretary Hemant Dugad also demanded a 'black register' of truant or violent patients and their relatives in each area to enable the healthcare authorities to "red-flag" such miscreants in future, akin to the list of habitual criminals in their jurisdiction compiled by all local police stations. Vaidya-Bhamare sought official posters from the Police Commissioners to be prominently displayed in all hospitals, nursing homes, clinics and dispensaries warning the patients of the consequences of indulging in any violence against the medicos. Dugad said a WhatsApp group should be created by all police stations with the details of all the medicos in different medicare facilities serving their localities for quicker assistance in case of such ruckus. Both the AMC office-bearers said the culprits indulging in attacks on medicos must be booked immediately under the provisions of the Maharashtra Medicare Act.

## Rishabh Pant operated for ligament tear on right knee in Mumbai: Report

Team Absolute | Mumbai

India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, who miraculously survived a horrific car accident on December 30, was operated for a ligament tear on his right knee. A report by mid-day newspaper states that Pant was operated by Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala, the head of the Centre for Sports Medicine, and Director of Arthroscopy & Shoulder Service at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani hospital in Andheri West, here on Friday. "On Friday morning at around 10.30 am Dr Pardiwala and his team conducted ligament tear surgery on his right knee, the surgery was performed for around 2 to 3 hours. The surgery went smoothly," said the report. The report added that the hospital didn't confirm the development, saying they would not comment on the matter due to the privacy of



the patient and that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) would release the statement. It also said after Pant was airlifted to Mumbai from Dehradun on Wednesday, doctors have been evaluating his health condition and did some basic health checks on him before the surgery happened on Friday, while adding that it will take some

months for the left-handed batter to recover completely. On December 30, around 5:30am, Pant, 25, suffered multiple injuries when his car collided with a road divider and caught fire on the Delhi-Dehradun highway. The horrific car accident happened between Manglaur and Narsain in the Haridwar district in the state of Uttarakhand.



## 69 PERSONS, INCLUDING 44 CUSTOMERS, ARRESTED IN RAID ON BAR

Mumbai: Sixty-nine persons have been arrested following a raid on a bar in Santacruz in Mumbai in the early hours of Saturday, a police official said. Those held comprise 44 customers, 21 staffers and four artistes, the official said. "Fourteen women were rescued from the establishment, and Rs 3.5 lakh cash was seized. The raid was carried out by the police's Social Service Branch after it received a video clip of a dance performance there," he said. A case was registered under Maharashtra Prohibition of Obscene Dance in Hotel, Restaurants and Bar Rooms and Protection of Dignity of Women (working herein) Act 2016 as well as the Indian Penal Code, he added.

## Vandal runs riot in 489-year-old Portuguese-built Mumbai church cemetery

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a shocking incident, an unknown person sneaked inside the historic St Michael's Church premises around dawn and vandalised 18 crosses in the graveyard of the 489-year-old church, near the Mahim station, officials of the Archdiocese of Bombay said here on Saturday. According to the church's Parish Priest, Fr. Bernard Lancy Pinto, the incident occurred around 6 a.m. when the unidentified miscreant entered the church premises and embarked on a damage-spre in the cemetery, sparking furious reactions among the Mumbai's Catholic community. He said the police have promised appropriate legal action against the vandal and they will also conduct a probe to check for any security lapses. The St. Michael's Church is the oldest Portuguese-built church in 1534 in its former colony of isles and the then sea-trading centre known as 'Bom Bahia' (later Bombay). 127 years later in May 1661, when Britain's King Charles II married Princess Catherine of Braganza, the



daughter of Portugal's King John IV, 'Bom Bahia' was transferred to her husband as part of her wedding dowry. The Mahim Church is famed for its Wednesday 'novenas' where people from all religions flock to attend and pray for miracles that are believed to take place. The Catholic community in Mumbai and elsewhere has reacted sharply to the vandalism in Mahim Church and urged the police and government to take prompt action in the matter, besides ensuring security for the 125-odd churches in the city. Many Christians - who number around 500,000 (or 3.30 per cent) of

the city's population - penned their sense of agony and outrage on social media posts, and recalled similar but smaller incidents of vandalism, theft of valuable church properties, etc, that have occurred in the past few years in different parts of Mumbai against the peace-loving community. Saturday's development came barely a day after the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation revoked a move to acquire a part of the cemetery besides the St Peter's Church in Bandra west, for a road widening project, after Catholics from Mumbai raised an outcry and intervention of some local political leaders.

## 4 LAKH CIGARETTES SEIZED AT MUMBAI AIRPORT



Mumbai: The Customs Officials at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport seized 4 lakh cigarettes worth Rs 30 lakh which were being supplied illegally. According to the information, the seizure was made by Mumbai Customs Department on January 5. "Total 2,000 undeclared cigarette cartons were found mixed in export shipments destined for London. We have seized it," said an official. "Acting on intelligence that cigarettes were being attempted to be smuggled by way of mis-declaration and concealment in export shipments, we identified and tracked it," the official said. The official said that they seized 4 lakh cigarettes packed in 2,000 cartons under section 110 of the Customs Act. "It is an offence punishable under various sections of Customs Act. Further investigation in the matter is under progress to trace the carrier of the said narcotic substance," said the official.

## ANGARKI SANKASHTI CHATURTHI: Roads around Siddhivinayak temple to be closed for traffic on Jan 10

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai Traffic Police on Friday said that there would be traffic restrictions on some roads around Siddhivinayak temple in Prabhadevi on January 10 for Angarki Sankashti Chaturthi.



