

INDIA NEEDS 30 MN DIGITALLY SKILLED PROFESSIONALS BY 2026, SAYS REPORT

THE WORK FORCE

Currently, India has about 500 million people of working age, and industry data suggests that only 49 per cent of total youth (age group of 22-25 years) in the country is employable, according to employment services provider TeamLease. According to the World Economic Forum, investing in upskilling could boost India's economy by \$570 billion by creating 2.3 million new jobs by 2030, the report said.

“Our own survey have indicated that 75 per cent of companies face a skill gap in the industry. Even among people, who can stay in their current jobs, 40 per cent of fundamental abilities are likely to change and thus re-aligning the skill strategy will be crucial for companies.”

Rituparna Chakraborty, Co-Founder & ED, TeamLease Services

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India will need 30 million digitally skilled professionals by 2026, and about 50 per cent of the current workforce would require to re-skill themselves in areas of emerging technologies, a new report said on Friday. Moreover, the report suggests that developing a skills matrix, conducting skill audits to target specific learning journeys and intermingling upskilling within the company culture; a comprehensive skill development strategy will lead to a more sustainable future of work. The proposed suggestion

also includes having an effective outcome-focused learning approach with structured impact evaluation metrics. “Over 2 million jobs in AI, Cyber Security, and blockchain are expected to remain unfilled in 2023. Additionally, the workplace is evolving so rapidly that 76 per cent of the global work-

force is not equipped with the requisite skills to function in the new digitally focused workplaces,” mentioned Chakraborty. “The long-term goal of all skill development programs must focus on the creation of a future-ready and future-proof workforce for that is the only way we can tackle the fluctuations in the world of work and infuse a sense of greater stability. The adoption of sustainable skill development thereby creating a healthy talent pipeline in any country is the only way to address the vagaries of talent Inequity.”

The Herbal Way

Extracts from 2 wild plants can block Covid-19 virus. In laboratory dish tests, extracts from the flowers of tall goldenrod (*Solidago altissima*) and the rhizomes of the eagle fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) each blocked SARS-CoV-2 from entering human cells. The active compounds are only present in miniscule quantities in the plants.



NEW YORK | Agencies

Two common wild plants contain extracts that inhibit the ability of the virus that causes Covid-19 to infect living cells, a US study has discovered.

It would be ineffective, and potentially dangerous, for people to attempt to treat themselves with them, the researchers from Emory University in the state of Georgia stressed. In fact, the eagle fern is known to be toxic, they warned.

Given that Covid-19 is a newly emerged disease, the researchers took a broader approach. They devised a method to rapidly test more than 1,800 extracts and 18 compounds from the Quave Natural Product Library for activity against SARS-CoV-2.

Additional experiments showed that the protective power of the plant extracts worked across four variants of SARS-CoV-2: Alpha, theta, delta and gamma.

Two rare bird species spotted in Sunderbans this winter

- Sunderbans area is scattered over North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas districts of West Bengal.
- Forest officials have sighted 145 different bird species in the current winter season in the Sunderbans region, out of which two were from extremely rare and almost extinct species.
- The two bird species are Lesser Sand Plover and Eurasian Curlew, said S. Justin Jones, the deputy field director of Sunderban Tiger Reserve.

Kolkata | Agencies

This winter came with twin good news both for nature as well as bird watchers. 145 species of birds were spotted during the first Sunderban Bird Festival, an official said on Saturday.



The two-day bird festival which ended on Friday was conducted by the Sunderbans Tiger Reserve of West Bengal Forest Department.

Eurasian Curlew is a migratory range of bird species mainly wintering in South Asia, South Europe and Africa and Lesser Sand Plover mainly above the tree-line in the Himalayas and occasionally in the coastal plains of north-eastern Siberia.

Jones said that while the forest department initially estimated that around 100 species of birds will be spotted in the region, the actual findings was higher than the expectation at 145.

"Of the bird species, 128 were spotted in the buffer zone, Kalas-2 region sighted the maximum number of species," he added.

Meanwhile, a state forest department official said that they are taking some steps to attract more migratory species of birds in the Sunderbans from the next winter season.

"The fact that the maximum number of species have been detected in the buffer zones is also a cause of concern. So, we have decided to start awareness campaign drive among the villagers residing near the islands favourite for the migratory species. We will make the villagers aware on how to make these islands an ideal destination for these migratory species of birds," he said.

Indian dentist wins top literary award in Singapore



Singapore: Vrushali Junnarkar, an Indian national living in Singapore, has won the 2023 Epigram Books Fiction Prize for her debut novel on a group of Indian women learning to swim in a condominium.

Titled, The Campbell Gardens Ladies' Swimming Class, Junnarkar's unpublished work beat 56 other submissions from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Indonesia, and the Philippines, The Straits Times reported.

The panel of judges, which included top Malaysian actress Michelle Yeoh, selected the winner from among four finalists, whittled down from a larger pool by a group of readers.

Junnarkar, who is a dentist by profession, was not in Singapore to receive the award. Her manuscript will be published in the second half of 2023 by Epigram Books. The award was initiated to promote contemporary creative writing and reward excellence in Singapore literature. Since 2020, it has been open to writers from Southeast Asia.

2022 FIFA BEST MEN'S PLAYER



Messi, Mbappe and Benzema nominated

Geneva: Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappe and Karim Benzema have been named as the finalists for The FIFA Best Men's Football Player Award in 2022, soccer's world governing body FIFA announced on Friday.

Messi captained Argentina to lift the FIFA World Cup trophy in Qatar last year, beating France in a dramatic final. Messi won the tournament's Golden Ball, while his Paris Saint-Germain teammate Mbappe secured the Golden Boot with eight goals. Mbappe's compatriot Benzema won last year's Ballon d'Or for winning UEFA Champions League and La Liga titles with Real Madrid but missed the World Cup due to injury, reports news agency Xinhua.

Spain's Alexia Putellas, England forward Beth Mead and Alex Morgan of the United States were nominated for the Best Women's Player Award. The winners of the best men's and women's players, the best male and female coaches, the best men's and women's goalkeepers, and the Puskas Award for the best goal of 2022, will be unveiled on February 27 in Paris.

AFGHAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS CAMPAIGNER SHORTLISTED FOR NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Kabul | Agencies

When the Taliban seized power in August 2021, hundreds of women's rights activists fled Afghanistan, fearing reprisals from the militant group. But Mahbouba Seraj, one of the most prominent rights campaigners in the country, refused to leave, even though she holds a US passport, the media reported.

Despite intimidation from the Taliban, the 75-year-old has continued to advocate for the rights of women and girls and operate a network of shelters for women fleeing domestic abuse, Radio Free Europe (RFE)/Radio Liberty (RL) reported.

Seraj's work and courage were recognised when she was shortlisted for the Nobel Peace Prize earlier this month. She was nominated jointly with Narges Mohammadi, the jailed Iranian human rights activist and lawyer. The winner is expected to be announced in October.

In announcing the nominees on February 1, the Peace Research Institute Oslo said both women have shone "a spotlight on the non-violent struggle for human rights" and are "highly deserving nominees to share the prize, based on their tireless efforts to improve women's rights in Iran and Afghanistan," RFE/RL reported.

Seraj said that winning the prize would be a



"great honour for me and for Afghanistan".

Many Afghan women have praised Seraj for standing up to the Taliban and fighting for the rights of women and girls, RFE/RL reported.

"Women who work in these difficult circumstances inside Afghanistan deserve to be acknowledged," Samira, a Kabul-based rights activist who did not want to reveal her full name for fear of retribution said.

Seraj has been outspoken in her criticism of the Taliban's policies on women in her appearances in international media and forums, which Kazem said has energised "resistance by women in Afghanistan and mobilised support abroad", RFE/RL reported.

Donald Trump calls Rihanna 'nothing' ahead of Super Bowl

LOS ANGELES | Agencies

Former U.S. President Donald Trump has attacked Grammy-winner Rihanna, calling her "nothing" and claimed that she has "no talent."

The 76-year-old got riled up after Texas congressman Ronny Jackson called on the NFL to remove the Barbadian songstress from the halftime show after "badmouthing America." In his post on Truth Social account, he also pointed out that Rihanna is anti-Trump, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"Rihanna spray painted 'F*** Donald Trump' on a car at the Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo, Texas. She's made a career of spewing degenerate filth while bad-mouthing America every chance she gets," Jackson, who is Trump's former White House doctor, wrote on Friday.

