

# absolute india



VOL. 6, ISSUE 88, NEW DELHI | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM NEW DELHI, MUMBAI AND BHOPAL

**NATION** > 02

Indian citizens send help to Turkey, Ambassador says 'Thank you...'



**HOLLYWOOD** > 06

Eva Longoria looks incredible in a plunging cut-out swimsuit, posed...



**SPORTS** > 07

Shubman Gill named ICC Men's Player of the Month ...

▶ IN 2022, 79 PER CENT OF PROFESSIONALS WERE PLANNING TO UPSKILL, WHILE IN 2023, THAT NUMBER HAS RISEN TO 83 PER CENT.

▶ THE HIGHEST PROPORTION OF WORKFORCE, WHO PLAN TO UPSKILL, ARE FROM IT/TECH AND BFSI SECTORS, FOLLOWED BY EDUCATION/TRAINING, MANUFACTURING, AND AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY.

▶ INDIANS ARE PRIMARILY LOOKING TO UPSKILL IN SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT, DATA SCIENCE AND ANALYTICS, DIGITAL MARKETING, MANAGEMENT, AND AI/ML DOMAINS, SAID THE REPORT.

## 71% Indian professionals confident to retain jobs in 2023 despite global layoffs

Team Absolute | New Delhi

About seven in 10 (71 per cent) professionals in India are confident about keeping their jobs in 2023 despite the rough macroeconomic conditions and global layoffs, a report showed on Monday. There is a stark difference in the confidence levels of freshers and entry-level professionals and the ones with more than six years of experience. While 63 per cent of professionals



with 0-3 years of experience are confident about retaining their job, this number jumps up to 83 per cent for professionals with more than six years of experience, according to the report by edtech company Great Learning. "With a tighter job market in 2023, skill development will be as critical as ever. The increase in intent to upskill in 2023 among professionals is expected given how rapidly technology and business practices are evolving," said Hari Krishnan Nair, Co-Founder, Great Learning. "In 2023, the primary moti-

vation for Indians to upskill is career growth within their current organisation. This is followed by personal interest and the expectation of new job opportunities as a result of upgraded skills," it added. In general, more male professionals enrolled in upskilling programs in 2022, but the gap in representation becomes more pronounced at higher levels of work experience. This is even lower than the general industry trend for female representation at senior positions, the report mentioned.

## CENTRE AGREES TO SET UP EXPERT PANEL ON PROTECTING INVESTORS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central government on Monday informed the Supreme Court that the existing structure, which includes the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) and others agencies, are fully equipped to handle the situation which occurred after Hindenburg report on Adani group, and it would not oppose the court's suggestion to constitute a committee to strengthen the existing regime. It stressed that the court could permit it to suggest the remit of that committee with possible suggestions of names of the committee.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, submitted before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud that: "Our instructions are that existing structure - Sebi and other agencies - are fully equipped not only regime wise but otherwise also, in taking care of the situation. "However, responding to suggestion which fell from your lordships the government has no objection in constituting a committee." The bench asked the SG to come back with the proposed remit of the committee by Friday and put it down on a note for the bench to examine, so that it could either modify or reflect on it, and then it can pronounce an order. Advocate Vishal Tiwari, one of the petitioners, argued that although organisational structure is there, yet this problem has arisen, there may be some loopholes which could be examined by the expert committee. The bench said it will continue hearing the matter on



### SC REGISTERS SUO MOTU CASE ON UNLICENSED FIREARMS

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday observed that unlike the US where the right to bear arms is a fundamental right, no such right has been conferred on anybody under the Indian Constitution, while registering a suo motu case to curb the large number of unlicensed firearms in the country. The bench, hearing a bail application of murder noted that an unlicensed firearm was used and offences under section 302 along with 307 of the IPC was registered. It added that it has come across several cases where unlicensed arms were used and termed the trend "very disturbing".

The bench observed that unlike the US constitution where the right to bear arms is a fundamental right and under the wisdom of our founding fathers, no such right has been conferred on anybody under the Constitution.

### PETITION DISMISSED AGAINST DELIMITATION IN J&K

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday affirmed delimitation of Assembly and parliamentary constituencies in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. A bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul and comprising Justice A.S. Oka clarified that the decision on delimitation would not affect a separate batch of matters where abrogation of Article 370 is under challenge before a constitution bench of the apex court. The detailed judgment will be uploaded later in the day.

Friday. On February 10, the Supreme Court had observed that there is a need for a robust regulatory framework to protect the interest of the investors and Centre agrees, a committee may be set up to suggest regulatory improvements.

### BJP MP DEMANDS SEPARATE STATE OF BUNDELKHAND IN LOK SABHA



New Delhi: The demand for the creation of Bundelkhand state by separating its districts from Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh is decades old. BJP MP from Uttar Pradesh's Hamirpur Lok Sabha constituency, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel again demanded the formation of a separate Bundelkhand state in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

During Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, Chandel demanded the formation of a new Bundelkhand state by separating its parts from Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, saying that Bundelkhand is a special region, which has its own distinct culture.

He added that as per the intentions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Bundelkhand should be made a separate state for its development and to ensure that organic farming, employment, tourism, culture and religious sectors are promoted in the area.

## Prez Murmu appoints 13 new Governors

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After showing a downward trend in December 2022, when it had slid to 5.72 per cent, retail inflation for January 2023 rose to a three-month high of 6.52 per cent, owing to higher food prices. Food inflation in January 2023 rose to 5.94 per cent from 4.19 per cent in December 2022. With this, the consumer price index (CPI) based retail inflation has again gone



beyond RBI's tolerance level of 6 per cent. The retail inflation for January 2023 is even higher than 6.01 per cent level of January 2022. Higher prices of cereals, egg and meat as well as fish, milk and fruits along with clothing, footwear, housing, health and transport in January 2023, resulted in higher retail inflation.

