

## NATION >02

ED seizes BMW in PMLA case against ex-IFS officer, family ...



## HOLLYWOOD > 06

Margot Robbie improvised a kiss that wasn't in the script with Pitt ...



## SPORTS >07

Hugo Lloris hangs his boots ...



'MULTIPLE MISTAKES, HIGHLY AVOIDABLE SITUATION': DGCA ISSUES SHOW CAUSE TO GO FIRST

# AVIATION IN TROUBLE

Multiple mistakes such as lack of proper communication, co-ordination, reconciliation, and confirmation resulted in a highly avoidable situation, aviation regulator DGCA noted in the incident of a Go First flight leaving behind 55 passengers in the passenger coach at Bengaluru airport.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The DGCA on Tuesday issued showcause notice to notice to accountable manager or Chief Operation Officer of Go First airline as to why enforcement action should not be taken against them for dereliction of their regulatory obligations.

The incident of Go First flight G8-116 on sector Bengaluru-Delhi leaving behind 55 passengers in the passenger coach at the Bengaluru airport on Monday came to the notice of the DGCA, and it sought an incident report on the same day.

A senior DGCA official said that as per regulations, the airline concerned is responsible to ensure adequate

arrangement for ground handling, preparation of load and trim sheet, flight dispatch and passenger or cargo handling and also ensure that all the ground handling staff engaged in passenger handling undergo periodic soft skill training for sensitisation, courtesy, behaviour and procedures for assisting the passengers.

However, the regulator found that airline failed to comply with the relevant regulations in the case.

While issuing showcause notice, the aviation regulator has given two weeks time to reply. "To follow the principles of natural justice, they have been given two weeks time to submit their reply to DGCA and based on that further action will be taken," said the DGCA.

## Russian flight lands in Goa safely after bomb hoax

**Panaji:** Moscow-Goa Russian flight Azur Air ZF2401, which received a bomb threat, landed in Goa on Tuesday at around 3 p.m. with passengers onboard, saying they were lucky to be safe. Goa-bound flight from Moscow made an emergency landing in Jamnagar airport on Monday night at 9.30 p.m. following the bomb threat. It was diverted to Jamnagar after an email warning of a bomb in the flight was received. After landing at Dabolim airport in Goa, the Russian tourists said that they are lucky to be safe. "Authorities thoroughly checked all our luggage and flight, but nothing suspicious was found. We are lucky as we are safe," one of the passengers said.



NSG and BDDS teams at Jamnagar had thoroughly checked the plane besides the luggage and hand baggage of the travellers but no suspicious object was found. Passengers also said that they were provided all the facilities at Jamnagar after they were de-boarded there. "We spent around 9 hours outside the flight at the airport (Jamnagar). But we are happy now that we have reached here," another passenger said.

## GO FIRST BEGINS PROBE, OFFERS FREE TICKET

**New Delhi:** Go First on Tuesday said that it has initiated an inquiry into the incident where 55 passengers on its Bengaluru-Delhi flight were left on a passenger coach at Bengaluru airport on Monday even as aviation regulator DGCA held that the airline failed to comply with the relevant rules. Moreover, the airline decided to offer all affected passengers one free ticket for travel on any domestic sector. "In line with our philosophy of customer centricity, the airline has decided to offer all affected passengers one free ticket for travel on any domestic sector in the next 12 months," said the airline in a statement.

# Home Ministry monitoring situation in Joshimath

THE AUTHORITIES ON TUESDAY STARTED THE DEMOLITION PROCESS OF TWO HOTELS -- MALARI INN AND MOUNT VIEW -- WHICH HAVE LEANED TOWARDS EACH OTHER DUE TO THE SINKING IN UTTARAKHAND'S JOSHIMATH.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As the crisis in Uttarakhand's Joshimath continues, the Union Home Ministry is keeping close tabs on the situation every moment, sources said on Tuesday.

Officials of the Border Management Department and the NDMA under the Ministry of Home Affairs have also reached Joshimath and will review the situation and submit their report to the Central government. The survey work of the buildings is also being done continuously.

According to information,



## U'KHAND GOVERNOR SEEKS REPORT

**Dehradun:** Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Tuesday met Governor Gurmeet Singh to apprise him of the situation in Joshimath, which is facing land subsidence.

During the meeting, the Governor sought a complete report on Joshimath from Dhami.

Dhami gave detailed information about the relief and rescue operations being taken up in the subsidence-affected area in Joshimath and the steps taken for the safety of the people.

The governor also inquired about the steps taken for the safety and rehabilitation of the affected people and about the progress in the immediate and long-term action plan.

## Tunnel work not responsible for land sinking: NTPC

**New Delhi:** With Joshimath having been declared a subsidence-hit zone amid sinking of land and threat of the entire town sinking under its own weight, state-owned NTPC has clarified that the tunnel for its Tapovan Vishnugad hydel project has nothing to do with the situation prevailing there. "The tunnel of Tapovan Vishnugad hydropower project is also being held responsible for the landslide in Joshimath. It is clarified that the tunnel constructed by NTPC is not passing under Joshimath town," a statement issued by the NTPC said. The statement came after local residents in Joshimath held protests against the tunnel work for the project, blaming it as one of the reasons behind the gradual sinking of the town. The NTPC said that the tunnel has been constructed with the help of a tunnel boring machine and currently no blasting work is being undertaken by the company at the project, which is being constructed on Dhauliganga river in the hill state.

# 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Pehelwan', Rahul's message for Haryana

Karnal | Agencies

As the Bharat Jodo Yatra completed its journey of 8 days in Haryana, Rahul Gandhi thanked the people for their enormous support and coined a new slogan -- Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Pehelwan.

Haryana has a huge number of wrestlers who have won medals for the country.

"I especially thank the lakhs who attended our public meeting in Panipat, and the large numbers of women and youth who participated in the Yatra, often braving the cold, fog, and even smog. We have seen the diversity of Haryana by walking through the green fields of Nuh and Karnal, vibrant industrial centres of Faridabad and Ambala, and historic sites of Indian culture such as Kurukshetra and Panipat," he wrote.



He said that he was honoured to join the residents of Ghasera in Nuh district to celebrate Mewat Diwas.

Rahul Gandhi said that the people of Haryana are blessed with everything they need for a good life but alleged their potential is being wasted as the farmers of Haryana led the historic movement against the three black farm laws, and many

were martyred. Still, the agricultural crisis endures.

"In the land of doodh, dahi and gur, it is a tragedy that farmers' children no longer want to be farmers. Yet, there are no other options for an aspirational youth. Haryana has the highest youth unemployment rate, and desperate youth look abroad for jobs," he said.

## PRACHANDA WINS VOTE OF TRUST WITH OVERWHELMING SUPPORT

**Kathmandu:** Nepal's new Prime Minister, Pushpa Kamal Dahal aka Prachanda, won the vote of trust on Tuesday, receiving 268 votes in the 275-member Parliament.

This is the first time in the history of Nepal's Parliament that a Prime Minister received such overwhelming support from different political parties.

At present, there are 12 parties in the House, out of which 10 have supported Prachanda's bid. Earlier, while claiming the post of Prime Minister, Prachanda was supported by only 168 members.

More political parties, including Nepali Congress, which is the largest party in the House, have now extended support to Prachanda.

Even Nepali Congress, the single-largest party in the Parliament which was declared to sit in the opposition bench, also supported Prachanda.

# 'Mere demand for return of money can't be held as abetment to suicide'

Atul Krishan | New Delhi

A Delhi court discharged two persons -- a father and his son -- of charges of abetment to suicide, noting that mere demand for return of money can't be said to be an act of instigating or abetting or aiding in the commission of suicide by the deceased.

The accused would, however, face the prosecution for the offence punishable under Section 506 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The court was at the stage of framing charges in connection with the suicide of Vijender Singh, who took a loan of Rs 1.5 lakh and helped his friend in getting a loan of Rs 15 lakh from the accused, Dal Chand. It was alleged that Chand and his son Dinesh alias Titto Yadav had tortured Vijender, which led to him committing suicide.

The Additional Sessions Judge at the Tis Hazari Courts, Devender Kumar Sharma, said that the suicide note itself made it clear that there were no allegations of abetment to suicide.