"Why is the NFL showcasing this crap? Rihanna SHOULD NOT be the half-



time performer!"

Responding to Ronny's remarks, Trump wrote: "Without her 'Stylist' she'd be NOTHING." He added: "Bad everything, and NO TALENT!"

Trump didn't seem to hate Rihanna that much before as his team used her song 'Don't Stop the Music' for a campaign rally during the mid-terms. She, however, sent a cease and desist to

prevent them from using her music in the future. She added that she wouldn't be seen at one of the "tragic rallies."

Rihanna has been a vocal critic of the 45th POTUS. She criticised his stance on immigration, sharing a photo of herself holding a T-shirt that read "Immigrants" around the time he ordered the delay of ICE deportations.

L-G has no right to overturn decisions of CM, cabinet of elected govt: Manish Sisodia

ANTARCTIC SEA ICE FALLS
TO RECORD LOW: STUDY

PAK FOREIGN MINISTRY DATA ALLEGEDLY HACKED BY INDIAN HACKERS, CLAIMS REPORT

Tit-for-Tat

❑ The sea ice of the Southern Ocean had shrunk to a new record minimum of 2.2 million square km by early February, the study found on Friday.

❑ This year, the ice is receding even more quickly than in the previous record year of 2022. According to the study, the sea ice in the Antarctic is expected to continue to melt during the second half of February, Xinhua news agency reported.

❑ One possible reason for the strong melting of the ice cover was the above-average warm air temperatures in the western and eastern parts of the Antarctic Peninsula, which were around 1.5 degrees Celsius above the long-term average, according to AWI.



changed at all in the 35 years before," Christian Haas, head of the Sea Ice Physics Section at AWI, said in a statement. "It is still unclear whether what we are seeing is the beginning of a rapid end to summer sea ice in the Antarctic, or if it is merely the beginning of a new phase characterised by low but still stable sea ice cover in the summer," Haas added. The crew of the research vessel Polarstern reports "almost ice-free conditions" in their current research area, the Bellingshausen Sea.

dous changes" in sea ice conditions, the AWI added. In 1899, the Belgian research vessel Belgica was stuck for more than a year in massive pack ice in exactly the same area where Polarstern can now operate completely free of ice. "The photographs and diaries of the Belgica's crew offer a unique chronicle of the ice conditions in the Bellingshausen Sea at the dawn of the industrial age, which climate researchers often use as a benchmark for comparison with today's climate change," the AWI said.

Islamabad | Agencies

In what appears to be the latest in a series of cyber attacks, Indian hackers have reportedly managed to extract data from Pakistans Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) office, Samaa TV reported.

The hackers gained unauthorised access to the ministry's systems and were able to extract a significant amount of data.

Based on a LinkedIn post shared by Zaki Khalid, an intelligence analyst, there has been a potential data leak of Pakistan's MoFA, Samaa TV reported.

The Sidewinder group, allegedly based out of India, has released sample datasets of a total of 7.5 TB that is believed to have been breached from the ministry's systems, the report said.

The leaked files also



include WhatsApp conversations between the members of the Pakistan Consulate in Barcelona.

The authenticity of the data samples has not been confirmed, but Zaki Khalid suggested that the matter warrants a thorough technical audit of MoFA's systems and networks, including the likelihood of certain officers' smartphones being compromised.

The sample datasets

have been released on one of the group's Telegram channels.

The timing of this potential data leak is notable, as India's Ministry of External Affairs was recently reported to have faced a similar breach by an unidentified hacker.

This breach could be a tit-for-tat response, which may have been perceived as originating from Pakistan, said Zaki Khalid, Samaa TV reported.

Mob breaks into police station, lynches man accused of blasphemy

Nankana Sahib: A 35-year-old man, who was arrested on blasphemy charges, was lynched on Saturday in Pakistan Punjab's Nankana Sahib district after a mob broke into the police station where the victim was being held, media reports said.

According to reports, the victim was accused of desecrating the Holy Quran while the locals claimed he was involved in 'witchcraft', The Express Tribune reported.

Following the accusation, he was handed over to the local police. However, a mob later gathered at the police station soon after news of the incident spread in the area, the report said.

The mob demanded the police to hand over the accused.

Govt can't act as robber of citizens' land: Karnataka HC

Team Absolute | Bengaluru

In a setback to the ruling BJP, the Karnataka High Court on Saturday stated that the government can't act as "a robber of citizens' land".

A bench headed by Justice Krishna S. Dixit made these observations while partly allowing the petition filed by M.V. Guruprasad, Nandini M. Guruprasad and residents of J.P. Nagar locality of Bengaluru.

The court also objected to the conduct of Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) and its officers fell short of the fairness standard expected from them as it took severe objection to the fact of non-payment of



compensation to land owners even 15 years after acquisition of their lands for setting up industries in 2007.

It maintained that the conduct of KIADB reinforces the shackles of a feudalistic attitude from which the transformative character of our Constitution seeks to liberate. The petitioners filed a peti-

tion in 2016, questioning the land acquisition and non-payment of compensation by KIADB. In return, the government agency had filed its statement in this regard making a casual intimation to the court that there is delay in payment of compensation, and it would be made soon.

REGULATORS ARE EXPERTS IN THEIR DOMAIN: FM ON ADANI ROW

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said that regulators in India are quite experienced and experts in their domain.

She said this when asked to react to Supreme Court's observation on the Hindenburg-Adani group controversy. The Supreme Court on Friday heard a petition seeking its intervention in the Adani row.

Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, while hearing the matter on Friday, said that "Do we intervene and have a mechanism to ensure this doesn't happen again? We do not want to get into policy matters. That is for the government."

Reacting further on issue, the finance minister said that "regulators are always on their toes, and not just now. So I will leave it there."

"You are obviously not expecting me to tell you what I would tell in the court," the finance minister said further. The finance minister said this while addressing a press conference after the customary post-budget address to RBI's board.



Freedom of speech neither in parliament, nor outside: Mallikarjun Kharge

Ranchi | Agencies

Hitting out at the BJP-led government at the Centre, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday alleged there was no freedom of speech in the country.

Addressing a rally in Jharkhand's Sahebganj district, Kharge expressed anguish, claiming that parts of his speech in Parliament were expunged.

"There is neither freedom of speech inside Parliament, nor outside. If someone speaks the truth, writes about it, shows it then they (BJP) send him or her behind the bars," he alleged while speaking at Guman Ground in Pakur after launching the party's 60-day 'Haath Se Haath Jodo' mass outreach



programme in the state.

BJP state president Deepak Prakash, however, termed the Congress' programme as "drama."

Kharge said, "I did not use any unparliamentary word or language to describe the prime minister.. Atal Bihari Vajpayee had used the same expression for former PM PV

Narasimha Rao and the BJP used it for former PM Manmohan Singh."

"BJP inducts many MLAs who face ED, IT, CBI cases...Prime Minister Modi and Amit Shah have bought a washing machine in which they wash the blemishes of such MLAs who then come out clean," he said.

SUSPECTED AL QAEDA TERRORIST ARRESTED IN BENGALURU

Bengaluru: A suspected terrorist with links to Al Qaeda has been arrested on Saturday from Thanisandra in Bengaluru in a joint operation by central probe agency and Internal Security Division (ISD).

The arrested, identified as Arif, was acting as per instructions of the terror outfit, according to police. The police suspected that Arif has links with Al Qaeda since past two years and carried out operations from his residence.

The accused, who works in a software company in Bengaluru and had taken the work from home option, got in touch with the terror outfit through social media.

Sources said the accused was active on Telegram and darknet and spreading messages of the terror outfit.

The authorities stated that he was preparing to reach Syria through Iraq in March. He was also planning to reach Afghanistan if not able to go to Syria. The authorities are grilling him at an undisclosed location.



INDIGENOUS AIRCRAFT ALH MK III TO PARTICIPATE IN AERO INDIA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The indigenous aircraft, ALH Mk III, and Maritime Reconnaissance aircraft P-8I would participate in the fly past and static display, respectively, during the upcoming Aero India event.