A traffic notification issued by the police said that on account of Angarki Sankashti Chaturthi there will be a huge congregation of devotees at Siddhivinayak temple and it will affect traffic on the roads in the vicinity of Siddhivinayak temple. Hence it is necessary to make an order for traffic management on the said road. The notification issued by Raj Tilak Roushan, DCP, Traffic, Mumbai said, in order to prevent danger, obstructions and inconvenience to the public, traffic on the following roads will be affected. In order to minimize pressure of traffic on the aforesaid roads following traffic restrictions have been imposed temporarily on January 10 from 06.00 hrs. to 24.00 hrs. In case of necessity for the safety of devotees the restrictions may be increased, the notification further said.

- ▶ THERE SHALL BE NO ENTRY TO ALL TYPES OF VEHICLES ON S.K. BOLE ROAD FROM GOKHALE ROAD
- ▶ THERE SHALL BE NO ENTRY TO ALL TYPES OF VEHICLES ON DATTA RAUL ROAD AND N. M. KALE ROAD FROM GOKHALE ROAD
- ▶ THERE SHALL BE NO ENTRY TO ALL TYPES OF VEHICLES ON S. K. BOLE ROAD FROM AGAR BAZAAR JUNCTION.
- ▶ ENTRY ON S. K. BOLE ROAD SHALL BE ALLOWED FROM SIDDHIVINAYAK JUNCTION ONLY.
- ▶ THERE SHALL BE NO ENTRY TO ALL TYPES OF VEHICLES ON SHANKAR GHANEKAR ROAD FROM LENINGRAD JUNCTION.

## SRK's NGO donates undisclosed amount to Anjali's family



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's philanthropic NGO Meer Foundation has come forward and supported the Delhi accident victim Anjali Singh's family by donating an undisclosed amount. A statement read: "Shah Rukh Khan's Meer Foundation donates an undisclosed amount to the family of Anjali Singh.

Anjali, a 20-year-old, lost her life in a brutal hit and run that took place in Delhi's Kanjhawala. The aid by Meer foundation aims to help the family, especially the mother with her health issues while providing adequate relief to Anjali's siblings." Meer Foundation is a philanthropic foundation named after Shah Rukh's father Meer Taj Mohammed Khan which aims to effect change at

ground level and works to build a world that empowers women. In the past, Meer Foundation has supported and contributed to various causes that provide support to disadvantaged women and children. Anjali Singh, a 20-year-old woman, died a painful death after being dragged by a car for about 12 km in the national capital in the early hours of January 1.



### Trouble for Pragya Thakur

# EX BUREAUCRATS SLAM BHOPAL'S MP OVER "HINDUS, KEEP KNIVES" SPEECH

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Bhopal

A group of 103 former bureaucrats has slammed BJP MP Pragya Singh Thakur for an alleged hate speech in Karnataka in which she urged Hindus to "keep weapons". The group has demanded action from the Lok Sabha's Speaker and Committee of Ethics.

Pragya Thakur, MP from Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh, was reportedly named in a police case - charges unclear - after she allegedly made incendiary remarks against Muslims while speaking at a Hindu group's convention in Shivamogga.

"They have a tradition of jihad, if nothing they do Love Jihad," she had said, referring to the right-wing's conspiracy theory that Muslims have an organised attempt at "luring" Hindu girls. "Answer those involved in Love Jihad... Protect your girls, teach them the right values."

She had further said, "Keep weapons in your homes, if nothing else, at least knives used to cut vegetables, sharp... Don't know what situation will arise when... Everyone has the right to self protection."

The former officers' letter says she appears to have "cleverly chosen her words to avoid criminal charges being made against her" as her speech may be seen as calling only



for "self-defence".

It alleges that she was "clearly telling her Hindu audience that they had to be afraid of attacks from non-Hindus", though the word 'Muslim' was not used.

Signatories include Anita Agnihotri, former secretary in the central government's department of social justice; Salahuddin Ahmad, a former chief secretary, Rajasthan; and SP Ambrose, who served as additional secretary in the union ministry of transport.

"By her incendiary words, Pragya Thakur has not only committed sev-

eral offences under the Indian Penal Code, she has also violated the oath taken by her as Member of Parliament to uphold the Constitution of India, which is premised upon the rights to life and liberty, secularism, equality and fraternity," it adds.

It also mentions a petition by some civil society organisations asking the Speaker of the Lok Sabha to disqualify her as MP. "We, in the Constitutional Conduct Group, also strongly believe that stern action should be taken against her as per the rules of the Lok Sabha," it adds.

It goes on to observe that society seems to have become "inured to hate speech" against minorities.

"A daily dose of venom is spewed, in the print, visual and social media against different non-Hindu communities, primarily against Muslims, and more lately against Christians as well. Often, these verbal attacks are accompanied by physical violence, assaults on their places of worship, anti-conversion legislation, hurdles placed in the way of inter-faith marriages, denial of livelihoods and [...] other actions to lower their status in society. A compliant media and systematic distortion of history by people in positions of authority feed this frenzy of communal hate," the letter alleges.

It quotes from recent Supreme Court judgments that stress that India is a secular country as per its Constitution.

Arguing that Pragya Thakur be charged with particular sections of the law, it says, "It is commendable that the police in Shivamogga have not been taken in by [her] attempt to disguise her speech as being about self-defence and have registered one or more FIRs against her under various sections of the Indian Penal Code. We hope they will speedily move to file a chargesheet in the court."

