

# absolute india

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'REFRAIN FROM UNNECESSARY REMARKS ON MOVIES': PM MODI TELLS BJP LEADERS AMID PATHAAN ROW

## QUIT BOYCOTT GANG

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders to refrain from making unnecessary comments on movies as they put the party's development agenda on the back-burner, sources said.

The PM made the comment while addressing the party workers on the second and final day of BJP's National Executive Meeting in Delhi on 18 January. PM Modi said that while everyone in the party works hard, some people make some comments on a movie and the entire narrative changes. PM's diktat to the BJP workers came amid growing calls to ban Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone-starrer 'Pathaan', which faced ire from several BJP leaders including Narottam Mishra and Ram Kadam. BJP leaders opposed Pathaan. BJP MLA Ram Kadam stated that no film insulting Hindutva will be tolerated. He said Hindu organisations, including its saints, and "crores of people" have strongly protested against the film on social media. Ram Kadam further said 'JNU Dharis' are aiming to insult the 'Janeu Dharis' and threatened that they will not allow any anti-Hindu film to release in the State.

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra had also objected to Padukone's costume in the song of "Pathaan" and also frowned upon the colour of the attire of Padukone and lead actor Shah Rukh Khan, calling for its "rectification". He warned that if the objectionable scenes were not deleted then a ban on the film would be worth considering.

Madhya Pradesh Assembly speaker Girish Gautam had lashed out at Shah Rukh Khan and said that he should watch the film with his daughter. Gautam even challenged the actor to make a similar film on other faiths.



### PATHAAN SEES INDIA AS HIS MOTHER: SRK

**Mumbai:** Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, who plays a spy in the upcoming release 'Pathaan', may have been idolised as the king of romance by his countless fans across the globe, but the actor personally loves the action genre and always wanted to be an action hero.

In a video released by the producers, Yash Raj Films, SRK said: "I came to the film industry 32 years ago to be an action hero but I missed the boat because they made me a romantic hero instead. I've only wanted to be an action hero. I mean I love DDLJ and I love Rahul and Raj and all these good sweet boys but I always thought I was an action hero, so for me it's my dream come true."

The 'King', as he is known, is returning to the silver screen after a wait of four long years, and his fans are certainly waiting with bated breath to watch him in action on screen. Talking about his character in 'Pathaan', the superstar shared: "Pathaan is an easy guy, doing a lot of tough things and I think he's naughty, he's tough but doesn't wear it on his sleeve. He's trusting. He's honest and I think he very single-mindedly thinks of India as his mother."

### PM'S MESSAGE TO BJP WORKERS



Further he said that all party workers need to work hard and should not work with the mentality "if Modi comes (to campaign), we will win." He also said that there are just 400 days left for the 2024

General elections and it is important for workers to go among people and tell them that "Modi government did surgical strike because you elected him." BJP will run 'BJP Jodo' campaigns to connect people with the party. PM said during BJP national executive meeting that BJP workers have to forge connections with all sections of society with sensitivity and not do anything just for votes but to bring change in the country. PM Modi said that BJP is no longer a mere political movement but also a social movement working to transform socio-economic conditions.

## SC reserves verdict on Delhi-Centre row over control of services



Team Absolute | New Delhi

A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed the Centre to file additional submissions seeking reference of the Delhi-Centre dispute over control of services to a larger bench.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, submitted before a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, "I have filed an application for reference". The Chief Justice replied, "We did not hear arguments on reference. It was never argued, now we are in rejoinder...". Mehta pressed that reference is needed and added that they do not want to be remembered in history for "handling over capital to complete anarchy".

The bench - also comprising justices M.R Shah, Krishna Murari, Hima Kohli, and P.S. Narasimha - reserved the judgment after hearing Mehta and

senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, representing the Delhi government, for almost four-and-half days.

During the hearing, the top court said that reference to a larger bench has to be argued at the outset and pointed out that hearing in the case is nearing end. Senior advocate Singhvi, representing the Delhi government, opposed Mehta's submissions. Mehta argued that when he filed the application seeking reference to the larger bench Delhi government opposed and the court told him that it can be argued during submissions.

"Reference is essentially on the ground that contours of federalism between Union and Union Territory require relook. It is covered in my arguments", said Mehta.

Earlier, the Centre had filed an interim application seeking reference to a larger bench of nine or more judges in the Delhi-Centre dispute over control of services.

## 'Players are being harassed'

Top Indian wrestler protest against WFI at Jantar Mantar

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Olympian wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Wednesday levelled serious allegations against Wrestling Federation of India President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, saying that he sexually harassed the female wrestlers. The Asian Games and Commonwealth Games gold medalist broke down in tears while speaking to the reporters as more than 30 wrestlers, including Olympic medalists Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia, were staging a protest, here at Jantar Mantar. Vinesh said she was subject to mental harassment by Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, adding she had contemplated suicide.

"Adhyaksh (WFI President) and a few coaches in the national camp have sexually exploited female wrestlers," she said. "No one takes



responsibility for injuries. They talk of banning wrestlers from nationals. The WFI President called me khota sikka (useless). I wanted to open commit suicide.

"I've openly said it today, I don't know if I will be alive tomorrow. We have requested many times to move the camp away from Lucknow. Why does it happen only there? Because it's easy for him to prey on the women wrestlers." Vinesh said she faced death threats for complaining against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. The wrestlers are demand-

ing change in the WFI administration and appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Sports Authority of India to take action against the WFI chief. Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh has been in charge of the WFI for nearly a decade. The 66-year-old was elected unopposed as the WFI President for the third time in 2019 for a three-year term.

**"This is a conspiracy against me. I will talk to the players. I am ready to face any kind of investigation. Sexual harassment never happened. If even one athlete comes forward and proves this, I will hang myself."**

Brij Bhushan Sharan, President, WFI

## FINANCE MINISTRY CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYEE NABBED FOR LEAKING SECRET DOCS

**New Delhi:** A contractual employee in the Finance Ministry was arrested by the Delhi Police's Crime Branch for leaking classified data to foreign countries, an official said on Wednesday.

The accused has been identified as Sumit, who worked as a data entry operator with the ministry.

According to police, Sumit was arrested on Tuesday for espionage activities in lieu of money and during search, a mobile phone which was used by him to share secret information related to the Ministry of Finance was recovered from his possession.

"A case under section 3/9 of the Official Secrets Act has been registered at the Crime Branch police station and further investigation is going on," said the official.

## Government bullish on railway assets monetisation in Union Budget

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Monetisation of railways' assets is likely to be one of the key agenda items in the forthcoming Union Budget for 2023-24, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is going to present on February 1.

In 2021-22, the Railway Ministry had set a target of monetising railways assets worth Rs 17,000 crore, however due to poor response from the private sector, the target could not be achieved.

Even this fiscal's target of railways' asset monetisation of Rs 57,000 crore is likely to be halved as the department has not been able to meet it till now, sources aware of developments, said.

It is likely to be brought down to around Rs 25,000 crore as the Railway Ministry has not been able to monetise its assets during the current fiscal and only three months are left for 2022-23 to end, the sources added. Despite lack of enthusiasm shown



by investors in railways' assets, the government is bullish on pushing them and in the forthcoming Union Budget, it is likely to set a target, albeit a reasonable one, for monetisation of railways assets, the sources said.

Under asset monetisation, the government transfers revenue rights to private parties for a specified transaction period in return for a revenue share and commitment of investments in the assets.

The assets are monetised through models like Public Private Partnership (PPP) - Operate Maintain Transfer (OMT), Toll Operate Transfer (TOT), and Operations, Maintenance and Development (OMD).

Under monetisation, the government does not sell assets, but leases them for a certain period for redevelopment and operations by a private entity, while continuing to retain their ownership.

## 2 BKI OPERATIVES, PLANNING TO TARGET HINDU LEADERS IN PUNJAB, HELD

Atul Krishan | New Delhi

Ahead of Republic Day, the Punjab Police's State Special Operation Cell has arrested two alleged Babbar Khalsa International operatives, planning to carry out attack on prominent Hindu leaders, from Mohali, officials said. According to official sources, the two, identified as Yuvraj and Nishan, were arrested on Tuesday night, and a pistol was recovered from their possession. Both were in touch with UK-based Khalistani supporter Amritpal Singh and BKI's top leader Paramjeet Pannu.

"During the interrogation, we have learnt that a few prominent Hindu leaders were on their radar. They were planning to carry out

target killings and had conducted reconnaissance of the premises of Hindu leaders," a source said. "Shiv Sena and Bajrang Dal leaders were on their radar. Both were in touch with Amritpal Singh alias Amrit Bal, a Kapurthala resident, who is currently based in England. Currently both have been booked under the UAPA. We have got their custodial remand to unearth their entire conspiracy. We are trying to know what was the actual plan of the BKI," the source added.

The State Special Operation Cell had recently filed a case against gangster Awaz who is associated with the BKI, and police received inputs that Khalistani outfits were planning to carry out attack on Hindu leaders with the help of gangsters.

## Embrace technology-driven medical techniques to prevent health catastrophes: Expert

India will face a tsunami of chronic diseases such as cancer due to globalisation, growing economy, aging population and changing lifestyle, warns a leading oncologist, making it imperative for the country to embrace technology-driven medical techniques to prevent the health catastrophes in an effective and affordable manner.

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

Cancer vaccines for prevention and treatment, expansion of Artificial Intelligence and data digital technology, and cancer diagnosis from liquid biopsies are among the six trends that will reshape cancer care in this century, said Jame Abraham, Chairman, Department of Haematology and Medical Oncology, Cleveland Clinic, Ohio, US.

The other three trends are of genomic profiling, evolution of



gene editing technologies and next generation of immunotherapies and CAR T cell therapies, said Abraham, in an article in the annual publication of a leading vernacular media house in the state. "Digital technology, information

technology and telehealth will narrow the gap between patients and specialists. This will also potentially enhance the availability of experts' care in remote parts of our country, including rural settings where the majority of our population lives," says the reputed oncologist.

India's biggest challenge will be how to make it affordable and accessible for millions of its people when these technologies continue to revolutionize cancer care, said Abraham. As per the Globocan estimates,

the cancer burden worldwide is expected to be 28.4 million cases in 2040, a 47 per cent rise from 2020, due to demographic changes.

This may escalate by increasing risk factors associated with globalisation and a growing economy.

An estimated 19.3 million new cancer cases and almost 10.0 million cancer deaths occurred across the world in 2020. Female breast cancer has surpassed lung cancer as the most commonly diagnosed cancer while lung cancer remained the leading cause of cancer death, with an estimated 1.8 million

deaths (18 per cent), followed by colorectal (9.4 per cent), liver (8.3 per cent), stomach (7.7 per cent), and female breast (6.9 per cent) cancers, reveals the report.

Abraham holds that cancer vaccines are an exciting research area having the potential to immunize people against various cancers. Researchers have developed amazingly successful mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. The fact is mRNA-based cancer treatment vaccines have been tested in small trials for more than a decade, with some promising early results.



# TRAFFIC ADVISORY ISSUED AHEAD OF REPUBLIC DAY REHEARSALS IN DELHI

In view of upcoming Republic Day rehearsals on January 18, 20 and 21, the Delhi Traffic Police has issued an advisory, suggesting alternate routes for commuters.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In view of #RepublicDay Parade rehearsals on Jan 18th, 20th and 21st, traffic restrictions will be effective on Kartavyapath from 10:15 AM to 12:30 PM. Commuters are requested to avoid the mentioned routes and plan their journey accordingly," traffic police tweeted.