The Biennial event of Aero India 2023 is scheduled to be held at Air Force Station Yelahanka, Bengaluru from February 13-17.

The event offers a platform for the industry to showcase their latest equipment, helicopters and aircraft.

It also provides an oppor-



tunity for defence personnel to interact with OEM representatives and gain first-hand experience on the products which are envisaged for future induction

into the Armed Forces.

In pursuance to the nation's goal to achieve 'AatmaNirbharta', the Indian Navy has recently landed the LCA (Navy), the

indigenous technology demonstrator fighter (lead in for the Twin Engine Deck Based Fighter) onboard the indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant.

The aircraft was flown by an Indian naval test pilot.

This niche capability is the result of the Indian Navy's long term vision of AatmaNirbharBharat.

Officials said that during Aero India 2023, the Indian Navy will be participating in a number of activities.

The indigenous aircraft, ALH Mk III and MR aircraft P8I would participate in the fly past and static display respectively during the event.

DCGI SENDS NOTICE TO E-PHARMACIES FOR SELLING DRUGS WITHOUT LICENCE

New Delhi: The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has issued a showcause notice to online pharmacies, seeking an explanation on why action should not be taken against them for selling and distributing drugs in contravention of provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940.

The notice was issued to online pharmacies including -- Tata 1mg, Amazon, and Flipkart on Friday.

"The office has received various representations from time to time raising concerns regarding the sale of drugs through online, the internet or other electronic platforms, including various mobile applications, in contravention to the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 & Rules there under," the DCGI notice to the e-pharmacies read.

"Such sale includes drugs specified in Schedule H, H1 and X which are only allowed to be sold under a valid prescription of a registered medical practitioner and supplied under the supervision of a registered pharmacist," the notice read.

"In this regard, it may be mentioned that import, manufacture for sale or for distribution, or sale, or stock or exhibit or offer for sale or distribution of any drug are regulated under the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 & Drugs Rules 1945 made there," it stated.

The DCGI in the notice further said that for sale, or stock or exhibit or offer for sale or distribution of any drug, a license is required to be obtained from the concerned state licensing authority and conditions of license are required to be complied by the licensee. "There are cases in various courts in this regard requesting to prohibit the online sale of drugs," it said.



At 41,075, number of inmates in Maharashtra jails exceeds capacity

❑ The statistical report for the period ending December 2021 has indicated a steady excess occupancy in jails over years. The combined capacity of 60 jails in the state is 24,722.

❑ The number of inmates in 18 out of the total of 60 jails in the state is double or more than twice the capacity as on January 31, 2023, it said.

❑ These jails include Mumbai Central Jail (446% occupancy rate), Thane Central Jail (389%), and Buldhana District Jail (387%) among others.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The number of inmates in 60 jails in Maharashtra stood at 41,075 as on January 31, 2023, while the total capacity is 24,722, as per the Prison Department statistics.

At 5,966, Yerawada Central Jail in Pune had the highest number of inmates as of December 31, 2021, followed by Thane Central Jail at 4,471, Mumbai Central Jail at 3,424, and Talaja Jail at 2,819.

The report stated the jail occupancy in the state was 136.19% in 2017, 148.93% in 2018, 152.72% in 2019, 128.70% in 2020 and 148.80 in 2021. In 2021, Maharashtra stood

seventh in the country in terms of occupancy rate.

The average number of inmates in the total 60 jails in 2021 was 34,818, of which 96% were men and 4% were women.

As on January 31, 2023, the number of inmates in all jails was 41,075 of which 39,504 were men, 1,556 were women, and 15 were trans-genders. Of them, 7,949 were convicts, 32,917 undertrials, and 209 detainees. There were also a total of 606 foreign inmates in the jails, it said.

During 2021-22, the factory industry in jails earned Rs 11.10 crore and Rs 2.36 crore through agricultural produce.

MAHARASHTRA ORDERS SIT PROBE INTO SCRIBE'S 'KILLING', CONGRESS DEMANDS JUDICIAL PROBE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Under flak from various quarters for the "killing" of a Ratnagiri journalist Shashikant Warishe, the Maharashtra government will on Saturday set up a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the case.

Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who holds the home portfolio, ordered the police to form the SIT and investigate Warishe's killing even as the Opposition Congress demanded a judicial probe panel.

Fadnavis has directed the police department to set up the SIT headed by a senior officer and conduct the investigations into the case which has grabbed national attention.

On the other hand, Congress Chief Spokesperson Atul Londhe has sought an inquiry commission headed by a sitting or retired Bombay High Court judge to carry out the case probe, plus the report must be handed over to the court and not the state government. "It must be noted that Fadnavis had in the past declared that



the Barsu refinery complex (originally due to come up at Nanar) will come up no matter what and nothing can stop it..." Londhe pointed out, demanding the judicial probe to ascertain Warishe's killing and a possible conspiracy behind it.

On Monday, Warishe, 46, was knocked down and dragged on his bike by a SUV allegedly driven by a

local realty agent, Pandharinath Amberkar, 42.

While the scribe succumbed to his serious injuries on Tuesday, following a massive hue and cry, Amberkar was arrested and charged with murder, as the incident reverberated nationally.

Major media organisations, rights and social groups, NGOs, and almost all major political parties like

Congress, Nationalist Congress Party, Shiv Sena (UBT), CPI, and others have rallied together to condemn Warishe' killing, and unravel the plot behind it.

Warishe had run a series of articles opposing the Barsu refinery-cum-petrochemicals complex - billed as the world's biggest - coming up at a cost of Rs 3.50 lakh-crore, with foreign collaboration in Ratnagiri.

Earlier, following protests by locals, the erstwhile Maha Vikas Aghadi government had scrapped the Nanar location and the next regime has finalised Barsu as its new location, which is also facing huge opposition.

Warishe had been running a campaign against the upcoming refinery and petrochemicals complex coming up in the region, while Amberkar was a supporter of the mega-project.

Journalists and other organisations took out silent protest marches in Mumbai on Friday and in Rajapur on Saturday demanding justice for Warishe's family and ensuring stringent punishment to the prime accused Amberkar.

Searches in Mumbai, Bengaluru against suspects linked to ISIS, Al-Qaeda

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday carried out searches at multiple locations in Mumbai and Bengaluru against some suspects having links with global terror outfit ISIS and Al-Qaeda, sources said.

The raids are learnt to have links with the case related to the conspiracy hatched by the accused to spread terror activities of the Islamic State (IS), a banned terrorist organisation, and to endanger the unity, security, and sovereignty of the country.

During the searches, digital devices and incriminating documents were seized from the houses of the suspects, said sources, adding that some of the suspects have been picked up for questioning.

Last month, the NIA also carried out searches at six locations across Karnataka,



and arrested two persons in connection with the Shivamogga Islamic State conspiracy case. The searches were conducted at Dakshina Kannada, Shivamogga, Davangere, and Bengaluru.

The arrested persons were identified as Reshaan Thajuddin Sheikh from Varamballi in Brahmapur, Udipi, and Huzair Farhan Baig from Shivamogga in Karnataka. The investigations in the case revealed that one Maaz Muneer radicalised his close associate and college mate Reshaan Thajuddin, and

both the accused persons had received funds from their ISIS handler through crypto-wallets. As a part of their larger violent and disruptionist designs, they also indulged in arson and targeting of vehicles and other establishments, such as liquor shops, godowns, and power transformers, the probe agency had said earlier. he case was initially registered on September 19, 2022, at Shivamogga Rural Police Station, but was later re-registered by the NIA on November 15, 2022.

PM to inaugurate 246 km section of Delhi-Mumbai Expressway

Team Absolute | Mumbai

First completed section of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, Delhi-Dausa-Lalsot, will be dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 12.

The 246 km Delhi-Dausa-Lalsot section of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway has been developed at a cost of more than Rs 12,150 crore. The operationalisation of this section will reduce the travel time from Delhi to Jaipur from 5 hours to around 3.5 hours and provide a major boost to economic development of the entire region.

Delhi-Mumbai Expressway will be India's longest expressway with length of 1,386 km. It will



reduce travel distance between Delhi and Mumbai by 12 per cent from 1,424 km to 1,242 km and travel time by 50 per cent from 24 hours to 12 hours. It will pass through six states of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra and connect major cities like Kota, Indore, Jaipur, Bhopal, Vadodara and Surat.