## Prime Minister will inaugurate 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in Indore

Will be concluded by President Smt. Droupadi Murmu. Overseas Indians of the world will present in the three-day conference

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 17th Pravasi

Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention in Indore on January 9 and President Droupadi Murmu will conclude it. The PBD will involve thousands of overseas Indians living around the world. The three-day convention will be held from January 8 to 10. In the PBD conference, overseas Indians from all over the world will discuss various topics. Overseas Indians will be introduced to the achievements and capabilities of the country and the state. There will be cultural activities as well. President Droupadi Murmu will honour non-resident Indians at the conclusion of the three-day convention.

The President of Guyana Mohammad Irfan Ali, the President of Suriname Chandrika Prasad Santokhi and the Member of Parliament of Australia Zaneta Mascarenhas will participate in the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on January 8 on the first day of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas



### Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Convention. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and ministers of the Union and state governments will participate in the PBD.

On the first day, in the plenary session under the chairmanship of Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur there will be discussions on the role of migrant youths in innovations and new technology.

After this, there will be 3 sessions on sectors related to industrial capabilities of the state, Textile and Garments: Weaving the Growth Story of M.P., Stories of Changes Taking Place in Madhya

Pradesh in Information Technology and Allied Sectors, Health Care and Pharmaceuticals Investment: Reshaping the Global Health Value Chain. After this, there will be important discussions in three important sessions on Invest in Madhya Pradesh - The Food Basket, Startup Eco System - Unleashing the Entrepreneurial Strength of Madhya Pradesh and Tourism Opportunity in the Heart of Incredible India. In the evening there will be cultural conferences based on the unique cultural features of Madhya Pradesh.

## M.P. State Crime Records Bureaus e-Vivechan App receives Platinum Award from President

Team Absolute | Bhopal

President Droupadi Murmu presented the Platinum Award for Digital Initiatives at the grassroots level to e-Vivechna App of State Crime Records Bureau of Madhya Pradesh at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi. The President gave this award at the Digital India Awards 2022 function. Chanchal Shekhar, Additional Director General of Police, State Crime Records Bureau along with his team received the award. Union Minister for Electronics, Information Technology, Communications and Railways Ashwini Vaishnav was also present at the function.

Madhya Pradesh is pioneering in the country by



successfully operating the e-Vivechna app with more than 80,000 case diaries. This app offers transparency in police investigations. The App facilitates the Investigating Officer to collect evidence and statements from the crime scene itself and link it to the rele-

vant FIR. The evidence and statements collected are geo-tagged and time-stamped, so they cannot be tampered with later. This has also increased the confidence of the courts in the police investigation.

## ON GUARD



Security personals doing rehearsal for the parade ceremony of Republic Day.

## CM Chouhan plants saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Along with Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, members of CPHD Health Care Foundation and Ram Sena Samaj Sevi Sanstha planted saplings of Khirni, Gular and Pithoria at Water Vision Park. The members of the Foundation, dedicated to providing health facilities and services to the needy people and vaccination of cows, dedicated the lines of the song "Kisi Ki Muskurahaton Pe Ho Nisar-Kisi Ka Dard Mil Sake To Le Udhar" to Chief Minister Chouhan by singing in chorus.

Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, Shubham Shiv Chourasia of Ram Sena Samaj Sevi Sanstha planted a sapling on the occasion of his birthday. The organisation is active in the field of providing free food to the poor, cow service and tree plantation. Ajay Naveria and Mayank Srivastava of the organisation also participated in the plantation.



## TEEN GIRL RAPED, BLACKMAILED BY BOY SHE MET ONLINE IN HARDA

Harda: A 17-year-old girl in Harda in Madhya Pradesh was raped allegedly by a boy she had befriended on a photo-video sharing social networking service, a police official said on Saturday.

The girl, who is a Class XI student, and the boy, who turned 18 during the day, came in contact through social media around a year ago and had met each other several times, Harda woman police station in charge Gajiwati Pusham said.

"The girl was raped repeatedly after the accused said he had obscene videos of her which he threatened to circulate. The ordeal came to light after her parents noticed changes in behaviour and she confided in them," she said.

## M.P. Will make Kerala a hub for flower production: Minister of State

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Will make Madhya Pradesh the hub of flower production. This was stated by the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Horticulture and Food Processing Bharat Singh Kushwaha at the 42nd All India Rose Exhibition. The exhibition took place at Gulab Garden in Bhopal on Saturday. More than 600 varieties of roses were displayed in the exhibition.

Minister of State Kushwaha said that Madhya Pradesh ranks second in the country in the production of flowers. Those cultivating flowers will be promoted in the state. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, several programs are being conducted for those cultivating horticulture. Flower Dome is being constructed in Bhopal to preserve the flow-



ers. In this, flowers can be kept safe for a long time. Flori-culture garden will be made in the state to develop different types of flowers and to increase new species of flowers. Minister of State Kushwaha welcomed the participants of the exhibition.

Minister of State Kushwaha also distributed prizes to the participants of the exhibition. Kushwaha also visited the exhibition. In the beginning, Director Horticulture Nidhi Nivedita gave information about organizing the exhibition and programs to promote flower cultivation in the state.

## 40th Indian Dental Association conference started in AIIMS Bhopal

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Three days IDA MP state conference started with pre conference courses. The live surgical demonstration of third molar surgeries and the hands on Inter-maxillary fixation was completed at AIIMS Bhopal in which 52 participants from all the dental colleges of MP were participated and learn the tricks and tips of third molar surgeries. 25 surgeries were demonstrated live on the patients.

Director and CEO Dr Ajai Singh address the gathering and shower his blessings for the success of the conference



and also advised the budding dentist to involve in research activities and live demonstration in the future. Dr Pankaj

Goel congratulates all the participants and wishes to perform these types of events in the future on a bigger

scale. From IDA Dr Pratima Vajpaye, Dr Atul Verma, Dr Benaiffer Agarwal, Dr Manish Verma and Dr Anup Vyas were present.