"In the present case, there was demand for returning the loan amount and that has been attributed to be the



sole reason for committing suicide by the deceased in his suicide note. However, in no manner, the mere demand for return of the amount can be said to be an act of instigating or abetting or aiding in the commission of suicide by the deceased. Even if it was coupled with the allegation that in case of non-payment of the loan amount, the accused would get the deceased sent to prison, it can not be said to be a direct or indirect act compelling the deceased to commit suicide," the court noted.

The court has now discharged the accused duo of abetment to suicide charges, but they will face prosecution under Section 506 of the IPC.

## DELHI-NCR TURNS INTO 'GAS CHAMBER', GURUGRAM'S AQI AT 529

**New Delhi:** The Air Quality Index in Delhi and its surrounding areas remained in "severe" category on Tuesday with PM 2.5 levels at 421 in the capital and PM 2.5 at 529 in Gurugram, according to the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR). The AQI at Mathura road, Pusa, Delhi University, Lodhi Road, IIT Delhi and Ayanagar was recorded at 488, 425, 410, 410, 402 and 416, all in the "severe category", on Tuesday.

The AQI in Noida reached 458 under the "severe" category.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

According to Central Pollution Control Board data, the national capital was the most polluted city in India in 2022 with PM 2.5 levels more than double the safe limit and the third highest average PM10 concentration. PM2.5 is tiny particulate matter that can enter the lungs and bloodstream and it is less than 2.5 microns in diameter.

▶ As per the age band, the risk seemed to be cumulative, with each subsequent course adding an additional 11 per cent, 15 per cent, and 14 per cent heightened risk, said the study.

▶ The highest risk of all was observed among those prescribed 5 or more courses of antibiotics -- 69 per cent heightened risk for 10-40 year-olds, a doubling in risk for 40-60 year-olds, and a 95 per cent heightened risk for those over the 60s.

▶ Among 10-40 year-olds IBD risk was 40 per cent higher 1-2 years after taking antibiotics compared with 13 per cent 4-5 years later.

▶ The equivalent figures for 40-60 year-olds were 66 per cent vs 21 per cent and for those over the 60s were 63 per cent vs 22 per cent.

# Frequent use of antibiotics may increase risk of inflammatory bowel disease

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Frequent use of antibiotics may increase the risk of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) -- Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis -- in people over the age of 40, a new study has shown.

According to the study published in the journal Gut, the risk appears to be cumulative and greatest 1-2 years after use, particularly for antibiotics used to treat gut infections. In the study, more than 6.1 million people were included, and just over half of them were female.

In total, 5.5 million (91 per cent) were prescribed at least one course of antibiotics between 2000 and 2018. During this period, some 36,017 new cases of ulcerative colitis and 16,881 new cases of Crohn's disease were diagnosed, according to the study. Moreover, compared with no antibiotic use, the use of these



drugs was associated with a higher risk of developing IBD, regardless of age, but older age was associated with the highest risk.

In terms of antibiotic type, nitroimidazoles and fluoroquinolones, which are commonly used to treat gut infections, were associated with the highest risk of

IBD, the study mentioned.

These are referred to as broad-spectrum antibiotics because they target all microbes, not just those that cause disease.

Nitrofurantoin was the only antibiotic that was not linked to an increased risk of IBD at any age, the study added.

# Bombay HC pulls up Maha Govt for uncertainty over Bike - Taxi policy

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court today rapped the Maharashtra government for its uncertainty on framing a policy permitting bike taxis in the state, and said it has to clarify its stand one way or the other.

The bench was hearing a petition filed by Roppen Transportation Services Private Limited, operator of Rapido bike taxi services in Pune and Mumbai, against a communication issued to it by the state government on December 29, 2022, refusing to allow them a bike taxi aggregator licence.

Appearing for the government, Advocate General Birendra Saraf on Tuesday told the court that as on date, bike taxis are not allowed to



ply, as the government has not issued any policy or guidelines for the same.

The court, however, said that it found it difficult to accept the government's stand that such bike taxis cannot ply till a policy is framed but at the same time the government is not even clarifying when it would come up with its policy.

"How can you (government) refuse for want of poli-

cy or guidelines? You may refuse it on any other ground but this. You cannot keep it hanging like this on fire. You have to take a decision even if it is on a temporary basis. We find it difficult to accept the government's stand," Justice Patel said.

The court said while it understands that the government has certain constraints, but the issue cannot be kept in limbo.









# EKNATH SHINDE VS UDDHAV THACKERAY: SUPREME COURT TO HEAR CASE ON FEB 14

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Supreme Court on Tuesday scheduled the hearing of the matter arising out of the rebellion by Eknath Shinde and other MLAs against Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray in Maharashtra, on February 14.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing the Thackeray faction, submitted before a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud that the matter was urgent as the Election Commission was conducting proceedings on the issue of control over the party and the symbol.

Sibal further argued that the court has to primarily decide the issue whether the 2016 five-judge judgement of the Nabam Rabia case should be referred to the seven-judge bench. The judgment restricted the power of the Speaker to decide disqualification petitions if a resolution seeking his removal was pending.



Senior advocate Neeraj Kishan Kaul along with advocate Abhikalp Pratap Singh appeared for Eknath Shinde's group of the Shiv Sena. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta represented the Governor.



The apex court had said that a five-judge constitution bench will hear a batch of petitions filed by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Uddhav Thackeray faction on queries related to defection, merger, and disqualification.

A three-judge bench of the apex court, in its reference order, had framed first issue whether notice for removal of a Speaker restricts him from continuing with disqualification proceedings under Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, as held by this court in Nabam Rabia (by a five-judge bench).

Thackeray suffered a major setback after Eknath Shinde and other MLAs rebelled against him and ousted him as the Maharashtra CM. They also laid claims to the Shiv Sena party and its symbol as well.

The top court restrained the Speaker from proceeding on disqualification petitions against Shinde and other MLAs and subsequently allowed a fresh vote of confidence in the Assembly, after which Thackeray resigned. The apex court on July 11 last year asked the newly appointed Maharashtra Assembly Speaker not to go ahead with proceedings on the disqualification petitions.

## Shiv Sena 'rebel', who changed his mind in Guwahati, gets ACB notice now

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Pressure further mounted on the Shiv Sena-UBT after an MLA - who had "rebelled" in June last year and then changed his mind in Guwahati - has been slapped with an Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) notice, party leaders said here on Tuesday.

Balapur (Akola) MLA Nitin Deshmukh has been served the ACB notice, making him the third MLA in the past two months to get such notices for allegations pertaining to holding disproportionate assets. The Sena-UBT has again cried foul at the hounding of its legislators by various probe agencies by the government. In recent months, two of its MLAs - Vaibhav Naik from Kudal (Sindhudurg) and Rajan Salvi from Rajapur (Ratnagiri) - had received ACB notices in October and December 2022, respectively.

After going to Gujarat and Guwahati with the rebel camp led by Eknath Shinde - now the Chief Minister - Deshmukh had mysteriously resurfaced in Mumbai and rejoined the faction led by Uddhav Thackeray.

The party had wholeheartedly rejoiced, showered praises on him and he was felicitated by both Thackeray and son Aditya Thackeray later. Unfazed after getting the ACB notice, Deshmukh



said that "attempts are being made to implicate me", and he would report to the probe agency on January 17 in Amravati to record his statement.

He said that around a fortnight back, Shinde's Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena (BSS) MP Bhavna Gawli had filed a case against him after which the ACB Amravati notice was received.

Deshmukh pointed out that the ACB notice is vague, with no mention of the complainant's name, the nature of the complaint and he would not be scared even if central agencies send him a notice as he has no illegal properties.

The Sena MLA said that after going to the ACB Amravati office, he would hold a media conference and expose the conspiracy against him.

At the height of the rebellion drama in June, Deshmukh had alleged that he was "kidnapped", whisked off to Surat and then to Guwahati where attempts were made to subject him to some "medical procedure" but he managed to escape.



## TARIKH PE TARIKH: AMBADAS DANVE SENA (UBT) ON DEFERMENT OF SC CASE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Leader of Opposition Ambadas Danve on Tuesday said that a game of 'tarikh pe tarikh' is on in the party's case in the Supreme Court pertaining to the power struggle here. Reacting to the SC's decision on Tuesday to hear the case on February 14, Danve said, "The entire situation is clear, there is a law prohibiting defections, and even the Election Commission of India's viewpoint is before us. 'We hope that on February 14, there will be a decision in the matter,' Danve said, saying he was reminded of a famous Bollywood film dialogue referring to 'Tarikh Pe Tarikh' (Date Upon Date), or frequent postponements.