The Expressway will also serve 93 PM Gati Shakti

Economic Nodes, 13 ports, eight major airports and eight multi-modal logistics parks (MMLPs) along with spurs to new upcoming greenfield airports such as Jewar Airport, Navi Mumbai Airport and JNPT port. The Expressway will have a catalytic impact in the developmental trajectory of all adjoining regions, thus contributing in a major way in the economic transformation of the country.

MAN ACQUITTED 6 YEARS AFTER WIFE COMMITTED SUICIDE ALLEGING HARASSMENT

Thane: A couple and their son have been acquitted in an abetment of suicide case in Maharashtra's Thane district.

Laxmi, the wife of Yakasami Pyarala (28), ended her life on January 16, 2017 allegedly due to harassment at her marital home in Kalwa, including threats of dire consequences if she gave birth to a girl child, as per the prosecution.

Pyarala, father Mastan Narsinha and mother Mangalamba, were charged with abetting the suicide of Laxmi and other offences, including criminal intimidation.

In her order of February 1, the details of which were made available on Saturday, Sessions Judge Rachna R Tehra acquitted the three saying the prosecution had failed to prove the charges.



Gold teeth help Mumbai cops arrest fugitive missing for 15 years

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai Police on Saturday arrested 38-year-old Pravin Ashubha Jadeja, missing for 15 years, with two gold-plated teeth in his mouth posing as an LIC agent.

He worked as a salesman in a clothing store & duped a shop owner of Rs 40,000 in 2007.

The accused has changed his identity and shifted to Kutch in Gujarat to avoid being caught. "He has been identified as Pravin Ashubha Jadeja aka Pravin Singh aka Pradeep Singh Ashubha Jadeja," a police official said.

"The accused was charged with cheating and misleading the police. Although after a few days of arrest, the accused got



bail from the court. Later, after the hearing, the accused absconded from Mumbai and didn't appear in court again.

Hence the court declared him a fugitive," the police official said.

"Pravin used to work as a salesman in a cloth shop in 2007. His owner once asked him to collect Rs 40,000 from another merchant. Instead of giving the money to his owner, Pravin misled the police and the owner by telling them that someone has stolen his bag full of money from

the toilet," the police official added.

After the investigation, it was revealed that Pravin kept the money with himself and misled the police, the Mumbai police said in a statement.

"The accused was arrested but he absconded after getting bail from the court." Talking about their latest search for the accused, Mumbai police said, "A few days ago, the search investigation was resumed by the police in which they interrogated the former associates of the accused and came to know that Pravin is hiding in Sabhrai village of Mandvi Taluka in Kachchh District of Gujarat. The police acted as LIC agents and called Pravin to Mumbai. After confirmation, the accused was arrested."

No charge sheet against Eknath Khadse till March: Bombay HC

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Friday directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) of Pune police not to file its charge sheet against former Maharashtra revenue minister and Nationalist Congress Party's (NCP) Eknath Khadse in connection with a 2016 Pune land deal case till March.

A division bench of Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Justice P K Chavan gave directions while hearing Khadse's petition

claiming that the ACB had in April 2018 filed a closure report in the case, saying that no substance was found in allegations against him.

However, after the change in government in the state in June 2022, the anti-graft agency sought to reopen the matter. Khadse faced allegations that he misused his power as a minister and purchased land in Pune's Bhosari area, owned by MIDC, in the name of his wife and son-in-law for Rs 3.75 crore against the market price of Rs 40 crore.



WOMAN ARRESTED FOR OPERATING SEX RACKET

Mumbai: A 24-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly running a sex racket in Thane, a police official said on Saturday.

The woman is a resident of Andheri in Mumbai and she has been charged under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, the Kalwa police station official said.

She was held on Thursday from Kalwa Naka after a tip off about the flesh trade was confirmed by a decoy customer, he added.

Man stabbed to death over Rs 500 payment to repair phone

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 25-year-old man was stabbed to death allegedly by two brothers over non-payment of Rs 500 to get a damaged mobile phone repaired, at suburban Bandra, police said on Friday.

The incident took place on Thursday night below a foot-over bridge of Bandra railway station and the man was identified as Nazim Iftikar Khan, an official said, adding the two accused were known to him and were later arrested by the police.

According to the official, Khan and the two accused resided at Garib Nagar in Bandra (East). Khan's

mobile phone was damaged by one of the accused persons, for which he demanded Rs 1,000 from him to get it repaired.

The duo gave Rs 500 to Khan's wife and assured the remaining money will be paid before 12 am. However, Khan demanded the remaining amount on the spot, which led to a scuffle between them, he said.

During fighting over the pending payment, one of the accused pulled out a knife and stabbed Khan in his chest, leaving him seriously injured, the official said.

The victim was rushed to a hospital where he was declared dead before admission, he said.

SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER ARRESTED FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT: POLICE

Mumbai: Thane police have arrested Naresh Manera of Shiv Sena's Uddhav faction for allegedly sexually assaulting a woman, officials said on Saturday.

"Naresh Manera was arrested by Thane's Kasarvadavali police. He was produced before the court on Saturday," an official familiar with the matter said. "A First Information Report under Indian Penal Code (IPC) section 354 (assault or criminal force to a woman with intent to outrage her modesty) and others has been lodged against Manera in Kasarvadavali police station," police said.

More details are awaited.

Maha Congress hits choppy waters, but it's likely to sail through unscathed

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

In its 138-year long chequered history, the Congress is no stranger to political upheavals or crises, especially in Maharashtra -- where it was born in December 1885.

For the past month, the state unit has once again run into another such rough weather with many prophets of doom darkly predicting it's the end game for the grand old party.

Curiously, the Congress leads itself in some or the other mess around elections -- whether Parliamentary, Assembly, biennials or bypolls -- pushing it to the brink, much to the glee of political detractors, both within and outside.

The latest unrest brewed up ahead of the crucial All India Congress Committee (AICC) Session coming up in Raipur (February 26/27), where a decision is likely to be taken to conduct organisational polls at the state-level, including Pradesh Congress Committee chiefs.

It was in the run-up to the recent biennial MLC polls that resulted in the latest intra-party fracas that erupted into an open war of words between state Congress President Nana Patole and Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Balasaheb Thorat.

The latest point of friction was the Nashik MLC seat in which certain machinations saw the official Congress nominee Sudhir Tambe dropping off at the last-minute in favour of his son Satyajet Tambe, who happens to be Thorat's nephew.

Amid allegations hurled from all sides, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) promptly 'threw its doors open' to welcome anybody willing to switch sides, as many had done in the past.

State Congress Vice-President Ratnakar Mahajan, however, says that



the developments regarding the Patole-Thorat fracas are "unfortunate and avoidable" -- especially when the party is bracing for two major elections in 2024 -- Lok Sabha and state Assembly, besides other civic polls.

Brushing aside apprehensions that the party is again tottering in the bastion state -- where it has ruled 52 years directly, indirectly or with allies and 'avatars' -- a veteran general secretary said that the Congress is poised to make "another comeback" after the Bharat Jodo Yatra (BJY).

"Is it the first time? The Congress has been tackling such delicate situations for over a century, starting with the rebellion of Lokmanya Tilak (1906). But after each internal onslaught, the party has emerged stronger... It will pass through this sticky patch soon," he countered the prophets of doom.

This time while the Maha Vikas Aghadi ally Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) has kept aloof, the Shiv Sena (UBT) peeped inside and aired its views publicly, virtually blaming Patole even for the fall of the MVA government in June 2022.

Viewing it as an affront, Congress Chief Spokesperson Atul Londhe hit back to defend Patole, the party and its policies, while advising Sena (UBT) to follow the 'alliance-dharma' and not poke its nose into others' affairs. At the grassroots level, Mumbai Congress' North Indian Cell Vice-President V.P. Singh feels that given the present state political scenario, senior leaders must shed their egos, iron out differences through indoor negotiations, ensure that the ordinary workers are not demoralised and the party can encash the BJJ goodwill.

A central leader dismissed comparisons of the current ongoing with Sharad Pawar's thunderous exit from Congress in 1999, and feels that the possibility of Thorat or Tambe joining the BJP appear 'miniscule'.