Live surgical demonstration and lectures were performed by Dr Anshul Rai, Dr Ankit Vastani, Dr Rishi Thukral and Dr Jitendra kumar.

Health Education Minister Vishwas sarang awarded Dr Anshul Rai with the Dr R.S Verma memorial Best Academician of the year 2022 award for his hard work put towards the contribution in the field of dental academics in the 40th MP STATE IDA Conference.



# 'WE REALLY STRUGGLED AT FIRST TO GET BACK INTO SHAPE!'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Ola Jordan has showcased her incredible 3.5 stone weight loss on Friday as she and husband James displayed their dance skills in before and after videos.

And the couple certainly looked on fine form as they showcased just how much their bodies have transformed within the four months, remarking of the videos: 'We really struggled at first to get back into shape!'

Ola looked sensational as she slipped into a turquoise crop top and matching leggings which perfectly highlighted her newly-slim figure, after dropping from a size 12 to size 8. While James donned a white vest and shorts with the dancer looking significantly fitter than his previous self. Captioning the post, which was shared on both their Instagram and Twitter pages, Ola penned: 'For those of you who think we've always been fit - as you can see we really

**Ola Jordan displays her incredible body transformation with her husband**

struggled at first to get back into shape! 'But we had a laugh doing it - mixing up dance with some power fitness moves. 'Just when you've piled on over 3 Stone each, and not done anything for a few years, even a minute is tough at first.

But the great thing is if you're enjoying the exercise you're happy to carry on and stick with it. 'So if you fancy losing a bit of weight AND learning to dance with us - our new diet and fitness plan Dance Shred is waiting for you.'

It comes after Ola once again displayed her 3.5 stone losses in a brand new comparison video which showed her strutting in the same bikini before and after the loss. The professional dancer shared the video with her 321K followers, admitting that she 'didn't know' if she would ever get to the final goal.

# Jenna Ortega-starrer 'Wednesday' is renewed for second season

Los Angeles | Agencies

The Jenna Ortega-starrer web-series 'Wednesday' has been renewed for Season 2, on Netflix. The eight-episode first season of the series centred on the titular 'Addams Family' character, originally debuted on November 23, reports Variety.

Netflix announced shortly thereafter that the series set a new platform record for most hours viewed for an English language series, in its first week with over 341 million hours.

Since then, the show has grown to become the second biggest English language season of television on Netflix with over 1.2 billion hours viewed within its first 28 days, among other streaming series records.

Jenna Ortega stars as Wednesday Addams in the horror comedy series. Per the official first season description, the show centres on Wednesday's "years as a student at Nevermore Academy."

"She attempts to master her emerging psychic ability, thwart a monstrous killing spree that has terrorised the local town, and solve the supernatural mystery that embroiled her parents 25 years ago, all while navigating her new and very tangled relationships at nevermore."

Along with Ortega, the cast of Season 1 included Gwendoline Christie, Jamie McShane, Percy Hynes White, Hunter Doohan, Emma Myers, Joy Sunday, Naomi J. Ogawa, Moosa Mostafa, Georgie Farmer, Riki Lindhome, and Christina Ricci.

Catherine Zeta-Jones appeared as Morticia Addams alongside Luis Guzman as Gomez and Isaac Ordonez as Pugsley.

"It's been incredible to create a show that has connected with people across the world, said Gough and Millar.

"Thrilled to continue Wednesday's tortuous journey into season two. We cannot wait to dive head first into another season and explore the kooky spooky world of Nevermore. Just need to make sure Wednesday hasn't emptied the pool first."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Tom

chooses not to watch his hit movies. While having doubts about his acting ability, the actor also has to "wrestle with authenticity" when looking back at his films. "I wrestle with authenticity. I wrestle with the difference between lying for a living as an actor and lying to myself as a human being," Hanks said when speaking on "The Great Creators with Guy Raz" podcast, reports aceshowbiz.com. The two-time Oscar winner prefers not to watch his films again as it always leaves him with a sense of regret about his performance. Hanks explained: "(I see) the falsehood in them. I see the loss. I see that one time, 'Oh man, I missed that opportunity.'"

"And it's not because, at the moment, I chose not to - it's because, after it was done, I realised I didn't go far enough. I didn't go to the place that I could have gone."

"Then I asked myself, well, why? Was it because I was satisfied with what I had? Was it because I wasn't up enough on the text? Was it because I didn't have enough of those ideas in my pocket? Or you know, were it because I was late that day and we had to rush the shot and instead of six passes, we only got two passes at it? That's where the self-doubt creeps in."

Hanks claimed that the 1994 film 'Forrest Gump', which landed him an Oscar for Best Actor - as one of the few movies where he gave his all. The 'Cast Away' star recalled: "We all sat together for weeks with (director Robert Zemeckis), and Bob was saying, 'Well, what we make of that?'" "We started at the beginning of the script and we all talked about everything. Even scenes we're not in, and what it meant to the text. That doesn't mean your own lines. You must know the text, because the text is the interpretation of the theme, and the theme is why you're all there in the first place."

# 'I WRESTLE WITH AUTHENTICITY'

**TOM HANKS IS OVERCOME BY 'SELF-DOUBT' WHEN HE WATCHES HIS FILMS**

# Paul Mescal to star in Ridley Scott's 'Gladiator' sequel

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Aftersun' and 'Normal People' star Paul Mescal is in talks to star in Ridley Scott's hotly-anticipated sequel to 'Gladiator', the 2000 epic that made Russell Crowe a superstar and went on to win an Oscar for best picture.

