VOL. 8, ISSUE 80, BHOPAL | TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2023 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI

NATION

**SC** agrees to examine plea against ban on BBC documentary...



**HOLLYWOOD** 

absolute no

**Hugh Hefner is the only man to treat** me with respect: Pamela Anderson...



**SPORTS** 

Shafali, Shweta, Parshavi in U19 Women's T20 World Cup ...



**As per a CARE Ratings** survey, the agriculture sector Budget expectations include:

- ▶ HIGHER ALLOCATION OF SUBSI-DIES TOWARDS UREA AS WELL AS NON-UREA FERTILISERS AT A LEVEL OF MORE THAN RS 2,00,000 CRORE.
- SPECIAL INCENTIVES TO SET UP FERTILISER PLANTS IN INDIA TO **CUT DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTS.**
- ▶ REDUCTION IN DUTY ON IMPORTS OF AMMONIA AND PHOSPHORIC ACID TO IMPROVE THE COMPETI-TIVENESS OF DOMESTIC FERTILIS-ER MANUFACTURERS.
- ▶ INCENTIVES FOR THE PROMO-TION OF ORGANIC FERTILIZERS.

Budget wishlist: Economy can touch \$5 tn if lives of marginalised farmers improve

**CHENNAI** | Agencies

f the lives of millions of marginalised farmers are better and their standard of living improves, India as a nation should be coasting easily towards the target of a \$5 trillion economy in the near future, said a top official from Lawrencedale Agro Processing

"Farmers are and should be the centre of focus in all discussions, as they are the important stakeholders. Farmers are always confused by the various and frequent changes in the market on what will be the value for their harvest. We need to bring in significant transparency for them so that farmers can plan their livelihoods," Palat Vijayaraghavan, Founder & CEO, Lawrencedale Agro Processing (LEAF), told



IANS on his expectations from the FY24 Union Budget to be presented on February 1.

Vijayaraghavan said the Indian agriculture sector is at significant cross-roads and there is explosion of private sector participa-

There are lots of contributions which the organised sector can make for the benefit of the farmers and to uplift the sector. There is immense knowledge base and capabilities in the organised

Vijayaraghavan said the organised sector players in the market must ensure that no one loses in the ecosystem and that should be done on an immediate basis to instil confidence in the farmers. The other aspect which needs to be enabled is that of technol-

Another important cog in this whole puzzle is that how we can mainstream financial services to the agriculture sector, he said.

DESPITE THE CONTINUING SNOWFALL WITH A FLAG-HOISTING CEREMONY AT LAL CHOWK

# BJY CONCLUDED

The Congress's Bharat Jodo Yatra's closing ceremony began with a flag-hoisting ceremony at the party's office in Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar amid inclement weather. A rally at a stadium followed soon. Top Kashmiri leaders, National Conference's Faroog Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti from People's Democratic Party, spoke at the event amid heavy snowfall. Speeches by the Congress leadership, including Rahul Gandhi, who has led the march, followed.

People of Kashmir gave me hearts full of love, not hand grenades

Rahul Gandhi

- ▶ THE 'PADAYATRA' CONCLUDED AT THE LAL CHOWK AREA ON SUNDAY WITH RAHUL GANDHI UNFURLING THE NATIONAL FLAG, BUT THE OFFICIAL CLOSING TOOK PLACE ON MONDAY.
- THE KANYAKUMARI TO KASHMIR YATRA STARTED FROM THE SOUTHERN TIP OF THE COUNTRY ON SEPTEMBER 7 AND ENDED ON JANUARY 30 IN SRINAGAR, AFTER COVERING 3,970 KM IN 12 STATES, AND TWO UNION TERRITORIES.
- ▶ RAHUL GANDHI HELD OVER 100 **CORNER MEETINGS AND 13 PRESS CONFERENCES DURING THE** YATRA. HE HAD OVER 275 PLANNED WALKING INTERACTIONS AND MORE THAN 100 SITTINGS.

**Srinagar** | Agencies

he 135-day long Bharat Jodo Yatra (BJY) concluded on Monday with a flag hoisting ceremony at the party headquarters here and a public rally at the Sher-e-Kashmir cricket stadium in the nearby Sonwar area of the city.

Despite the continuing snowfall senior local leaders, Dr. Farooq Abdullah of the National conference (NC) and Mehbooba Mufti of Peoples



#### KASHMIRI "PHERAN" TO WARD OFF WINTER CHILL

Srinagar: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who set off a national debate when he walked the Bharat Jodo Yatra in a T-shirt in north India's cold winter, donned a 'pheran' to ward off Kashmir's bone-freezing chill. As the snow fell steadily, carpeting much of the Valley in white, the former Congress president was seen in a sleeveless jacket over his trademark white T-shirt earlier in the morning and then in the traditional long cloak worn by Kashmiris. Soon after attending an event at the Pradesh Congress Committee headquarters, Gandhi emerged in a grey pheran as he headed to the Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket stadium for the closing ceremony of the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

Democratic Party (PDP) attended the rally.Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress general secretary, also addressed the rally.

Speaking at the rally, Rahul Gandhi said he was warned that he might be attacked in Kashmir, but the people here did not give him hand grenades, but hearts full of love

He added that the BJP members could not walk like this in Jammu and Kashmir because they are scared. He also spoke about the pain of losing

someone while remembering his father Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, saying that he understood the pain of those who lost their kin in the Pulwama attack. He was wearing a traditional Kashmiri pheran to mark the occasion.

"I did not do the Yatra for myself or Congress, the aim is to stand against an ideology that wants to destroy the foundation of the country," he asserted.Congress sources said over a dozen leaders from the opposition

#### OPPOSITION SHOW

21 parties were invited for the function, but some are not attending due to security concerns, sources said. Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party, and TDP are among the parties to skip the function.

Low visibility and continuous snowfall has delayed all flights to Srinagar, Kuldeep Singh Rishi, Srinagar's airport director said on Twitter. Vistara Airlines cancelled both its flights from Delhi to Srinagar for the day. The 12 parties confirmed to attend are -- MK Stalin-led Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Teiashwi Yadav-led Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United), Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena, CPI(M), CPI, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK), Kerala Congress, Farooq Abdullah-led Jammu & Kashmir National Conference, Mehbooba Mufti's Jammu and Kashmir People's Democratic Party (PDP), and Shibu Soren's Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM).

parties were scheduled to attend the rally, but couldn't make it because of the closure of Jammu-Srinagar national highway and the disruption of air traffic.A total of 21 parties were invited for the function. Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party and TDP are among the parties who could not attend the function.

#### Private broadcasters to undertake public service broadcasting for 30 mins every day

Team Absolute New Delhi

he Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on Monday drew attention towards the obligation of public service broadcasting and guidelines for uplinking and downlinking of television channels in India.

The guidelines, among other things, require private broadcasters to undertake public service broadcasting for 30 minutes every day.

In this regard, the ministry undertook extensive consultations with the private satellite TV channel broadcasters and their associations and based on their inputs, an 'advisory' was issued on Monday.

Through the advisory, the ministry has clarified that the relevant content embedded in the programmes being telecast can be

accounted for by public service broadcasting. It is also clarified that the content need not be of 30 minutes at a stretch and could be spread over smaller time slots and requires the broadcaster to submit a monthly report online on the Broadcast Seva Portal.

The theme for the broadcasting sho comprise national importance and social rel-



evance, including education and spread of literacy; agriculture and rural development; health and family welfare; science and technology; welfare of women; welfare of the weaker sections of the society; protection of environment and of cultural heritage; and national integration.

It also said that the broadcaster shall keep the record of the content telecast for a period of 90 days.

The Electronic Media Monitoring Centre under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting shall keep the record of the content telecast for a period of 90 days.

It said the private satellite TV channels are accordingly advised to report public service above, with effect from March 1, 2023.

## ASARAM CONVICTED IN GUJARAT RAPE CASE

Team Absolute Gandhinagar

court in Gujarat's Gandhinagar on Monday found "godman" Asaram Bapu guilty in a 2013 rape case, and will announce the quantum of punishment on Tuesday.

The Additional District Sessions Court, however, acquitted six other accused in the rape case - Asaram's wife Lakshmiben, daughter Bharati, Nirmala Lalvani, Meera Kalvani, Dhruvben Lalvani, and Javantiben Chaudhary

Special Public Prosecutor R.C. Kodekar told media that the victim had regis-

a bond promising not to

make any statements for a

participate in any public

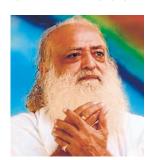
Leh, now bristling with

status under the Sixth

gatherings, for a month, over

the recent developments in

protests demanding special



tered a case with Surat police, which was transferred to Ahmedabad police in 2013. The Chandkheda police station had registered a case under various section of the IPC, including rape by one or more in group, common intent, unnatural offence,

criminal force on women, wrongful confinement and criminal intimidation against 8 persons, including Asaram Bapu, and his son Narayan Sai.

While Asaram is presently in Jodhpur jail following conviction in another rape case, a separate trial against Narayan Sai is going on in the Surat court.

Two sisters had filed complaint against Asaram and his son, alleging that between 1997 to 2006, they were raped at the Motera Ashram run by Asaram and his son. The younger sister had lodged a complaint against Narayan Sai and the older against Asaram.

#### **ECONOMIC SURVEY TO BE PRESENTED IN** PARLIAMENT TODAY

New Delhi: The government on Tuesday will release the Economic Survey for 2022-23, which will present a picture of the economic situation of the country during the period.

The Economic Survey, will be tabled in Parliament by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, soon after President Droupadi Murmu's address to both houses of Parliament.

The Budget session is scheduled to commence from tomorrow on January 31.

The Economic Survey gives a detailed account of the country's economic performance during the fiscal gone by and provides key data on macroeconomic indicators like inflation, foreign exchange reserves and the economic growth rate

In addition, it also provides a status report on significant sectors like infrastructure, energy, financial institutions, and agriculture as well as industry.

#### Guj govt opposes bail pleas of Godhra convicts in SC

New Delhi Agencies

he Supreme Court on Monday sought reply from the Gujarat government on bail petitions of some convicts sentenced to life imprisonment in the 2002 Godhra train coach-burning case.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Gujarat government, submitted before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud that it was not just a matter of stone throwing at the bogey of the Sabarmati Express, but instead

the convicts had bolted the bogey,

which resulted in death of many pas-

sengers on the train. Mehta said: "Some are saying their role was just stone pelting. But when you lock a bogey from outside, light it on fire and then pelt stones, it is not

just stone pelting. Senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, representing some of the convicts, con-



tended that the state government has filed appeals in the cases of certain convicts whose capital punishment was commuted to life sentence by the Gujarat High Court.

The bench, also comprising Justices P.S. Narasimha and J.B. Pardiwala, told Mehta: "We will list (the bail pleas) after two weeks."

After hearing brief submissions in the matter, the apex court issued notice to the state government on the bail pleas of Abdul Raheman Dhantia alias Kankatto, Abdul Sattar Ibrahim Gaddi Asla, and others

## Ladakh Innovator Says Detained After Fast, Officials Deny Allegation

New Delhi Agencies

adakh's top environmentalist Sonam Wangchuk alleged that he has been detained by the Union Territory's administration after his protest fast demanding special status for Leh. Authorities, however, denied any detention. Day before Wangchuk said, the administration wants to "silence him" for the protest against the destruction of the region's ecology and unsustainable development.

The Union Territory administration said he wanted to protest in Khardung La, permission for which was denied.