On Sunday, AICC In-Charge of Maharashtra H.K. Patil is reaching Mumbai to douse the political fire before it spreads further or scalds the state Congress and MVA.

Most senior leaders at the state and central level are optimistic that an amicable settlement will emerge after Patil's visit and the Raipur AICC Session, and the resilient party will be battle-ready once again -- as in the past 138 years.



Khelo India Youth Games, 2022 Madhya Pradesh

JAIVEER MOTWANI AND JASNOOR KAUR CLAIM FASTEST SWIMMER TITLE AS CURTAINS COME DOWN

Madhya Pradesh, who took home the 2nd Runner Up Trophy with a haul of 39 gold, 30 silver and 27 bronze medals. Haryana were awarded the 1st Runner Up Trophy for their haul of 40 gold, 28 silver and 50 bronze medals.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Curtains came down on the Khelo India Youth Games 2022 Madhya Pradesh (KIYG2022MP) India's "Youth Olympics", at the beautiful Upper Lake area of the Madhya Pradesh (M.P.)'s state capital. Jaiveer Motwani of Maharashtra and Punjab's Jasnoor Kaur, claimed the title of the fastest boy and girl swimmers of the games, after win-

The Champions Bus parade

The hour-long Champions bus parade travelled through different parts of the city, making a couple of stops in between at pre-notified checkpoints. Artists on floats performed traditional martial arts like Kalaripayattu and Gatka, besides performances by Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) exponents and football, rope and cycle artists. Champion athlete and Olympic medalist Gagan Narang, was also at hand to address the champions at the first checkpoint while Emcees and dance performances kept the crowds engaged at all times.

ning the Boys and Girls 50m freestyle event on the final day, at the Prakash Tarun Pushkar pool in the city. Maharashtra, with a haul of 56 gold, 55 silver and 50 bronze medals emerged the overall champions, while Haryana (40

golds) and hosts Madhya Pradesh (M.P) with 39 golds were second and third respectively.

The Closing Ceremony was attended among others by the Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Chief Minister, M.P, Anurag

Singh Thakur, Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India and Yashodhara Raje Scindia, Minister for Sports and Youth Welfare, Government of M.P.

THE CLOSING CEREMONY: ELEGANT, IMMACULATE AND SLICK

The Closing Ceremony was immaculately planned. It began once the Champions and dignitaries deboarded the bus and entered the venue and flute player Anirban Roy set the ball rolling, with a wonderful rendition of Vande Matram. Scindia then gave the welcome address, before Thakur and the Chief Minister, made their addresses. In between a couple of films were aired, among them one titled Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat, which captivated the audience.

The felicitations followed and one by one all key sponsors. The winners followed next and the biggest cheer was reserved for the hosts Madhya Pradesh, who took home the 2nd Runner Up Trophy with a haul of 39 gold, 30 silver and 27 bronze medals. Haryana were awarded the 1st Runner Up Trophy for their haul of 40 gold, 28 silver and 50 bronze medals.

The final and most coveted award went to the champion state Maharashtra with a haul 56 gold, 55 silver and 49 bronze medals, who were then called on stage and presented with the glittering Winners Trophy.

The Ceremony ended with a wonderful choreographed dance performance to the popular Anthem of the games, "Hindustan ka Dil Dhadka do" and photo opportunities of the winners with the dignitaries.



21 lakh earthen lamps will be lit on Mahashivaratri in Ujjain: Chief Minister

Shiv Jyoti Aparnam 2023 will be successful with public participation, Guinness World Record will be created. Chief Minister reviews preparations for Mahashivratri Deepotsav in Ujjain.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that on February 18, the festival of Mahashivaratri will be celebrated in Ujjain like Diwali. The form of Shri Mahakal Mahalok is the subject of discussion in the whole world including the country. On Mahashivaratri, residents of Avantika will express their commitment towards Mahakal by lighting 21 lakh lamps. This unprecedented event will be possible only with the participation of the society and the government. Chief Minister Chouhan was reviewing the preparations for the grand campaign of lighting 21 lakh lamps on Mahashivaratri on February 18 in Ujjain.

Will be organized on the principle of zero waste

It was informed that Mahashivaratri Deepotsav has been named as "Shiv Jyoti Aparnam 2023". A Guinness World Record will be created by lighting 21 lakh lamps on the festival. Earlier, in the year 2022 in Ujjain, a world record was made for lighting 11 lakh 71 thousand 78 diyas on Mahashivaratri.

After this, a new world record was created in Ayodhya in the year 2022 itself by lighting 15 lakh 76 thousand diyas on Diwali. There is a plan to light 21 lakh diyas on Mahashivratri in Ujjain. This entire event will be on the principle of zero waste.

Decoration will be done at temples, ghats and major places of the city

In Shiv Jyoti Aparnam in Ujjain, lamps will be lit in the city's temples, all commercial places and house-to-house including the ghats of Kshipra river. Along with electrical decorations, there will be Rangoli and other decorations at prominent places. 3 lakh 10 thousand at Kedareshwar Ghat on the banks of Kshipra river, 1 lakh 75 thousand at Sunehri Ghat, 4 lakh 50 thousand at Dutt Akhara, 2 lakh 50 thousand from Ram Ghat to Bombay Dharamshala, 3 lakh 75 thousand from Bombay Dharamshala to Narsingh Mandir And there is a plan to light 4 lakh 75 thousand lamps at Mali Ghat towards Bhukhi Mata Temple. About 20 thousand volunteers will participate in this work.

12 Cheetahs from South Africa likely to arrive on Feb 18: Official

Team Absolute | Sheopur

A second batch of 12 cheetahs is expected to arrive in Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park (KNP) from South Africa on February 18, six months after eight of the spotted cats were released into the reserve, a senior forest official said on Saturday.

According to current plans, 12 more cheetahs are being brought to KNP on February 18, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (wildlife) J S Chouhan told a News Agency.

He said the felines will be flown from South Africa to Gwalior before being transported to Kuno. The official said he was unaware of the number of male and female cheetahs in the batch of 12.

The cheetahs will be kept under one-month quarantine as per the norms, he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had released the first batch of eight cheetahs - five females and three males -



from Namibia into a quarantine enclosure at KNP on his 72nd birthday on September 17. The first batch of cheetahs is currently in hunting enclosures at the park before their full release into the wild.

Cheetahs are being reintroduced nearly seven decades after the species became extinct in India. The last cheetah died in the country in 1947 in the Korea district in present-day Chhattisgarh, and the species was declared

extinct from India in 1952.

In January, India and South Africa signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the reintroduction of cheetahs in the Asian country. As per the MoU, an initial batch of 12 cheetahs will be flown from South Africa to India.

An official of KNP had earlier said that the park has set up 10 quarantine "bomas" (enclosures) for the new guests.

MINOR GIRL RAPED, MURDERED IN SHIVPURI

Shivpuri: A six-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered in Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri district, police said on Saturday.

The incident took place in Badora village under Karera police station limits on Friday night. Police station in-charge Satish Chouhan said the girl's mother had taken her to a temple where a religious programme was underway. The girl got separated and her mother thought she must have returned home. But when she was found to be missing, a police complaint was filed. Her body was found behind the village's government school on Saturday morning with a piece of cloth stuffed into her mouth. A case of rape and relevant offences under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) was registered and probe is on, the official said.

Projection of Kamal Nath as Cong's CM face dampens Yatra-time bonhomie

Sundeep Pouranik | Bhopal

Though the Congress united like never before for Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra, an undercurrent of tension has gripped the party's Madhya Pradesh unit over the projection of Kamal Nath as the chief ministerial candidate.

While the party succeeded in putting up a united front when passing through the Hindi heartland, the issue of the next Chief Minister's appointment created a lot of strain within.

Voices of dissent erupted after hoardings depicting state President Kamal Nath as the future Chief Minister were put up in the state on the occasion of New Year.

Former state President and former union minister Arun Yadav said that since Nath is the state president, the appointment of the CM would be the decision of the MLAs and the party chief. Ajay Singh -- the former Opposition leader -- also backed Yadav's statement.

Earlier, while Nath was being called the "future chief minister", he is now being referred to as the "inevitable CM".

The ruling party in the state has been attacking Nath constantly.