While suggesting the routes for commuters on south to north Delhi or vice versa, the advisory stated that the travellers can take "Ring Road i.e. Sarai Kale Khan - IP flyover - Rajghat. Lajpat Rai Marg - Mathura Road - Bhairon Road - Ring Road. Prithviraj Road - Rajesh Pilot Marg - Subramaniam Bharti Marg - Mathura Road - Bhairon Road - Ring Road. Barfkhana - Azad Market - Rani Jhansi flyover - Panchkulan Road - Hanuman Murti



- Vande Mataram Marg - Dhaula Kuan.

The travellers from east to west Delhi and vice versa can take Ring Road - Bhairon Road - Mathura Road - Subramaniam Bharti Marg - Rajesh Pilot Marg - Prithviraj Road - Safdarjung Road - Kamal Ataturk Marg - Panchsheel Marg - Simon

Boliver Marg - Upper Ridge Road/Vande Matram Marg.

"Ring Road - ISBT - Chandgi Ram Akhara - Mall Road - AzadPur - Ring Road. From Ring Road - Bhairon Road - Mathura Road - Lodhi Road - Aurobindo Marg - Safdarjung Road - Teen Murti Marg - Mother Teresa Crescent - Park

Street - Shankar Road - Vande Matram Marg," is also a route suggested for commuters moving from east to west Delhi and vice versa.

The commuters coming from south Delhi to Connaught Place/Central Secretariat can take Mother Teresa Crescent - Par Mandir Marg/Baba Kharak Singh Marg. Ring Road - Vande Matram Marg - Link Road - Panchkulan Road. Ring Road - Sardar Patel Marg - 11 Murti - Mother Teresa Crescent - R/A RML - North Avenue or Baba Kharak Singh Marg.

"Motorists coming to Vinay Marg, Shanti Path and going to New Delhi and beyond should take Sardar Patel Marg - Mother Teresa Crescent - R/A RML - Baba Kharak Singh Marg or Park Street - Mandir Marg and proceed further to north Delhi/New Delhi," the advisory added.

## India should leverage G20 presidency to seek openness towards service exports: Raghuram Rajan

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan has advised that India should leverage its G20 presidency to seek greater openness towards service exports.

In a television interview during the ongoing World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting at Davos, Rajan said that too much investment is going towards chip making globally, which could lead to a glut.

He also pointed out towards possible risks for India economy due to opening up of China.

India is doing well in service export, the former RBI Governor said.

He added that if India could use its G20 presidency to push for greater openness towards service exports, it could help push India's growth. On the excessive focus towards investments in chips, Rajan said that the world doesn't require so many chips and it shows a lack of trust between countries as everyone wants to secure themselves by focusing on domestic manufactur-



ing. On China's reopening, he said that if it leads to global commodity prices edging up, then it could create problems for India as the current account deficit is already high. He told the television channel that China is back pedalling on some of the Covid policies just to stabilise its economy.

"From India's perspective we would like commodity prices to be lower. Right now, the guess is as China comes

up, commodity prices will go higher. And that will be a problem for India which is already running a fairly significant current account deficit.

"The price of oil plays an important role. But I think if commodity prices stay lower, then to some extent some of our inflationary issues become less important than they are. Our core inflation is still something to worry about," he was quoted as saying in the interview.

## Gadkari calls for efforts by all to reduce road accidents by 50%

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday said efforts by all are necessary to reduce road accidents by 50 per cent before the end of 2025.

Participating in a 4-hour telethon and outreach campaign "Sadak Suraksha Abhiyan" during the Road Safety week, he said a law will soon be brought in the country to determine the working hours of truck drivers.

During the event, megastar Amitabh Bachchan, Isha Foundation founder Sadhguru and many other stakeholders discussed the key issues related to road safety.

Officials said that the Road Transport & Highways Ministry has undertaken multiple initiatives across all 4Es of Road Safety including



Engineering, Enforcement, Education and Emergency Care for reduction in road fatalities and injuries. This year, it observed the Road Safety Week (RSW) from January 11 to 17, under "Swachhata Pakhwada", to propagate the cause of 'Safer Roads for All'.

During the Week, the Ministry conducted multiple activities at various locations in Delhi including 'nukkad natak' (street shows), sensitisation campaigns, competitions for school & college students, road safety exhibitions

in collaboration with corporates, walkathons, talk shows, and panel discussions with senior government officers and industry leaders.

In addition, road owning agencies such as NHAI, NHIDCL etc. conducted special drives related to compliance of traffic rules and regulation, pedestrian safety, eye check-up camps for drivers at Toll Plazas and other road engineering related initiatives. Transport and police departments of states and UTs, NGOs, private companies and general public across the country also actively participated in the event by conducting awareness campaigns, first responder training, ensuring strict enforcement of rules & regulations up to grass root levels and conducting other activities, workshops & advocacy programmes related to road safety.

## PUNJAB'S EX-FINANCE MINISTER MANPREET SINGH BADAL JOINS BJP



New Delhi: Former Finance Minister of Punjab Manpreet Singh Badal joined the BJP on Wednesday here in the presence of Union Minister Piyush Goyal and the party's national General Secretary Tarun Chugh. Manpreet Singh Badal, the estranged nephew of former Chief Minister and Shiromani Akali Dal patriarch Prakash Singh Badal, had joined the Congress in January 2016. Reportedly, Manpreet Singh Badal did not share cordial relations with Punjab Congress chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring. In his almost three-decade-long political career, this is the fourth party that he has joined.

## Gehlot vs Pilot: War of words continues over paper leak case

Jaipur | Agencies

The war of words between Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot has intensified over the exam paper leak case, with both leaders continuing to trade barbs at each other on this count for the third day.

The Rajasthan second grade teacher recruitment exam paper was leaked in December 2022 after which the test was cancelled. More than 50 people, including candidates, have been arrested so far for their alleged involvement in the paper leak. In the past three years, as many as eight cases of paper leak have been reported from across Rajasthan.

On Tuesday, Pilot had said, "Sometimes question papers are leaked, sometimes exams are cancelled, which is very distressing. The aspirants go through so much trouble. I hope the government acts against the 'big fish' instead of going after the small-time touts." Later during another programme, Gehlot gave a clean chit to the officials, saying, "Those who have been caught



are masterminds, and not small-time brokers."

On Wednesday, Pilot said, "We feel sad when papers get leaked again and again. Action must be taken by fixing responsibility for this. Now it is being said that no official is responsible. The papers were locked. So how did papers supposedly kept in the vault reach the

students? This is sorcery," he said. "It is not possible that no official is responsible. Somebody or the other has to be responsible," Pilot said while speaking at a Kisan Sammelan at Gudha in Jhunjhunu district.

Pilot also questioned political appointments given to officials post retirement.

## No decision on making Tejashwi Bihar Chief Minister in the near future: JD(U)

The JD(U) on Wednesday claimed that there is no decision to make Tejashwi Bihar Chief Minister in the near future.

Patna | Agencies

Interacting with mediapersons in Ranchi, Bihar minister and JD(U) leader Ashok Chaudhary said: "Nitish Kumar has become chief minister because of his own capacity and not because of the mercy of any other party or leader."

Chaudhary, who is also Construction Minister of the state, said: "Nitish Kumar has the ability to become chief minister of state whether in the NDA or the Mahagathbandhan governments."

He trumpeted the increased budget allocations compared to pre-2005 state budget of the Lalu government.

When asked whether the 2025 assembly election will be contested under the leadership of RJD



leader Tejashwi Yadav, Chaudhary said: "After few hours I am returning to Patna and I am not sure whether I would reach there or not, so how can we say anything about 2025."

Nitish Kumar had recently announced that the 2025 assembly election will be contested under the leadership of Tejashwi Yadav. However, the RJD leaders are not satisfied with it and are demanding that Nitish Kumar should step down to make way for Tejashwi Yadav.

The RJD's recent attacks on the Nitish Kumar government over its minister's controversial statement on Ramcharitmanas has given an edge to the BJP, the lone opposition party in the state. Sources said that it is RJD's strategy to "pressurise" Nitish Kumar to step down as the chief minister.

## Mother of four elopes with Muslim man; family calls it 'Love Jihad'

Bengaluru | Agencies

A Hindu woman -- mother of four children, has allegedly eloped with a Muslim man in Karnataka's Gadag district, her husband has claimed, urging the state government to initiate an action in the matter.

Prakash Gujarati, a resident of Gadag, who works as a goldsmith, has alleged that his wife had left him and married Maqbool Bayabadaki, a resident of Savanur.

Prakash, terming the development a case of 'Love Jihad', said when he tried to contact his wife, Maqbool's family did not allow him, and also threatened him, adding his wife had been converted



to Islam and she also took one of their daughters with her.

Meanwhile, Sri Rama Sena has warned that the woman

should be reunited with her husband and children. If suitable action is not taken, it would launch large scale agitation.

## 400 LIVE CARTRIDGES SEIZED IN BIHAR'S BHAGALPUR

Patna: The Special Task Force (STF) of Patna police on Wednesday arrested three arms suppliers from Naugachia block in Bhagalpur district for smuggling a huge cache of arms and ammunition and recovered 400 live cartridges from their possession.

One of the accused Nitish Kumar alias Satyam is a native of Samastipur while two others Abhigyan Kumar alias Golu, and Gaurav Kumar Singh alias Chotu belong to Begusarai district.

The accused were travelling on two bikes. They were intercepted at Naugachia block during the search operation. The accused were carrying a bag. When it was searched, the cops found 400 live cartridges of 1.765 mm and Rs 35,000 cash. The accused were arrested and an FIR under relevant sections of IPC registered in Naugachia. Further investigation is on," said an officer of STF requested anonymity.



## JAIPUR LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2023 SET FOR GRAND OPENING

Lalit Sharma | Jaipur

Thought widely to be the grandest celebration of literature worldwide, the Jaipur Literature Festival 2023 opens tomorrow at Hotel Clarks Amer, Jaipur and keeps up its tradition of uncovering a gamut of 'stories' from across the world.

The magnificent and diverse programme for the much awaited 16th edition will as always feature some of the most celebrated and extraordinary minds of the world. Audiences can savour a range of language diversity in the programme this season, which displays 21 Indian and 14 International languages with sessions spread across 5 venues. The Festival will host over 350 speakers from across a vast array of nationalities, as well as recipients of major awards such as the Nobel, the Booker, International Booker, the Pulitzer, the Sahitya Akademi, Baillie Gifford, PEN America Literary Awards, the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature, the JCB Prize for Literature and many more.

Marking its 16th edition, the Festival will cover subjects such as the ongoing climate justice debate under the urgency of borrowed time theme; great women writers and artists focusing on the female voice and identity, crime fiction, memoir, translation, poetry, economics, tech morality and Artificial Intelligence, the global crisis in agriculture, Russia-Ukraine conflict, violence unleashed by the British

Empire, cutting-edge science, India at 75, remembering Partition, geopolitics, art and photography, health and medicine, amongst others.

Beginning on Thursday, January 19th, the Festival will open its first day with the calming strains of Morning Music by the award-winning Carnatic vocalist Sushma Soma. The winter morning will also see inaugural addresses by

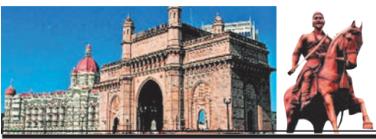


Founders and Festival Co-directors Namita Gokhale & William Dalrymple along with Festival Producer Sanjoy K. Roy, Managing Director, Teamwork Arts. The keynote address will be delivered by the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature Abdulrazak Gurnah.