The Ladakh administra-



tion wants Wangchuk to sign Schedule of the Constitution, the bond adds. Wangchuk began his fivemonth over the recent hapday fast on Thursday at penings in Leh. He is not to

Phyang, Leh, where the night temperature is minus 20 degrees Celsius. He earlier alleged he was placed under house arrest.

He had also tweeted a copy of what he claimed was

the bond that he has been asked to sign to ensure he wouldn't make any statement or participate at public meetings for a month.

He co-founded the Himalayan Institute of Alternative Ladakh, or HIAL, on whose grounds he has been fasting.

Calling for preventive steps, he has said unsustainable industries, tourism, and commerce will continue to mushroom in Ladakh and finish the region eventually.

He has also asked the government to include the region in the 6th schedule of the Constitution, which allows administration of some tribal areas as autonomous entities.

## **SC AGREES TO EXAMINE PLEA AGAINST BAN** ON BBC DOCUMENTARY ON GUJARAT RIOTS

he Supreme Court on Monday agreed to examine, on February 6, a plea challenging the Centre's ban on the BBC documentary in connection with the 2002 Gujarat Riots.

Ádvocate M.L. Sharma mentioned the plea for urgent listing before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, and the top court agreed to hear it on February 6.

The series, titled "India: The Modi Question", has been dismissed as a biased "propaganda piece" by the government.

The plea, filed by Sharma, contended that the BBC documentary and was released for public view, however due to fear of truth, the documentary has been banned from viewership in India by any means under Rule 16 of IT Act 2021.

Sharma's plea sought a direction for quashing of the January 21 order under the IT Act being illegal, malafide and arbitrary, unconstitutional and void ab-initio and ultra vires to the Constitution.

The documentary titled 'India: The Modi Question' has been banned on



social media and online channels, but some students have screened it on campuses of various universities across the country.

Sharma's plea contended that the BBC documentary has reflected true facts with original recording of the victims of 2002 riots as well as others concerned involved in the scenario of riots, and it can be used for judicial justice. The top court will also hear

series do not fall under any of the restrictions specified in Article 19(2) or B restrictions imposed under Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000," said the plea by Ram and others.

The government has blocked the sharing of any clips from the documentary on social media. Students' organisations and opposition parties have organised public screenings of the documentary, to protest against the ban.

The plea by Ram and others argued that the apex court has categorically laid down that criticism of the government or its policies or even the judgment of the Supreme Court does not tantamount to violating the sovereignty and integrity of India.

"Censoring the freedom of speech and expression of the petitioners by the Executive through opaque orders and proceedings is manifestly arbitrary as it frustrates the fundamental right of petitioners to effectively seek judicial review of administrative actions under Article 226 and Article 32 of the constitution of India in violation of the Basic Structure of the Constitution of India," added the

## Would rather die than forming alliance with BJP: Nitish Kumar

ihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday asserted that he would choose death over any alliance with BJP -- its

While interacting with media persons here, Nitish Kumar further said that the next Assembly polls would bring forth his party's capability.

His statement comes a day after BJP Rajya Sabha MP Sushil Kumar Modi said that the top leadership, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and the party national president have decided against having any kind of truck with Kumar in Bihar.

Sushil Kumar Modi further tore into the chief minister saying that he lacked the capability to win any elections on his own. Why would the BJP make alliances with any leader and his party who does not have any capacity to win elections on his own. In the 2020 Assembly election, had JD(U) not entered an alliance with the BJP, it would not have bagged even 15 seats. PM Modi had campaigned extensively for JD(U) in that election," Sushil Modi said on Sunday.

"We are the people who believe in Atal Ji and hence were with BJP. In 2013, we did leave the party but got back in 2017 on their consistent demand. During the 2020 Assembly elections, we realised that our deci-



sion was wrong. "We supported BJP but they worked against us in the last Assembly polls. I did not agree to the post of chief minister but they requested me. After becoming the chief minister, they started with their wrongdoings again," Nitish Kumar said. JMM and Shiv Sena to contest election in Bihar. They have a similar election symbol like the JD(U). Due to the symbol similarity, we lost 5 to 6 seats. When we did not have an alliance with BJP in 2015, you know the seats we had," Kumar said.

"Now, wait for the next elections. It will give you a clear picture about our capacity. I choose to die but not get into any alliance with the BJP in future. They had deliberately made a case against Tejashwi's father and are doing it again after we parted ways," Kumar

# India's first glass igloo restaurant come up in J&K's Gulmarg

Srinagar | Agencies

ndia's first glass igloo restaurant has been attracting attention of tourists who visit the world-famous Gulmarg ski resort these

This glass-wall restaurant has been built in the middle of snow by Kolahoi Green Heights hotel of Gulmarg. Two years back, the same hotel had built a snow igloo in Gulmarg what the management claimed was the biggest snow igloo of Asia.

Hotel management said that they took the concept from Finland and built three igloos in the courtvard of their hotel - a feature which was not seen anywhere before. Then, they also built three igloos at phase one of Gulmarg Gandola cable car project.

"Imported fabricated material has been used for this unique igloo. This unique glass-



fronted restaurant keeps the interior insulated and offers the best view

"Eight people can sit in each of these glass igloos at one time. We are trying to give a different kind of experience to tourists. These unique glass-fronted restaurants are loved by locals as well," the hotel manager said.

#### **BIHAR TEENAGER FALLS** INTO WELL WHILE ON **MOBILE PHONE, DIES**

next week, a separate petition filed by

advocate Prashant Bhushan on taking

journalist N. Ram, Trinamool

documentary.

Congress MP Mahua Moitra, and

down their tweets with links of the

"The contents of the BBC

Petitioner No. 2 (Bhushan) &3

Documentary and the tweets by

(Moitra) are protected under Article

19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India.

Patna: Engrossed in talking on his mobile, a 17year-old youth in Bihar's Siwan district fell into a well and died, police said on Monday

The deceased, Rahul Kumar, resident of Raghunathpur Bazar, was talking when he stepped out of his house and did not realise that there was an open well just in front, fell in, and drowned, police said.

Raghunathpur SHO Tanvir Alam said that the incident came to light after the youth did not return home after half an hour.

"As per the statement of the deceased's father Hareram Yadav, Rahul was talking with a person on phone while eating dinner. He was talking to that person after completing the meal as well. While continuing to talk, he went out of the house. After he did not return for half an hour, his family started searching for him. When a person saw into the well with the help of torch, his dead body was found floating on the water," the SHO said.

The villagers present there immediately pulled out the dead body and informed police about the

"It has been assumed that he was busy talking on the phone and did not realise that there was an open well ahead. We are trying to find the person who was in conversation with him," Alam said.

#### Ahead of Feb-16 Tripura assembly polls, another BJP MLA resigns

Agartala Agencies

ust ahead of the February-16 elections, ruling BJP suffered a jolt as one more legislator of the party, Atul Debbarma resigned from the Tripura Assembly and the party on Monday.

Debbarma, a physicianturned-politician, however, submitted his nomination papers on Monday in the Krishnapur assembly constituency in Khowai district as an Independent.

Debbarma and six other sitting BJP MLAs were dropped from the list of party nominees for the next month assembly polls. The ruling BJP this time nominated Bikash Debbarma in the Krishnapur assembly seat.

Out of the total of 60 assembly constituencies, BJP has fielded candidates in 55 seats while its ally Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) fielded candi-



dates in the remaining five seats. Atul Debbarma, who is the 6th BJP MLAs and 9th legislator of the BJP-IPFT alliance quit the assembly and their respective parties since 2021, said that he was dropped from the candidates' list and none was informed of him yet.

"In 2018, I resigned from the

Delhi government health services and joined BJP and was elected to the assembly from the Krishnapur assembly constituency. I have tried my best to give services to the people. If I do not quit the government job, I can do the job for many more years," the 59-year-old leader told reporter.

#### Man commits suicide in Kolkata while on video call with wife

Kolkata Agencies

n a shocking incident, a man committed suicide on Monday while he was on a video call with his wife, who is currently staying in Ahmedabad.

The police later recovered the hanging body from his rented accommodation at Garfa in South Kolkata. The deceased has been identified as Prasun Bandopadhyay (47), who worked as an officer with a private sector bank.

Initial investigation has revealed that Aparna, the wife of the deceased, is currently staying in Ahmedabad with their two daughters. Initially, Bandopadhyay was also in Ahmedabad and got transferred to Kolkata around 18 months back. Since then, he had been residing at the rented accommodation at Garfa.

Aparna told the police from Ahmedabad that they started a video call at 1 a.m. on Monday and continued till around 4 a.m. She admitted that during the video call, they got engaged in a bitter war of words. At around 4 p.m., Bandopadhyay suddenly got up and hanged himself from the ceiling fan even as the video call was on. Aparna was shocked before she called the Kolkata Police headquarters



and informed about the incident.

The police, by tracking the tower location of the mobile phone of the deceased, reached the rented accommodation. They broke open the door and recovered Bandopadhyay's body from the bedroom, and sent it for post-mortem.

#### PROTESTS IN ASSAM OVER INCLUSION OF 60 VILLAGES IN BODOLAND REGION

**Guwahati**: Protests broke out in Gohpur in Assam's Biswanath district on Monday over the state government's decision to include 60 villages in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

The protesters came out on to the streets and violence was resported. They burnt tires on the highway to express displeasure against the state government's decision.

While visiting Bodoland area on Sunday, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that the government decided to include villages, which have at least 80 per cent Bodo population, in the BTR.

However, the protesters claimed that the decision has not been made looking into the demography of the villages carefully as many villages have a quite high non-Bodo population.

They also criticised the role of MLA from Gohpur Utpal Bora for being a mute spectator in this issue.

Meanwhile, the Bodo leaders have welcomed the state government's decision.

#### Plane carrying Andhra Pradesh CM makes emergency landing

Vijayawada | Agencies

n aircraft carrying Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy made an emergency landing at Gannavaram airport on Monday evening, reportedly due to a technical snag.

The chartered aircraft in which the Chief Minister and senior officials were travelling to New Delhi returned to the airport, around 30 minutes after take-off.

The aircraft took off at 5.03 p.m. and returned to the tarmac at 5.27 p.m. It made a safe landing.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, the pilot identified an AC valve leakage which led to a problem in the pressurisation system. This forced the pilot to return to the airport to ensure safety of the passengers.

The Chief Minister was on his way to the national capital to address diplomats and entrepreneurs in a curtain raise event related to the AP Global Investors Summit-2023. After the aircraft returned to the

Gannavaram airport, the Chief Minister left for official residence at Tadepalli.



The officials were making alternate arrangements for the Chief Minister, public representatives and officials to go to New Delhi on Monday night.

# TN WOMAN COP WHOSE CYCLING HABIT MOTIVATES PEOPLE

ushparani is a Sub Inspector in Tamil Nadu police working with the Flower Bazar Police station. However, what makes this 45-year-old officer unique is her resolve to use cycle as a mode of transport even in this busy world.

The woman cop told reporter, "My father was a police officer and he used to cycle every day. It was he who taught me safe pedalling and since then there was no looking back and it's my resolve to cycle to my station and back She cycles a minimum of 6 km a day from

her home to the police station and back. In between, she also pedals to the City Police commissioner's office and has now turned into a motivator to many. Subbalakshmi, a flower vendor in Sowcarpet, said, "I have now started using a bicycle for travel from my home to the flower market. This saves money and provides good health. I knew cycling since my school days but had stopped using it. After seeing Pushaparani Madam cycling to the police station in uniform, I thought why not



me? Now I am cycling 5 km a day from my home to the market and back. " Pushparani joined the Tamil Nadu police as a grade II

constable with the Tamil Nadu Special police and then the Armed reserve police. Since then, she has been cycling to her work and

this is her seventh cycle. Incidentally, the present cycle is gifted to her by the Chennai City police commissioner, Shankar Jiwal.