Taking a jibe at Nath, Chief Minister



Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that while the "future CM" Nath says something, his IT Cell has an entirely different story to tell. A state of uneasiness prevails within the Congress.

Political analysts believe that unity in the party was apparent during the Bharat Jodo Yatra. They also say that factionalism within the party had majorly reduced when Nath became the state President in 2018.

However, tension has resurfaced regarding the CM's appointment and is clearly visible. Significantly, the Congress

formed government after winning in the 2018 Assembly elections, but the Nath-led government in the state collapsed after MLAs, including Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia switched sides.

The Legislative Assembly elections are to be held this year, and both the major national parties are engaged in making efforts to win the same.

Since the ongoing tussle within the party is taking place at a time when former CM Digvijaya Singh is less active in the state, it is difficult to predict what might be in store for the Congress.

CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN PLANTED SAPLINGS OF BANYAN, JAMUN AND TAMARIND



Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Banyan, Jamun and Tamarind in the garden located at Shyamala Hills. Muskan Raghuvanshi of Ashoknagar, who went on a cycle journey from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, planted saplings along with Chief Minister Chouhan. Khajuraho MP V.D. Sharma were also present. Muskan has started the cycle tour from Sindra Camp of CRPF in Kashmir. He aims to complete the journey till Kanyakumari in 25 days. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, journalist Ritu Sahu of Indore, along with her seven-year-old niece Planted a sapling on the birth anniversary of Dakshita Sahu. Dakshita recited the verse "Ya Devi Sarvabhuteshu Shakti-Rupen Sansthita" while dedicating the plantation to women power. Journalist Hariom Pastor planted saplings on his birthday and Amarjit Jha and Alpana Jha on their marriage anniversary.

191 couples tied in matrimony according to Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist rituals

The couples thanked the Chief Minister by carrying the placard of "Thank you Mamaji".

Team Absolute | Bhopal

As many as 191 couples tied the knot in Sonsar district panchayat of Chhindwara district under Chief Minister Kanya Vivah, Nikah Yojana. The specialty of the ceremony was that 130 couples got married in tribal, 44 in Mangalashakt, 14 in Buddhist rituals and 3 couples got married together. People of all religions also cooperated enthusiastically with each other with love and brotherhood.

Newly wedded couples and their families full of enthusiasm and enthusiasm praised Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for the scheme. The newlyweds were happily showing placards of "Thank you Mama ji", "Thank you Mama ji" and "Thank you Chief Minister" in their hands.

Under the Kanya Vivah Yojana, the state government spends Rs 55,000 on



the marriage of girls. From organizing the marriage to the daughter's household needs, a check of Rs 11,000 is given. The objective of the scheme is to remove the worry of marriage of daugh-

ters of poor families and to get them married without taking loans. In the function, the local public representatives gave material and checks to the couples.

Registration of psoriasis disease started in Bhopal Institute of Medical Sciences

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Registration of new patients of psoriasis disease has been started in the Government Homeopathic Medical College and Hospital of Bhopal. For the treatment of patients, a special research and treatment unit is being operated in the Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhopal in collaboration with the Department of AYUSH.

For the last few years, work is being done to eliminate psoriasis disease from the root through homeopathy. For registration of new cases of psoriasis disease, the office of the institute can be contacted during office hours from 10 am to 5 pm. Mobile number 9630667239 and landline number 0755-2992970 have been issued for the convenience of patients in the institute.

SYMPTOMS OF PSORIASIS DISEASE

Psoriasis is a skin related problem, in which the skin cells of the person start growing very fast. There is also burning and itching. Apart from the skin of the body, it occurs on the scalp, palms, soles, elbows, knees and back. Along with this, there is a wound in the skin of the victim. Plaques cause itching and swelling in the sufferer. Continuous research is being done in homeopathy for the treatment of complex diseases like psoriasis in the world. Effective medicines are available in the institute for its treatment. For the treatment of psoriasis, contact can be made at the homeopathic hospital located in the premises of Khushilal Sharma Ayurveda Sansthan, Bhopal.

Los Angeles | Agencies

The Hollywood star explained: "Every single person that's seen the movie talks first and mostly about that scene, which it's a surprise for me. But I'm glad because it works for the story of the movie."



Los Angeles | Agencies

contrasted perfectly with the bright tone of her outfit. Kardashian began the video by showing off the Valentine's Day box which featured an attached note that supposed to be addressed to her.



Los Angeles | Agencies

No folks, it's not 2007... It's 2023 and I'm making my first homemade lasagna at home. I finally got my fireplace to work in my living room!!! As my hubby says it best: don't believe everything you read!!! All that love right back at ya (sic)", she added. The claims come after Britney was forced to issue a lengthy statement after fans called the police to her house following concerns for her well-being.



Los Angeles | Agencies

"Our legion of fans have demanded it for years, and now we're finally ready to honour their call-to-action with 'Riddick: Furya,'" Twoby said in a statement. "My collaboration with Vin and One Race has spanned 20 fruitful years, as together we've created three movies, two video games, an anime production, and motion comics for the internet. This new big-screen event will see a return to Riddick's homeland, where we finally get to explore Riddick's genesis."

Los Angeles | Agencies

Capaldi is looking forward to giving his fans a closer look at his real-life self. The chart-topping star



"Either way, it's going to be lots of fun, and will be lovely to have people along for the ride."



IND vs AUS 1st Cricket Test Match

INDIA THRASHES AUSTRALIA BY INNINGS AND 132 RUNS

Nagpur | Agencies

India capitalised on the fear of spin in the minds of the Australian batters on a spin-friendly wicket, to bowl them out for 91, their lowest total in India and second lowest ever, winning the first Test by an innings and 132 run defeat in the first Test at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium.

India thus took a 1-0 lead in the four-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, setting them for the 3-0 win they need to comfortably seal their Berth in the World Test Championships Final to be held later this year at the Oval in London.

Ravichandran Ashwin bowled a devastating spell of 12 overs to claim 5 wickets for 37 runs as India bowled out Australia within a session after Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Mohammed had helped the hosts reach 400 runs in their first innings, adding some quick runs in the morning session, giving India a lead of 223 runs.

However, Ravindra Jadeja was the star of India's memorable win as he shone both with the ball and bat to single-handedly put Australia under pressure. Jadeja, making a comeback from a knee injury after a five-month



break, claimed 5-47 in their first innings and then scored 70 runs, sharing crucial partnerships of 61 runs with skipper Rohit Sharma, who scored a majestic 120, and 84 runs for the eighth wicket with Axar Patel (84) as India handed Australia a comprehensive defeat.

India had added 79 runs in the morning session to set Australia the target of scoring a minimum of 224 runs to make them bat again. But the Australians, who were out for 177 in their first innings, fared even poorly in the second essay as they succumbed too easily with their batters coming up with a spineless performance.

Australia were bowled out in less than a session, their innings lasting

32.3 overs and lasted just 131 minutes. Ashwin, who claimed his 450th wicket in the first innings, recorded his 31st five-for as the Australian batters failed to read his bowling and went back to the pavilion in a procession.

Ravindra Jadeja, who had claimed 5-47 in the first innings, bagged 2 for 34 while Mohammed Shami claimed 3-13 from five overs as he wiped out the tail. Brief scores: Australia 177 & 91 all out in 32.3 overs (Steve Smith 25 not out; R Ashwin 5-37, R Jadeja 2-34, M Shami 2-13) lost to India 400 all out in 139.3 overs (Rohit Sharma 120, Ravindra Jadeja 70, Axar Patel 84, Mohd Shami 37; Todd Murphy 7-124, Cummins 2-78) by innings and 132 runs.

JUGGLING THREE TOP-CLASS SPINNERS IS CHALLENGING: ROHIT

Nagpur| Test skippers all over the world may envy him for having the services of Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel, especially when playing in India, but captain Rohit Sharma said handling the three spinners is a headache, albeit a pleasant one, and nag him all the time as they want to bowl all the time and are aware of approaching milestones.



"Yeah, it's a little tough, honestly, because they are all reaching their milestones. Jaddu was telling me he's 249 wickets. He's been telling me all day that Ashwin has four wickets. He's closer to five wickets. He's saying I want to bowl. But again, all three guys are quite quality spinners, I mean, so you know. Whichever end is more helpful; all three spinners want to bowl from that end, that's obvious." Rohit said.