Danve also wondered why the Election Commission of India (ECI) was in such a hurry to give its decision on the party name and symbol when the MLAs' disqualification matter is pending before the SC, especially since this (the state government) is illegal. In New Delhi, Sena (UBT) MP and Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut said that the hearing will be on a continuous basis on a very auspicious date - Valentine's Day - and expressed hope that the outcome would also be 'lovely' for all. The Sena (UBT)'s response came after a five-judge SC bench postponed to February 14 the hearing in the case of the rebellion by legislators led by Eknath Shinde in the erstwhile Shiv Sena government headed by Uddhav Thackeray.

### ICICI-Videocon case

## Bombay HC grants CBI 3 days to reply on Dhoot's plea

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday granted the Central Bureau of Investigation 3 days time till Friday to file its reply in a plea filed by Videocon Group Chairman Venugopal N. Dhoot seeking to quash the FIR against him in the ICICI-Videocon case.

A division bench of Justice Revati Mohite-Dere and Justice Prithviraj K. Chavan has now posted the matter for further hearing on Friday.

The CBI's lawyer Kuldeep Patil had earlier sought at least a week's time to file its reply. In his plea, Dhoot, 71, who was arrested on December 26, 2022, has sought bail on the grounds that his arrest without a warrant was arbitrary, illegal and



grossly flouting the CrPC's Sections 41 and 41A.

His lawyer Sandeep Ladda informed the court that Dhoot is a senior citizen suffering serious ailments including major heart blockage needing urgent treatment, and has undergone multiple surgeries and hospitalisation in the past seven years. Moreover, Dhoot had cooperated with the CBI probe and appeared before the agency on his own, the CBI failed to prove his non-cooperation as a ground for the arrest and he was nabbed carelessly and mechanically

without necessary cause or reasons. Ladda added that Dhoot was nabbed in a connected case of money-laundering in which he was already granted bail by the Bombay High Court after observing that there were reasonable grounds to believe he was not guilty of the alleged offences. Accordingly, Dhoot - a co-accused along with Chanda Kochhar and Deepak Kochhar in the ICICI Bank-Videocon Group fraud case - termed his arrest as illegal and sought to be released on bail.

Incidentally, Chanda Kochhar, the former MD of ICICI Bank and her businessman husband Deepak Kochhar were granted bail on Monday after the high court termed their arrest as flouting the laws.

### BANGLADESHI NATIONAL HELD FOR OPERATING SEX RACKET

Palghar: A 36-year-old Bangladeshi national has been arrested for allegedly running a sex racket in Nalla Sopara area of Maharashtra's Palghar district, police said on Tuesday. Acting on a tip-off, the anti-human trafficking cell (AHTC) of the police conducted a raid on Monday and arrested the accused, senior inspector Santosh Chowdhary said.

The police also rescued a woman who had been forced into sex trade by the accused, he said.

An offence under section 376 (rape) and other relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code, Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (PITA) and Foreign Nationals Act has been registered, he said, adding that a manhunt has been launched for seven other accused involved in the racket.

## Mumbai man honey-trapped to smuggle cocaine worth Rs 28cr from Ethiopia

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A Mumbai man was honey-trapped by a woman and forced to smuggle cocaine worth Rs 28.10 crore from Ethiopia into India.

This came to light when the man was held with 2.81 kg of cocaine by the Customs officials at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai after his arrival from Ethiopia.

A customs official on the condition of anonymity, told IANS that the 49-year-old man, a Mumbai resident, had met a woman on social media. Soon they became friends and the woman lured him to come to Ethiopia.

The man left his private job and went there to meet her. But, on reaching there, when he tried to contact the woman, she told him that she was in Mumbai only. Some men there forced him to carry the bag which had the cocaine in it. The man had no choice but to carry the bag,



said a source.

"He was sent back to Mumbai with the cocaine consignment. The accused concealed cocaine in a duffle bag. It was intercepted by the customs officials on the basis of intelligence surveillance," said the official.

The official said that during the investigation he broke down and told the officials that a woman was forcing him to do all this. He said that he was being blackmailed. "The man has violated provisions of section 8 of the NDPS Act, and has committed an offence punishable under Section 21, Section 23 and Section 29 of NDPS Act. Accordingly, he was placed under arrest. The said drugs, which is cocaine, has been seized along with concealing material under section 43(a) of NDPS Act," said the official.

The official said that they have informed the local police about the honey-trap matter to investigate.

# "How Are You Concerned?": Court Asks Petitioner In Cyrus Mistry Car Crash Case

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday sought to know a man's locus standi, his right to approach the court, over his PIL seeking the inclusion of culpable homicide charge against Dr Anahita Pandole, who was driving the car that crashed and killed former Tata Sons chairman Cyrus Mistry.

Petitioner Sandesh Jedhe, who claims to be a self-spirited citizen concerned about road safety, in his PIL sought a direction to Kasa police station in Palghar district to invoke section 304 of the Indian Penal Code, against the accused in the accident case.

Mistry and Jehangir Pandole were killed on September 4, Dr Anahita Pandole, who was at the wheel, and her husband Darius Pandole were seriously injured. The police later registered a case against Anahita Pandole for rash and negligent driving.

While hearing the PIL on Tuesday, a division bench of acting Chief Justice S V Gangapurwala and Justice Sandeep Marne sought to know Jedhe's locus standi in the case and how the high court can do the job of a magistrate.

"This is a job of a magistrate. It is the magistrate who can



decide what charges to put. You (petitioner) want the high court to do the functions of the magistrate? What is your locus standi? How are you concerned in this case?" the court asked.

The bench added that the concerned police can add any charge and it is for the magistrate to consider the same and see if any more charge needs to be included.

Jedhe's advocate Sadiq Ali claimed that the petitioner has evidence that Anahita Pandole was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the accident. In his petition, the petitioner refers to a CCTV footage allegedly indicating that Anahita Pandole had been consuming liquor at a cafe on the previous night (September 3, 2022) before she drove the vehicle carrying Mistry, among others.

Senior counsel Rafique Dada, appearing for Darius Pandole, sought for the PIL to be dismissed.

Appearing for Anahita Pandole, senior counsel Abad Ponda said, "It is premised on the imagination that she was under alcohol. There were tests conducted by the police." Public prosecutor Aruna Kamat Pai, appearing for the police, clarified that "The tests were negative." Ali then claimed that he has more material to prove his case and sought a last chance. The court then posted the matter for further hearing on January 17.

## SHIFTING OF RACE COURSE CAUSES NEW EPISODE B/W TEAM THACKERAY VS BJP

Mumbai: A plan to shift Mumbai's iconic Mahalaxmi Racecourse to an abandoned dump yard in Mulund has opened up a new front between the Eknath Shinde-BJP government and Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena faction. The lease for the race-course ended a decade ago, and reports that the Mumbai civic body has revived its plan to build an amusement park at the site have triggered controversy and anger.



Aadiya Thackeray, a former minister of the state and the son of Uddhav Thackeray, has accused the state government of trying to "sell the racecourse to commercial interests" and "destroy open spaces".

The Uddhav Thackeray government, he said, had planned to build a space like London's Hyde Park in the area that is also a heritage site. "The idea was to create an urban green space open for children, the elderly, runners, Yoga lovers, music lovers, artists, pets and horse lovers too. A free, open urban green park for all," he tweeted yesterday.

A state minister today insisted that no decision has been taken.

Cabinet Minister and Mumbai Guardian minister Deepak Kesarkar conceded that the original plan was to shift the race-course, but asserted, "No such decision has been taken yet".

"There should be open space. Mumbai is short of open spaces. This could be a recreational area for common people. This is one option where open space remains like that and it remains for the common man. But this should not happen at the cost of the game that is racing," Kesarkar said.