#### **ACCUSED IN GORAKHNATH TEMPLE ATTACK CASE GETS DEATH**

**Gorakhpur:** Ahmed Murtaza, convicted in the Gorakhnath temple attack case in Gorakhpur, was sentenced to death by a special NIA court on

Murtaza was convicted by the court on charges of UAPA, waging war against the country and murderous attack. He was present in the court, when the sentence was announced. Earlier on Saturday, the NIA court had convicted Ahmed Murtaza.

It may be recalled that on April 4, 2022, Murtaza entered the Gorakhnath temple and attacked the security personnel.

Murtaza attacked PAC constable Anil Kumar Paswan and tried to snatch weapons from him. When other security personnel came to the rescue, Murtaza attacked them too.

After this, he started raising religious slogans while waving arms. The police arrested him and sent him to jail.

During the investigation, weapons, laptops and material written in Urdu were recovered from him. Deputy SP, Sanjay Verma had filed the charge sheet in the case. The ATS produced Ahmed Murtaza in the special court on April 25, 2022 in this case and also obtained remand.

A lawyer was engaged for Murtaza at the expense of the government.



## madhya pradesh

# KHELO INDIA YOUTH GAMES **INAUGURATED IN M P**

Sports like kayaking, canoeing, canoe slalom and fencing will be part of the KIYG for the first time



Team Absolute Bhopal

he fifth edition of the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) was inaugurated by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in the presence of Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Anurag Singh Thakur at Tatya Tope Nagar Stadium on January 30 evening.

The KYIG 2022 will be held at 23 venues in eight cities of the State in which nearly 6,000 athletes will take part in 27 different sports, an official said. For the first time sports like kayaking, canoeing, canoe slalom and fencing will be part of the Khelo India Youth Games.

"The games started from Monday in a glittering manner on the theme 'Hindustan Ka Dil Dhadka

Do' for 13 days," Chouhan told reporters. Noted artists including Shaan, Neeti Mohan, Sivamani and Abhilipsa Panda performed at the grand

Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Nisith Pramanik and Madhya Pradesh Youth Welfare and Sports Minister Yashodhara Raje Scindia was also presented on the occasion.

The games will be held in eight MP cities-Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Jabalpur Mandla, Balaghat, and Khargone (Maheshwar)- while one cycling event will be held in Delhi, she said.

A total of 303 international and 1,089 national officials will be part of the games and nearly 2,000 volunteers will be deployed at different sport ven-

#### **MP LOSES FIRST MATCH IN BOTH MEN'S AND WOMEN'S**



**Bhopal:** The first sporting event of the Khelo India Youth Games 2022, volleyball, began in the indoor hall of the Sports Authority of India on Monday. Players from different states looked their opponents in the eye here. Some won the first match, some lost, but it was the spirit of sports that maintained a positive environment among young athletes. The volleyball players enticed the spectators with strong serves, continuous smashes, and great enthusiasm and impactful cheers.

On the first day, there were four matches in both the men's and women's categories. In the men's category, the matches that were played were among Gujarat v/s Delhi, Tamil Nadu v/s Madhya Pradesh, Haryana v/s Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan v/s Himachal Pradesh. In the women's category, the matches that were scheduled for day 1 were: Haryana vs. Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal vs. Karnataka, Tamil Nadu vs. Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat vs. Kerala. Madhya Pradesh's men's team kicked off with a good start in the first round but lost their rhythm in the second round. They tried to catch up in the third round, but it was too late, and they lost their first match against Tamil Nadu by 3-0. Madhya Pradesh women's team lost by 3-0 against Tamil Nadu.

## Indore man's heart flown to Pune for ailing army soldier

he heart from a 34-yearold brain dead man in Madhya Pradesh's Indore was flown to Pune in a special plane of the Indian Army on Monday to be transplanted to a soldier suffering from a heart ailment, an official said.

Pradeep Aswani, a vegetable trader from Ujjain, sustained a serious head injury in a road accident on the night of January 20 and was admitted to a private hospital in Indore for treatment, the official from Indore Society for Organ Donation said. Aswani's condition did not improve and the doctors declared him brain dead, he said. The man's grief-stricken family agreed to donate his organs, following which surgeons retrieved his heart, liver, kidneys and eyes, the official said. Talking to Reporter, Indore's Divisional Commissioner (Revenue) Dr



dier and serve the country.' Meanwhile, Aswani's kidneys, liver and eyes will be

heart is going to be trans-

planted to a soldier. I feel that

(after the heart transplant)

my brother will live as a sol-

transplanted to needy patients in local hospitals, said Sandipan Arya, a volunteer of "Muskan Group", an organisation associated with the Indore Society for Organ Donation. According to eyewitnesses, Aswani's body was sent for last rites from a pri-

Personnel from the Madhya Pradesh police sounded the bugle as a tribute to Aswani in the presence of local Lok Sabha MP Shankar Lalwani and doc-

#### **2 ARRESTED FOR PROTESTING AGAINST THE FILM IN INDORE**

Team Absolute Indore

olice have taken strict actions against the people on Monday who protested against the film Pathan in Indore city, objectionable slogans were raised by some people on January 25, Wednesday at Badwali police station area of Sadar Bazar. Police have registered two separate cases under section 295 A, 153 A, 505, 34 of Indian Penal Code (IPC). Inflammatory and objectionable slogans were raised and a video of other people's provocative speech had also gone viral. While taking action in the case two accused were arrested and detained in jail. Earlier, police arrested four other accused who raised objectionable slogans and protested and sent them



According to the information, the Sadar Bazar police identified the other two accused on the basis of the viral video and arrested them. The accused are identified as Uvesh alias Avesh Ahmed and Tausif. Investigation in the case is going on by the police, on the basis of which advance legal action will be taken. Every activity of social media is being closely monitored by the police.

#### MP Assembly's month-long budget session to begin from Feb 27

Team Absolute Bhopal

he budget session (2023-2024) of Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly will begin from February 27, State Home Minister Narottam Mishra who is also the state's Parliamentary Affairs Minister, said on Monday.

It would be month-long session, which would conclude on March 27. Th preparation including receiving of questions from the legislators will begin with announcement of the beginning of the session.

According to the Madhya Pradesh Assembly secretariat, there will be a total of 13 sittings during the 29-day budget session, which would be the 14th of the current Assembly

Before the presentation of



the state budget for the fiscal 2023-24, various issues of public welfare will be discussed during the monthlong session, Mishra, who is also spokesperson of the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government, said.

As the assembly polls in the state are scheduled to be held at the end of this year. the ruling BJP is most likely to announce several projects and public beneficiary schemes to woo the voters.

On the other hand, the opposition Congress will corner the BJP government on all fronts.

## BJP govt in MP begins administrative surgery ahead of Assembly polls

7ith around eight months left to the state legislative elections, the BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government has started an administrative surgery.

In a notification issued by Chief Secretary Igbal Singh Bains late on Sunday, as many as 11 IAS officers, of hem seven district collectors, hav been transferred.

The transfer list issued two days before the Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is scheduled to chair a high-level meeting with IAS and IPS

officers in the state. Gwalior collector Kaushlendra Singh has been shifted to Bhopal after being appointed as Additional Chief Secretary of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Akshya Kumar Singh, 2010 batch IAS, who was serving as district collector of Shivpuri,



has been appointed as new district collector of Gwalior.

Ravindra Kumar Choudhary (2011 batch IAS) will be the new district collector of Shivpuri, while Khargone collector Kumar Purusottam (2012)

will be new collector of Ujjain. Notably, Kumar Purusottam was appointed Khargone collector following a communal riot in April last year. Shivraj Singh Verma (2012 batch IAS)

district collector of Barwani will be

Dr. Phatting Rahul Haridas (2012) who has been serving as collector of Shivni district, will replace Shivraj Singh Verma. Similarly, Sonia Meena, collector of Anuppur has been shifted to Bhopal and has been appointed as Additional Chief Secretary in Madhya Pradesh government.

Jabalpur Municipal Commissioner shish Vashishtha (2014 hatch IAS) will be new collector of Anuppur district, while Kshit Singhal (2014 batch IAS), who has been serving as the CEO in Sagar Zila Panchayat, has been appointed as the new district collector of Shivni.

Sources said that a major reshuffle of IPS officers, including Police Commissioner Bhopal and Indore, is likely to be announced soon. The names of SP to IG rank officers are also likely to be included in the upcoming transfer list.

#### ARRESTED LAW STUDENT **ASSOCIATED WITH PFI: MP HOME MINISTER**



Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra on Monday said that the female law student arrested for alleged impersonation in Indore, had links with banned Islamic organisation- Popular

Front of India (PFI).

Briefing the media, minister Mishra said that during interrogation, Sonu Mansoori confessed that she was working for PFI and some other banned organisations. Mansoori was providing information to the banned Islamic outfits, he added.

"She has confessed to her involvement with PFI during the police questioning. It is a serious issue involving an attempt to disrupt peace and harmony of Madhya Pradesh, so it deserves no leniency. Indore police are trying to track some other persons also suspected of impersonation. Tough action would be taken against those involved in such activities." the minister said. Mansoori's arrest came during a hearing in a district court room in Indore

A complaint from the bar council said that a woman was trying to record court proceedings on her phone while posing as an advocate. She was identified by one of the lawyers but on being asked about her identity, she could not give satisfactory answers."It was later found that she was a law student and was posing as an advocate to be a part of court proceedings. We also recovered Rs 1.5 lakh in cash from her," Rajesh Raghuwanshi, additional DCP said on Sunday

## Katni's mayor Preeti It's raining in Bhopal Suri joins BJP, again



Team Absolute Bhopal

n a major political development ahead of Assembly elections due in November, Katni's mayor Preeti Suri, who won as an independent candidate, joined BJP in presence of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, state BJP president VD Sharma, home minister Dr Narottam Mishra and ex-minister Sanjay Pathak in Bhopal on Monday. Apart from this, district panchayat member Amit Rai and three independent corporators from Katni - Suman Makija, Dr Ramesh Soni and Khushbu - also joined BJP in addition to Nivari district panchayat president Saroj Rai.

The chief minister welcomed them. Praising the decision of Preeti Suri, he said she returned to BJP fold to serve people in a better manner.

VD Sharma said Preeti Suri was a member of BJP earlier but fought mayoral election as an independent candidate and won. But she always had a longing for ruling party. Political pundits believe that by winning hearts of rebels, BJP was trying to cement its position in Katni Assembly constituency.

Sources said former minister Sanjay Pathak played an important role in drawing independent leaders to BJP fold.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has raised another question before state Congress president Kamal Nath that why the latter fail to fulfil promised made in Congress election manifesto like starting Krishak Kanya Vivah Scheme. Chouhan said Nath was avoiding answers to his questions.

## Malhargarh records 3 cm rain

Team Absolute Bhopal

louds loomed across the sky in Bhopal on Monday while the weather remained chilly. The meteorological department has forecast occurrence of light rain accompanied by thunder in many districts in next 48 hours. On Monday, Bhopal recorded a minimum temperature of 15 degrees Celsius, which was 3.5 degrees above normal.

The meteorological

department has forecast fall in temperatures by two to three degrees in next 48 hours. Meanwhile, showers are likely to occur at isolated places in Gwalior and Chambal divisions and districts like Vidisha. Raisen, Rajgarh, Betul, Dhar, Indore, Ratlam, Ujjain, Dewas, Shajapur, Neemuch, Mandsaur, Umaria, Dindori, Katni, Damoh, Sagar, Chhattarpur, Tikamgarh

Rain will be accompa nied by thunder in

and Niwari.