Women's T20 World Cup

India begin chase for elusive title with opener against arch-rivals Pakistan

Cape Town | Agencies

India's run for an elusive Women's T20 World Cup title will begin again when they open their campaign against arch-rivals Pakistan at the Newlands Cricket Ground in Cape Town.

With a historic victory in the ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup coming in South Africa last month, Harmanpreet Kaur & Co have got the motivation to go one step further from their runners-up finish in the 2020 T20 World Cup and get their hands on the trophy.

They will also be aided by U19 Women's T20 World Cup-winning captain Shafali Verma and wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh joining the side for the marquee event,



bringing a lot of knowledge about the conditions in South Africa.

If India is to go all the way to the trophy, they will need Shafali, Richa and Jemimah Rodrigues to come good consistently plus support mainly Harmanpreet and Smriti. Deepti has to continue her good form with bat and ball, which has been stel-

lar of late. With the ball, the roles of Renuka Thakur, Pooja Vastrakar and Shikha Pandey will be key in the fast-bowling department. In terms of spinners, Deepti will need Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Devika Vaidya and part-time spinners, Harmanpreet and Shafali, to come good.

HARMANPREET FIT TO PLAY; INJURED SMRITI DOUBTFUL

Cape Town| On the eve of India's opening match in the Women's T20 World Cup against Pakistan, batting Coach Hrishikesh Kanitkar said that captain Harmanpreet Kaur is fit to play in Sunday's highly-anticipated game. At the same time, Kanitkar also mentioned that vice-captain and left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana is 'most likely' going to miss out on India's tournament opener due to a finger injury which is not related to fracture. "Harman is fit to play tomorrow; Smriti has got a finger injury. So, she is still recovering and most likely, she won't play tomorrow. Harman has battled for the last two days -- today and yesterday. So, she is fine. We believe Smriti will play the next game (against West Indies on February 15), it's a finger injury, she will be fine for the next match," the coach said.



Serie A

Giroud ends Milan's dismal run with winner against Torino

Rome (Italy) | Agencies

Olivier Giroud's header earned AC Milan a 1-0 victory over Torino in Serie A on Friday, their first win since January 4.

The Rossoneri headed into the new year with poor form as they suffered an exit in the Coppa Italia and a Supercoppa setback to city rivals Inter Milan. They also conceded three consecutive defeats in Serie A and only collected two points from the past five rounds, reports news agency Xinhua. Zlatan



Ibrahimovic was back in the squad, for the first time since May 2022, while it was another veteran Giroud that decided the game as he jumped to meet Theo Hernandez's floated cross for a header in the

62nd minute. Milan provisionally moved to third place with 41 points. They will host Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday in the first leg of the UEFA Champions League last-16 tie.

Champions League

Bayern's Nagelsmann puzzling over tactics ahead of Paris duel

Berlin (Germany) | Agencies

To entirely focus on the delicate last-16 duel against Paris Saint-Germain, Bayern Munich's training centre seems to have turned into a quiet haven.

The tensions of the past days and weeks caused by several in-house struggles appear to have been moved into the background like a theatre scene.

The club is spreading the news of the first cautious peace talks between coach Julian Nagelsmann and keeper Manuel Neuer, who attacked the club after the dismissal of his favourite goalkeeper-coach Toni Tapalovic.

Club leaders such as Chairman Oliver Kahn and sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic announce to



have postponed meetings with injured Neuer until after the Paris games while announcing Michael Rechner as the Tapalovic successor. The club claims sportive issues are keeping minds busy while pictures of Leroy Sane are spread showing the striker doing extra hours to improve his robustness. The message behind seems apparent: Bayern is working fully concentrated on how to beat the French giant next Tuesday evening despite the news the Paris cornerstones Kylian Mbappe and Lionel Messi might miss

the first leg due to injury. Bayern coach Nagelsmann is busy talking about tactical issues such as having to decide if a back-row of three might be a more promising choice than the traditional chain of four.

Considerations ground on the intention to include silverback Tomas Muller and upstart Jamal Musiala aside from spearhead Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting to the starting 11 and change the 4-2-3-1 system into a 3-1-4-1-1.

Despite many swan songs indicating the best times for the icon has passed, Muller's presence turned out to be a case of survival.

Therefore, the 33-year-old is said to cover the spot right behind former Paris player Choupo-Moting while Musiala is part of the mid-field four.



WPL was the one piece missing from women's cricket: Smriti

India's left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana believes the Women's Premier League (WPL) was the one piece which was missing from women's cricket in the country and said it will have a tremendous impact on the growth of cricket globally.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

I'm really excited about the first-ever Women's Premier League. We have been waiting for this for a really long time. I think the build-up has been amazing and I'm really excited at how things have turned out."

"It's going to be massive in terms of

growing bench strength for the Indian team and I don't think only in India, globally it's going to be massive for women's cricket. IPL is a brand, and similarly, WPL will definitely boost women's cricket globally."

"We have seen what Women's Big Bash (played in Australia) has done for players from different countries. WPL will do the same," she said.

Women's T20 WC

SRI LANKA CLAIMED THREE-RUN VICTORY OVER SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town | Agencies

Sri Lanka claimed a famous three-run victory over hosts South Africa at Newlands on the opening night of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023.

Captain Chamari Athapaththu led from the front with a wonderful 68 from 50 balls, her nation's highest-ever individual score at the showpiece tournament.

Having set South Africa 130 to win, Athapaththu's spinners took control with guile and discipline to secure a first T20I victory over the Proteas since 2016. Now joined by 17-year-old Vishmi Gunaratne, Athapaththu didn't take a backward step and took De Klerk for five boundaries in nine balls. Vishmi took time to settle but matched her skipper's stroke play, lap-sweeping Mlaba to the rope and then hacking Shabnim Ismail for three fours in an over on her return to the attack. Athapaththu and Vishmi put on 86 for the sec-



ond wicket, Sri Lanka's highest partnership for any wicket at the T20 World Cup, but they departed abruptly in successive balls. Vishmi took a single to short cover that wasn't there, run out by Tazmin Brits for 35, before Athapaththu perished to long leg for a superb 68 to leave her side on 114 for three.

Ismail yorked Nilakshi de Silva in the penulti-

mate over to slow Sri Lanka right down and Marizanne Kapp conceded only five from the last as South Africa were set 130 to win.

Left-arm spinner Sugandika Kumari struck when Anneke Bosch dragged on, leaving South Africa in disarray at 72 for five. Proteas captain Sune Luus was left standing amid the wreckage and as the required rate climbed north of 10; she launched Ranasinghe over the long-on boundary. Two balls later De Klerk tried the same but could only find the grasp of that fielder De Silva again, the hosts with it all to do at 95 for six.

Brief scores

Sri Lanka 129/4 in 20 overs (Chamari Athapaththu 68, Vishmi Gunaratne 35; Nadine De Klerk 1-38, Marizanne Kapp 1-15) beat South Africa 126/9 in 20 overs (Sune Luus 28, Laura Wolvaardt 18; Inoka Ranaweera 3-18, Oshadi Ranasinghe 2-20) by 3 runs.

ILT20

Desert Vipers, Gulf Giants lock horns in final for inaugural trophy

Dubai | Agencies

An intense clash is in the offing for the inaugural ILT20 trophy when Desert Vipers meet Gulf Giants in the final at the Dubai International Stadium.

Leading the show through consistent batting is Alex Hales from Desert Vipers with 468 runs from 11 matches and a fine bowling performance from Chris Jordan with 19 wickets from nine matches. Hales is being closely chased by the inspiring Gulf Giants skipper James Vince with 425 runs from 10 matches, while Jordan is being trailed by his teammate David Wiese with 18 wickets from 10 matches.

Who will walk away with the 'Green Belt' for the most runs and the White Belt for the most wickets is as unpredictable as the outcome of the



final. For the UAE cricket fraternity, it is a matter of pride that their hero and MI

Emirates' opener Muhammad Waseem is in fourth position among the highest run-getters with 367 runs

from 11 matches and bowler Junaid Siddique of Sharjah Warriors is in the seventh position among highest wicket takers with 10 wickets.