Without naming Aadiya Thackeray, he added, "A few young people are doing politics on this issue ahead of the upcoming BMC (Brihanmumbai Corporation) elections. They are unnecessarily raising this issue as they



## Watchman kills minor boy over dispute with his mother

Team Absolute | Thane

A watchman allegedly kidnapped a seven-year-old boy and killed him following a dispute with the child's mother in Maharashtra's Thane district, police said on Tuesday. The accused, Nitin Kamble, kidnapped the child from his school in Kalyan town after classes on Monday, Khadakpada police station's assistant police inspector S S Survase said.

When the boy did not return home, his family members filed a police complaint of kidnapping against unidentified person.

The police launched a search and found the child's body in the swimming pool of a housing complex, the official said.

The police subsequently registered a case of murder. During the probe into the case, the police got to know the accused and the victim's mother had an affair. She later started avoiding him due to which they had a quarrel.

The accused, in a bid to settle the score with her, allegedly kidnapped the child and killed him by drowning him in the swimming pool of the housing complex where he worked earlier, the official said.



## Washington | Agencies

"We are taking the threat from these storms seriously, and want to make sure that Californians stay

## Seoul | Agencies

It's a tit-for-tat move which Beijing says will remain in place until "discriminatory" entry restrictions against China are lifted. Last week, South Korea stopped issuing tourist visas for those coming from

China, which the Chinese Foreign Ministry called "unacceptable" and "unscientific". Reacting to China's latest move, South Korea's Foreign Ministry told the BBC that its policy towards arrivals from China was "in accordance with scientific and objective evidence". Japan, meanwhile, is currently allowing Chinese visitors into the country - provided they test negative for Covid. According to South Korea's Disease Control and Prevention Agency, around a third of all arrivals from China tested positive for Covid prior to the visa restrictions being put in place. At Seoul's Incheon International airport - the only South Korean airport still allowing flights from China - arrivals are met by military personnel.

nel in personal protective equipment, BBC reported. Many South Koreans supported the idea of protecting their country from China's coronavirus surge - but not all are convinced that the decision is a purely medical one. The South Korean curbs are supposed to last at least until the end of the month, which would give scientists time to analyse for any potential new variants coming from China. "There's no transparency at the moment in China about any monitoring for new variants. If a new variant comes from China, it would be a very difficult situation for the whole world," Professor Kim Woo Joo, an infectious diseases expert at Korea University and a government adviser, told the BBC.

A total of 23 people were killed in January 2018 when a massive mudslide caused by heavy rains swept through the coastal community and destroyed 130 homes.

**Islamabad** | Agencies

Textile factories are being deprived of necessary raw material

It's causing severe disruption and production delays and has led to the cancellation of export

Despite such a difficult situation, the government is importing expensive luxury cars like BMWs for cabinet members. These imports will have no contribution

The industrial sector cannot operate under extreme financial stress as the alarm bells for sovereign default have been continuously ringing while the government's finance and economic team appears to be asleep at the wheel, Dawn news quoted the associations as saying.

Basically, Turkey wants Assad to rule out allowing the US-backed Kurdish dominated, People's Defence Units or People's Protection Units (YPG), to form an autonomous area in northern parts of the country that they currently control, as part of any future peace agreement, if the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan restarts any reconciliatory process.

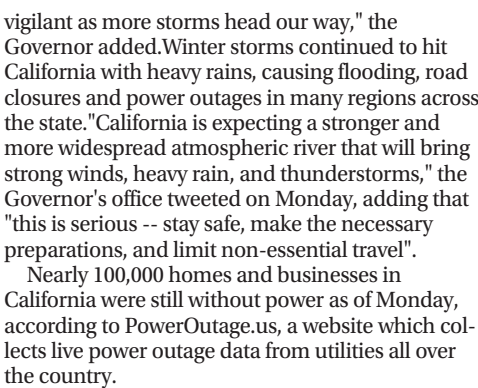
As part of a flurry of diplomatic

Reportedly, the US is 'very concerned' about possible Turkish meddling in Syria. US State Department spokesperson Ned Price when asked last week, about a potential Erdogan-Assad meeting said that the US will not normalise and we do not support other coun-

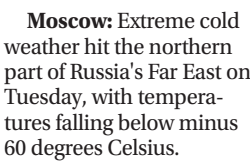
Earlier, the Defence Ministers from Turkey and Syria met for the first time in December last year since the civil war erupted in the Arab state in 2011, the high point so far

# international

## Washington | Agencies



Tens of thousands of people across Northern California are dealing with continued power outages on Monday, as heavy rain and strong winds caused issues on roadways but spared the region from widespread devastation, reported KCRA-TV, a television station in Sacramento, the capital of the



In the Oleneksky district

The local emergency agency has warned people to insulate their cars and bring enough supplies should they travel outside their settlements.

Tokyo | Agencies

The incident was reported to the coast guard at around 12.30 p.m. by the crew of the destroyer who said they felt a

Around 20 crew members on the deck of the stranded vessel were seen throwing what appeared to be a white sheet into the sea to absorb the oil that had flowed out of the stricken destroyer, NHK said.





## Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

# PRESIDENT MURMU WELCOMED AT INDORE

Team Absolute | Bhopal

President Droupadi Murmu was welcomed by Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai C. Patel and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan after she landed at Indore airport on Tuesday.

The President arrived here to address the Indian diaspora on the occasion of 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

The President will facilitate over 50 overseas Indian and firms for their achievements, and building a better relationship between India and foreign countries.

According to the organising team of Madhya Pradesh government, over 3500 delegates from different countries, including, the US and the UK were received in Indore for three days of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas that started on January 8.

The President is scheduled to attend several programmes including meeting with delegates arrived from overseas nations. Murmu will also attend a welcoming meeting for Suriname Republic President Chandrika Prasad Santokhi and Guyana Republic President Mod. Irfan Ali.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the formal inaugural session on Monday reminding that - Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is held after every two years but this time it is being organised after a gap of four years - due to the Covid pandemic.



## INDIA IS THE COUNTRY MAKING ECONOMIC PROGRESS RAPIDLY: SITHARAMAN

India has made progress at a very rapid pace after the year 1990. Production is being done as per global standards. In the next 25 years of Amrit Kaal, NRIs should actively contribute in progress focused on "Four-I's" - Infra-Structure, Investment, Innovations and Inclusiveness. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made this call while chairing the session on "Harnessing the Potential of Women Diaspora Entrepreneurs towards an Inclusive Approach to Nation Building" on the third day of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention today. She said that you are the brand ambassador of Indian culture and India, actively contribute in taking India to a loftier peak with public participation. India is also the country making economic progress at the fastest pace in the current and next year.



## AREY YAHIN REH JAO NA: CM CHOUHAN'S EMOTIONAL APPEAL

Bhopal/ New Delhi: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan gave an emotional address at the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in the state. Comparing the event to a daughter's wedding, he said he is emotionally overwhelmed, with a lot of joy and happiness in his heart, but there's also sadness in some corner. "We had your company for three days. Indore became one with you. Truly, Indore prepared to host the convention as one prepares for a daughter's wedding. But the daughter's vidai pains the heart too. Three days of hope and festivities went by so quickly. Now, the heart is heavy thinking you will leave...arey yahin reh jao na," he said. Over 3,500 diaspora members from nearly 70 different countries have registered for the convention, which is annually celebrated on January 9 to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards their homeland.



## Pradhan asks diaspora to cement India's capacity to serve global family

Bhopal/ New Delhi: For a skilling approach under the new education policy we are envisioning a flexible model with multiple entry-exit and skilling pathways that focus on building competencies, said Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday.

The Indian workforce is hardworking, honest, and responsible and India can emerge as the global hub of skilled manpower, he added.

He was addressing the plenary session on 'Enabling

Global Mobility of Indian Workforce - Role of Indian Diaspora' at the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2023. Addressing the gathering, Pradhan said that our diaspora is an integral part of India's civilization and has played an important role in its great journey.

He spoke about the diaspora's role in enhancing the capacity and mobility of India's workforce and in creating a new Indian model for serving humanity.



# Kolkata Police arrest 3rd IS man from MP's Khandwa

Team Absolute | Bhopal/Kolkata

Based on the inputs from Mohammad Saddam and Syed Ahmed, the two Islamic State (IS) linkmen arrested from West Bengal's Howrah district on January 7, the Special Task Force (STF) of Kolkata Police arrested an important link of the terror module from Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh. The arrest was made on Monday night, and the person has been identified as Abdul Raqib Qureshi. The STF sleuths are bringing him to Kolkata on a transit remand on Tuesday only, city police source said.