Gwalior, Chambal divisions and districts including Vidisha, Rajgarh, Neemuch, Mandsaur, Damoh, Sagar,

Chhattarpur, Niwari. In last 24 hours, rainfall occurred in Chambal, Gwalior and Ujjain divisions. About 3 cm rain was recorded in Malhargarh (Mandsaur district) followed by 2 cm rainfall each in Karhal, Bhanpura, Vijaypur, Manasa, Neemach, Jawad, Mandsaur, Alipur, Kailaras recorded 1 cm



#### 217 DIAMONDS OF TO BE AUCTIONED **IN PANNA**



Panna: The auction of approximately 217 diamonds (Gem, Off Colour and Industrial Diamonds) weighing about 367.03 carats and amounting around Rs 39,61,297 will commence in Panna from February 21. Besides this, a large number of small and medium size diamonds weighing from a few cents to carats will also be kept for auction. These diamonds were recovered from shallow diamond mines of Panna. Panna collector, Sanjay Kumar Mishra will conduct the diamond auction. Out of 217 diamonds, five diamonds are of Gem quality weighing 11.88 carats, 9.64 carats, 6.44 carats, 6.29 carats and 5.70 carats.

These diamonds have been found by people who took 'patta' or a land deed of a diamond mine form the government. Now all such people are waiting with bated breath for the auction day as after the auction, the diamonds they have found would fetch them large sum of money.

EDITOR'S SPECS

#### Budget likely to be tightrope walk

he FY24 Union Budget is likely to be a tightrope walk, considering its fiscal L guidance and the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Phillip Capital said in a report. "We estimate fiscal deficit for FY24 at 5.8-6.0% and FY23 at 6.2%. Muted nominal GDP growth (due to global slowdown and low deflator) will constrain tax revenue and government spending, compared to the strong pace in the last couple of years", the report said. Thus, the government's innovation will be tested - to deliver an effective budget, encompassing capex, rural, social, policy incentives, subsidies, and tax/growth buoyancy. In case the government adopts an easy approach to the fiscal path, across-the-board expansion can be expected and delivered. In the upcoming budget, we anticipate continued focus on PLI incentives (for new sectors), Atmanirbhar Bharat (to enhance manufacturing, exports, while managing imports), sustainability (supply/demand push towards renewable energy and alternative technologies), and infrastructure expansion (defence, railways, ports, logistics, and roads). The government wants to encourage the adoption of the new income-tax regime, thus incentivisation is likely, the report said. Fiscal support to rural India will continue (adjusting for food and fertiliser subsidy); we will be watching for any meaningful stimulus (low probability considering fiscal constraints). Total expenditure for FY23 clocked 62% of BE by November end with 18% higher spend than the corresponding period of previous years. Ministries that drove the spending were fertilizer (142% of BE) due to higher subsidy outgo, followed by railways (101%), roads (79%), atomic energy (72%), rural development (69%), PDS (68%), home affairs (65%) and defence (64%). Decent spend was noted among education (56%), agriculture (51%) and health (50%) while spending was weak in petroleum (26%), water resources (32%), housing (44%) and power (48%).

# DO IT THE WAY THE SOUTH DOES: IT WORK

he Hindi film industry, especially its stars, has this funny attitude towards South Indian films and filmmakers. They grudge South Indian films, especially the successful ones and more so the ones that are dubbed, and succeed with the Hindi belt audience!

In recent times, quite a few dubbed South Indian films have done record-breaking business in the Hindi belt and there are no exceptions. Earlier, mainly the Telugu films worked when remade in Hindi, with a rare Tamil film doing so. Kannada and Malayalam remakes rarely worked and the pro ducers avoided remaking them. In fact, quite a few Hindi stars

have either built or sustained their careers because of South Indian remakes or Hindi films made by South Indian filmmakers. The Kannada market was small and had a limited reach. Tamil films were very conventional, verbose. Malayalam films were too bold and unconventional, too ahead of their time to appeal to the Hindi audience fed on what were called for-

Telugu films worked because they were close to Hindi themes and readily acceptable. That was one reason why more Telugu filmmakers got into the Hindi market compared to others.

In the recent past, when a few South Indian films worked big time, some actors took to social media to express their grudge. The dubbing of South Indian films was a small-time byproduct that did not bother Hindi filmmakers; rather, they served as gap fillers for the distributors and exhibitors during phases when releasing a new Hindi film was not considered opportune.

The South Indian filmmakers kept their basic ingredients of family, mother-sister ties, traditional culture; in fact, they stuck to their roots, but their approach to filmmaking changed. They introduced grandeur. And you started being treated to films such as 'Baahubali' 'RRR', 'Kantara', and such, Hindi filmmakers and stars should not grudge such films. Not that they did not try to imitate multi-star costume



dramas, but it didn't help.

Despite everything, now the Hindi stars have decided to go allout to copy South Indian trends all the way (without bothering to their way of sticking to content with roots).

South Indian stars enjoy a huge fan following who are really devoted to their idols. They have fan clubs. Here, the stars may have fans, but each fan may also be a fan of a few other actors. There, the fans go out of their way to felicitate a star's new release, bathe his cutouts with milk and build temples in his honour. So, why not pretend to have a fan base and fan clubs for our Hindi stars?

To that end, Hindi stars now invite their 'fans' to all their events and film premieres, and help fill empty cinemas. It reminds me of political events and rallies where a politician's followers/fans are actually a crowd on bikes. Next day, when the other politician organises a rally, you won't be surprised to see the same faces.

Loyalty and devotion on hire! That is okay for social media handles. To go the whole hog, the makers of Hindi films have started putting up huge cutouts of the film's lead stars a la South. This is a typically South Indian trend. Huge cutouts of the star measuring 40 to 60 feet in height are put up.

So, be prepared to see huge cutouts of Shah Rukh Khan put up for 'Pathaan' or of Ajay Devgn for his upcoming film, 'Bhola'. If you

can't beat them, join them!

Star Secretaries To Casting

There used to be this breed called star secretaries. Now, they have been replaced by casting agents or talent managers. You must have seen what a secretary's job was; just maintaining a star's date diary and face the producer's music when the dates needed to be cancelled and when it came to asking for pay-

Asrani plays a secretary who manages the affairs of first, Amitabh Bachchan, and later, Jaya Bhaduri, in the film 'Abhimaan' (1973), But the star secretary as projected in 'Abhiman' was straightforward, very businesslike, one busy with a fading singer husband and the rising singing star, and balancing their competing egos.

That is not what the real-life star secretaries were really like. They would not survive in the business if they were anything like Asrani in the film. The secretaries of the big stars were exclusive -- they attended to just one star. Then there were those few who handled a lineup of stars, their clients being mostly character artistes.

A star secretary was as much sought after as the star himself, if not more. He made meeting a star possible and adjusted your film's dates into the star's schedule. A star did three shifts a day and the dates

were handed out by the hour, so the stars sometimes ended up doing four to five shifts at a time. No won der producers often took two to three years to complete a film.

But one thing was common. The ambition of all these secretaries was to become film producers. Rajesh Khanna's first secretary, Gurnam Singh Arora, produced 'Savera' (1972), his second secretary, Yusuf Hassan, produced 'Chakravyuha' (1978). Dharmendra's secretary, Dinanath Shastry. produced 'Dharti Kahe Pukar Ke' (1969).

Amitabh Bachchan and Shatrughan Sinha shared a common secretary, Pawan Kumar, who along with Jaya Bhaduri's, Sushila Kamat, produced 'Abhimaan', though, it was said the original producers of the film were Bachchan and Bhaduri. Rakesh Nath, who handled the work of Madhuri Dixit and Anil Kapoor, produced 'Yaraana' (1995).

Akshay Kumar involved his secretary in his many productions. Ajay Devgn's secretary, Kumar Mangat, has produced a number of films, the latest being 'Drishyam2'.

A lot many guys who descended upon Bombay of that time, had dreams of becoming stars or directors or film producers, took to other jobs, such as becoming star secretaries, PRs or journalists after the

struggle. It

initial

star who made films in his name.

A secretary normally charged 20 per cent of a star's remuneration. But once successful, the secretary would be replaced by one of the family members. The stars found 20 per cent of what they charged too high to part with, once they were

Now, the scene has changed. The star secretaries are out. Instead, the casting agencies have taken their place. Yet, the background stories are the same. The top casting agent, Mukeh Chhabra, for instance, aspired to be an actor and played a bit role in 'Gangs Of Wasseypur'. Kunal Shah worked for trade journals and, finally, found his calling as a casting agent. The other known agents are Abhishek Bannerjee, Honey Trehan, Vicky Sidana and Jogi Malang.

Things are easier for these casting agencies. The scope has grown manifold as they don't have to depend only on film casting. Now, there are television serials, OTT platforms and films.

Earlier, an aspirant was accepted by a secretary only after he/she signed a film; no secretary wanted to struggle on behalf of an aspirant. Today, as a lot of makers depend on such casting agencies, it is easy to push a newcomer. But casting agents now seem to go by the social media following of aspirants. If you don't have much of a following, you don't qualify!

How can one expect a lay netizen to have a huge following? That can happen only if one has achieved a status of, say, a film or TV star, a social media influencer, or some other kind of celebrity.

The column this week would be incomplete without mentioning 'Pathaan'. A lot of curious observations and claims are floating around. One would be able to do better justice to it with an article about it in due course.

## international

# 32 KILLED, 147 INJURED IN **BLAST AT PESHAWAR MOSQUE**

**Peshawar** Agencies

powerful suicide blast inside a mosque in Peshawar's Police Lines area on Monday killed 32 people while 147 others were injured, local media reported.

According to security officials, the suicide attacker was present in the front row during the prayers when he exploded himself, injuring dozens of faithfuls offering Zuhr prayers, Geo News reported.

The outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has taken responsibility for the attack, the report said. The Peshawar mosque attack is by far the biggest in the serious of attacks that TTP has been conducting targeting the security forces and their installa-

Confirming the casualties, Peshawar Commissioner Riaz Mehsood said that a rescue operation was underway inside the mosque located in the city's Police Lines aea, Dawn news reported.

"An emergency has been imposed at hospitals across the city and injured persons are being provided the best medical facilities," the senior official said.

Meanwhile, Lady Reading Hospital spokesperson Mohammad Asim told



claimed responsibility for the attack.

In a statement, Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned

the blast and said that the attackers

behind the incident "have nothing to

do with Islam", Dawn news reported.

"Terrorists want to create fear by

targeting those who perform the duty

nation is standing united against the

The premier also said that a com-

prehensive strategy will be adopted to

Pakhtunkhwa and the federal govern-

counter the deteriorating law and

of defending Pakistan. The entire

menace of terrorism.

order situation in Khyber

Dawn news that injured persons were still being brought to the medical facility and some of them were in critical condition.

According to the Dawn news report, personnel of the police, army and bomb disposal squads were currently present inside the mosque.

It added that a portion of the mosque had collapsed and several people were believed to be trapped under it. However, it remains unclear if the explosion was due to suicide bombing or if the bomb was planted inside the mosque.

So far, no group or individual have

Also condemning the attack, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that "terrorist incidents before the local and general elections were meaningful". Taking to Twitter, former Prime

ment will help provinces in increasing their anti-terrorism capacity.

Minister Imran Khan said: "It is imperative we improve our intelligence gathering & properly equip our police forces to combat the growing threat of terrorism.

In the wake of the attack, Islamabad Inspector General Akbar Nasir Khan issued directions for a 'security high-alert" to be placed in the capital.