But the film isn't a prequel and Mescal won't be stepping into Crowe's toga. Mescal will play Lucius, the son of Lucilla, reports Variety.

Scott is returning to the world of swords and sandals and is expected to make this his next project. He will produce the picture, along with Scott Free President Michael Pruss and Red Wagon Entertainment's Doug Wick and Lucy Fisher. David Scarpa wrote the screenplay. Paramount will produce the film.

Universal, which backed the first movie along with DreamWorks, has the right to co-produce the movie once it has been set up. Mescal has been earning Oscar buzz for his work as a troubled father in 'Aftersun' and thrilled audiences with his turn as a brainy college student in 'Normal People'.

He earned an Emmy nomination for his work in that series. Mescal will appear in Andrew Haigh's 'Strangers' opposite Andrew Scott and Claire Foy, as well as Garth Davis's 'Foe' with Saoirse Ronan.

Before he ventures back to Rome, Scott is directing 'Napoleon' which stars Joaquin Phoenix as the French despot.



San Francisco | Agencies

A push notification on the popular crime reporting app called Citizen disclosed the exact location of an alleged break-in at singer-songwriter Billie Eilish's family home to at least 178,000 people on the platform.

According to a report in vice, the push notification informed thousands of users that police were responding to a 911 call in Los Angeles, an attempted burglary at a specific home in the city's Highland Park neighbourhood.

Later, the notification was updated to disclose that, according to police, the home belonged to pop star Eilish.

The notification, which included the home's exact address, was sent to 178,000 people and viewed by about 78,000 people, the report said late on Friday. Eilish grew up in Highland Park but the home is blurred on Google Maps for privacy. The app later changed the address of the reported incident, naming a cross-street, not an exact address. The Citizen app was originally called Vigilante. The aim of the app is to encourage users to upload videos and photos of alleged crimes and police activity happening around them. In December last year, Twitter CEO Elon Musk suspended the accounts of several prominent journalists on the micro-blogging platform as they covered his "exact real-time location", called "Doxing". Musk had also suspended the Twitter account that was tracking the movements of his private plane.

# ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Tallia Storm



## IND vs SL 3rd T20I

# SKY, BOWLERS POWER INDIA TO 91-RUN WIN, 2-1 SERIES VICTORY

Rajkot | Agencies

Suryakumar Yadav's blistering unbeaten century (112 not out off 51 balls) and dominating performance by bowlers helped India thrash Sri Lanka by 91 runs in the third and final T20I and clinch three-match series 2-1 at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium, here on Saturday.

With his beautiful wristy shots, Suryakumar made the opponent team feel like he isn't from the same planet, treating every bowler with disdain to power India to a mammoth total of 228/5 in 20 overs. Apart from Suryakumar, Shubman Gill played a decent knock (46 off 36) while Rahul Tripathi gave India some quickfire runs in the Power-play with his 35 off 16.

In reply, openers Pathum Nissanka (15) and Kusal Mendis (23) gave Sri Lanka a solid start but they failed to build on it and kept losing wickets at regular intervals. The likes of Dasun Shanaka (23), Dhananjaya de Silva



(22) and Charith Asalanka (19) got starts but couldn't score big as Sri Lanka were bowled out for 137 in 16.4 overs, losing by a huge margin of 91 runs.

Arshdeep Singh was the most suc-

cessful bowler for India with 3-20, while Yuzvendra Chahal (2-30), Hardik Pandya (2-30) and Umran Malik (2-31) picked two wickets each with Axar Patel also getting one wicket.

Earlier, India, who won the toss and opted to bat first, lost the first wicket early as Ishan Kishan poked outside off.

Rahul Tripathi, who walked in to bat at No 3 again, showed his attacking intent in his blistering innings of 35 off 16 balls.

After watching the Suryakumar carnage from the other end, Shubman Gill too decided to free his arms. He contributed 46 runs. Axar Patel (21 not out off 9) continued from where he left in the previous game and played a little cameo towards the end.

### Brief scores

India 228/5 in 20 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 112 not out, Shubman Gill 46, Rahul Tripathi 35; Dilshan Madushanka 2-55) beat Sri Lanka 137 all out in 16.4 overs (Kusal Mendis 23, Dasun Shanaka 23; Arshdeep Singh 3/20) by 91 runs

## Tata Open Maharashtra

# BALAJI, JEEVAN FALL SHORT AS BELGIAN PAIR WINS DOUBLES TITLE

Pune | Agencies

India's N. Sriram Balaji and Jeevan Nedunchelvan failed to cap off their brilliant run in the Tata Open Maharashtra ATP Tour tennis event here, losing to the all-Belgian pair of Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen in straight sets in the men's doubles final at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex here.

Balaji and Jeevan, who had come into the main draw as alternates after the late withdrawal of Laslo Djere and Alex Molcan of Slovakia, played superbly throughout the week as they stormed into the men's doubles final without dropping a set.

But on Saturday, their magical run came to an end when they lost to the Belgians 6-4, 6-4 at the Centre Court at the Balewadi Stadium here. The Belgians earned an early break in both sets which was enough for them to seal their sixth ATP Tour title as a team.

The Indian team had reached its first ATP Tour final as a team after first



teaming up at the 2007 India F7 and made their tour-level debut at the 2012 Chennai. Balaji and Jeevan had shocked No. 2 seed Nathaniel Lammons and Jackson Withrow earlier in the quarter-finals. The Tamil Nadu-born duo has a 3-3 tour-level record as a team and wanted to become the second consecu-

tive all-Indian team to win Pune after Rohan Bopanna/Ramkumar Ramanathan won in 2022. In the second set, Gille and Vliegen broke Balaji's serve in the third game to take a 2-1 lead. They maintained their advantage till the end of the set to win 6-4, winning the final and the title in 70 minutes.