It is learnt that Qureshi has been booked under Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) and Section 121 (waging or attempting to wage war or abetting waging of war against Indian government) of the Indian Penal Code. "Before his active association with IS, Qureshi was a senior and active leader of the banned outfit, Students' Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) and he was the key person in inspiring Mohammad Saddam to join the IS. Later Saddam



brainwashed and roped in Syed Ahmed to the terror module," the city police source said.

It is learnt that besides brainwashing local youths to join the IS, Qureshi was also responsible for procuring arms and distribution of the same to the new recruits. Meanwhile, from the diary seized from the residence of Mohammad Saddam, the STF sleuths have tracked an oath statement of joining the IS, which was written in Arabic. Mohammad Saddam and Syed Ahmed were arrested on Saturday afternoon by the STF sleuths while the two were on their way to attend a secret meeting at Khidirpur area in Kolkata. Earlier, the STF sleuths recovered from their devices, crucial clues on how the two, especially Mohammad Saddam, used to contact his IS handlers in Syria and Saudi Arabia using the Telegram Web medium. The recovery of such crucial clues, especially the ones related to the videos and still photographs about the activities of the suicide squad modules of IS have kept the investigating sleuths worried.

## 40 BUFFALOES, TWO MEN KILLED IN ACCIDENT

Team Absolute | Sagar

Forty buffaloes were killed when a container truck carrying them crashed into a roadside mosque in Mahoba district.

The driver and the owner of the buffaloes, who was in the truck was from Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh, also got killed in the incident which took place on Monday night. The truck was carrying 50 buffaloes, 10 of whom survived.

The police identified the truck driver as Rajesh Patel while the owner of the buffaloes as Chhote of Rahatgarh in Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh.

The incident took place when the speeding container truck hit a concrete pillar by the road and the driver lost control over the wheels. A shop built next to the



mosque and a house were also damaged.

After seven hours of rescue operation under the supervision of SDM and CO Kulphar, two people, including the driver trapped inside the truck were taken out by cutting the cabin of the truck with a gas cutter and taken to the community health centre in Kulphar.

While Chhote died on the spot, Rajesh died while being taken to the district hospital.

The police said that a truck going from Mahoba towards Panwadi, crashed into the gate of the mosque near the Sugra village on the highway, damaging its boundary wall as well as the house and a building next to the mosque.

Later, the officials requisitioned JCB machines and cranes, and pulled out the dead buffaloes by breaking the entire enclosure of the truck.

## Green corridor formed to transport kidney to Indore

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A green corridor was made from Bansal Hospital, Bhopal, to Indore on Monday. Four people were benefited with donation of kidneys and eyes. The green corridor was 35 kilometre long till Phunda toll Nakka from Bansal hospital. Around 80 policemen were deployed. The distance was covered in 30 minutes. Kidney was transported to Indore while eyes to Gandhi Medical College (GMC), Bhopal. Chandra Bhushan Singh (63) of Sector-C of Shahpura, died in Bansal Hospital. His eyes have been transported to Gandhi



Medical College (GMC), Bhopal and Kidney has been transported to Indore.

Dr Rakesh Bhargava, Paediatrician of Kiran Foundation said, "A green corridor was made to transport

kidney to Indore. Eyes have been transported to GMC. Family of Shahpura resident CB Singh has donated the organs." Dr sanjiv Jain counselled the family for organ donation.

## Investors will get acquainted with the capabilities of Madhya Pradesh in the 7th GIS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh, the heart of India, is all set to write a new chapter of development by showcasing the development of the state's capabilities, promotion of investment climate and infrastructure along with display of its capabilities to potential investors through the Global Investors Summit. The Global Investors Summit is going to be held on January 11-12 at the Brilliant Convention Centre in Indore, the country's cleanest city and commercial capital. PM Modi will also virtually inaugurate the seventh summit and address it. The President of Suriname Chandrika Prasad Santokhi and the President of Guyana Dr. Mohammed Irfan Ali will also attend the inaugural session and they will also address.

Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will also address the inaugural session. Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal will have a virtual address in the session. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will also address the summit. The summit will be inaugurated at 10:30 am at Brilliant Convention Centre Indore.

In order to bring investors from the country and abroad to the state in the Investor Summit, various scenarios of favourable environment for industrial investment in Madhya Pradesh will be demonstrated. The objective of the



**INVEST MADHYA PRADESH**  
GLOBAL INVESTORS SUMMIT

ment in the state in consultation with industrial associations to formulate industry friendly policies, enhance co-operation opportunities and export potential. Since the year 2007, Global Investors Summit of Madhya Pradesh has become a great opportunity for the investors and business community from all over the world. Delegations from more than 65 countries will participate in this Global Investors Summit being held in Indore. It will be attended by ambassadors, high commissioners, consulates and diplomats

summit is to promote the policies of the state, create an investor friendly environment

from more than 20 countries. In the International Pavilion of GIS, 9 participating countries and 14 International Trade Organisations will showcase different aspects of their countries. The summit will also provide an opportunity to the exporters of the state to connect with potential overseas buyers.

Prominent industrialists who have agreed to attend the Global Investor Summit include over 500 leading industrialists from India including Sarvshri Kumar Mangalam Birla, Noel Tata, Nadir Godrej, Puneet Dalmiya and Ajay Piramal. The programme will see participation of leading industrialists from various sectors such as pharma, IT, automobile, textile, clothing, chemical, cement, food processing, logistics, petrochemical, tourism, renewable energy, services etc.

## Bhopal gas tragedy

# HOW CAN SETTLEMENT BE REOPENED, IS RS 50CR LYING UNDISBURSED: SC TO CENTRE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday grilled the Centre on how the settlement can be reopened, when Union Carbide has already paid over \$ 470 million to the Bhopal gas tragedy victims, and also expressed concern over Rs 50 crore undisbursed funds.

A five-judge bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul asked the Attorney General (AG) R. Venkataramani, representing the Centre, that the settlement was arrived at a particular stage of time, and can the court say that 10 years hence, 20 years hence or 30 years hence, open the settlement on the basis of fresh documents? Senior advocate Harish Salve, representing Union Carbide, said there is a new set of documents. The bench further queried the AG, can any fresh documents



be permitted in curative petition? The bench -- also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, A.S. Oka, Vikram Nath, and J.K. Maheshwari - said no review was filed by the government and a curative petition was filed after a gap of 19 years. It added that the settlement is between two parties and one of the parties

is the Union of India and it is not a weak party. The AG replied that just have a look at the settlement, did it bring about a just conclusion? Justice Kaul asked the AG, what was the scope of such a curative petition, especially at this point in time? Venkataramani replied that there was an amendment to the settlement and "we are not asking for a settlement to be annulled". Justice Kaul asked why Rs 50 crore were lying undisbursed. He further added this means that the people were not getting the money, and was the government responsible for the money not going to the people? The AG said the number of claimants had gone beyond what the review judgment had in mind. Justice Kaul said, "Attorney, please address us why and how not having filed a review a curative is moved?" The bench asked a specific query to the AG, how can settlement be reopened?

## Tigress T4 gives birth to 4 more cubs in Pench Reserve, her offspring count reaches 20

Team Absolute | Seoni

Tigress T4, also known as Patdev, has given birth to four more cubs in Pench Tiger Reserve, taking her offspring tally to 20, officials said on Tuesday. Patdev is the daughter of supermom 'Collarwali', who gave birth to 29 cubs over a span of 11 years, they said.