The police in the capital said that security at all entry and exit points of the city has been increased and monitoring was being done through the "Safe City" system.

The police added that snipers had been placed at "important points and buildings" and the police were provided with thermal imaging facilities.

On March 4, 2022, 63 people were killed and 196 others injured during a suicide bombing inside a Shia mosque in Peshawar's Kocha Risaldar area.The Islamic State terror group's Khorasan unit (IS-K) claimed responsibility for the attack.

Melbourne Agencies scuffle broke out between the Indian

**London** Agencies

ormer British Prime

Minister Boris Johnson

President Vladimir Putin had

"threatened him with a mis-

sile strike during an extraor-

dinary phone call" ahead of

Moscow launching its invasion of Ukraine on February

He made the remarks in a

'Putin Vs the West' which will

"He threatened me at one

BBC documentary titled

be broadcast on Monday.

point, and he said, 'Boris, I

don't want to hurt you but,

with a missile, it would only

take a minute' or something

like that."But I think from the

very relaxed tone that he was

24, 2022.

said that Russian

of an independent Sikh state, local media reported. The brief fracas broke out at 4.30 p.m. on Sunday after a group of pro-India used pepper spray to quell the protests, said issued a penalty notice for their riotous

In several videos posted on Twitter, Khalistan supporters were seen attacking Indians with sticks in broad daylight. They were also seen snatching and damaging the Indian Tricolour.Reacting to the videos, BJP leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa tweeted: "I strongly condemn anti India activities by pro Khalistani in Australia. Anti-social elements that are trying to disrupt the peace & harmony of the country with these activities, must be dealt with strongly and culprits must be brought to books."Two men were injured at



Boris Johnson says Putin

missile strike' before war

'threatened him with

detachment that he seemed to have, he was just playing along with my attempts to get him to negotiate," Johnson was quoted as saving in the documentary.The former Prime Minister also said that he warned Putin that invading Ukraine would lead to Western sanctions and more NATO troops on Russia's bor-

ders.He also tried to deter Russian military action by telling Putin that Ukraine would not join Nato "for the foreseeable future", the BBC reported. Johnson further said that "Putin had been very familiar during the most extraordinary call". The former leader's claims however, have been been official verified.The BBC documentary also features Defence Secretary Ben Wallace who had flown to Moscow on February 11, 2022, to meet his Russian counterpart Sergei Shoigu.The film revealed that Wallace left with assurances that Russia would not invade Ukraine, but he said both sides knew it was a lie.

#### Khalistani supporters, Indians clash in Australia; 2 arrested

diaspora and Khalistan supporters in Australia during a referendum called by the banned Sikhs For Justice for the creation supporters waving national flags arrived at the voting site in Federation Square, Melbourne, The Age reported.The Victoria Police, which two men, aged 34 and 39, were arrested and behaviour.



the demonstration -- one with a head laceration and the other with a hand injury -- and police are continuing to investigate the injuries, The Age reported.

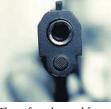
The Khalistan Referendum campaign is being run across the world by pro-Khalistan Sikhs For Justice, calling for a new state that would take in the Punjab regions of northern India and Pakistan. The attack came despite the Indian community in Australia informing the police about the planned protest at the Federation Square in Melbourne, The Australia Today reported.

## 8 people shot dead at birthday party in S.Africa

Johannesburg | Agencies

outh African police on Monday said that at least eight people were shot dead and three others injured by two unknown gunmen in the Eastern Cape province.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that between 5.15 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. on Sunday, the owner of a house in Kwazakele was hosting his birthday party with several guests, and the two gunmen entered the yard and started shooting randomly, reports Xinhua news agency.



"Three females and four males were fatally injured while another four people, including two females and two males, sustained gunshot wounds and were taken to hospital for treatment," said Priscilla Naidu, police spokesperson in Eastern Cape, told reporters on Monday.

One of the victims succumbed to the injuries in hospital, bringing the total number of deceased to eight, and the owner of the house was among the deceased, according to Naidu.

Police have launched a manhunt for the suspects while an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the attack is underway

No arrests have been made at this stage, the spokesperson said, adding that the identity of the deceased and injured are still to be established.

#### XINJIANG, NO CASUALTIES REPORTED Beijing: A 6.1-magnitude earthquake jolted China's Xinjiang

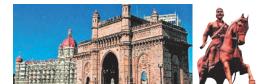
**6.1-MAGNITUDE QUAKE HITS CHINA'S** 

Uygur Autonomous Region on Monday, authorities said, adding that there were no immediate reports of casualties. According to the China Earthquake Networks Centre (CENC),

the epicentre was monitored at 40.01 degrees north latitude and 82.29 degrees east longitude, with a depth of 50 km, reports Xinhua news agency. The epicentre is located in an unpopulated area, 105 km away

from the city of Alaer and 141 km away from the Shaya county seat. The quake was felt around the area, and no casualties or property losses have been reported so far, according to local authorities. So far, 15 vehicles and 70 rescuers from the fire and rescue department in the Aksu prefecture have rushed to the dis-

A team of 10 people from the fire and rescue department in the Shaya county is exploring the area of the epicentre with two vehicles.Local power grid operation, oil and gas production, and key petrochemical enterprises were not affected by the earthquake.



## maharashtra

## **MAHARASHTRA MLC BIENNIAL POLLING UNDERWAY, CRUCIAL TEST FOR GOVT & OPPN**

eaceful polling got underway for the elections to the five MLC seats in different parts of Maharashtra with voting on a dull to brisk pace in different constituencies, here on Monday.

The polling was taken up for the Nashik and Amravati Graduates' constituencies, and Nagpur, Aurangabad and Konkan Teachers' constituencies, with the government side and the Opposition engaged in a keen contest to wrest the seats.

There's largely a straight fight between the ruling Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party (BSS-BJP) and the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance of Congress-Nationalist Congress Party-Shiv Sena

As per the latest voting figures till noon, Amravati notched around 20 per cent while Nashik clocked over 40 per cent votes, and it was average in other constituencies. The results of the biennial elections shall be announced on Thursday, February 2, with the terms of all the sitting MLCs



ending on February 7. After keeping a suspense till the last minute, the BJP late on Sunday finally announced its support to the

Congress rebel Satyajeet Tamble, con-

testing as an independent from

and now MVA-backed Shubhangi Nashik suddenly shot to promi-

nence last fortnight when the

Nashik with his main rival, BJP's rebel

his nomination and instead propped up his son Satyajeet Tambe as an independent candidate.

Stunned by the defiance, the party hit back by suspending Sudhir Tambe, expelling his son Satyajeet Tambe and followed up by en masse sacking the Ahmednagar District Congress Committee. In Nagpur, the main battle is between sitting MLC Nago Ganar, contesting as Independent supported by the BJP, against Congress' MVA-backed Sudhakar Adbale of Vidarbha Madhyamik Shikshak Sangh. Shikshak Bharti's Rajendra Zade and NCP rebel Satish Itkelwar are also in the fray.

In Amravati, sitting BJP  $\operatorname{MLC}$ Ranjeet Patil is contesting against Congress' MVA nominee Dhiraj Lingade. In Aurangabad, sitting NCP MLC Vikram Kale is locking horns with BJP's Kiran Patil. In Konkan, the MVA-supported Peasants & Workers Party's sitting MLC Balaram Patil is pitted against BJP's Dnyaneshwar

#### 'Balasaheb Thackeray' through the eyes of global cartoonists on Feb 2-3

Team Absolute | Mumbai

unique 2-day international exhibition Aentitled "Cartoonists' Balasaheb" with cartoons, caricatures and images of the late Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Keshav Thackeray will open here on February 2, the organisers said here on Monday.

The expo, to be held at the Swatantryaveer Savarkar Rashtriya Smarak in Shivaji Park, is being organised by the Cartoonists' Combine and Shivprerana, and will be inaugurated by senior Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Subhash

The exhibition will showcase the various spoofs on Balasaheb Thackeray, as viewed through the eyes of eminent cartoonists and caricaturists from all over India and many countries around the world.

There will be contributions lampooning the different moods, serious or howlarious expressions, mannerisms, hinting at both political and non-political aspects of Balasaheb Thackeray, from at least 25 cartoonists from all over the world, 44 from India and 44 from Maharashtra.

At the exhibition, some of the images depict Thackeray as a prancing tiger (his party's logo), another as a sitting tiger with Thackeray's face, one where he's sitting like a king and apparently wielding the dreaded 'remote control', in another he's on a roll enjoying himself in a rocking chair, others



depict him as a Hindutva icon, etc.

Considered a cartoonist's delight, many of Thackeray's oft quirky styles or memorable traits mirror in the cartoons - his thick-framed glasses or black glasses, his famed 'rudraksh mala', his changing hairstyles and receding hairline over the years, the large red tilak on his forehead, his clean-shaven, french-bearded and a snowy grandfatherly full-bearded style, as it manifested over decades, holding fort at his bastion, 'Matoshri' in Bandra east. Also seen will be Thackeray and his popular pipe hanging from his mouth - a perpetual fixture much like Popeye's - which in later years he replaced with the lighter but large cigar though he was rarely known to light it, his collection of attires like dazzling white, offwhite, soft creamy or sheer saffron kurtaspyjamas with a shawl, all of which people admired at his public appearances or his annual Dassehra rallies, and his trademark aggression, raised arms, extended right arm,

## KCR's party to hold rally in Maharashtra on Feb 5

#### First time outside Telangana

**Hyderabad** Agencies

fter the success of its first public meeting in Khammam recently, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi is all set to hold its second meeting in Nanded in Maharashtra, the first meeting of the party outside Telangana on February 5, BRS sources said on monday.

Telangana Minister for Endowments Indrakaran Reddy and some senior leaders of the party recently visited the neighbouring state to oversee the arrangements including crowd mobilisation plans.

"This is the first meeting of BRS outside Telangana. KCR (Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao) will address the gathering. Some of the important leaders of the Nanded region are expected to join the party, the party sources said. Rao is likely to visit a famous gurudwara in Nanded and offer prayers before the meeting, they further said. Nanded was chosen as the district has a sizeable population of Telugu-speaking people due to its proximity to Telangana.

Asserting that the BRS' slogan in the run-up to 2024 general elections would be 'Ab ki baar



kisan sarkar' (This time, a government for farmers), KCR recently said Maharashtra continues to witness the highest number of farmers' suicides despite being one of the richest states. According to political analysts, the focus of Rao's speech would be around farmers' issues in the Nanded meeting.

## NO PAROLE FOR CONVICTS UNDER ANTI-TERROR LAW: BOMBAY HIGH COL

The Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court has refused to grant parole to a prisoner convicted under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, noting that convicts of "terrorist crimes" are not eligible for parole, as per rules in Maharashtra.

Team Absolute Nagpur:

division bench of Justices S B Shukre and M W Chandwani on December 2, 2022 dismissed a petition filed by convict Hasan Mehndi Sheikh, serving life imprisonment in the Amravati Central Prison, seeking regular parole to see his ailing wife.

Sheikh was convicted for various offences including under stringent provisions of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act

He approached the HC after the jail authorities rejected his application on the ground that he was not eligible for grant of parole under provisions of the Prisons (Bombay Furlough and Parole) Rules.

The high court in its order noted that there was a specific provision in the Rules which disqualifies a convict under TADA from getting benefit of regular parole.

It is clear that there is a bar placed



upon prisoners who are convicted for terrorist crimes, TADA is about terrorist crime, from being released on regular parole," the court said. The petitioner is convicted under TADA and therefore he would not be eligible for grant of regular parole," the HC

Sheikh had in his plea relied on a 2017 judgment of the Supreme Court holding that even if a convict is found to be guilty under the TADA provisions, this would not disqualify him from seeking regular parole.