On Wednesday honouring the authors and speakers, Jaipur Literature Festival hosted an evening at the iconic Rambhagh Palace. The star-studded guest list for the event included authors, speakers, literature lovers, glitterati, among others. The chefs of the palace under the stewardship of Executive Chef Raghu Deora, curated an extravagant feast featuring local delicacies and an array of global cuisines.

The Festival will offer 5 days of evocative literary discourses, exhilarating musical performances, art installations, merchandise, local cuisine and more. It will also host a Heritage Evening on 22nd January at Ganesh Pol, Amber Fort, Jaipur. The programme will feature breath-taking performances by Ahuti - featuring Nrityagram and Chitransena Dancers, co-presented by Engendered - a collaborative piece of Odissi and Kandyan Dance, and Shared Dreams by Harpreet and George Brooks, spanning genres and generations through poetry and music.

The literary show will also live-stream some key sessions which will be available on the Festival's micro site. Audiences watching from across the globe will be able to access these sessions free of cost.



# Dharavi revamp figures in Davos, CM says it's 'eco-friendly development'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde raised the issue of the proposed makeover of Dharavi considered among the world's worst eyesore slums before a dazzling global audience of influencers in the cool climes of Davos, terming it as an 'environment-friendly' development project.

Addressing the Congress Centre at the ongoing World Economic Forum (WEF)-2023 on Tuesday evening in Switzerland, Shinde said that although Mumbai has the biggest natural forest, it is also home to the world's largest slum, the Dharavi, literally meaning 'quicksand', in the south-central part. "In order to make Mumbai slum-free, we are implementing the largest public-private-partnership (PPP) real estate program of slum redevelopment. We are providing free homes of 300 sq. feet to each slum-dweller," informed Shinde.

He termed it as the biggest pro-



gram to rehabilitate around 56,000 families which will help reduce pollution and other environmental side-effects. Through slum redevelopment, Shinde claimed that the government has succeeded in saving more than 800 hectares of mangroves dotting the country's commercial capital.

Speaking on the viability of the mega-project, the Chief Minister said

that cross-subsidy is being given for the vacant spaces, and a portion of the land in these major redevelopment schemes is also being developed into parks or for afforestation purposes.

Now, along with these organisations or NGOs, the locals also take part in keeping public toilets and other areas clean and these efforts are

improving the life and living standards of around 1.5 million families, said the Chief Minister.

Shinde made a firm commitment to continue 'environment-friendly' development, in accordance with the best principles of conservation, connectivity and clean cities' to lessen the impact on the changing global weather.

"We are trying to reduce carbon emissions by increasing the forest cover, solid waste management, promoting green wind and solar energy, and providing climate education at the school levels. If sustainable development is desired, PPP is necessary and Maharashtra is already leading in it," Shinde asserted.

He also said the current India's G20 Presidency is also an added opportunity for the state to prepare the next roadmap to grapple with climate change under the guidance of PM Modi, and with help from the developed nations. Shinde is shopping for investments and hopes to net project commitments of around Rs 1.40 lakh crore during his trip, of which around 90K-crore was achieved till Tuesday.

## PM MODI'S VISIT

# Police bans use of drones, flying objects for 24 hours

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Mumbai on January 19, the city police have banned the use of drones and other flying objects around Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC), Andheri and Jogeshwari for 24 hours.

The order issued by DCP (Operations), Mumbai Police, Vishal Thakur said, "Due to the situation prevailing in the areas under the control of the Commissioner of Police, Brihan Mumbai, it is apprehended that during the Prime Minister of India's Mumbai visit on January 19 at BKC MMRDA Ground, Metro Line no. 7, Gundavali Station to Moggapada Metro Station that anti-social elements may attack using drones, paragliders, remote control microlight aircraft and there is every likelihood breach of peace and disturbance of public tranquility and also there is grave danger to the human life, health,



safety and injury to public property."

It further said "no drone, para-gliders, and remote control microlight aircraft flying activities to be allowed in the jurisdiction of BKC police station, Andheri police station, Meghwadi police station and Jogeshwari police station."

When contacted, a senior Mumbai Police official confirmed about the order being issued. The order said, "The order shall remain in force with effect from 00.01 hours of January 19 till 24.00 hours of January 19. Any person contravening this order shall

be punishable under Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860."

PM Modi will visit Mumbai on Thursday to lay the foundation stone of various infrastructure projects in the city. He will also inaugurate two Metro lines - 2A (which will run between Andheri to west Dahisar), and 7 (which will run between Andheri east to Dahisar). PM Modi is also expected to make a few announcements for the city ahead of the BMC polls. PM Modi is likely to address a public rally during his visit to the city.

## "Loss of percentage" swipe at team Thackeray: Devendra Fadnavis

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday hurled a "loss of percentage" jibe at the Uddhav Thackeray faction of Shiv Sena for questioning the proposed concretisation of roads in Mumbai.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aadiya Thackeray had alleged tenders worth more than Rs 6,000 crore were floated at a higher price for the concretisation of 400 km of roads in Mumbai for the benefit of contractors. He had demanded the same should be scrapped.

"The real pain behind such criticism is they will not get a certain percentage for sanctioning work orders from



construction companies. They were used to this practice for the last many years," Fadnavis told reporters when asked about Aadiya Thackeray's remarks. Fadnavis visited the MMRDA ground in Bandra Kurla Complex on Wednesday afternoon along with top police officers to take stock of the preparations on the eve of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit.

"A probe report ordered by me as the chief minister in

2018 found that 200 roads in Mumbai had no lower layer. This is how they used to issue work orders for road constructions every year and get a certain amount of percentage at the time of sanctioning," he said. "Once we construct concrete roads, they will remain for 40 years," Fadnavis added. Notably, the Shiv Sena had been in power in the Mumbai civic body for over two decades before the tenure of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation ended last year.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has set its eyes on the cash-rich civic body to dislodge the rival Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) faction from power in the civic elections, the schedule for which is yet to be announced.

## ECI ANNOUNCES 2 PUNE ASSEMBLY BY POLLS ON FEB 27

Mumbai: The Election Commission of India on Wednesday announced its poll schedules to fill up two vacant seats in the Maharashtra Assembly. The seats are Kasbapeth and Chinchwad Assembly segments in Pune where the elections shall be held on February 27. The two bypolls are necessitated by the death of two Bharatiya Janata Party MLAs - Mukta S. Tilak (Kasbapeth) and Laxman P. Jagtap (Chinchwad) - both succumbing to cancer in a span of barely 11 days in December-January. The ECI will issue the notification for the polls on January 31, the last date for filing papers is February 7, the polling will be held on February 27 and the counting of votes and results shall be announced on March 2.

## Police book Nawab Malik's son, daughter-in-law for submitting 'fake' visa papers

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai Police have booked former Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik's son Faraz Malik, and his second wife Hamleen F. Malik for allegedly submitting fake papers for her visa application, officials said here on Wednesday. The purported fraudulent documents came to light during a scrutiny of the papers submitted by Faraz and his wife Hamleen - who is reportedly a French national - conducted by the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), which informed the Kurla police station.

Based on this, the police late on Tuesday lodged an FIR against Faraz Malik



and his second wife Hamleen Malik under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Foreigners Act, pertaining to cheating, forgery, etc. No arrests have been made so far and a detailed probe is currently underway into the matter, officials said.

Meanwhile, a former BJP leader Mohit Kamboj-Bharatiya slammed the Malik family for "accusing others while they are themselves full of frauds".

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Nawab Malik was nabbed by the Enforcement Directorate in

February last year and is currently in custody for the past 11 months in an alleged money-laundering case arising out of a tainted land deal linked to absconding mafia don, Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar.

Prior to his arrest, Malik Sr. had shot into the limelight after he ran a campaign targeting former Narcotics Control Bureau Mumbai zonal chief Sameer Wankhede.

Wankhede came under flak after he carried out an alleged drug party bust on a luxury cruise ship in October 2021 in which Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan, several glam world personalities and some foreigners were among those nabbed.

## SHRADDHA WALKAR'S CASE

# Father demands action against policemen, who did not act on complaints

Palghar | Agencies

ikas Walkar, father of Shraddha Walkar who was murdered allegedly by her live-in partner Aaftab Poonawala, met Mira Bhayandar-Vasai Virar police chief Madhukar Pandey and demanded action against the policemen who apparently did not act swiftly on two complaints.

Pandey has assured action against the erring officials, Walkar told reporters outside the MBVV police commissioner's office at Vasai in Maharashtra's Palghar district on Tuesday. This was the second meeting between the two.

According to Walkar, Shraddha had filed a com-



plaint with the Tulinj police in 2020 accusing Poonawala of abusing and assaulting her, while he himself had approached the Manikpur police after his daughter went

missing last year. Both police stations, which come under the jurisdiction of the MBVV, did not act on the complaints quickly, he had alleged earlier. Poonawala allegedly stran-

gled Shraddha and cut her body into 35 pieces which he kept in a fridge at his residence in Mehrauli in south Delhi in May last year, before dumping them across the city over several days. He was arrested in Delhi in November. A deputy commissioner of police from Vasai is carrying out a probe into the allegations of dereliction of duties, said Walkar on Tuesday. He was also apprised of the formation of a special investigation team (SIT) in the case.

Walkar said he was satisfied with the probe done by the Delhi police, which arrested Poonawala, and demanded maximum punishment for the accused.

## RAID AT GODOWN; 100 TONNES OF UREA SEIZED

Thane: Police have seized 100 tonnes of urea after raiding a godown in Maharashtra's Thane district, an official said on Wednesday. Action will be taken if it is found that the urea stock was stored illegally, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Zone-2 Bhiwandi, Navnath Dhavle said.

Urea is widely used in the agriculture sector as a fertilizer. Based on a tip-off that the urea was stored illegally, the police on Tuesday raided the godown at Purna in Bhiwandi town and seized the stock, the official said. A sample of the seized stock has been sent to Nashik for testing, he added.

## Women's panel asks cops to look into Uorfi Javed's security demand

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra State Commission for Women has written to the Mumbai police commissioner asking the police to look into the model and social media influencer Uorfi Javed's demand seeking security, an official said on Tuesday.

He said Uorfi Javed had submitted a complaint letter to the MSCW claiming BJP leader Chitra Wagh has filed a complaint against her for political mileage and had threatened to beat her during interaction with the media. Javed stated she was feeling unsafe outside her home.

In her letter, Uorfi Javed demanded security and the



MSCW asked Mumbai Police to take serious note of her complaint, the official said. Last week, Uorfi Javed called on MSCW chairperson Rupali Chakankar. "The MSCW on Monday wrote a letter to the Mumbai police commissioner asking the police to look into Uorfi Javed's demand for security," the official said.

Mumbai Police on Saturday recorded a state-

ment of Uorfi Javed in connection with a complaint filed against her by Chitra Wagh. Last week, Uorfi Javed called on MSCW chairperson Rupali Chakankar.

"The MSCW on Monday wrote a letter to the Mumbai police commissioner asking the police to look into Uorfi Javed's demand for security," the official said.

Mumbai Police on Saturday recorded a statement of Uorfi Javed in connection with a complaint filed against her by Chitra Wagh. Ms Wagh, chief of Maharashtra BJP's women's wing, has filed a complaint against Uorfi Javed for dressing 'improperly' in public places.