## FA Cup

# Rashford inspires Manchester United to victory over Everton

London | Agencies

A Marcus Rashford-inspired Manchester United booked their place in the FA Cup fourth round with a 3-1 victory over Everton at Old Trafford.

Rashford was the creator for United's first two goals before grabbing a well-deserved third late on to seal his side's progression from a pulsating affair, reports thefa.com.

United had the perfect start after Antony slid home Rashford's cross after just four minutes only for Conor Coady to level proceedings ten minutes later.

The winger was involved once again as United retook the lead after Coady turned Rashford's cross into his own net, before the gloss was added with a late penalty.

The visitors then began to feel their way into the game, winger Demarai Gray fired a shot against the post after 13 minutes, with United goalkeeper David De Gea fortunate to see the rebound hit off him and go behind for a corner.

However, their resistance was broken just seven minutes after the restart as Rashford cut in from the left, beat Seamus Coleman in the box and flashed a ball across the six yard box



which Coady could do little but turn into his own goal.

The goal gave United confidence as they looked to add to their lead, this time Antony cut in from the right wing but his shot was straight at Pickford.

Everton continued to push for a leveller to send the game to a replay at Goodison Park, but it was United who came closest to adding a fourth goal with Pickford forced to tip a Rashford free-kick over the bar as the clock ticked towards 90 minutes. And Rashford added the shine on the win with a penalty in additional time after Alejandro Garnacho was fouled by Ben Godfrey.

## AJAX SIGN ARGENTINIAN WORLD CHAMPION GERONIMO RULLI

The Hague (The Netherlands) | Ajax, Villarreal and Geronimo Rulli have reached an agreement on the transfer of the Argentine goalkeeper to the Dutch soccer club, Ajax announced.

Rulli started his professional career at the Argentinian club Estudiantes in 2013. After that, he played for Real Sociedad in Spain and Montpellier in France, before signing for Villarreal in 2020. With Villarreal, he won the UEFA Europa League in 2021. At the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, Rulli was the reserve goalkeeper of Argentina's World Cup-winning team. At Ajax, he has to compete for a place as the first goalkeeper with the 39-year-old Remko Pasveer and the Maarten Stekelenburg. Born in La Plata, Buenos Aires Province, Rulli graduated from the local Estudiantes' youth setup and was promoted to the first-team squad in 2012. Initially a backup to Justo Villar and Agustín Silva, he made his professional debut on April 8, 2013, after profiting from Villar's departure to Nacional and Silva's injury.



## Shahid Afridi, Misbah-ul-Haq, Muralitharan, Sreesanth, Lendl Simmons to play in Legends League Cricket

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The new season of Legends League Cricket, to be held in February and March 2023 in Doha, Qatar, will witness Shahid Afridi, Misbah-ul-Haq, Muttiah Muralitharan, Robin Uthappa, Lendl Simmons and S Sreesanth being a part of the tournament.

"We thoroughly enjoyed the second season. The level of competition was beyond our own expectations and all the players played in their best form. We expect this season to be more exciting, considering different teams from World, Asia and India. It is always a proud moment to play for India for me," said Sreesanth in an official statement.

The league saw a high level of competitive cricket from the greats of the game in India, during the 15 matches, which were played in 6 cities across the country, with a global reach of 1.2 billion fans.

"It was great to see the legends play while I was commentating in the last season of Legends League Cricket. I am inspired by the enthusiasm. Now I will be on the field playing with my old mates. It will be fun," said Uthappa.

In the present format starting February, three teams - World Giants, Asia Lions and Indian Maharajas will fight out for the champions' trophy. Last year, World Giants won the first tro-



phy with some outstanding performances from the legends.

"We look forward to play this season with even more enthusiasm and fun," said Muralitharan. "It will be fun to play with old mates and rivals. I am looking forward to a competitive season," added Afridi. The league has recently signed Simon Taufel as a Director of Match Ethics & Regulations, to strengthen Legends League Cricket fans' faith in transparent and clean cricket. He will be bringing in more scrutiny for clean cricket.

## TAYLOR FRITZ SENDS US INTO UNITED CUP FINAL

Brisbane | Agencies

Team United States sprinted to a 2-0 lead against Team Poland on Friday in the United Cup Final Four, and American Taylor Fritz finished the job Saturday morning.

The reigning BNP Paribas Open champion clawed past Hubert Hurkacz 7-6(5), 7-6(5) in the No. 1 men's singles match to give his country an insurmountable 3-0 lead.

Jessica Pegula upset World No. 1 Iga Swiatek and Frances Tiafoe eased past Kacper Zuk to earn the Americans their first two points, reports unitedcup.com. Fritz was followed by Madison Keys, who earned a 6-4, 6-2 triumph against Magda Linette. Fritz and Pegula then completed a 5-0 sweep with a 6-7(5), 6-4, 10-6 mixed doubles win against Lukasz Kubot and Alicja Rosolska. Team United States is now 4-0 in mixed doubles in Sydney.

In the championship match, Team United States will face Team Italy or Team Greece. Italy leads Greece 2-0 in their semi-final tie.

That proved prophetic. Fritz won 88 per cent of his first-serve points and was able to manoeuvre into



comfortable positions in points behind his serve.

Hurkacz earned two set points on return at 5-4 in the first set. The Pole missed a mid-rally crosscourt forehand on his first opportunity and a forehand return just long on his second. Letting slip those chances proved his downfall. A classy drop shot paved the way to Linette's only break of serve in the first game of the second set, but Keys responded by upping her focus to immediately break back and reel off six of the final seven games of the match.