The high court, however, refused to accept this and said the prisoner in the SC case was from Rajasthan and hence not governed by the Rules for prisoners in Maharashtra.

"The top court has acknowledged the fact that many state governments have formulated guidelines on parole in order to bring out objectivity in the decision making and to decide as to whether parole needs to be granted in a particular case or not," the HC

# Family of man killed in accident | Fire breaks out in 19in 2015 to get Rs 29 lakh aid

Team Absolute Palghar

he Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) in Maharashtra's Palghar district has awarded a compensation of Rs. 29.12 lakh to the mother and son of a man killed in 2015 in an accident of a car registered in his wife's name.

MACT member Dr Sudhiir M Deshpande, in the order passed on January 17, directed the car's owner (deceased man's wife), driver and insurer to jointly and severally make the payment to the claimants along with six per cent interest per annum from the date of filing of the claim. A copy of the order was made available on Sunday.

The tribunal in its order noted that the since the owner of the car (involved in the accident) was the wife of the victim she would not be entitled to compensation herself. The petitioners (the deceased's

mother and son) informed the MACT that on August 20, 2015, the man, then aged 50 and hailing from Palghar, was travelling in the car when its tyre burst in Bhayander area of neighbouring Thane. The vehicle turned turtle and the man was injured. He died in a hospital on September 25, 2015 while undergoing

The petitioners also informed the MACT that the deceased earned an annual income of ? 4 lakh from his

business. The wife of the deceased pleaded that in case the tribunal comes to the conclusion that the petitioners are entitled to any compensation either wholly or partly, the insurers are held to be liable under the indemnity.

The claimants in the petition were the deceased's 83-year-old mother and 28-year-old son. The opponents in the petition were the deceased's wife, who was the owner of the offending vehicle, its driver and insurer. While the deceased's wife and the insurance company contested the claim, the car driver did not appear before the tribunal and the matter was decided ex-parte against

The tribunal in its order said in the present claim petition, the deceased's mother, son and wife would have been the natural petitioners if the said car had been owned by any other third party.

In that case, all the three petitioners would have been entitled to seek compensation from the registered owner of the vehicle involved in the accident, it said.

"But, since the wife of the deceased herself is the registered owner of the said car, she loses her status as the petitioner. Because nobody can seek compensation from oneself. Therefore, the registered owner i.e. the wife may not be entitled to the compensation," the tribunal said.

# storey high-rise at Sion

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Level-1 fire broke out in a 19-storey high-rise at Sion Koliwada in Mumbai on Monday at around 12.30 pm, according to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). The fire broke out on the sixth floor of Om Shiy Shakti building in GTB Nagar on M A Road in Sion Koliwada area and no casualty or injuries had been reported as yet, the BMC said.

The cause of the fire, which was confined to an electric panel on the sixth floor of the building, was not immediately known.

Four fire engines, a water tanker and other assistance were rushed to the spot and the blaze was put out by around 1.30 pm, a fire

It was a "level-1" (minor) fire, the official said, adding no casualty was reported in the



Earlier, on Saturday a fire broke out in a ground-plus-three residential building in Mumbai's Mahim area. The fire broke out on the third floor of Nitvachava building in Mari Nagar on Senapati Bapat Marg.

#### Chief Minister must look into issues plaguing Marathwada during his visits: Ambadas Danve

Team Absolute Mumbai

hief Minister Eknath Shinde should also look into the issues plaguing Marathwada whenever he visits the region, said Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Ambadas Danve on Monday referring to the former's presence at a religious gathering. The chief minister was in Aurangabad on Sunday to attend a religious gathering.

"There is nothing wrong in attending religious meetings and coming to Marathwada for the same. But the chief minister should also look into issues and ensure that they are resolved. Does he (Shinde) feel that the problems in the region have been solved?" the Leader of Opposition in the state legislative council said. Matters pertaining to irrigation and Marathwada Development Board are not on the agenda of the state government since



The case is not limited to Marathwada alone, it is happening with Vidarbha and the state capital Mumbai, Danve alleged. The state government keeps talking about what it did six months ago, but is not looking into issues of the public, he said.

Meanwhile, the Shiv Sena (UBT) took a dig at the Bharatiya Janata Party over right-wing groups taking out a march against "love-jihad" and questioned the need for such a protest when the "socalled Hindutvavadi government" is in power at the Centre and Maharashtra.

## Maha Greens aghast at fatal fall for 12 blackbucks, seek remedies

Team Absolute | Mumbai

wo days after 12 blackbucks fell to their deaths on a bypass road on the Solapur-Pune National Highway, environmentalists on Monday expressed shock and sought remedial measures to prevent similar tragedies in

Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) Secretary Kishor Rithe said that a herd of the totally protected species got trapped on the national highway and jumped to their deaths, while 3 other blackbucks were injured late on Saturday

He pointed out that there are guidelines in place to have mitigation measures on the existing and proposed linear projects crossing through wildlife habitats which are often ignored by the agencies concerned. Other environmentalists said that there is a population of just around 300 blackbucks in the forested region there and fervently appealed to the government to work out a long-term



For starters, the Maharashtra Forest Department is planning to write to the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) for netting or fencing on the Solapur-Pune, Solapur-Kolhapur and other highways in the vicinity to prevent such accidents. Rithe has urged for an underpass to be provided at this particular point as there are two blackbuck populations which regularly cross and get

run over by speeding vehicles.
"The Saturday incident is the worst dis-

aster so far, with barely 300 blackbucks left in this region now. I also demand that a three-meter chain-link fence be erected over the sidewall of the flyover to avoid similar incidents on this flyover." he said. Other environmentalists like Bittu Sehgal and Radheshyam Bishnoi have also expressed concern over the blackbucks tragedy and urged for more sensitivity to nature and wildlife to reduce such incidents. Around 6.30 p.m. on January 28, 15 from a herd of Blackbucks fell nearly 35 feet onto the Kegaon-Degaon Bypass along the Solapur-Pune National Highway, shocking locals and environmentalists. Opened four months ago, the new bypass road was made by cutting into a hillock passing through a grazing tract of the blackbucks inhabiting the

jungles around. While 12 perished in the deep fall, 3 others were injured and are being treated at a nearby veterinary centre, local offi-

#### **CASE AGAINST WOMAN FOR SEXUALLY ASSAULTING MINOR BOY**

Thane: Police on Monday registered a case against a 32-year-old woman on charges of sexually assaulting a 16-year-old boy from Maharashtra's Thane district, an official said. The boy's mother in her police complaint said the accused woman, who has three children, was the neighbour of her relative in Nashik. The accused used to frequently



visit Mumbai and befriended the boy. She allegedly made him consume liquor and had sexual relations with him; the official from Kolsewadi police station at Kalyan in Thane said quoting the complaint.

The boy used to skip school and go to Nashik to meet the woman, who also allegedly showed him objectionable videos, as per the complaint.

This happened from 2019 till December 2022 after which the boy's mother learnt about it and approached the police, the official said. Based on the complaint, a case was registered against the woman under relevant provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, he said. No arrest has been made so far, he added.

**THAVE NEVER FELT BETTER'** 

**Britney Spears** denies breakdown, says she's 'never felt better'

Los Angeles | Agencies

op icon Britney Spears has made her return to Instagram just a week after removing her page and telling her fans she's "never felt better".

The singer concerned fans with a number of posts lately, leading one to call police with fears for the star's wellbeing, reports Mirror.co.uk.

In a lengthy post alongside an image of a pink rose, the star wrote: "Since everyone thinks they know my story. Think again. A mere side of any given Sunday doesn't show worship placing someones story out there a it's a day of WEL-COMING a not a righteous reply. It is what it is a nope I'm not having a breakdown and I am who I am and moving forward in my life. I have never felt better."

She went on to say she's enjoying being able to "volumise my voice in a world where I lost my rights a for 15 years."

She explained that if those taking aim at her were able to walk in her shoes, they might understand how she is feeling. Britney continued: "Still learning this no rules thing a I don't think so limited a I feel younger and in awe a unfortunately I'm boring as hell and drink hot chocolate at night. I've waited nearly 15 years to drink alcohol only to realise I hate it !!! It makes me sad and I feel bloated, although food tastes better."

She then exclaimed she would "rather show my a\*\*" than sit down, before concluding: "PS yes I took my Instagram down and now its back up because I

hollywood

Los Angeles | Agencies ctress Pamela Anderson said that the late Playboy founder Hugh Hefner is the only man to treat her with "complete

Hugh

and utter respect." The 'Baywatch' star has revealed how the late Playboy founder's invitation to feature on the cover of his magazine helped her reclaim her sexuality, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Asked if anyone "has ever treated her with complete and utter respect", Pamela told the Sunday Times newspaper: "Hugh Hefner." She recalled: "I was painfully shy, and I hated that feeling. That's why I did it. I just didn't want that feeling anymore. Doing that first photoshoot gave me this little kind of portal on what it felt

like to be a sensual woman. My sexuality was mine. I took my power back." The actress has penned a new memoir 'Love, Pamela' and revealed that she gained 25 pounds in the process of writing the book.

Pamela, whose story is also told in the new Netflix

Documentary 'Pamela, a Love Story', said: "I went through kind of a crazy time writing the book. I started writing my book

and I put on like 25 pounds, Crazy! I look back at it and I see how it was the book process because as I wrote my book, I didn't change too much." "I mean, I was drinking earlier with the husband and stuff but I lost it all at the end of my book. It was crazy, it was crazy! I had a physical reaction to telling my story. It was almost like I was hanging on to something. It was a protective, my puffy suit of armour." "I don't know what it was - I was thinking it was some kind of protection. It wasn't like I was eating any different, I'm vegan, I eat nuts and berries, you know, I don't eat a lot. But my body was changing!"

Hefner is the only man to treat me with respect: Pamela Anderson

## 'Unexpected and delightful' JAMIE LEE CURTIS CELEBRATED HER FIRST

Los Angeles | Agencies

ctress Jamie Lee Curtis "had a cake" with her fellow nominee Cate Blanchett to celebrate the first Oscar nomination of

The actress has earned her first Academy Award nod for Best Supporting Actress for her role in Everything Everywhere All at Once' and discussed her celebration with her fellow nominee and 'Borderlands' co-star Cate Blanchett, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Lee Curtis noted that her best friend, the Oscar-winning film and TV producer Debbie Oppenheimer, came over in the

One Direction member

early hours of the morning to watch the nominations being revealed with her husband Christopher Guest.

She told People: "It was a shocking morning. Unexpected and delightful."

"And then I went to work on the re-shoots for 'Borderlands' with Cate Blanchett, and she had been nominated that morning, as (had) our sound designer. So, we had a cake, and it was celebratory, but

Lee Curtis said: "It is the thrill of my life, professionally. It is, because it never was something I thought would ever happen."

Despite her Oscar's recognition,

the star has revealed that she

& A CAKE! obsess about winning awards and had developed a philosophical attitude towards the glitzy cere-

OSCAR NOMINATION WITH CATE BLANCHETT

> She explained: "Life is short and precious and we're in a profession that celebrates art, a time when we're out of COVID and we back together and if we're not celebrating this moment right now, what are we doing?"

"It's out of your control. At the end, win or lose, it doesn't matter. We're here celebrating the arts."