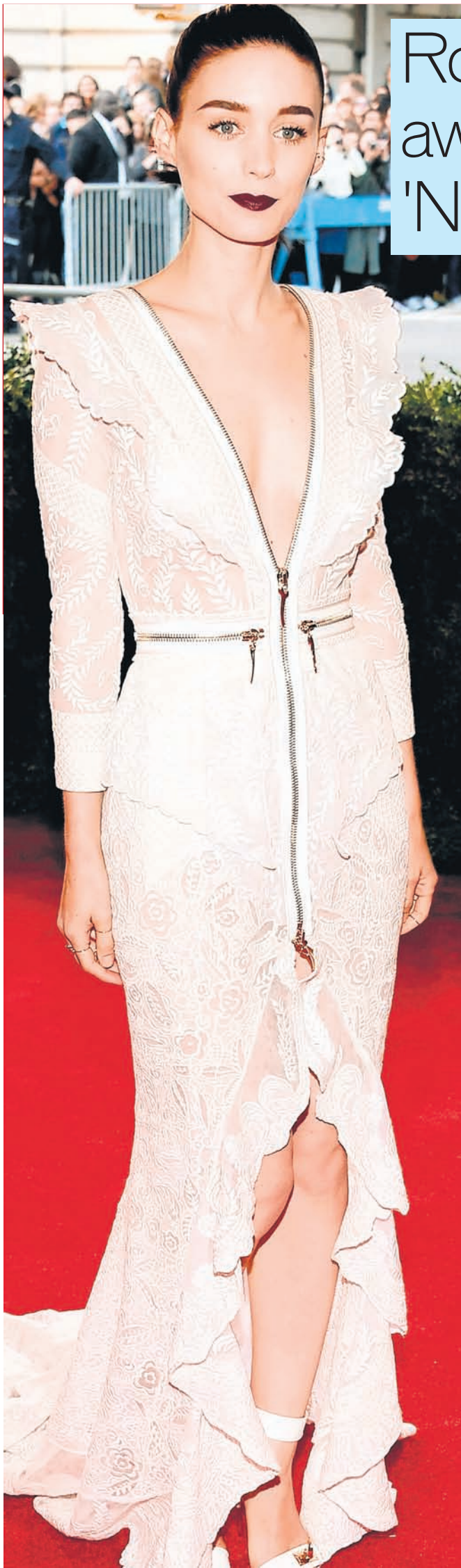
On Monday, some officials and visitors during a safari spotted tigress T4 with four cubs, Pench Tiger Reserve's deputy director Rajneesh Singh said. This was the first time that tigress T4 was spotted



with her cubs, who appeared to be about two months' old, he said. The tigress has so far given birth to 20 cubs in five litters since 2014, the official said.

Singh said T4 was born in 2010 to tigress Collarwali, who gave birth to 29 cubs in eight litters between 2008 and 2018.





## Los Angeles | Agencies

"A few years before (The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo), I had done (A Nightmare on Elm Street) remake, which was not a good

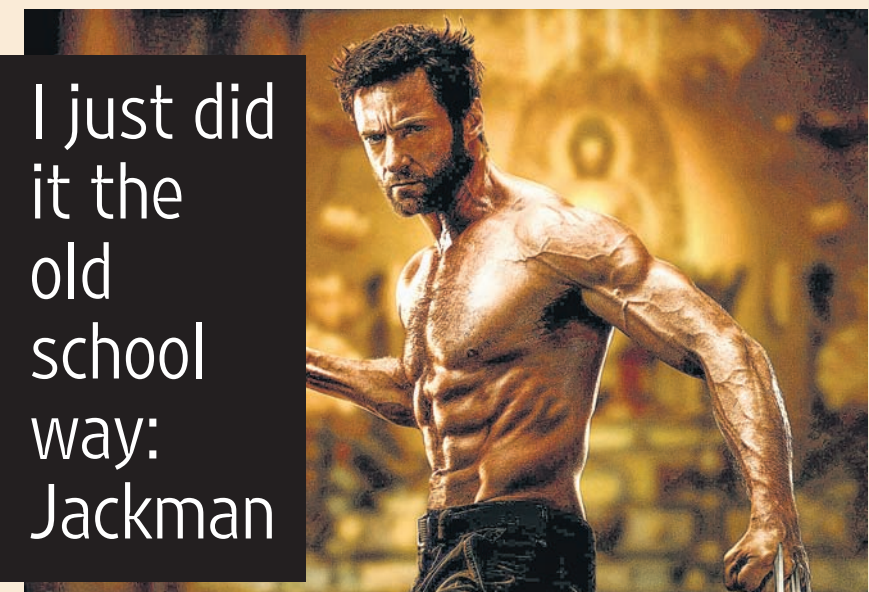
After finishing work on the horror remake, she landed a part in David Fincher's Facebook drama 'The Social Network' which took her career to a whole new level as

The role in the 2011 film earned Rooney an Academy Award for Best Actress and her career took off.



## Los Angeles | Agencies

Their sons Johnny, four, and three-year-old Jack meanwhile matched their dad in white shirts, paired with tan shorts. The girls were seen helping their parents perfect their looks before they headed down the aisle in sweet behind the scenes glimpses.



Los Angeles | Agencies

He added: "So no, I just do it the old school way." Sharing his secret to get in shape for the role, the Australian actor spilled: "And I tell you, I've eaten more

Feeling confident that he can do it, the 'Real Steel' star boasted about how his Broadway role helps him for his Wolverine return, "And I'm really fit right now. There's one thing about eight shows a week being on Broadway, singing and dancing, is I'm fit. So, I'm healthy. I have a good place to start."



## Los Angeles | Agencies

Pitt is said to be dating jewellery executive Ines de Ramon, 32, after divorcing Angelina Jolie in 2019, while Margot has been married to 32-year-old film producer Tom Ackerley since 2016.

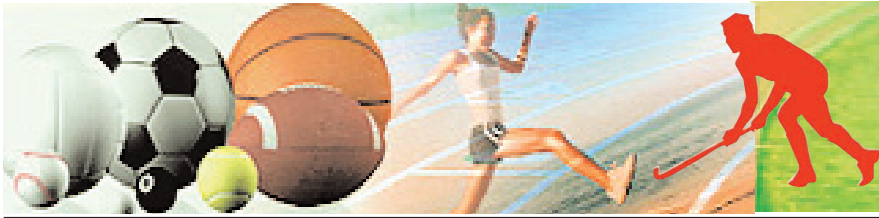
Los Angeles | Agencies

Plus, we get some Paul Rudd-multiverse mayhem as two identical versions of Ant-Man come face to face, and even more run around wild in the Quantum Realm.

He Who Remains, a variant of Kang from an alternate timeline, was killed by Sylvie (Sophia Di Martino) in the show's finale, which unleashed waves of multiversal chaos and the wrath of Kang, a universe-traversing threat. The purple-and-green-suited villain will be a big player in the current Multiverse Saga of the MCU. At the 2022 San Diego Comic-Con, Marvel Studios chief Kevin Feige revealed the upcoming slate of films for the MCU's Phases 5 and 6, which end with two 'Avengers' movies in 2025 and 2026.







1st ODI: India vs Sri Lanka

# KOHLI'S 45TH CENTURY; ROHIT, GILL FIFTIES PROPEL TEAM TO 373/7

Guwahati | Agencies

Virat Kohli looked at his very best again while slamming his 45th ODI century and second consecutive ton in the format while captain Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill slammed fifties as they propelled India to a massive 373/7 against Sri Lanka in the first match of the three-match series at the Barsapara Cricket Stadium, here on Tuesday.

On a flat pitch with a lighting fast outfield, Rohit and Gill made 83 and 70 respectively while sharing a 143-run opening stand to set the tone for a big total, before Kohli carried forward the mantle with his 87-ball 113, hitting 12 fours and a six for his ninth ODI century against Sri Lanka, going past the legendary Sachin Tendulkar for the milestone.

Initially watchful, Kohli was in imperious touch, picking slower deliveries with ease and ramping short balls over keeper's head while maintaining the balance between front foot and back foot stroke play while earning reprieves when the Sri Lankan fielders dropped his catches on 52 and 81.

Soon, he got his second hundred at the venue in 80 balls in the 47th over, punching the air in delight and got a roaring applause from the crowd.

Pushed into batting first, Rohit got going for India with a silken drive through mid-off for four off Kasun Rajitha in the opening over. From there, it was a boundary hitting show from Rohit and Gill, showcasing their full array of shots in an attractive display of stroke play in



the power-play.

The most delightful of them was Gill cutting twice and slicing off debutant Dilshan Madushanka for a hat-trick of fours while Rohit was assured in his pulls off Rajitha as India got 75 off power-play. The opening partnership ended when Gill was beaten on the flick and was trapped lbw by Shanaka for a 60-ball 70. Four overs later, Rohit got a big inside edge off

Madushanka and saw his off-stump being uprooted.