## CWG gold medallist Sanjita Chanu fails dope test, suspended provisionally by NADA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Two-time Commonwealth Games gold medallist weightlifter K Sanjita Chanu has failed a dope test and is now suspended provisionally by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).

Sanjita's sample was taken on September 30, the day she lifted a total of 187kg to finish second. Both her 'A' and 'B' samples have shown the presence of Drostanolone, an anabolic steroid that is on the specified list of the World Anti-doping Agency (WADA) prohibited list, says a report in Tribune.

Sanjita, who will now have to appear before the anti-doping



disciplinary panel of the National Anti-Doping Agency, can get a four-year suspension for this offence. If found guilty, she stands to lose her National Games silver.

"I am very sad that such a sen-

ior lifter, one who has won us two Commonwealth Games medals, has been caught in the dope net," Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWLF) chief Sahdev Yadav was quoted as saying.

"Incidents like this only tarnish

the image of our sport. Everyone knows that we have a strict policy towards dope cheats. We periodically get our lifters tested during camps and tournaments and there have been times when many of them have been asked to give out-of-competition samples. But we do get setbacks like this."

In June 2018, Sanjita was banned by the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) after her samples, taken during the 2017 World Championships, showed the presence of testosterone. Sanjita had claimed a 'conspiracy' behind that offence and was given the all-clear by the IWF in January 2019, through a letter by its legal counsel Dr Eva Nyirfa.

# Carlos Alcaraz withdrawn from the 2023 Australian Open

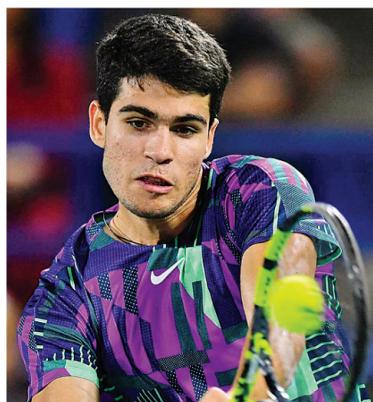
Madrid, Spain | Agencies

World No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz has withdrawn from the Australian Open due to a right leg injury.

The Spaniard, who last year became the youngest player to finish year-end No. 1 in the Pepperstone ATP Rankings, would have held the top seed at a Grand Slam tournament for the first time in his career.

Alcaraz tweeted: "When I was at my best in preseason, I picked up an injury through a chance, unnatural movement in training. This time it's the semimembranosus muscle in my right leg."

"It'd worked so hard to get to my best level for Australia but unfortunately I won't be able to play the Care A2+ Kooyong or the Australian Open. It's tough, but I have to be optimistic, recover and look forward. See you in 2024



Australian Open."

The withdrawal imperils Alcaraz's hold on World No. 1, with Casper Ruud, Stefanos Tsitsipas and Novak Djokovic all having an opportunity to rise to top spot the Monday after the Australian Open. son, Alcaraz had a frustrating end to 2022, being forced to withdraw from the quarter-finals of the Rolex Paris Masters with an internal oblique muscle tear that also sidelined him at the Nitto ATP Finals in Turin. On September 12, Alcaraz became the youngest World No. 1 in the history of the Pepperstone ATP Rankings. He finished 2022 with a 57-13 record and five tour-level titles, including his first two ATP Masters 1000 victories (Miami and Madrid) and his first Grand Slam trophy at the US Open.

Last year Alcaraz lost 7-6 in the fifth set to Matteo Berrettini in the third round of the Open.

## Adelaide International

# SABALENKA MASTERS BEGU FOR FINAL BERTH

Adelaide | Agencies

Aryna Sabalenka has marched into her first final on Australian soil without conceding a set, denying Irina-Camelia Begu at the Adelaide International.

After a slow start to her campaign, the second seed has quickly rediscovered the shot-making brilliance which carried her past the world's top three women to a runner-up finish at last year's WTA Finals.

As temperatures climbed above 30 degrees Celsius, the 24-year-old was pleased to wrap up the job in 78 minutes, restricting Begu to a 6-3, 6-2 scoreline. "Yeah I'm happy with the level I played today, especially with (Begu's) different game," Sabalenka was



quoted as saying by adelaideinternational.com.au. "She's playing a little bit, like, a different style, so I'm super happy that I'm able to win this match." Sabalenka's best finish last year was a runner-up showing at the WTA Finals to Caroline Garcia, having

beaten No.1 Iga Swiatek, No.2 Ons Jabeur and No.3 Jessica Pegula. She will meet either top seed Jabeur or 18-year-old Czech Linda Noskova for the chance to collect her first title since beating Ash Barty in the Madrid final in May 2021.



## RAKUL ROOTS FOR SEX EDUCATION, AWARENESS IN HER UPCOMING MOVIE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The makers of the upcoming film 'Chhatriwali' have unveiled the trailer, which focuses on safe sex and sex education among the youngsters, led by Rakul Preet Singh's character.

The over two-minute long trailer begins with the stereotypes in the society surrounding sex and how women have to suffer because of a lack of education.

The trailer then focuses on a professor played by Rajesh Tailang thinking how it is not really important and is a taboo to teach children about sex and 'copulation'.

Then enters Rakul, who gets married to Sumeet Vyas who doesn't believe in using condoms. Rakul said: "In today's patriarchal society, every household needs a Sanya who holds the courage to single-handedly fight against all

odds, traditions, social norms, and barriers. I hope this character inspires others to find their voice and speak up against unsafe sex and the many health implications of not using protection." She added: "India's youth make up for majority of the population and educating them on safe sex is the need of the hour, so I am glad that Chhatriwali is catering to them and everyone else in a progressive and entertaining manner. I have respect and only respect for the incredible team behind this extraordinary project." Sumeet said: "Raincoat pehenke baarish mein bheegne ka kya mazaa." Later, Rakul is seen making a decision to teach sex education to school chil-

dren.