### **OSCAR-NOMINATED ACTOR** JAMES MARTIN RETURNS TO **HIS DAY JOB AT COFFEE SHOP**

Los Angeles | Agencies

scar-nominated actor James Martin said that he is returning to his day ob after starring in 'An Irish Goodbye'. The star has Down's syndrome, vorked at Starbucks in Belfast before starring in the short film, reports

mirror.co.uk. He said that he "helps out all the customers" and that he's been "doing that a long time." "It's nice," he explained. James played one of two brothers who are brought together by their mother's death. The film is nominated in the Best Short Film category at the Oscars. He also worked as a chef in the Italian restaurant Scalini's. "I can make garlic bread, meatballs, salads and mussels, chips and stuff like that," he added. The actor discussed acting with Down's syndrome and said 'anybody can act" and it "doesn't matter if you [who had motor neurone disease] in the Simpsons," he explained. "He was a fantastic



categories, being put into contention for both record and song for the recently chart-topping



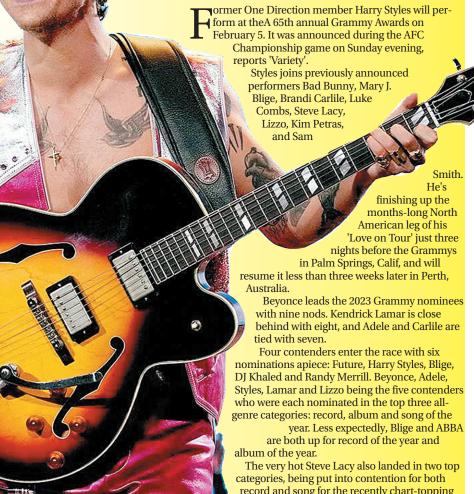
ames Cameron's film blockbuster sequel 'Avatar: The Way of Water' added \$15.7 million from 3,600 North American theatres between Friday and Sunday, enough to claim the No. 1 spot for the seventh consecutive weekend. So far, 'Avatar 2' has

generated \$620 million at the domestic box office and \$2.117 billion globally. It passed 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' (\$2.071 billion) to become the fourth-highest grossing movie in history. Now, 'The Way of Water' ranks behind only 'Avatar' (\$2.92 billion), 'Avengers: Endgame' (\$2.7 billion) and 'Titanic' (\$2.19 billion) in terms of worldwide ticket sales. Cameron has directed three of those four releases, putting the filmmaker in unmatched company, reports Variety. Elsewhere at the box office, only one new movie

Neon's disturbing sci-fi thriller 'Infinity Pool' opened in theatres nationwide. The R-rated film, from director Brandon Cronenberg (son of genre legend David Cronenberg), debuted to muted results, generating \$2.7 million from 1,835 cinemas. Alexander Skarsgard and Cleopatra Coleman star in 'Infinity Pool' as vacationers at a wealthy tropical island. But when a mysterious woman (played by Mia Goth) convinces the couple to venture away from the resort, they suffer a tragic accident that pushes them into a world of consequence-free violence. What unfolds next is the kind of stomach-squelching horror that makes the film's mediocre "C-" CinemaScore unsurprising, even though critics dug 'Infinity Pool'.



Maya Jama





# SHAFALI, SHWETA, PARSHAVI IN U19 WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP TEAM OF THE TOURNAMENT

Team Absolute New Delhi

ndia's trophy-winning captain Shafali Verma, her opening part-'ner Shweta Sehrawat and legspinner Parshavi Chopra have been included in the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup team of the tournament, day after beating England by seven wickets in the final at Potchefstroom in South Africa.

Shafali was at her destructive best with the bat and her tactical best as captain throughout the tournament. She would have liked to be more consistent with the bat but the rate at which her runs came (at 193.25)

Her 34-ball 78 against UAE was an exhibition in power-hitting as she smashed the bowlers to all parts of the ground for 12 fours and four sixes. She was the third-highest rungetter in the tournament with 172 runs. Shafali also chipped in with handy overs, scalping four wickets in seven games at an economy rate of just 5.04.

Shweta shone the brightest as India emerged as the winner of the inaugural U19 Women's T20 World Cup, bringing the country's first-



ever trophy in women's cricket. The Indian vice-captain started the tournament with a classy 92 not out against South Africa, setting the

tone for the rest of the tournament.

She notched up two more halfcenturies (74 not out against UAE and 61 not out against New Zealand) and eventually finished as nament with 297 runs at an average of 99 and a strike rate of 139.43. With an incredible showing at the tournament, Shweta will be expected to carry on the superb show and

be in the senior team in future. Parshavi had a slow start to the tournament, picking up only two

wickets in India's first three games. However, she made up for it at the business end of the tournament and finished as the second-highest wicket-taker with 11 wickets in six

In the final Super Six game, Parshavi was all over Sri Lanka, returning with figures of 4-5. She followed that up with a 3-20 in the crunch semifinal victory against New Zealand and 2-13 in the final, which included the wicket of England's top-scorer of the day, Ryana MacDonald-Gay.

The team of the tournament has **England captain Grace Scrivens** appointed as skipper, who also took the Player of the Tournament award, and is joined by compatriots, legspinner Hannah Baker and seam bowler Ellie Anderson.

Others who make up the team of the tournament are New Zealand batter Georgia Plimmer, Sri Lanka all-rounder Dewmi Vihanga, Bangladesh's big-hitting batter Shorna Akter, South Africa wicketkeeper Karabo Meso, Australia's pace bowler Maggie Clark and Pakistan's left-arm spinner Anosha Nasir, who is slotted in as 12th man.

## Djokovic returns to top spot; Nadal slips to sixth in ATP rankings

fter winning his 10th Australian Open title, Novak Djokovic returned to the No. 1 spot in the latest ATP rankings released on Monday.

Djokovic defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 7-6(4), 7-6(5) in the final on Sunday and clinched his 22nd Grand Slam title, equalling Rafael Nadal on the list for most Grand Slam

crowns on Sunday night. The Serbian climbed four spots from World No. 5 to seal the top spot, the biggest jump to the top of the men's tennis summit between two editions of the ATP Rankings in history (since 1973). The 35-year-old dethroned reigning U.S. Open champion Spain's Carlos Alcaraz, who



is now placed second on the list. The four-place ascent is a bigger jump than the three-spot climb previously made by Carlos Alcaraz (September 12, 2022), Pete Sampras (September 11, 2000), Andre Agassi (July 5, 1999) and Carlos Moya (March 15, 1999). If Djokovic remained World No. 1

through the week of February 20, he will tie Stefanie Graf's record for most weeks as World No. 1 in history (men and women) at 377. On the other hand, Rafael Nadal dropped from second to sixth place after his second-round loss to USA's Mackenzie McDonald.

#### SABALENKA BACK TO CAREER-HIGH WORLD NO. 2

New Delhi: Aryna Sabalenka attained her career-high ranking of World No. 2 after winning the Australian Open women's singles title while runner-up Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan

marked her top-10 debut in the latest WTA Rankings released on Monday. Sabalenka came back from a set down to defeat Rybakina 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 in the final to win her first Grand Slam title on Saturday. The triumph saw her improve her ranking by 3 spots to number two with 6100 ranking points. Having paved her way to her second major final with wins over World No.1 Iga Swiatek, Jelena Ostapenko, and Victoria Azarenka, reigning Wimbledon champion Rybakina took a giant leap of 15 places to sit in tenth place.

# Was confident that if I managed to stay till the end, could win the game in last over: Suryakumar Yadav

**Lucknow** Agencies

n a low-scoring second T20I which went down the wire, India's in-form batter Suryakumar Yadav steered his side home with an unbeaten 26 off 31 balls, including slapping Blair Tickner over mid-off for the winning boundary and level three-match series to set up a decider in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

On a pitch which was aiding spinners a lot, New Zealand's five spinners kept India in check. But Suryakumar and captain Hardik Pandya had an unbeaten 31-run stand off 32 balls to get India over the line in a chase of 100. Suryakumar, who took Player of the Match award, said in a video posted by BCCI that he was confident in himself staying at the crease till the end and get the win for India in the last over."I was there in the middle with a clear mindset that it's a tough wicket to play on and it was important for someone to play



till last. It was equally important to build small partnerships and adapt to the situations." "I knew this was a totally different wicket than the ones I play freely. I was confident that if I managed to stay till last, I could win the game in the last over as well. When Hardik came in, we had a chat and planned to take the game

# Liverpool fall to Brighton in FA Cup

**London** Agencies

n injury-time goal from Brighton forward Kaoru Mitoma ended Liverpool's campaign in this season's FA Cup as they were beaten 2-1 away to the south-coast outfit.

The winger scored after a magnificent control to take Brighton into the last 16 and leave Liverpool's season hanging by a thread, reports Xinhua news agency

Although Liverpool improved from their 3-0 defeat in the same ground just 15 days ago and even took the lead through Harvey Elliot's 30th-minute goal, Brighton were level just nine minutes later when Lewis Dunk deflected a shot into the Liverpool goal. In the day's most romantic Cup tie, fifth-tier outfit Wrexham drew 3-3 with Championship promotion



were reduced to 10 men 13 minutes from time when Daniel Jebbison was sent off, but they netted a 95th-minute equalizer through John Egan after it looked as if Paul Mullin's 86th-minute goal would put Wrexham through. On Saturday, Kelechi Iheanacho's

68th-minute goal saw Leicester City into the fifth round, although Brendan Rodgers' side failed to impress against a rival from the fourth tier, League Two. Leeds United were more convincing as goals from Jack Harrison, Junior Firpo and Luis Sinisterra put

them on their way to a 3-1 win away to Accrington Stanley from League One.Two goals from left back Romain Perraud helped Premier League bottom side Southampton beat Championship strugglers Blackpool 2-1. Fulham were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Championship outfit Sunderland, with the visitors taking the lead thanks to Jack Clarke before a goal from veteran midfielder Tom Cairney earned Fulham a replay. Son Heung-min scored twice as Tottenham eased past Preston 3-0 in what could have been a difficult visit to the northwest for Antonio Conte's side.Two goals from Brazilian midfielder Casemiro and another from his international teammate Fred saw Manchester United ease past Reading 3-1 in a match which saw former United legend Paul Ince return as

## Mumbai Falcons claim 1-2 finish, maintain lead Bundesliga: Dortmund in Formula Regional Middle East, Formula 4 UAE down Bayer Leverkusen

Kuwait City | Agencies

ndian motor-racing outfit's Mumbai Falcons Racing Limited scored wins and achieved podium places in the second round, extending their lead in both the Formula Regional Middle East and Formula 4 UAE championships held at the brand-new 5.6-kilometre venue in Kuwait Motor Town, Kuwait City, this weekend.

In F4 UAE championship, Mumbai Falcons got off to a blistering start, with James Wharton achieving one pole position and a win. The 16-yearold Ferrari Driver Academy racer, determined to bounce back from a challenging opener, quickly accomplished the goal in race 1 with his first win of 2023, the outfit informed in a release here on Monday.

"It was good to be back to where we should be. But now it's time to get our head down and try to get to the front of the championship as well,"



Wharton was quoted as saying in the release. Wharton then finished a close second in Race 2, edging

member Tuukka Taponen, who was the best rookie.

Indian racer Muhammad Ibrahim showed solid improvement and battled for points to confirm his consistent growth. Mumbai Falcons maintain the lead in the Teams Championship.

orussia Dortmund secured its third consecutive win after taking a 2-0 away victory over Bayer Leverkusen in the final match of the 18th round, also ending Bayer Leverkusen's five-game winning run.