## WOMAN JAILED FOR FORCING WOMEN INTO PROSTITUTION

Thane: A court in Maharashtra's Thane district has sentenced a 39-year-old woman to three years rigorous imprisonment for forcing women into flesh trade. In the order passed yesterday, Special Judge V V Virkar pronounced the accused guilty under provisions of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act and imposed a fine of Rs 2,000 on her.

The woman was residing in Turbhe area of Navi Mumbai Township in Thane district.

Special Public Prosecutor Rekha Hiwrale told the court that the accused used her residence in Turbhe for prostitution and pushed women and minor girls into it. On May 30, 2018, a team of the Navi Mumbai police's anti-human trafficking cell raided the premises and found a woman being forced into flesh trade. The woman was rescued and the accused was arrested. Twelve prosecution witnesses were examined to prove the charges against the accused, Hiwrale said. The judge in her order said the prosecution has successfully proved the charges against the accused, who needs to be convicted. Another woman accused in the case was given the benefit of doubt and the court acquitted her of all the charges.

## Maha is facing shortage of 1crore eggs per day: official

Aurangabad | Agencies

Maharashtra is facing a shortage of one crore eggs per day and the animal husbandry department have chalked out a scheme to increase its production in the state, a senior official has said.

More than 2.25 crore eggs are consumed in Maharashtra per day.

The state has a capacity to produce 1 to 1.25 crore eggs per day and the department has been chalking out a plan to meet the need, animal husbandry department's additional commissioner Dr Dhananjay Parkale said on Tuesday.

Currently, eggs are procured from Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu to overcome the shortage, he said.

"The animal husbandry department plans to give 50 White Leghorn chickens at a subsidised



rate of Rs 21,000 along with 1,000 cages to each district in an attempt to increase the production," the official said. The department has sent the proposal to the state government for further sanctions, he added. In Aurangabad, the price of eggs has increased in the last two months.

"As on date, the price of 100 eggs in Aurangabad is Rs 575. The prices have been above Rs 500 (100 eggs) since more than two months," wholesaler Abdul Wahid Shah said.

## Metro Line 2A completion was delayed, exposed by RTI; contractors fined

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With so much delay in completion of metro Line 2A, a new RTI has revealed that a penalty of only Rs 36 lakh has been levied on various contractors under metro 2A for the delay.

A Right to Information query has revealed that the MMRDA has levied a fine of Rs 36 lakh on various contractors for delay of work by 36 months. The much-awaited Metro 2A from Dahisar East to Andheri West will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday.

RTI activist Anil Galgali, who had sought information from the MMRDA about the current status of the metro work and the penal action imposed on the contractors, has been informed by Delhi Metro Railway Corporation that the deadline has been extended by 36 months and only 36 lakhs penalty has been imposed on the contractors for delay in work.



Galgali said that the Metro 2A service from Dahisar East to Andheri West was scheduled to start on December 31, 2019, but the first phase from Dahisar East to Dahanukar Wadi was started on April 2, 2022. The second phase was completed in January 2023.

"Overall, there was a delay of 36 months. Penalties were imposed in case of safety violations in civil works and various safety improvements were taken

up on the site. But the information was not given. A fine of 36 lakh has been levied for delay in electrical work. A fine of Rs 4.44 lakh was imposed on one contractor, Rs 1.50 lakh on another, Rs 1.53 lakh on yet another and also a major fine of Rs 28.54 lakh on an international contractor," he said.

Mumbai Metro Line 2A spokesperson was not immediately available for a comment.



EDITOR'S SPECS

HOW INDOOR AIR POLLUTION IS 5 TIMES WORSE THAN OUTDOORS

As Delhi-NCR reels under massive air pollution after Diwali every year, leaving people with respiratory illnesses gasping for fresh air, experts on Tuesday said that as most people spend winter days inside and even though the indoor air quality may appear to be better than outdoor air quality, it can be up to five times worse. The indoor and outdoor air pollution are often treated as two separate entities but outdoor pollutants, such as vehicle exhaust fumes, pollen and mould spores, can also enter our indoor spaces. The main cause behind indoor air pollution is known to be gases or particles released into the air, substances like building materials, tobacco smoke, wood-burning stoves cause indoor pollution. Once inside, they can react with indoor pollutants, creating a complex cocktail of dirty air. Furniture and carpets can also emit formaldehyde and flame retardants that accumulate in the air, while emissions from cooking appliances, such as ovens and stoves, may contain a range of substances that deteriorate indoor air quality. According to a report in the Indian Journal of Community Medicine, statistics suggest that in developing countries, health impacts of indoor air pollution far outweigh those of outdoor air pollution. Around 4.2 million people die prematurely due to indoor air pollution, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Lee said that their purifiers make the invisible visible, helping users to understand the types of pollution they are exposed to on a daily basis and giving peace of mind that these pollutants are being captured and that they are breathing clean air indoors. The HEPA+Carbon filter removes 99.95 per cent of pollutants as small as 0.1 microns such as allergens, bacteria, pollen and mould spores and harmful gases.

Meghalaya, Tripura Assembly polls will be litmus test for Trinamool Congress

Sujit Chakraborty

This election in two of the three north-eastern states - Meghalaya, Tripura and Nagaland will prove to be a litmus test for Trinamool Congress (TMC), headed by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. TMC leader and party's Rajya Sabha member Sushmita Dev said that her party would field candidates in Meghalaya and Tripura and would not contest in Nagaland.

The TMC is the first party in Meghalaya which declared their candidates for 52 of the total of 60 seats.

Twelve MLAs, led by former Chief Minister Mukul Sangma (2010-2018), who had won in the 2018 Assembly election as Congress nominees joined the TMC in November 2021, making the West Bengal-based party the main opposition in the northeastern state overnight.

However, weeks before the announcement of Assembly elections, two TMC MLAs switching loyalty quitting the Assembly recently joined the ruling National People's Party (NPP) and another joined the BJP.

With three MLAs leaving the Trinamool, the party's strength in the 60-member Assembly has come down to nine now.

However, the TMC leaders in Meghalaya claimed that thousands of NPP and other party supporters, including some leaders joined their party.

To woo the electorate, the TMC has promised to roll out the Meghalaya Financial Inclusion for Women Empowerment (MFI WE) scheme that would provide assured monthly income support of Rs 1,000 per woman per household in the state, if the party is voted to power in the forthcoming Assembly polls, expected to be held by the end of February.

The MFI WE, also called 'WE Card', was announced by TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee in Shillong on December 13, sparking a controversy in the state.

The BJP has announced to lodge a complaint with the Election Commission against the TMC for its promise to implement an income support scheme.

State Trinamool Vice-President, George B. Lyngdoh said that opposing 'WE Card' exposes BJP's "anti-poor" politics, claiming that two lakh families have already registered for the scheme.

BJP's Meghalaya unit Chief Ernest Mawrie said: "The Trinamool did not disclose how it



will raise funds for the scheme. Such a scheme should be seen as a corrupt and unethical practice under the sections of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, as its intent is nothing but to bribe voters."

Claiming that the 'WE Card' scheme failed in West Bengal, the BJP leader accused the Trinamool of making false promises since it does not have any development agenda.

After TMC was founded in 1998, it had set up bases in Tripura, Manipur and Assam but they could not maintain the political tempo in these states.

There were seven MLAs of other parties that once joined the TMC but eventually, they quit one by one.

Former Tripura Chief Minister late Sudhir Majumder, incumbent Tripura Assembly Speaker and former Congress leader Ratan Chakraborty, Ashish Saha, Subal Bhowmik and others went to TMC in 1998 and most of

them returned to Congress in 2001-2002. Majumder contested in the West Lok Sabha Constituency in 1999 with TMC ticket and secured second position. Present lone Congress MLA in Tripura Sudip Roy Barman, six other MLAs and many leaders quit the Congress in 2016 and joined TMC and next year (2017) they joined the BJP. Roy Barman, also a former Minister, quit BJP early last year and was re-elected to the Assembly in last year's June by-elections as a Congress nominee. After the TMC started its organisational work in the third phase in Tripura in early 2021, it had been searching for a candidate for the party's president post in the state and finally appointed Subal Bhowmik, a former Congress MLA and BJP leader, in April 2022. But due to internal feud, the TMC removed Bhowmik from

the post on August 24, 2022, and appointed former Tripura Congress President and veteran lawyer Pijush Kanti Biswas as President of party's Tripura unit on December 11 last year.

Within a week after Ripun Bora, a former Assam state Congress President and former Rajya Sabha member joined the TMC in April 2022, party supremo Mamata Banerjee had appointed him as the President of Assam unit. Bora along with his wife and former Congress MLA Monika Bora and son and many Congressmen also joined the TMC.

TMC leader and party's Rajya Sabha member Sushmita Dev claimed that her party would form the government in Meghalaya after the Assembly elections in February "mainly because of the allegations against Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma-led Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government and also since the Congress is almost 'inactive' in the state."

The MDA government has done nothing for the people of Meghalaya, and the Congress, which once ruled the state and was the main Opposition party, is now "non-existent" in the hill state, Dev, a former All India Mahila Congress Chief, told correspondents.

She alleged that except for the atrocities and terror against the Opposition parties' workers, leaders and supporters, the BJP also did nothing in Tripura.

"People have also realised that they (BJP) gave false promises before the 2018 Assembly polls," Dev said, adding that the Congress and Left tie-up did not work in West Bengal and there is factionalism over the alliance.

"If the Congress and CPI-M forge an alliance, there would be further erosion among the Congress rank and file. Grassroots workers of Congress would not accept the Congress-CPI-M alliance as the Left cadres earlier unleashed atrocities on the Congress workers," she said.

Claiming that the people would not vote for the BJP, Dev said: "Trinamool Congress, therefore, is the only alternative that could form the government after the Assembly elections in Tripura."

She refused to make any comments about the party's possible alliance with TIPRA (Tipraha Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance) headed by former royal scion Pradyot Bikram Manikya Deb Barman.

international

BIDEN FORGETS HOW TO PRONOUNCE KAMALA HARRIS' NAME!

New York | Agencies

US President Joe Biden seemed to have forgotten the pronunciation of Vice President Kamala Harris' name during a White House event, referring to her as "Cam-a-la", the New York Post reported.

According to Biden's Indian-origin second-in-command, her name, which means 'lotus flower', is pronounced as 'comma-la' -- like the punctuation mark.

However, during a speech on Tuesday at a White House celebration for the NBA champion Golden State Warriors, Biden said: "As 'CAM-a-la' said, we're all closely monitoring the storms, the floods, the landslides all across California."

Biden -- the oldest-ever president at 80 -- is set to launch a 2024 re-election campaign, even as detractors question his 'mental acuity'.

According to his supporters, he's simply prone to gaffes and a stutter, the Post reported.



The President's flub comes right after he forgot the name of MLK's Jr's daughter-in-law during a speech on Monday.

While singing "Happy Birthday" to

Arndrea Waters King, he appeared to have forgotten her name. Biden has at least six times accidentally referred to Harris as president. The most recent one was on January 5.

7.3-MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE HITS PHILIPPINES

Manila | Agencies

An offshore earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.3 jolted the southern Philippines on Wednesday, authorities said, adding there were no reports of damages or casualties yet.

The authorities said the quake, which occurred at 2.06 p.m., hit at a depth of 64 km, about 352 km southeast of Sarangani town in Davao Occidental province, reports Xinhua news agency.

The tectonic quake will trigger aftershocks and cause damage and tremor was also felt in many areas in Mindanao, the Philippines' second largest island.

The Philippines has frequent seismic activities due to its location along the Pacific "Ring of Fire".