## Brief scores

India 373/7 in 50 overs (Virat Kohli 113, Rohit Sharma 83; Kasun Rajitha 3/88, Dasun Shanaka 1/22) against Sri Lanka.

## GLAD I COULD PLAY AT TEMPO OF THE GAME: KOHLI

Guwahati: After smashing his 45th ODI century in the series opener against Sri Lanka on Tuesday, Virat Kohli said he was glad to have played at the tempo of the game to make two hundreds in a row in the format and propel India to a score of above 370, here.

With the ton, Virat Kohli now has 20 ODI tons at home. He has equalled the record of batting legend Sachin Tendulkar, who too has 20 centuries in the format at home - most by any batter. Virat took only 99 innings to accomplish 20 tons at home while Sachin did so in 160 innings. On way to his 73rd international ton, Kohli also became the fastest to score 12500 ODI runs in 257 innings. Kohli now is four tons short of Sachin's record of 49 ODI tons. With his 45th ODI ton, Kohli now has nine centuries against Sri Lanka. It's the most number of tons scored by an Indian batter against the islanders.

## 'I am in good shape': Nadal confident of his Aus Open title defence



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Defending Australian Open champion Rafael Nadal is confident of his title defence in Melbourne, saying "I am in good shape" despite back-to-back losses in the United Cup in Sydney.

Nadal had a brilliant start to the 2022 season that saw him win four titles including the Australian Open and French Open - but the abdominal injury ruined his latter half of the season. Even the Spaniard did not get the start he wanted in the 2023 season as he lost both his singles rubbers at the United Cup. "It's true that the last couple of tournaments I wasn't able to play to my standards and here at the begin-

ning of the season I lost two matches in Sydney, but honestly, I am not unhappy with the preparation," new.com.au quoted Nadal.

"I need to win matches for sure. But the preparation is going quite well, practising a lot and I think I am in good shape. Then you need to demonstrate that in the matches, in the official tournaments.

"But I'm confident that if I am able to have this last week of positive practices, why not?" he said.

Ahead of the main round of the season's first Grand Slam, starting from January 16, the 22-time Grand Slam champion is slated to take on Poland's Hubert Hurkacz in a charity match at Rod Laver Arena on Friday.

## FA Cup: Arsenal fend off Oxford United to reach fourth round

Oxford | Agencies

Mohamed Elneny and Eddie Nketiah struck for Arsenal in a 3-0 victory over hosts Oxford United in the third round of the Emirates FA Cup.

A tense first half at the Kassam Stadium saw both sides struggle to create chances, with neither team able to produce a moment of magic when it mattered, reports thefa.com.

However, the second half showed renewed intent from the 14-time champions and Elneny's header and Nketiah's brace saw them seal a deserved victory on the night.

Arsenal were largely in control in the opening 20 minutes and ultimately throughout the first half,



though neither side were able to generate an early opportunity.

It was the hosts who eventually produced the first shot on goal 25 minutes in, though Cameron Brannagan's long-range strike was easily blocked.

A string of corners went Arsenal's way though some stern defending, particularly from the likes of Lewis Bate, saw the U's stay on level terms. However, just after the hour mark Elneny rewarded Arsenal's pressure with a goal.

## Malaysia Open TREESA-GAYATRI DUO ADVANCES; SRIKANTH, SAINA BOW OUT EARLY

Kuala Lumpur | Agencies

Rising Indian women's doubles pair Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Pullela Gopichand on Tuesday sailed into the Round-of-16 of the Malaysia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament while ace shuttlers Kidambi Srikanth and Saina Nehwal suffered first-round exit on Tuesday.

Commonwealth Games bronze medallist pair Treesa and Gayatri registered a straight game 21-19, 21-14 victory over Hong Kong's Yeung Nga Ting and Yeung Pui Lam of Hong Kong here at Axiata Arena.

The world no. 16 Indian pair will cross swords with the world no 14 Bulgarian sisters Gabriela Stoeva and Stefani Stoeva for a spot in the quarterfinals.

Earlier, World championships silver medallist Srikanth, who is struggling with his form lately, failed to



register a win in the year's first tournament and lost 19-21, 14-21 to world No. 17 Kenta Nishimoto of Japan. On the other hand, Nehwal went down fighting 12-21, 21-17, 12-21 to Han Yue of China. After losing the opening game, Nehwal bounced back into the

contest taking the second game 21-17 and managed to force the decider. However, the Indian shuttler could not maintain the momentum in the deciding game and ended up on the losing side against the world No. 11 Chinese.

In other action, Aakarshi Kashyap too suffered defeat in her first round at the hands of Wen Chi Hsu of Chinese Taipei 10-21, 8-21. Men's doubles pair Krishna Prasad Garaga and Vishnuvardhan Goud Panjala lost to South Korea's Kang Min Hyuk and Seo Seung Jae 10-21, 18-21 in the preliminary round.

The women's doubles pair of Treesa and Gayatri registered India's only win on the opening day of the Super 1000 tournament.

On Wednesday, two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu will face Spain's Carolina Marin in her first match while Lakshya Sen will lock horns with his compatriot HS Prannoy for a place in the final of 16.

World championships bronze medallist men's double pair Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy will be up against South Korea's Choi Sol Gyu and Kim Won Ho in their season's first tournament.

## U19 Women's T20WC warm-ups

### INDIA CLAIMS CONFIDENCE-BOOSTING WIN

South Africa | Agencies

India, Pakistan and Indonesia claimed confidence-boosting wins to open their official warm-up matches of the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup.

It might not have been the best day with the bat for Shafali Verma (run out for 10), though the 18-year-old with 72 senior white-ball appearances came through with her off-spin, reports icc-cricket.com.

Verma has taken just seven senior international wickets across 24 overs, though she proved tough for Australia's batting line up, claiming opener



Paris Bowdler and ripping through the middle order to take 3/8 from four overs that included a maiden.

Parshavi Chopra's 2/14 (3 overs) combined with Verma to keep Australia to 79/7, successfully defending their 97/8. Hrishita Basu's 28 at No.7 proved invaluable in India's first innings, with Richa Ghosh's 12 the next best with the bat.

## ICC Player of the Month award for December 2022

### Ashleigh Gardner, Harry Brook claims Women's-Men's award respectively



Los Angeles | Agencies

Australia's off-spin all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner on Tuesday claimed the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for December 2022 after her contributions with bat and ball helped her team get to

T20I series victory in India. Her performances also meant she now sits on top of Women's T20I Player Rankings for all-rounders.

Ashleigh saw off challenges from New Zealand's Suzie Bates and England's Charlie Dean to become the fourth Australian female to win the award in 2022 following in the footsteps of Rachael Haynes (who won in March), Alyssa Healy (April) and Tahlia McGrath (July). England batter Harry Brook on Tuesday claimed his maiden ICC Men's Player of the Month award thanks to a blistering run of scores in December 2022 which helped the Ben Stokes-led



side claim a historic Test series victory in Pakistan. Brook, who also fetched a deal worth INR 13.25 crore with Sunrisers Hyderabad during IPL 2023 mini player

auction, was largely unstoppable during England's triumphant Test return to Pakistan, scoring centuries in each match as the tourists sealed a 3-0 victory.

## HUGO LLORIS HANGS HIS BOOTS

Paris: France captain and goalkeeper Hugo Lloris has announced his retirement from international football three weeks after the 2022 World Cup loss to Argentina.

Lloris made his international debut as a 21-year-old in a friendly against Uruguay in November 2008. The goalkeeper captained the French side on record 121 occasions since 2010. He also has a record of 145 appearances for France in 14 years of his career.

"I've decided to stop my international career, with the feeling that I have given everything," Lloris told France's Sports daily L'Equipe. "I think it is important to announce this now, two-and-a-half months before the start of Euro qualifying."

The 2018 World champion played his last match on December 18, during the final of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar which France lost against Argentina (3-3, 2-4) on penalties.



## ASB Classic

### Barrere survives Isner serving storm, Cyclone Hale in Auckland

Auckland | Agencies

French qualifier Gregoire Barrere survived an ace deluge from two-time champion John Isner and a move indoors due to Cyclone Hale to move into the second round of the ASB Classic, here.