Sumeet said: "Chhatriwali breaks the wall of awkward silence around sex between Indian parents and children, husbands and wives, teachers and students. Today's generation is curious about the words sex and intimacy because there is always a sense of hush-hush around such topics."

Director Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar said: "While researching for Chhatriwali, I happened to visit few rural parts in India and spoke to students and villagers over there. I saw a taboo around the word sex and the judgemental attitude of society as well as the pharmacists."

"But what was more interesting and alarming was that even the urban population had the same issue barring some pockets in metros. The dire need to normalise this conversation were the driving forces behind the making of this film."

## 'The experience was glamorous'



## Nargis Fakhri starts 2023 with her new music video

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Nargis Fakhri starts 2023 with her new music video titled 'Pyaase'. She said that working on it was "glamorous". The actress also shared the big reveal on her social media with the caption: "Tune in now to get hooked. It was a blast shooting this one with iambohemian and preetinderofficial."

Sharing her experience shooting the music video she said: "The experience was glamorous, fun and a memorable one. I'm so excited to see fans double tapping our efforts on all social media platforms. I was waiting eagerly to share this 'Pyaase' with everyone."

'Pyaase' is sung by Bohemia and preetinder, Music by Rajat Nagpal and lyrics are written by Param.

Nargis made her Bollywood debut in 2011 with the Ranbir Kapoor-starrer 'Rockstar'. She subsequently played a war correspondent in the political thriller 'Madras Cafe' and starred in the commercially successful comedies 'Main Tera Hero', 'Spy' and 'Housefull 3'.

The actress was last seen in 'Torbaaz', an action thriller film directed by Girish Malik. Sanjay Dutt plays the role of a medical professional that lost his wife and son while he was placed in the Indian Embassy in Kabul, while Nargis Fakhri and Rahul Dev play other prominent characters.

## 'I have always loved water so much'

Team Absolute | Bengaluru

Kannada actress Samyukta Hegde is in celebration mode and travelling solo. And she is sharing her best moments in Thailand's Phi Phi islands, off Phuket, on her social media handles and her pictures in a two-piece bikini are going viral. "Travelling solo, missing flights, boats and buses, making new friends and so many happy memories," one of her captions reads.

Talking about her deep-sea diving experience, Hegde described how amazing it was to go 100 feet deep into the ocean, in the day and at night.

"I have always loved water so much. I am just happy I took this solo trip, having all this time to myself have been really good for me! Not just the fact that I had a lot of fun but also I'm gonna have some great stories to tell when I'm old," she said.

The 'Kirik Party' star is eagerly looking forward to her projects in the new year. She is very much in the league of Rishab Shetty and Rakshit Shetty. Samyukta was seen with the core group from the coastal belt of the state that made it big in the industry.

## Samyukta Hegde is in celebration mode while travelling solo



## I was initially reluctant to play the mother: Manasi

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In actress and debutante producer Manasi Parekh's recent release 'Kutch Express', she plays a teenage mother. However, she had inhibitions taking on the role at first. 'Kutch Express' also stars Ratna Pathak Shah, Viraf Patel and "Taare Zameen Par" fame Darshel Safary. Manasi Parekh donned the producer's hat alongwith singer husband Parthiv Gohil. Manasi, plays a teenage mom to actor Darshel Safary on camera for the first time. Talking about her role, she said: "I was initially reluctant to play the mother of a teenager in the film because I feared that I would be typecast. But in an age where a Vidya Balan plays a mother to an Amitabh Bachchan, I realised that the audience ultimately connects to the story and the performance and nothing else. So I immediately jumped onto the role & took it up as a challenge." Manasi talks about her role: "The movie definitely revolves around the mother son relationship but with a twist. In this case, the mother is learning new things from the son and is getting awakened because of the son. So that was a beautiful relation to convey."



## Salman loses cool, says it is Archana who has come as 'khairaat'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In the upcoming episode of 'Bigg Boss 16', show's host Salman Khan will be seen addressing issues between Archana Gautam and MC Stan, who recently engaged in a war of words.

A promo shared by the channel on Instagram, shows Salman talking to Stan. He is heard saying: "Maa-Baap ke upar jaane ka matlab kya hai yaar (Why talk about parents?)"

He asks Stan to judge himself and tell him if he was right or wrong in the case. The rapper apologised. Salman then spoke to Archana and told: "Archana aapne kaha na khairaat me aya hai. Agar iss ghar me koi khairaat me aya hai na toh woh Archana hai (You said he has come as charity. If there is any-

one here that has come as charity, it is you.)" Not agreeing with Salman, Archana said: "Sir, main sahi hun." An angry Salman then said: "Agar yeh aapka attitude hai toh abhi ke abhi darwaza kholta hun, jaiyie aap." Archana and Stan got into a fight over house duties. She had said: "Kab tak janta ki khayraat mein rahega yaha pe? Janta aese ghatiya logo ko pasand nahi karti. Iske saare fans ko main bolna chahti hun isne jharu nahi lagayi (For how long will you stay on people's charity? People don't like such terrible people. I want to tell all his fans that he did bot sweep.)" Stan replied: "Tere baap ka naukar hai kya?" and Archana replied, "Mera baap Bigg Boss hai, uska toh naukar hai na." After which, an ugly verbal exchange took place leading to both talking about their parents.



## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Georgia Andriani