RUSSIA EXPANDS ENTRY BAN LIST OF EU CITIZENS, OFFICIALS IN RESPONSE TO 9TH SANCTIONS PACKAGE

Moscow | Agencies

Russia has expanded its entry ban list of EU citizens and officials in response to the EU's ninth package of sanctions against Moscow, the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

"In response to the hostile actions of the EU, Russia expanded the list of representatives from European institutions and EU member states who are prohibited from entering Russian territory," the Ministry added in a statement on Tuesday.

According to the statement, officials from EU law enforcement agencies involved in providing military assistance to Ukraine's armed forces, European government and commercial structures that supply military equipment to Ukraine, and EU citizens engaged in promoting anti-Russian sen-



timents, as well as individual members of the European Parliament, have been included in the expanded list, Xinhua news agency reported. "The EU is continuing to pressure Russia through its unilateral restrictive measures," the statement said, calling the latest

sanctions package "illegitimate". The EU adopted the ninth package of sanctions against Russia on December 16. It said the sanctions were meant to further increase collective pressure on Russia to end its military operation and withdraw its troops from Ukraine.

Somali forces kill 21 al-Shabab militants in central region



Mogadishu: Somali National Army (SNA) killed 21 al-Shabab militants and injured several others after al-Shabab militants raided a military base in central Somalia.

Chief of Defence Forces Odowaa Yusuf Rage told the Somali National News Agency early Tuesday that the militants attacked the base with two car bombs, causing destruction.

Five SNA soldiers were killed in the attack, Rage said, commending the soldiers for their swift response in repulsing the attackers, Xinhua news agency reported.

Al-Shabab has lost ground to the Somali government and African Union troops in recent months but still controls some territory in southern and central Somalia.

Ukraine's interior ministry top brass killed in helicopter crash

Kyiv | Agencies

The three main figures in Ukraine's interior ministry have been killed in a helicopter crash beside a nursery in an eastern suburb of the capital Kiev.

Interior Minister Denys Monastyrsky, 42, died alongside his first deputy minister and state secretary, BBC reported.

Nine people were killed when the helicopter came down in Brovary and another nine died on the ground, including three children. Monastyrsky is the highest profile Ukrainian casualty since the war began, BBC reported.

The deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, said the minister had been en route to a war "hot spot" when his helicopter went down.

There is no indication the crash was anything other than an accident, although witnesses said Russia's war



was to blame for the disaster. "It was very foggy and there was no electricity, and when there's no electricity there are no lights on the buildings," local resident Volodymyr told the BBC.

The 42-year-old interior minister was a prominent member of President Volodymyr Zelensky's cabinet. He played a key role in updating the public on casualties caused by Russian missile strikes since Ukraine was invaded.

Ukrainian reports said that those on board the helicopter included six ministry officials and three crew.

4 generations of a family killed in 'cartel like execution' in California

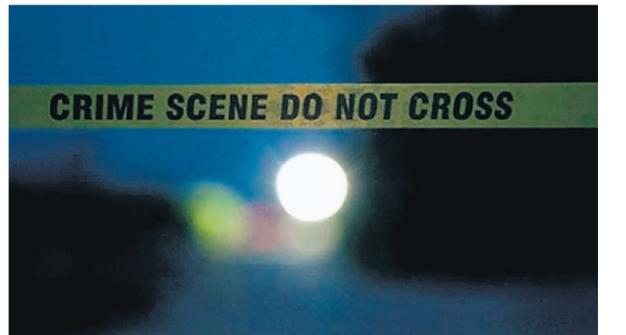
Islamabad | Agencies

San Francisco: Four generations of a family were killed in what authorities have described as a "cartel like execution" at a private residence in California which was raided by police last week for drug-related activity, the media reported. The victims have been identified as Rosa Parraz (72), Eladio Parraz Jr (52), Jennifer Analla (50), Marcos Parraz (19), Elyssa Parraz (16) and Nycholas Parraz (10 months), reports the BBC.

The house is located in Goshen, Tulare County.

Addressing the media on Tuesday, Tulare County Sheriff Mike Boudreaux did not provide the names of the suspects, saying that it was due to the possibility that the killers were watching in order to avoid capture, but revealed that much was already known to authorities about the tragedy.

Police had searched the residence just last week and found stashes of marijuana and methamphetamines, he said. "None of this was by accident. It was



deliberate, intentional and horrific," the BBC quoted the Sheriff as saying.

The FBI's San Francisco office is assisting in the investigation, and a \$10,000 reward is being offered for information leading to an arrest.

Police are monitoring the Mexico and Canada border for the suspects, the Sheriff said, adding that the "very inse-

cure border" has allowed Mexican drug cartel activity to grow in the central California area in recent years.

He said that the killings appear "similar to high-ranking gang executions, and the style of execution they commit", because the victims were "shot in places where a shooter knew that quick death would occur".



'Hitting cops with slipper'

MP BJP LEADERS FIGURING IN HEADLINES FOR WRONG REASONS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan took to Twitter to express anguish over the abusive video against him and family at a recent Karni Sena protest in Bhopal, and said he has 'no grudge against anyone', but leaders of his BJP, on the other hand, are making headlines for using abusive language and insulting public servants publicly.

The latest incident was reported from Satna district, where a local BJP leader was seen hitting a policeman with slippers, as per a video on on social media. As per the reports, Chitrakoot police (under Satna district) had received information about illegal mining at village, and therefore, a team along with revenue officials reached the spot.

Upon reaching the village, the police team spotted a few people performing illegal mining and when they tried to stop them, locals started abusing the police team. After a few minutes, BJP leader Sadhna Patel, who also happens to be the Municipal Council president of Satna district, arrived there and she also



started abusing and she beat up police personnel with slippers.

Some of her supporters were also seen arguing with the police officials, one of whom snapped back, asking, 'Do you want us to take you to the police station? We will begin our investigation from there.'

However, Patel was not arrested even then for assaulting a govern-

ment official. On Wednesday, reporter sought a reply on this issue, a senior police official in Satna said: 'They had no information about the case against her in Chitrakoot.'

However, a revenue official said that a case has been registered against Sadhna Patel and nine other people at a local police station. BJP MLA from Maihar constituen-

cy under Satna district Narayan Tripathi, around two months back, had claimed that illegal mining has been operating in the area. Tripathi had alleged that illegal mining was happening with involvement of a strong nexus of local politicians and revenue officials. He had also written to Chief Minister Chouhan regarding the same. Now, the district revenue department and the police too have accepted that illegal mining was happening in the district.

Before this slipper incident, Union Minister and senior tribal leader Faggan Singh Kulaste used a highly abusive word, while slamming the erstwhile Kamal Nath-led Congress government's 15 months period in MP. Kulaste made the abusive statement while talking to journalists on camera during a public program in his native Mandla district on Sunday.

Similarly, another senior BJP leader and former minister, Gaurishankar Bisen, who is now the state OBC Welfare Commission head, with a cabinet minister's status, was caught on camera, addressing the local RTO in abusive language at a public hearing in Lalbarra police station of his native Balaghat district.

Indore gets two world records in one day

Team Absolute | Indore

Under the aegis of Lions Club International, Balaji Sevarth Vinod Agarwal Foundation and Agarwal Samaj, two new world records were recorded at Khalsa Stadium, Rajmohalla, on Tuesday. A new world record was registered with the Guinness Book of World Records by providing 50,000 blankets to needy people at the Khalsa Stadium. People not only from the city but from all over the district gathered at the Khalsa Stadium to get the free blankets.

25k pledge to donate eyes At the same venue, 25,000 people pledged letters for eye donation, which was another world record. The team of Guinness Book of World Records was present to record these events and verify the claims.

On the occasion, city-based industrialist Vinod Agarwal was honoured with the Bhamashah Award and Lions Club's past international



director Kamlesh Jain was honoured with the Life Time Achievement Award.

MP Shankar Lalwani, Lions International's Kulbhushan Mittal Kukki, Satish Shukla, Sharad Mehta, and Sadna Sodani were present at the

distribution ceremony. On this occasion, famous lyricist and composer Sandhu Bandhu performed at the Khalsa Stadium. More than 5,000 youths presented their skills along with the band's performances. Campaign to dump e-waste A grand campaign to dump e-waste was also launched by Lions International. Under this, citizens visited Khalsa Stadium with their old electronic items kept in the attics at their homes and deposited their e-waste there.

32-YEAR-OLD MAN DANCING AT WEDDING COLLAPSES, DIES

Bhopal: A 32-year-old man suddenly collapsed and died while dancing at a wedding ceremony in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district yesterday night. Reports say the man suffered a cardiac arrest. Abhay Sachan, a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur district, had come to Rewa for the wedding. A video of the wedding shows Mr Sachan collapsing while dancing with a group, surrounded by a band beating drums. He was taken to a local hospital, where doctors said he was brought dead. The family is devastated. They said the wedding ceremony has turned into mourning.

Teen returning from birthday party abducted and raped, 1 arrested

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In another incident of sexual assault against minors, a 17-year-old girl was allegedly raped in Madhya Pradesh's capital city Bhopal on Sunday. The girl was reportedly returning home from a birthday party in her neighbourhood when two-bike borne men abducted her.

According to a report published in The Times of India, one of the bike-borne men raped her. The incident took place in the Sukhi Sewania police station area. The accused took the girl to an isolated place and allegedly raped her. The girl's family started searching for her when she did not return home. They found her at the spot where she was allegedly raped. The girl then revealed her ordeal to her family members. They approached the police and lodged a complaint. After receiving the complaint, the police swung into action and arrested the prime accused. He has been identified as 21-year-old Anku Khushwaha. Meanwhile, Khushwaha's aide Tikaram is still absconding. Both the accused are natives of Vidisha district. They had reportedly come to attend



the birthday party at the same house where the girl had gone. As per the police, Khushwaha raped the girl, while his friend acted as a guard. The police have initiated an investigation into the matter. A manhunt operation has been launched to nab the absconding accused.

Meanwhile, in another incident, a six-year-old girl was murdered in Delhi by her neighbour on January 12. The incident took place in the Kapashera area. The body of the girl was reportedly found in a drain the next day in the morning. It is still not clear whether the minor was sexually assaulted. The police arrested the accused.

Governor Mangubhai Patel performs Bhoomi Poojan of new galleries of Archaeological Museum

Team Absolute | Ujjain

Governor Mangubhai Patel performed Bhumi-Pujan of the new galleries along with the new building in the Archaeological Museum complex of Vikram Kirti Mandir, Ujjain. After Bhoomi Pujan, Governor Patel and Higher Education Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav inspected the Archaeological Museum. Member of Parliament Anil Firoziya, Mayor Mukesh Tatwal, Chairman Municipal Corporation Kalavati Yadav were present.

The Vikram Kirti Mandir Museum at Ujjain Vikram University houses some of the rich history of the city with artifacts from almost all periods and rulers. The museum has a vast collection of 650 artifacts from the prehistoric era and 30,000 rare manuscripts. The present building of the museum is dilapidated. The work of renovation and upgradation of the



museum will be done by Smart City. The proposed work includes construction of new building of 1200 square meters, upgradation/renova-

tion of existing structure of 4500 square meters and setting up of new gallery to display artifacts, air conditioning and modern storage/display,

lighting arrangements and providing information about artifacts and manuscripts through audio/digital means and developing public facilities etc.