Desert Vipers stormed into the final stunning table toppers Gulf Giants in the Qualifier 1 by 19 runs. Whether they will be able to repeat their show in the final will depend on the performances of their star players starting from their opener UAE's Rohan Mustafa, the consistent Alex Hales, Sam Billings, allrounders Wanindu Hasaranga and Tom Curran. Much is expected from their skipper Colin Munro and strike bowlers Sheldon Cottrell, UAE's Shiraz Ahmed, Luke Wood and Gus Atkinson.

Also, there are so many similarities in the strengths of both teams, which finished at the top two spots in the league stage.

Cordoba Open

RAMOS-VINOLAS REACHES LAST-FOUR STAGE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Third-seeded Albert Ramos-Vinolas of Spain progressed to the semi-finals of Argentina's Cordoba Open with a 6-4, 2-6, 6-1 win over Portugal's Joao Sousa.

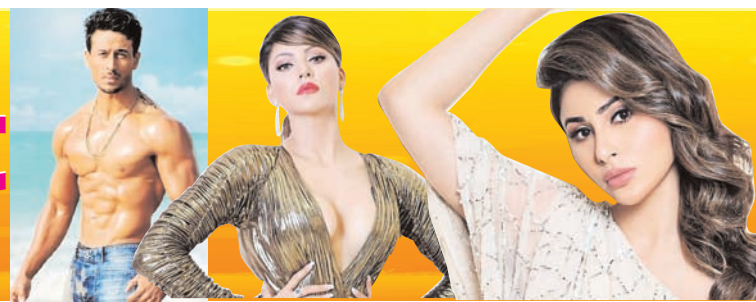
Ramos-Vinolas' first-serve percentage was 93 per cent, and he also sent down four aces while converting six of 10 break points.

He will meet Argentine Federico Coria on Saturday for a place in the final. The latter advanced after Francisco Cerundolo was forced to forfeit their quarter-final mid-match because of injury.



Hugo Dellien and Sebastian Baez were others to reach the tournament's last four with wins over Juan Manuel Cerundolo and

Marcelo Barrios, respectively. The ATP 250 event is being played on the outdoor clay of the Polo Deportivo Kempes complex in Cordoba.



BHUMI, RAJKUMMAR GO DOWN MEMORY LANE AS 'BADHAAI DO' TURNS ONE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As their film 'Badhaai Do', based on lavender wedding, has completed one year of its release in Hindi cinema, actors Rajkummar Rao and Bhumi Pednekar went down memory lane and discussed its importance.

Rajkummar took to Instagram, where he shared a deleted scene from the film featuring him and Bhumi. "Anniversary hai toh gift toh banta hai. Humara nahin toh aapka hi sahi. Here's a small gift for you on 1 Year Of Badhaai Do. BadhaaiDo deleted scene."

Bhumi says, through 'Badhaai Do', she wanted to raise her voice for the LGBTQIA+ community and their rights in India. She says, "I have never considered myself to be just an actor. I have great regard for the medium of cinema. I think films can have a cultural and societal impact and through most of my films, I have tried to start a conversation about the need to understand causes and issues and maybe look out for a realistic solution to it. Through my films, I try to have a conversation with audiences, the people of India, about things that matter."

Bhumi adds, "'Badhaai Do' is one such film that incorporates a very special place in my heart. I have been greatly invested in the empowerment of the LGBTQIA+ community." "I have family and friends belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community and while I've been a part of their journey, at times, I've found myself helpless - I didn't know how to share their pain, love and grief. That's when 'Badhaai Do' happened."

Bhumi added: "I'm fortunate to have found a script like 'Badhaai Do' which enabled me to voice for a cause that is close to my heart. Love is Love and I hope 'Badhaai Do' contributed to sensitise people to this reality."



'I surely look like a DUCK'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former 'Bigg Boss 14' winner and television actress Rubina Dilaik has shared a health update saying that she has fever and swollen lips, making her to "look like a duck." Rubina took to Instagram, where she shared pictures of her face and lips. Alongside the image, she wrote: "Fever, sore throat, infection and swollen lips, I surely look like a Duck (without fillers). And m frustrated and also laughing looking at myself." On the work front, Rubina was seen in the dance-based reality show 'Jhalak Dikhlai Jaa' and was also a finalist in filmmaker Rohit Shetty's stunt based reality show 'Khatron Ke Khiladi' Season 12.

She made her Hindi film debut with Palash Muchhal's 'Ardh' in 2022.

Rubina says that she has fever and swollen lips, making her to "look like a duck"



Urvashi Rautela confirms being part of Rishab Shetty's movie sequel

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Urvashi Rautela took to social media to announce that she will be a part of 'Kantara 2' starring Rishab Shetty. Urvashi took to Instagram, where she shared a picture posing with Rishab, who also directed the film.

"KANTARA 2 Rishab Shetty official Hombale films loading RS," she wrote as the caption.

'Kantara' stars Rishab as a Kambala champion who is at loggerheads with an upright forest officer, Murali (played by Kishore). The story is set and filmed in Keradi in coastal Karnataka.

On the work front, Urvashi was recently seen in the song 'Boss Party' alongside megastar Chiranjeevi in the film 'Waltair Vereeyya'.

Urvashi will next be seen with Ram Pothineni. She will also be Randeep Hooda's co-star in 'Inspector Avinash'.



Ranbir, Deepika's 'Tamasha' to re-release in theatres for V-Day week

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood stars Ranbir Kapoor and Deepika Padukone's 2015 romantic drama 'Tamasha', directed by Imtiaz Ali, is all set for a re-release in cinemas to celebrate Valentine's week.

'Tamasha' is a film that portrayed the essence of love in modern times from a whole new perspective. It is all set to hit the theatres across the nation with its release in all the PVR cinemas.

Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment took to their social media and shared the poster of 'Tamasha' while announcing the re-release of the film in the caption with: "This Valentine's week, celebrate their love story with your loved one! Tamasha re-releases in all pvr cinemas official near you!"

Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment was established by Sajid Nadiadwala in 2005.

The production house currently has 'Bawaal' and 'Satyaprem Ki Katha'.



I HAVE ONLY WANTED TO BE AN ACTION HERO, SO FOR ME IT IS MY DREAM COME TRUE: SRK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan is ecstatic to be receiving unanimous love for 'Pathaan'. He said that he came to the film industry 32 years ago to be an action hero, but missed the boat as he was made a romantic star instead. In a video released by Yash Raj Films, SRK said: "I have only wanted to be an action hero, so for me it is my dream come true. 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!"

He said: "I think this is the genre of film nobody knows better than Siddharth. I'm working with him for the first time; he just knows that this kind of cinema he knows very well. I just love the world that Siddharth makes."

"It's an action film that is close to my heart. I think it is made with a lot of goodness by a lot of good people. I hope you enjoy this larger than life (film), I think its cinematic which is the call of the day. It's a film you want to watch on a big screen."

He added: "I think Pathaan is fun, it's happy, it's good looking, it's technically quite forward, lovely locations, lovely songs, beautiful people and I think the action is very nice!"



SHREYA GHOSHAL TO PERFORM A SONG WRITTEN BY SINGING REALITY SHOW'S CONTESTANT

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular playback singer Shreya Ghoshal will perform a song written by Indian Idol 13' contestant Senjuti Das, thus giving her a big surprise on the singing reality show.

After Senjuti's performance in front of the celebrity judge, she shares how she is also a composer.

"I make songs when I have time and compose them by myself. I've composed a song for you, and I believe your voice is the only one that will work with it."

"Additionally, I would like to request you to sing the song I wrote and listen to my mockup of it." Later, Senjuti's song is performed by Shreya Ghoshal, who

will be seen also asking her when they should record it. Senjuti performed 'Thode Badmash' from 'Sawariyan' and 'Saans' from 'Jab Tak Hain Jaan.'

She said: "You are my greatest inspiration; it is because of you that I am standing here right now. I first got into singing by listening to your songs, and since then, I've performed mostly your song."

She also said: "My parents used to appreciate hearing music a lot when I was a child. They bought me a CD at that time that was your album. When I first heard 'Mere Dholna', one of your songs, I knew I wanted to follow in your footsteps and achieve my goal of being a playback singer." Shreya thanks Senjuti for her music selection and commends her on the rendition of 'Saans', which is one of her favourites.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Ishika Sharma