The Werkself assumed control from the kick-off and came close in the early stages, as Nadiem Amiri rattled the side net in the sixth minute before Moussa Diaby forced Dortmund goalkeeper Gregor Kobel into action ten minutes later, reports Xinhua news

Dortmund needed some time but opened the scoring with 33 minutes gone as Julian Brandt's cutback pass found Karim Adeyemi, who marked his first-ever Bundesliga goal from the central position of the box. The 'BVB' defended well with their narrow

lead behind and kept the offensively minded hosts at bay for the remainder of the first half. Leverkusen took the reins again but could-

n't restore parity after the restart, as Kobel was on guard again to deny Diaby and Amine Adli in quick succession three minutes into the second half.



Things went from bad to worse moments later for Leverkusen. Edmond Tapsoba cleared a square pass from Dortmund's Marius Wolf into the wrong goal to make it 2-0 for the visitors in the 53rd minute.

Leverkusen remained unimpressed and pushed forward, but Kobel was invincible as neither Adli nor Diaby was able to overcome the Dortmund goalkeeper from promising positions. Elsewhere, relegation-threatened Schalke shared the spoils with Cologne following a goalless draw.

#### Murali Vijay announces retirement from all forms of international cricket

Team Absolute New Delhi

ndia opener Murali Vijay has announced his retirement from international cricket. Vijay, the right-handed opener, last represented India in the 2018 Perth Test while his last first-class appearance for his state team Tamil Nadu came in the Ranji Trophy in December 2019.

'Today, with immense gratitude & humility, I announce my retirement from all forms of International cricket. My journey from 2002-2018 has been the most wonderful years of my life for it was an honour representing India at the highest level of sport," he said in an official statement through his social media

In his 61 Tests for India, Vijay scored 3982 runs averaging 38.29, including 12 centuries and 15 fifties, and was also leading run-scorer in the 2014 Test tour of England. He also featured in 17 ODIs and nine T20Is for India,

scoring only 339 and 169 runs respectively. In his first-class career, Vijay has played 135 matches, scoring 9205 runs, including 25 hundreds and 38 half centuries. In the Indian



Premier League (IPL), Vijay was an integral member of the Chennai Super Kings side winning the trophy in 2010, 2011 and 2018.

Vijay, who had returned to competitive cricket after a two-year absence through the 2022 Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL), playing for Ruby Trichy Warriors, signed off by saying he will seek playing as well as business opportunities in a new atmosphere.

## Jhulan, Mithali hail India on becoming U19 Women's T20 World Cup champs

Team Absolute New Delhi

eteran cricketers Jhulan Goswami and Mithali Raj lavished praise on the Indian women's team as they became the U19 T20 World Cup champions.

With a brilliant bowling performance followed by a calm run-chase, India cruised to victory over England in the final, sealing their triumph with seven wickets in hand and six overs to spare.

Opening bowlers Titas Sadhu and Archana Devi ripped through the England top order, reducing them to 22/4 after six overs. Sadhu bowled her four overs straight through, going for just six runs and picking up two wickets.

Taking to Twitter, Jhulan said: "Historic win. Proud of our U19 team. A great performance by Titas. Congratulations to all the players. This victory will inspire millions," tweeted Jhulan.

"CHAMPIONS! Congratulations #TeamIndia, this is a monumental achievement! This fantastic victory shows how dominating you have been



throughout the tournament. The triumph is even more special considering this is the first-ever Women's #U19T20WorldCup. Cherish every moment!" for India skipper Mithali tweeted.

Current Indian women's captain Harmanpreet Kaur and batter Smriti Mandhana also showered praise on their junior counterparts."You've been a motivation for us. You girls have bought laurels to the nation. We are extremely proud of each and everyone whose been a part of the world contest,"

said Harmanpreet.

Mandhana said: "Champions of the world. Proud. Absolutely proud of the bunch. Champions in the inaugural edition makes it even more special. This is just the beginning. Go team.'

Meanwhile, legendary Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar too extended his wishes and said: "Indian women's cricket is on the up! First the announcement of the #WPL & now the #U19T20WorldCup win. Congratulations to the entire women's team on winning the inaugural U19 World Cup. This win will inspire a whole generation to take up sports."India skipper Rohit Sharma tweeted: "Big congratulations to the U-19 girls' cricket team for winning the World Cup. Well done on making the nation proud #JaiHind @bcciwomen @bcci."

"Congratulations to the Women's under 19 team for winning the World Cup it's a great stepping stone for the girls to take their game to the higher level .@BCCIWomen," tweeted former captain and ex-BCCI chief Saurav Ganguly.

## entertainment

**Second Front Page** 





WALKING ON THE SETS OF THE SERIES GIVES ME A SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT: SUSHMITA SEN

Team Absolute Mumbai

Bollywood actress Sushmita Sen, who has cultivated a loyal fan following with her webseries 'Aarya', feels that the show has become synonymous with her name. The third season of the show started its shoot on Monday and the actress can't be more excited. Talking about the same, Sushmita said: "'Aarya' is synonymous with my name. I have lived as Aarya for two whole seasons and the love received by the audiences has only encouraged me to do more. Walking on the sets of Aarya Season 3 makes me feel at home and gives me a sense of empowerment."

The International Emmy-nominated show follows the story of the titular character of an independent woman who seeks to protect her family and joins a mafia gang in order to get revenge for her husband's murder.

The director of the show, Ram Madhvani said: "Getting to and commencing Season 3 of 'Aarya' is too special for me and my team. I'm grateful to our audiences who showered the series with so much love and stayed invested in the journey and evolution of Aarya Sareen. I can promise them that they are going to ask for more seasons after this one."

#### KAREENA'S NEW CHARACTER IS

INSPIRED BY KATE WINSLET'S IN 'MARE OF EASTTOWN'

Team Absolute Mumba

ollywood diva Kareena Kapoor Khan is marking a new phase in her glittering career with a brace of films that she terms as "shockingly different." She career with a brace of films that she terms as "shockingly different." She shared that her character in the upcoming Hansal Mehta film was inspired in part by Hollywood star Kate Winslet's role in 'Mare of Easttown'. She has wrapped a project that was shot in the UK under the working title 'The Buckingham Murders', directed by Hansal Mehta, reports Variety. The diva essays a detective and mother who investigate a murder in a town in Buckinghamshire. "I love 'Mare of Easttown' and when Hansal came to me, I said this is something that I've really been dying to do. So we've molded a little bit on those lines, she plays a detective cop in that," she told Variety. "It's the first time that I've dabbled in that." "I speak fluently in Hindi and I think also in Hindi because that's been what I've been doing all my life,' Kapoor Khan said. "When you're thinking in Hindi, but speaking in English, it was actually a difficult task to do because it was the reverse situation for the first time." The project, produced by Ektaa Kapoor's Balaji Telefilms and Mahana Film also marks Kareena's debut as a producer. "I never really thought that I would be a producer. But when I heard this subject, and the fact that it's very different to a regular Hindi movie, it's a very different take to things. So I thought that will be really nice and differ-

ent," Kapoor said. "And when Ektaa and Hansal told me that 'since you love the script so much, why don't you come on board as a creative producer as well, and take some calls as to what you think also and give your name to it' - after much thought, I thought that if I love something so much, and this is a character that I wanted to play, I think it's fun to do it. It's the first time. I don't know if I'll repeatedly do it. But let's see."



#### ARJUN KAPOOR REVEALS REASON BEHIND SIGNING UP FOR THE TV SERIES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Arjun Kapoor, who was recently seen in a cameo appearance in the webseries 'Cinema Marte Dum Tak', said that he became a part of the project because he wanted to add value by being a platform where the pulp filmmakers could talk freely. The actor said: "My role in the series is of a cameo or a special appearance. I wanted to add value by being a platform where these filmmakers could talk freely. I was just happy to be a part of this moment for them, which was celebrating them and getting their due." The docu-series sheds light on the pulp film industry of India which works under a lot of resource constraints. Considered to be a cottage style filmmaking industry, the series focuses on showing what and who contributed to the 90s Pulp Cinema, a genre of content that had strong and loyal fan following in its heydays.

It features celebrated pulp filmmakers like Dilip Gulati, J. Neelam, Kishan Shah and Vinod Talwar, who were some of the then successful names of the industry.

Arjun further said: "Prime Video gave them a platform which was not intended to make fun of. They are not trying to make it tacky, but are highlighting the people who have had this journey. I was very happy to be a part of this environment where they could tell their side of the story."

#### ADITYA ROY KAPUR DID RIGOROUS HOMEWORK FOR HIS WEB SERIES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

also behind the scenes.

Part of the prep for me was

ollywood actor Aditya Roy Kapur, who is Begaring up for the release of his webseries 'The Night Manager', spent time with actual night managers to get a sense of their world and their profession. The actor, who plays the titular role in the series, said: "There are a few interesting and unique things one has to do for every role. I think in this case he is a night manager at a hotel so I think every time you have a profession that is very specific, one of the joys of being an actor is getting to research these different professions and try and meet people in those professions to understand what goes on in front and

meeting them." Walking dow

Walking down the memory lane, he further mentioned: "I actually went and met a night manager. I spent a couple of days with her, interviewed her and quizzed her about her life and the effect that the profession had on her as a person to understand what goes into the job. You know, it's a

ighly qualified profession."

them, the actor said: "You have to go through years of training for it, so I was trying to understand basic dos and don'ts, body language, tonality. I think one big part of playing the night manager was getting that aspect of it right. So that kind of looked convincing on camera when I was portraying myself as a

manager, which was

very interesting.'

Talking about what he imbibed from



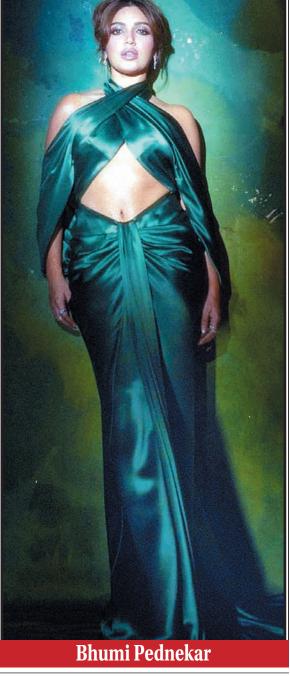
#### Jubin Nautiyal says his new song with Payal Dev is special

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Playback singers Jubin Nautiyal and Payal Dev have teamed up once again for a love song, which he said is special because it is animated. The music video of the song features vector animation of Jubin and Payal's sketches. The caricature rendition of both of them has been conceptualised by digital creator Pixoury.

Jubin said: "This is one of its kind music video, as it is specially animated by Hrishiraj, professionally known as Pixoury and I must say it has come out to be beautiful. Needless to say, it's always a pleasure collaborating with Payal Dev. We've worked so often together that we understand the melodies and synchronisations every

time we are recording. We hope audiences shower this one with as much love as they have our previous collaborations." Singer-composer Payal Dev said: "'Pyaar Hona Na Tha' is a simple but very deep and powerful love song. Kunaal Vermaa has penned some beautiful lyrics and Jubin Nutiyal as always has sung it fantastically."



**INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY** 

Owned, Published and Printed by Yogendra Chaturvedi at P.G. Infrastructure and service Pvt.Ltd, Karond Bhanpur Bypass Road, Bhopal-462037 (MP) and published from 8/1, Malviya Nagar, Bhopal-462011 **Editor** - Yogendra Chaturvedi, **Advisory Editor** - Sarika Chaturvedi, **Executive Editor** - Nagendra Sharma (\*responsible for selection of news under PRB act). RNI. No. MPENG/2015/69891 Phone No. 0755-3577179, www.absoluteindianews.com, E-mail- absoluteindiadesk@gmail.com,(Bhopal will be the jurisdiction of any dispute.)