Construction of Archaeological Museum building along with new galleries will be done at a cost of Rs. 14 crore. In the coming days, the work of beautification of the museum will be done by the government at a cost of Rs. 14 crore. In these works will be done to give modern look to the museum and the preserved statues and relics. Archaeological heritage, five lakh years old world famous elephant head, rhinoceros horn, hippopotamus tooth, wild buffalo jaw and other 200 fossils and other remains will be displayed in various galleries. In the first phase, building construction will be done at a cost of Rs. 7.5 crore and interior work will be done at a cost of Rs. 6.5 crore.

VIKAS YATRAS WILL BEGIN FROM SANT RAVIDAS JAYANTI: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the series of Vikas Yatras will start in the state from February 5, the birth anniversary of Sant Ravidas. Vikas Yatras will be launched after paying obeisance to Sant Ravidas. In the Vikas Yatra, the completed construction works will be dedicated by the minister in-charge and the foundation stone will be laid for the construction works to be started. Along with providing benefits to the beneficiaries in the Vikas Yatra, there will be beneficiary conferences at the village or village panchayat level to interact with them. The minister in-charge will decide the route of the Vikas Yatra. Ministers must make an intensive tour on the first two days of the Vikas Yatra. It is necessary to ensure that the people get the benefit of the development activities and public welfare works of the government without any difficulty within a fixed time frame. There must be dialogue on these subjects with the beneficiaries during the Vikas Yatra. Chief Minister Chouhan was addressing a meeting with the ministers at Samatva Bhavan in CM's residence today. All the Divisional



Commissioners and District Collectors attended the meeting virtually.

Ministers should necessarily communicate with the beneficiaries

Chief Minister Chouhan said that it is our priority that the tours of ministers and the Vikas Yatra should be effective. The Vikas Yatra will start from February 5 and continue till February 20, if required, the minister in-charge can extend the duration of the Vikas Yatra till February 25. During the Vikas Yatra, ministers must necessarily com-

municate with the beneficiaries regarding the quality of construction works and the time-limit for their completion, the status of implementation of public welfare schemes and their satisfaction level. Discussions with the social organisations, voluntary organisations and enlightened people of different societies should also be held in the Vikas Yatra. In the Vikas Yatra, there will be tours to the development block level along with the district headquarters and all the ministers will submit their reports after returning.

Instructions given to the district administration Chief Minister Chouhan gave instructions for necessary arrangements and coordination to the district administration regarding the Vikas Yatra. He said that in relation with the construction works and public welfare schemes, the pending cases of the district should be resolved on priority at the state level. Publicity of excellent works of the districts and their emulation at other places should be encouraged. Inspection of works of educational institutions, hostels, anganwadis, electricity and drinking water system, restoration of Jal Jeevan Mission will also be done in the Vikas Yatra.

Man booked for duping six on pretext of selling flat

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Jahangirabad police of Bhopal have registered a case of fraud against a man on the pretext of duping six people of Rs 1.25 lakh in total, on the pretext of selling them flats under the Pradhanmantri Aawas Yojana, the police said on Wednesday. The police added that the accused is a listed criminal, who has several cases registered against him at Kotwali police station. Jahangirabad police station in-charge, Shahwaz Khan said that the accused has been identified as Zeeshan Rehman, who is a listed crim-



inal and has cases pending against him under Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Complainant Rishabh Sen, told the police that Rehman had approached him in August 2022, claiming that he can provide him and five of his friends an accommodation in the new building under construction at Barkhedi, under the PM Aawas Yojana.

Sen and his friends agreed, after which Rehman demanded a sum of Rs 25 thousand from each of them. After Sen and his friends paid him the amount, he told them to wait for some time.

When Sen and his friends received no update in this regard, they reached the construction site on Tuesday, where they learnt that the building is under the supervision of Bhopal Development Authority (BDA) and carries no provision under PM Aawas Yojana. Realising that they had been duped, all six of them approached the police, who registered a complaint against the accused.

Khelo India Youth Games will promote sports culture in the state: CM Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that organizing Khelo India Youth Games in Madhya Pradesh will help in promoting sports culture in the state. Youth and students of all the districts of the state will be connected with the events to be held in Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Mandla, Maheshwar and Balaghat. Special instructions have been issued to the collectors in this regard. CM Chouhan was seeking information about the preparations for the Khelo India Youth Games 2022 starting from January 30 in a meeting organized at Samatva Bhavan today.

Chief Minister Chouhan will inaugurate the programme at Tatya Tope Stadium in Bhopal on January 30 at 7 pm. Union Sports and Youth Welfare Minister Anurag Thakur will be spe-

cially present in the program. About 21 thousand people will participate in the inauguration. There will also be a presentation on the vision of PM Modi towards sports on this occasion. Along with this, there will be a special presentation on Tricolour Light Show, Mahakal and Narmada River. Har-Har Shambhu performance will be given by well-known artist Abhilipsa Panda while the Tandava Nritya will be performed the Nataraj Group. There will be dance and song presentation on the theme 'Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat' from different regions of the state. Renowned singers Shaan, Neeti Mohan and Bainidayal will present patriotic and sports based songs in the programme. Along with this, a programme will be presented on the theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam with the flags of G-20 countries and there will be grand fireworks.

Two labourers dead as under construction wall collapses in Bargi

Team Absolute | Jabalpur

Three labourers were buried under debris after the collapse of an under construction wall in Jabalpur's Bargi on Wednesday morning. Two of the labourers died on the spot while the third is in a critical condition. The accident happened in Maneagon village of Bargi where a retaining wall for crusher was being constructed. In this accident, labourers Narayan Kol and Dashrath Barkade died on the spot while another labourer Girdhari Lal was seriously injured. After getting the news of the accident, the people present around the spot informed the police and an attempt was made to evacuate the labourers buried under the debris.

By the time the labourers were pulled out, two of them had already died. Locals admitted a seriously injured Girdharilal to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Bargi TI Ritesh Pandey said, 'We have



conducted the post-mortem of the dead bodies and have taken the whole matter under investigation. If anyone is found responsible for the incident, strict action will be taken against them.'

Notably, this is not the first such case in the Bargi assembly. Earlier as well, many incidents of illegal mining through crushers have been reported in the area

which have also claimed lives of labourers. But, the administration has not paid heed to these accidents.

According to the villagers, illegal explosions are carried out in crushers to break stones, due to which cracks have started appearing in the walls of people's houses, which is now causing worries for the locals.

Illegal poppy cultivation destroyed by CBN in Neemuch

Team Absolute | Neemuch

A joint team of the Central Bureau of Narcotics from Neemuch and Jaora acting on the basis of specific intelligence conducted a search operation at Babrecha village in the Mandsaur district and destroyed the illegal Cultivation of opium poppy crop spread in an area of 578 square metres (or 0.0578 hectares). As per the information, the entire area was surrounded by 15 feet tall walls and Iron Gate and was situated on the outskirts of Babrecha village. Officials claimed that after getting the tip-off, teams consisting of officers of CBN Neemuch were rushed to the spot and asked the owner of a plot to produce required

documents, including a licence for verification. After verification of ownership of land from village patwari and identification of grown crop as Papaver somniferum L (opium poppy) by the scientist of KNK College of Horticulture at the spot.

PUBLIC NOTICE: This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of Vindhya Janta Party (name of the party) The office of the party is located at House No-MIG-1-86, Padamdhar Colony Rewa in Huzar, Tehsil of Rewa, Dist-Rewa, Madhya Pradesh- 486001 (give full address). This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1915 Names/address of the office bearers of the Party are as follows: President/Chairman : Umesh Kumar Shukla Vice-President : Shalikh Ram Tiwari General Secretary : Abhishek Pratap Singh Treasurer : Rambhaji Gupta If any one has any objection to the registration of Vindhya Janta Party (name of the proposed Party) they may send their Objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, New Delhi Sadana, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.



# 'THAT WAS ACTUALLY TRUE'

JLo was supposed to be in three-way kiss with Madonna, Britney at 2003 VMAs

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-actress Jennifer Lopez could have been a part of that infamous three-way kiss with Madonna and Britney Spears at the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards.

Almost two decades since the much-talked-about onstage moment, the singer/actress confirms that she was supposed to be Madge's second smoocher, instead of Christina Aguilera, reports aceshowbiz.com.

During a new interview with E! News to promote her new movie 'Shotgun Wedding', Lopez revealed that she had met with Madonna and Britney to plan out the racy act.

However, she couldn't make it to the show and was replaced by Xtna.

"That was actually true," JLo said when asked if the rumours were true. She elaborated: "I was filming a movie in Canada and we had met - me, her and Britney to do it - at her home. And I just couldn't get off the film."

"So they got Christina to do it. And I didn't wind up doing it. But we had talked about it," the "On the Floor" hitmaker added. Despite being left out of the iconic moment with her favourite artist, the Bronx star has nothing but love for Madonna. "I love Madonna. I'm a huge fan, I always have been," she admitted.

While Madonna and Britney's kiss at the 2003 VMAs is still one of the most iconic moments in the industry, Madge's kiss with Xtna gained less attention. At the time, after Madge and Britney smooched, the cameras cut to broadcast Justin Timberlake's reaction, while Madonna proceeded to lock lips with Christina onstage.

Madonna has not responded to JLo's claims that she was supposed to be in the three-way kiss.



# 'WHATEVER THEY WANT TO DO, I SUPPORT THEM'

Angela Bassett will support her children if they pursue a career in acting

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Angela Bassett won't forbid her kids if they follow her into the movies. The actress vows to always support her children irrespective of what they do in their careers, reports aceshowbiz.com. "They want to follow the success, but whether it be acting, I don't get any clues to that right now. It's a little music, a little sports. But whatever they want to do, I support them," Angela explained to PEOPLE when speaking about her kids' interests.

Angela recently won the Golden Globe Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in 'Black Panther: Wakanda Forever', and the Hollywood star revealed that she celebrated her success with her kids. She said: "I went home and hugged my kids. They were really excited for mom to bring home a statue."

Meanwhile, Angela previously claimed that finding the "right" person is the key to wedded bliss. The actress has been married to husband Courtney B. Vance since 1997 and she feels that couples in the spotlight need to be "looking in the same direction."

She explained: "Staying together so long, whether in the industry or not, I think the important thing is that you gotta marry the right person. Make sure you're both looking in the same direction, basically."

The 'What's Love Got to Do with It' star added that couples should both recognise and respect each other's individual wishes.

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# CHANNING TATUM TO REPRIS PATRICK SWAYZE'S ROLE IN 'GHOST' REMAKE

Los Angeles | Agencies



Actor Channing Tatum is ready to get into pottery making after stripping off onstage for his next movie. The actor, who is set to reprise his role as the titular character in 'Magic Mike's Last Dance', is keen on stepping into the shoes of the late Patrick Swayze in a 'Ghost' remake. The hunk revealed that he's developing a reboot of the 1990 romantic film during an interview with Vanity Fair. "Now I know why they put this in 'Ghost'," he said in the interview, which was conducted during a pottery lesson, reports aceshowbiz.com.

He added: "This whole process is very, very sexual."

Tatum revealed during the chat that his production company Free Association, formally known as 33&Out, currently has the rights to 'Ghost'. He said: "We actually have the rights. Yeah, we have the rights to 'Ghost.'"

Giving insight into his idea for the upcoming project, he said that it will be a modern take on the original film, with him potentially in the male lead role. "But we're going to do something different," he spilled, adding that the original, like many movies of its day, contained some "problematic stereotypes." He added: "I think it needs to change a little bit." While Tatum has opened up about his desire to play Gambit and star in 'Ghost', he had some resentment about his role in the 'G.I. Joe' film franchise. He admitted that he was initially reluctant to star in the first film, 'G.I. Joe: Rise of Cobra', and subsequently asked that his character be killed off in the sequel, 'G.I. Joe: Retaliation' (2013). "The first one I passed on seven times, but they had an option on me and I had to do a movie," he said of his appearances in both films. "So the second one I obviously just didn't want to be in that one either."