The World No. 88 survived 28 aces from sixth-seeded Isner to advance 6-7(3), 7-6(5), 6-3, reports atptour.com. Avenging a four-set loss to Isner in the second round of Roland Garros last year, Barrere cracked a clean

cross-court service return winner off an aggressive Isner second serve in the eighth game of the third set to claim the only break of serve in the match. Barrere notched just his fourth win in 23 outings against Top 50 opposition. He has never beaten a Top 50 player outdoors, but didn't need to today after matches were moved indoors due to torrential rain. Barrere was solid on his own serve, winning 84 per cent of first serves and 69 per cent of second serves. He did not face a break point.

## HUGE HONOUR TO PLAY MY FOURTH WORLD CUP FOR INDIA: PR SREEJESH

Rourkela | Agencies

All set to play his fourth World Cup for India, experienced goalkeeper PR Sreejesh emphasised that it's the results that matter more than the number of times a player turns up for a marquee event like the World Cup.

While he admits it's a huge honour to turn up for his fourth World Cup, Sreejesh knows very well that this is a great opportunity to change India's fortunes at the ultimate tournament for hockey, in which India awaits to finish on the podium since 1975 triumph when the illustrious Ajit Pal Singh-led team won the tournament beating Pakistan in the Final.

"It is a great honour for me to play my fourth World Cup for our country and



the special part is, this is my third World Cup on home soil. I don't think any player has had this privilege of playing three World Cups at home," expressed

Sreejesh who was instrumental in India's Bronze Medal feat at the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

While this achievement in itself puts Sreejesh among the world's greatest players, he was quick to add that results are what make one great. "Most of the time, I have always felt it's not about how many times you have played a tournament but whether you have won it or not is what matters the most for me. This time too, it's important for me to give my 100 per cent and get the desired result from the tournament," he added.

Sreejesh also got nostalgic about his first outing at the World Cup when his former Coach asked him to pad up to guard India's post against nemesis Pakistan. This was during the FIH Men's World Cup in New Delhi back in 2010.

## Judoka Tulika Maan credits Khelo India for her CWG 2022 success

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian Judoka Tulika Maan, who aims for a medal in Asian Games, has credited the Khelo India scheme for her performance at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, where she bagged the silver medal in +78kg category.

Prior to her Birmingham success in 2022, Maan also clinched two gold medals in the 2019 Commonwealth Championships. Moreover, she also has a gold medal in the South Asian Games, held in the

same year.

"Khelo India really helped me for the Commonwealth Games. If Khelo India was not there then I would not be in SAI Bhopal, where I had a fixed training cycle that includes my diet and sleep routine. I played my first competition in 2018 Khelo India in Pune. In total, I played four Khelo India tournaments that include University Games. This scheme helps in the upliftment of athletes from a grassroots level," Maan said in an interaction facilitated by Sports Authority of India (SAI).





## I would love to play most beautiful Madhubala's biopic: Yami

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Yami Gautam Dhar envisions doing a biopic of the iconic and her "favourite" actress Madhubala. When asked whose biopic she would like to do, Yami said: "The most beautiful one would be Madhubala. I know that there are some films being announced, but it's nothing to do with those announcements."

She added: "I have always said this in my make-up room, because I used to watch her songs at night. So at night, I have this habit till date, of watching either some old songs or some old interviews."

"It could be Madhubala to Smita interviews, and my God! How well-spoken they were. I wish again, one of those actors were still alive. There was so much more that was left to be seen and I wish she was here today, because she's one of my most favourite actors." Meanwhile, on the work front, Yami has more power-packed performances lined up with projects like 'Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga', 'OMG2' and 'Dhoom Dham' among other unannounced projects.



Ill-health makes Shruti to miss pre release launch event

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Shruti Haasan is gearing up for two big-ticket releases this week with 'Waltair Veerayya' starring Chiranjeevi and 'Veera Simha Reddy' led by Balakrishna.

She could not, however, be a part of the 'Waltair Veerayya' pre-release launch. According to unit sources, Shruti could not make it to the event due to ill-health brought on by fatigue and exertion. Shruti had a hectic 2022 and spent most of last year shooting for her various projects across industries.

According to sources close to her, Shruti hasn't been 100 per cent fit since the Greece schedule of her international film 'The Eye', as it was a physically gruelling shoot and she was practically living out of a suitcase for more than four months because of back-to-back shoots.

Despite this, she ensured that she was back on sets to complete the shoot for her January releases so as to not hamper their release in any way. Tollywood's 'Mega Star' Chiranjeevi, who's opposite Shruti in 'Waltair Veerayya', praised her for her professionalism as she completed the film's shooting as per schedule despite being under the weather. Fans of the actress were worried about her health after she put out a status on her social media accounts ruing the fact that she could not be part of the 'Waltair Veerayya' event, but she assured them that with adequate rest and medication she will be back soon.

## GURU & SHEHNAAZ'S UPCOMING IS A HEARTBREAKING MELODY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Suit Suit' and 'Lahore' hitmaker Guru Randhawa is back with another music video, this time in the form of 'Moon Rise' featuring himself and Shehnaaz Gill. The music video, directed by Gifty, presents a palpable chemistry between Guru and Shehnaaz.

Talking about the music video, Guru said, "I'm extremely happy to be releasing the music video of 'Moon Rise' after the amazing response that we got on the audio. I don't think there could be a better co-star than Shehnaaz for this song because she is such a fun loving person who lights up the entire mood. We had an absolutely amazing time while shooting with so many fun and frolic moments. I hope the audience enjoys watching the music video as much as we enjoyed shooting." The melodious yet heartbreaking song has been composed and written by Guru Randhawa while the music production is done by Sanjoy. Shehnaaz Gill, who features alongside Guru in the video, shared her experience of shooting for the song. She said, "Shooting with Guru was definitely a memorable experience, as it was our first time working together on something. We've known each other for a very long time and finally coming together for such a beautiful song was absolutely amazing. We had a lot of fun and pleasant moments while filming the music video and I'm looking forward to more such projects together in the future."

The Director of this music video, Gifty said, "Both Guru Randhawa and Shehnaaz Gill have had amazing chemistry throughout the music video."

Since both of them have cheerful personalities they looked amazing on the screen and their chemistry is phenomenal too. The two have done complete justice to the song."



Team Absolute | Mumbai

As his film 'Tanhaji: The Unsung Hero' turned three on Tuesday, actor-filmmaker Ajay Devgn shared how playing the titular role was an honour and a dream come true for him. Ajay took to his Instagram story and wrote: "Playing the role of Tanhaji was a dream and an honour that resulted in the highest grosser of 2020 and also won us two National Awards. Happy & Humbled."

His production house, Ajay Devgn Films shared a video featuring moments from the film on Instagram and the caption mentioned: "A film that united the entire nation."

"Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior" released in 2020. The film is a historical action film directed by Om Raut. Tracing the life of Maratha warrior Tanaji Malusare, it stars Ajay as the eponymous lead, Kajol and Saif Ali Khan. It also features Neha Sharma, Sharad Kelkar and Luke Kenny. Set in the 17th century, it revolves around Tanaji's attempts to recapture the Kondhna fortress once it passes on to Mughal emperor Aurangzeb who transfers its control to his trusted guard Udaybhan Singh Rathore.

## 'Playing Tanhaji was a dream and an honour': Ajay Devgn



## Samantha replies to the tweet that said she's 'lost her charm and glow'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming historical drama film 'Shaakuntalam', recently reacted to a tweet which claimed that the actress has "lost her charm and glow." A verified Twitter handle posted a picture of the actress from the trailer launch event of 'Shaakuntalam' and wrote on the picture: "Feeling sad for Samantha. She lost all

her charm and glow. When everyone thought she came out of divorce strongly and her professional life is seeing heights, myositis hit her badly, making her weak again."

Samantha, who looked beautiful in an ivory-coloured saree and accessorised her look with glasses, replied to the said tweet: "I pray you never have to go through months of treatment and medication like I did...And here's some love from me to add to your glow."

Samantha was diagnosed with an autoimmune condition called Myositis last year. The autoimmune disorder that makes a person's immune system attack their muscles. It causes chronic inflammation - swelling that comes and goes over a long time. On the professional front, Samantha, who made her big digital debut with the Prime Video series 'The Family Man 2', will reportedly also feature in the Indian Prime Video original of 'Citadel' as well.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Vaani Kapoor