# When Kristin Chenoweth was 'practically killed' in a set accident

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Kristin Chenoweth has opened up about "long-standing injuries" that she received on the production of 'The Good Wife' in 2012. Chenoweth's comments came during an interview on 'Watch What Happens Live With Andy Cohen' on Monday. The actor joined the programmer to promote her new book, 'I'm No Philosopher, But I Got Thought', in which she details the 'The Good Wife' incident and its immediate aftermath, reports Variety.

Speaking with Cohen, Chenoweth detailed her mindset in the following months, voicing regrets that she took no legal action against the network. "I didn't do it out of fear and anxiety. Don't ever let fear rule your life," Chenoweth said. "I have long-standing injuries from that. I wish I had listened to my dad. He said, 'You're going to want to do this.' We're not the 'suing family,' but when you're practically killed."

Chenoweth went on to detail the 2012 incident, which occurred while she was acting in a recurring role of Season 4 of the series. The actor stated that she was hospitalised after receiving a "seven-inch skull fracture, a hairline fracture, cracked teeth and ribs" after falling lighting equipment struck her.

"I heard, like, a flagpole sound. I literally heard, 'We're losing the light.' I heard, 'Action.' And I woke up at Bellevue (Hospital)," Chenoweth recalled. Chenoweth had previously opened up about the health impact of the incident in the fall of 2012, calling herself "issue-ridden" in an interview on 'Live! With Kelly and Michael'.



Nikki M. James joins Marvel's 'Daredevil: Born Again'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Nikki M. James has been cast in Marvel's upcoming revival series on Disney+, 'Daredevil: Born Again'. Details regarding her character are being kept under wraps. Marvel declined to comment, reports Deadline. Written and executive produced by Matt Corman and Chris Ord, the new installment centres on Charlie Cox's title character 'Daredevil', otherwise known by the name Matt Murdock, an attorney by day and crime fighter by night. D'Onofrio reprises his role as mob boss Wilson Fisk aka Kingpin.

In addition to Cox and D'Onofrio, James joins previously announced cast members Michael Gandolfini, Margarita Levieva, and Sandrine Holt. James originated the role of Nabalungi in the hit Broadway musical 'The Book of Mormon', for which she won the Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical. She was recently seen in the world premiere production of Shaina Taub's 'Suffs' at The Public Theater.

She is currently seen in the Focus Features film 'Spoiler Alert'. Recent notable work in television includes 'Severance' for AppleTV+, 'Proven Innocent' for FOX, and the CBS series 'Braindead'.

As a director, James has helmed TV episodes of 'The Bite' and 'The Good Fight'. She served as an assistant director to Michael Arden for the Broadway revival of 'Once On This Island' and a Christmas Carol's starring Jefferson Mays.

# ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Helen Flanagan



## IND vs NZ 1st ODI

# GILL'S MAGNIFICENT DOUBLE CENTURY PROPELS INDIA TO MASSIVE 349/8

Hyderabad | Agencies

Shubman Gill produced a magnificent display of batsmanship to score a double century and propel India to a massive 349/8 against New Zealand in the first ODI of the three-match series at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium.

On a two-paced pitch, where no other Indian batter crossed 35, Gill dished out an opening masterclass against a quality New Zealand bowling line-up to score 208 off 149 balls, laced with 19 fours and nine sixes.

Electing to bat first, Rohit Sharma was severe on an earring Henry Shiple, hitting two fours and as many sixes, of which a well-timed lofted drive going over cover for a maximum was the standout. Gill, on the other hand, wasn't at ease before leaning into a drive off Lockie Ferguson in the sixth over got him going.

Gill easily took on Blair Tackner, pulling him twice over mid-wicket to bring up India's fifty in 8.4 overs. The 60-run opening stand ended in the 13th over when Rohit miscued a loft, giving mid-on a simple catch off Tackner.

Gill found a partner in Suryakumar Yadav, who produced exquisite timing in his punch, drive, flick against pacers while sweeping against Bracewell to collect four boundaries.

Mitchell broke the 65-run partnership by having Suryakumar to drive on the up and chipping straight to a leaping cover fielder in the 29th over. Gill raced to 99 by using depth



of crease to pull Santner off the backfoot over mid-wicket for six, before getting to his third ODI century in 87 balls.

Giving him some company was Hardik Pandya, who hit three boundaries in a 38-ball 28, before missing a Mitchell delivery while trying to cut off him in the 40th over, as replays showed bail on off stump came off after the keeper collected it cleanly, ending a 74-run partnership. Gill reached his double century by smacking a hat-trick of

sixes over fine leg, long-off and straight down the ground in the 49th over. He would hit another six over long-on in the final over, before falling for 208 as deep mid-wicket fielder took a screamer of a catch.

### Brief scores

India 349/8 in 50 overs (Shubman Gill 208, Rohit Sharma 34; Daryl Mitchell 2/30, Henry Shiple 2/74) against New Zealand.

## SHUBMAN GILL BECOMES FASTEST INDIAN CRICKETER TO SCORE 1000 ODI RUNS

Hyderabad | Right-handed opener Shubman Gill on Wednesday became the fastest Indian to record 1000 ODI runs during India's ongoing ODI series opener against New Zealand at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium. Gill reached the 1000-run mark when he reached 106 in his 19th ODI innings. Through his stroke-filled knock, he also notched up back-to-back centuries in the format, after hitting 97-ball 116 against Sri Lanka in the third ODI at Greenfield International Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram.

The right-hander batter overtook Virat Kohli and Shikhar Dhawan, who jointly held the previous record at 24 innings to become the fastest Indian and the joint-second fastest ever to 1000 runs mark in ODIs. He equalled Pakistan opener Iman-ul-Haq for breaching the 1000-run mark in 19 innings while missing out on another Pakistan opener Fakhar Zaman's record of fastest to 1000 ODI runs in 18 innings.

Gill's third ODI century in 19 innings came off just 87 balls, and among Indian cricketers, only Shikhar Dhawan (17) had reached the third hundred in 50 over cricket in fewer innings than him. He is currently leading India's innings against New Zealand with his sublime knock.

## Copa del Rey

# Real Sociedad, Sevilla book quarterfinal places



San Sebastian | Agencies

Real Sociedad were the first team into the draw for the quarterfinals of the Copa del Rey knockout competition in Spain after beating Mallorca 1-0.

Roberto Navarro continued his goalscoring form in the Cup when he put Real Sociedad ahead in the fifth minute after a pass from Martin Zubimendi and the home side controlled the first half from start to finish, with a Mallorca side packed with fringe players unable to manage one shot in the first 45 minutes, on Tuesday night, reports Xinhua news agency. The match was played in the pouring rain, which didn't help flowing football and the second half saw little in the way of chances, with Clement Grenier at least having a shot for the visitors, even if it was directly at home keeper Alex

Remiro. The home side were considerably below their best and lost full back Andoni Gorosabal with a twisted ankle midway through the second half, but despite surrendering possession far too easily on too many occasions, they still had more than enough to move into the last eight.

In the second game played on Tuesday, Sevilla rode their luck away to second division Alaves, with Ivan Rakitic's powerful header deciding a game that helped Sevilla forget their league problems, although they didn't play well in Vitoria.

The remaining matches will be played on Wednesday and Thursday, with Real Madrid's visit to an in-form Villarreal and Barcelona's trip to third-tier survivors Ceuta, the highlights of the round. The draw for the quarterfinals will be made on Friday.

# Liverpool recover from Brighton defeat with Cup replay win at Wolves

London | Agencies

Liverpool were able to put their league problems behind them for the night as they qualified for the fourth round of the FA Cup with a 1-0 win away to Wolverhampton in their third round replay.

Harvey Elliott's 13th minute goal decided the match in which Wolves threatened but failed to really test Liverpool goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher, reports Xinhua news agency.

This side will now travel to Brighton in the fourth round, meaning a quick return to the ground where Liverpool lost 3-0 last weekend in what Klopp described as the "worst" performance during his spell at the club.

In other replays played on Tuesday night, West Brom (Championship) won 4-0 at home



over Chesterfield (National League, 5th tier), while Luton Town won 2-1 away to Wigan Athletic in a match between two sides from the Championship.

Birmingham City (Championship) defeated Forest Green Rovers (League One) by a goal to nil away from home, while Bristol City won another all-Championship tie 2-1 away to Swansea after extra time.

# Indian women's hockey team register stunning 7-0 win over South Africa

Cape Town | Agencies

After a brilliant show in their opening match, the Indian women's hockey team registered a stunning 7-0 victory against the home side South Africa in their second match of the South Africa Tour.

The visitors, riding on their recent success at the FIH Women's Nations Cup, have shown sublime form in this tournament. They opened the campaign with a 5-1 win and today they showed same intent as they began with a fine 9th minute goal by Udit.

The team led by goalkeeper Savita upped the pressure on South Africa in the second quarter, forming some potent attacking combinations.



Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, who made her International debut for the Senior Women's side in their opening match on Monday, scored India's second goal in the 22nd minute.

This was followed by a brilliant field goal by

experienced forward Rani, who is making her comeback after nearly six months of playing her previous match during the FIH Hockey Pro League in 2022. She had also scored India's first goal in the opening game. India's 3-0 lead was extended to 6-0 by the end of the second quarter. Goals were converted in quick succession when Sangita Kumari, Navneet Kaur and Vandana Katariya scored in the 25th, 26th and 27th minute of the game. South Africa's defence was left wanting with India in a rampaging mood. Though the third quarter did not see any goals being scored, India ended the proceedings with Vandana scoring her second goal of the match in the 58th minute. Indian women's team will play their third match against hosts South Africa on Thursday.

# KOHLI JUMPS TO FOURTH, SIRAJ TAKES MASSIVE LEAP IN LATEST ODI RANKINGS

Dubai | Agencies

Former India Captain Virat Kohli and fast bowler Mohammad Siraj have been rewarded for their recent form by rising up the ICC Men's ODI Player Rankings released.

As per the latest ODI rankings, Kohli jumped two places to fourth overall on the latest list for ODI batters while Siraj took a giant leap of 15 spots to sit third on the list for bowlers.

During India's recent ODI series sweep, Kohli smashed two centuries while amassing a whopping 283 runs from three innings. The right-hander rose to a total of 750 points and getting closer to Pakistan skipper Babar Azam, who remained on top with 887 rating points.

South Africans Rassie van der Dussen (766) and Quinton de Kock



(759) are placed second and third on the batters list respectively.

Siraj, who took the giant stride in the bowlers list for ODI bowlers following his nine wickets for the series, improved to a career-best rating of 685 points to close in on pacesetters New Zealand's Trent Boult (730) and Australian Josh Hazlewood (727).

Besides Kohli and Siraj, teammates Shubman Gill and Kuldeep Yadav were also well compensated for their performances against Sri Lanka.

Gill hit a century and a fifty during the series and his 207 runs at an average of 69 helped the opener improve 10 spots to 26th overall on the rankings for ODI batters.

Kuldeep was rewarded for his five wickets from just two matches against Sri Lanka, with the left-armer jumping seven places to 21st on the latest bowler rankings.

## ILT20

# Imran Tahir receives White Belt after a fantastic spell

Sharjah | Agencies

Mi Emirates displayed their all-round strength and registered an emphatic six-wicket win over Sharjah Warriors in the sixth match of the ILT20 at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

The former South Africa leg-spinner Imran Tahir who is now the White belt holder, had bagged three wickets in his last match against Sharjah Warriors, was introduced in the eight over and he gave away just five runs. He also won the DP World Smart delivery of the day to Tom Kohler-Cadmore.

After winning the White belt, he said, "I have said many times before, I just have a huge respect for the game." Tahir said post their win after being handed the white belt which is given to the leading bowler in the



ILT20. "For my son and my family, I want to show it is never too late. I just respect the game and want to play in a good manner."

## India Open

# Srikanth loses to Axelsen, bows out in first round

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former World Championships medallist Kidambi Srikanth crashed out in the first round of the Indian Open Super 750 tournament after losing to world no 1 Viktor Axelsen of Denmark.

Srikanth lost the match 14-21, 19-21 to the Olympic Champion Axelsen, who won the Malaysia Open Super 1000 last week. This was the Indian's second straight first-round exit of the BWF World Tour 2023 season. He lost to Kenta Nishimoto of Japan at the Malaysia Open last week.

After losing the opening game, Srikanth took full control of the second game, leading 12-4 and later cruised to 15-4. But the Dane made a huge recovery, taking seven straight points to reduce the scoreboard deficit. He then brought the equation to 17-18 and quickly wrapped up the match to sail into the second round.

The Dane will next play Shi Yu Qi of China for a place in the quarterfinals.

In other men's singles action, former world champion Singapore's Loh Kean Yew ended Kodai Naraoka's campaign with a comeback win 18-21, 21-9, 21-7 to set a pre-quarterfinal date with Hans-Kristian Vittinghus of Denmark.

In the women's singles, world no. 1 Japanese shuttler Akane Yamaguchi, who won the Malaysia Open last week, defeated Clara Azurmendi of Spain 21-7, 21-11 in just 25 minutes. In round of 16, the Japanese will take on world no. 10 Han Yue.

Meanwhile, the world no. 5 He Bing Jiao, advanced to the pre-quarterfinals with a straight-game 21-16, 21-15 win over Denmark's Line Kjaersfeldt.

She will face South Korean Kim Ga-Eun in the last-16.

On Tuesday, Saina Nehwal and reigning India Open champion Lakshya Sen progressed to the second round of their respective events while PV Sindhu lost to Thailand's Supanida Katethong to crash out early.

## Aus Open

# Nadal crashes out in second round

Melbourne | Agencies

Reigning men's singles champion Rafael Nadal crashed out of the Australian Open in the second round. The 22-time Grand Slam winner was labouring with injury in a straight-sets loss to American Mackenzie McDonald at Rod Laver Arena.

Nadal was trailing 4-6, 3-5 when he took a medical time-out after moving to his left to chase a forehand and pulled up in pain with an apparent upper left leg injury.

The Spaniard returned to play out the match but he was clearly not 100



per cent physically fit for the rest of the match and McDonald wrapped up the win 6-4, 6-4, 7-5 in two hours and 32 minutes.

McDonald did not shy away from Nadal's fore-

hand and the Spaniard was not able to consistently put the World No. 65 on the back foot. The American hit 42 winners to just 22 unforced errors to earn the biggest win of his career.

## SWIASTEK BEATS OSORIO, PEGULA TAKES DOWN SASNOVICH TO ENTER THIRD ROUND

Melbourne | World No 1 Iga Swiatek of Poland has soared into the third round of the Australian Open, overcoming a pair of late-set stumbles here at Rod Laver Arena to dismiss Colombian Camila Osorio. Swiatek closed out a 6-2, 6-3 victory over Osorio in 84 minutes to win her 12th straight second-round match at a major. The Pole star hasn't lost before the third round of a major since the 2019 US Open.

Swiatek has now won 53 of her first 65 main-draw Grand Slam singles matches. In the Open Era, only six players had more such wins after their first 65 matches in majors: Margaret Court (61), Monica Seles (60), Chris Evert (57), Martina Hingis (56), Billie Jean King (56) and Tracy Austin (54). On the other hand, the No.3 seed Jessica Pegula edged Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-2, 7-6(5) here at Rod Laver Arena to reach the last-32 for the ninth time in the last 10 majors. This was the second time in five months that the American beat Sasnovich at a Grand Slam. Having just played her at the last hard-court Grand Slam (2022 US Open), Pegula said she was ready for the challenge that World No.38 Sasnovich posed, a player who just missed out on the Top 32 seeds.





# RASHI FEELS HER CHARACTER WILL RESONATE WITH WOMEN AT LARGE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Rashi Khanna, who will be seen essaying the role of a government official in the upcoming Vijay Sethupathi and Shahid Kapoor-starrer web series 'Farzi', feels that a lot of women will relate to her character and the challenges that she faces everyday in her professional and personal life.

Shedding light on her character, Rashi said: "My character of Megha is that of a modern girl in a patriarchal set-up. We talk about equality and feminism but still, a woman has to struggle a lot in her professional and personal space. She struggles in her personal space with her mother in

the series."

She further mentioned that the audience is bound to empathise with her and her relentless fight to get what she seeks: "You empathise with her because she is very relentless, if she sets her mind to it, she accomplishes it at any cost and that manifests itself in her way of dealing with her job and her seniors. She is a bit grey for me, not really black and white because she doesn't care

about the rules, regulations and the law." Given women's fight against the patriarchy that still dictates the functioning of the modern world, the actress feels that the character will deeply resonate with women across the board.

"She is in a way similar

to me and I learnt a lot while playing this character and I must say that a lot of women will relate to Megha and her struggles," she concluded.

**THIS SHOW CAN TURN OUT TO BE A BIG GAME-CHANGER IN MY CAREER: KRITIKA SINGH**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Apki Nazron Ne Samjha' actress Kritika, who is seen as Pratiksha in the show 'Pyar Ke Saat Vachan Dharam Patnii', said that the show has brought her the kind of fame she has been waiting for so long.

Kritika shared: "I do believe that everything happens at the right time, no matter how much effort we put into a thing to happen. I am more than glad that this show came my way because it will no doubt give a push to my career graph. 'Dharam Patnii' is bringing out my true versatility as an actor. For me, this show can turn out to be a big game-changer in my career."

The actress has made her acting debut with a Tamil comedy film 'Rayar Parambarai' and she is playing the lead role in her recent TV show. Kritika added: "It's been only a month but this show is bringing me the recognition for my craft. Earlier also, I have worked on many projects but didn't get the kind of recognition I feel I deserved." "Now, I feel that everything happens for a reason, we just have to keep working hard. I can say I spared no effort to reach where I am today and even today I am striving harder than ever, to be able to be known as a successful actress in the industry," she concluded.

**FIRST TIME I'M BRINGING AN ENTIRE ALBUM FOR MY AUDIENCE: DHVANI**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular singer Dhvani Bhanushali said she is excited about bringing a complete album for music lovers for the first time and expressed her hope that the viewers will show their admiration for 'Lagan'.

While opening up about her album which she considers to be a project which is close to her heart, she said: "The album is very close to my heart, as it is a labour of love. My close people have inspired me to come up with this and it is the first time I am bringing an entire album for my audiences. I hope they show their love and support as always to this special album."

The album is all about love and connection and it comprises five tracks sung by Dhvani Bhanushali joined by Abhijit Vaghani in two songs and Ash King in one.

'Lagan' is composed by Abhijit Vaghani and written by Shloke Lal. The album will be released soon on Hitz Music.

## It's a dream of every filmmaker to work in Hollywood: Rajamouli

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Indian director S.S. Rajamouli is open to experimentation and said it is a dream of every filmmaker to make a film in Hollywood. Last Monday, his crossover sensation 'RRR' turned Los Angeles's colossal TCL Chinese IMAX into a dance party, with hundreds of audience members rushing the screen. On Tuesday, Rajamouli's epic musical drama won a Golden Globe for Best Original Song, triumphing over such nobodies as Taylor Swift, Rihanna and Lady Gaga.

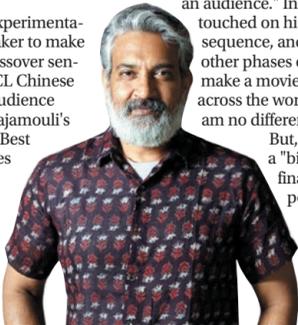
Later in the week, directors like Steven Spielberg and James Cameron fawned over the filmmaker casually known as 'SSR', praising him in public.

"I don't have words to explain the kind of exhilaration that we are having," Rajamouli, 49, told EW's Awardist podcast. "It's why I

make films - to extract that kind of joy, to give that kind of joy to an audience." In a wide-ranging conversation, the director touched on his own favourite films, how he cuts an action sequence, and his preference for screenwriting over other phases of production. Will he come to America to make a movie? "I think it is the dream of every filmmaker across the world to make a film in Hollywood," he said. "I am no different. I'm open to experimentation."

But, he also admits, the decision is causing him a "bit of confusion." At home, Rajamouli enjoys final cut and an unusual amount of creative power: "Back in India, I am the dictator. No one tells me how to make a film."

Modestly, he speculates that a Hollywood project might be an opportunity for a co-credit. "Very probably, my first step will be collaborating with someone," he said.



## Tushar Kalia feels 'blessed' as he marries ladylove Triveni Barman

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Khatron Ke Khiladi 12' winner Tushar Kalia has tied the knot with Triveni Barman and he has shared a wedding picture. While Tushar opted for traditional style sherwani, Triveni wore a red lehenga. Tushar wrote in the caption: "Blessed". The couple looked happy wearing garlands and holding hands. After his post, many of his industry friends and fans congratulated the couple for their new beginning.

Actor Arjun Bijlani mentioned: "Congratulations bro". Apart from him, Bharti Singh, Zaara Yesmin, Aalim Khan, Vivek Chachere, and Tarun Raj also shared their best wishes. The well-known dancer and choreographer Tushar has announced his engagement last year and shared pictures with his fiancée. He wrote in the caption: "To new beginnings trivenibarman Send us your love and blessings engaged gratitude." Triveni also mentioned on her social media handle: "You are the best thing that ever happened to me." He made his career as a choreographer in Bollywood with the movie 'Ae Dil Hai Mushkil'.

On the work front, Tushar had participated in dance reality show 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa' and was also the stage director of the reality show 'India's Got Talent', is now all set to be seen on 'Khatron Ke Khiladi 12'.



## ALI FAZAL'S MOVIE TO HAVE WORLD PREMIERE AT SLAMDANCE FILM FEST

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Ali Fazal, who has been making waves on the international platform with films such as 'Death on the Nile' and the soon to release 'Kandahar', will now be seen in another interesting project titled 'The Underbug'. The film, directed by Shujaat Saudagar, has been officially selected for the upcoming edition of Slamdance Film Festival which is set to take place from January 20 through January 26 in-person, in Salt Lake City and Park City, Utah and virtually between January 23 to January 29. Talking about the film, Ali said: "It's unlike any other film I have ever done in my career so far. The film was shot under confusing circumstances at a time in my life which was already a test of patience and an emotional turmoil right in the middle of the pandemic. The hardest part was

to gain the weight and the heaviness that was required for this character as the two characters are visually poles apart. Yes it's harder to gain weight when you're fit."

"The script was a collaboration of sorts between the actors and the writers and our director. For that matter, even our DOP whose eyes and lenses were totally in sync with the story we all were trying to tell," Ali added.



## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Donal Bisht