## Chair hurled at Nitish Kumar during Samadhan Yatra in Aurangabad

Patna | Agencies

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had a close shave on Monday when an unidentified man hurled a plastic chair at him in Aurangabad during his Samadhan Yatra. Nitish Kumar reached the Barun block to inaugurate the panchayat building, and attend a programme there, when a chair fell in front of him.

Following the incident, security personnel surrounded the Chief Minister and took him away after the event. The local police started the investigation to identify that person responsible for hurling the chair on CM Nitish Kumar.

Earlier in the day, Nitish Kumar visited Rohtas district as well and reviewed the government projects. He also met viral girl Saloni in Rohtas and appreciated her effort of creating awareness against liquor consumption.



Saloni sang a song in Bhojpuri on the consequences of drinking liquor consumption for the Chief Minister. She came into the limelight when she sang the song in her school last year. Liquor has been banned in Bihar since April 2016 but is still available illicitly and a large number of people have lost their lives by drinking spurious or poisonous liquor. One such incident recently occurred in Chapra district when more than 100 persons died in January this year.

### Too early to gauge spillovers of central bank digital currency: Sitharaman

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday told the Parliament that it is still too early to gauge the spillovers of the central bank digital currency (CBDC), while assailing concerns on whether it would impinge on an individual's autonomy. Replying to a question on the CBDC during Question Hour in Lok Sabha, she said that digital currency is something which the RBI issues. "Reserve Bank of India has come up with a pilot project in terms of retail and wholesale use of digital currencies for which there are several sandboxes created, so that user cases can be tested. It is only during this process and immediately after that can there be any kind of understanding on how the retail or the wholesale use of digital currencies will have any spillovers for which any action has to be planned.

### 'LTTE CHIEF PRABHAKARAN ALIVE', CLAIMS TAMIL LEADER

Chennai | Agencies

Tamil nationalist leader and President of World Tamil Confederation, Pazha Nedumaran on Monday claimed that LTTE leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran is alive and lives with his wife and daughter. While addressing the media at Thanjavur, Nedumaran said Prabhakaran's location will be disclosed at an appropriate time. He said that the Sri Lankan government had portrayed Prabhakaran as anti-India. Since the present global situation is optimistic and the Rajapakse rule has ended, he was disclosing this now, Nedumaran added. The Tamil nationalist leader also said that the information that Prabhakaran was alive will instil a lot of confidence among the Tamils in Sri



Lanka and that he has made the announcement with Prabhakaran's permission. Sivaji Lingam, a former Member of Parliament from Sri Lanka said that the Sri Lankan government had not confirmed the body of Prabhakaran. He added that the announcement made by Nedumaran that Prabhakaran was alive has brought a lot of happiness to the Tamil people across the world. Notably, in May 2009, after the final battle between LTTE and Sri Lankan Army, it was announced that Prabhakaran was killed and some photographs released.

## LCA Tejas at the centre stage of 'India Pavilion' at Aero India 2023

Bengaluru | Agencies

A full-scale Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas in final operational clearance (FOC) configuration will be at the centre stage of 'India Pavilion' at Aero India 2023.

The fighter aircraft on Monday performed several maneuvers such as the show-off, take-off, hesitation roll and vertical pinchback. The maneuvers were appreciated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who inaugurated the global airshow on Monday. According to sources, Argentina and Malaysia have evinced interest in importing the LCA Tejas MK 1A, a product of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). Tejas is equipped with state-of-the-art features like glass cockpit, zero-zero ejection seat, inflight refueling probe, jam-proof AESA radar, UEWs with SPJ, CMDS, HMDS DashV, BVR missile capability and many more which make the aircraft more lethal. The LCA has come a long way in terms of development and is presently available in Air Force fighter and twin-seater and LCA Navy fighter



and twin-seater variants. Other variants like LCA LIFT (Lead in fighter trainer) and MK-2 are being developed for LCA Tejas. The 14th edition of Aero India will have a separate 'India Pavilion', which is based on the 'fixed wing platform' theme to showcase India's growth in the area, including the future prospects for the same. The India Pavilion will also showcase the growth of India in developing an eco-system for fixed wing platform which includes the demonstration of various structural modules, simulators, systems (LRUs) etc. of LCA Tejas aircraft being produced by private partners. There will also be a section for

### SOME OF THE UNIQUENESS OF THE AIRCRAFT IS AS FOLLOWS:

- \* One of the smallest and lightest aircraft in its class; excellent flight safety record; available in all four variants to meet customers' needs.
- \* Composite constitute 90 per cent by area and 45 per cent by weight; supersonic at all altitude with minimalistic RCS; quadruplex fly by wire aircraft.
- \* Payload carrying capacity up to 30 per cent of AUW (all up weight); open architecture enables customised weapon integration; maintenance-friendly with low operating cost.

defence space, new technologies and a UAV section which will give an insight about the growth of India in each sector. LCA Tejas is pegged as the biggest achievement of HAL and it is expected to put Indian defence capabilities on a global map.





# SHIVRAJ, KAMAL NATH ENGAGE IN QUESTION WAR

Team Absolute | Bhopal

As the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress in Madhya Pradesh have been engaged in a 'question war' for the last few days, Monday they accused each other of failing to fulfil the poll promises made in the past.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who asks one question every day after his daily routine of planting a sapling at the Smart City Park in Bhopal, reminded that Kamal Nath -led Congress government during its 15-month tenure in the state had stopped the scheme that was providing financial support of Rs 1,000 monthly to tribal women.

Chouhan said poor tribal women were getting Rs 1,000 per month under the scheme -- 'sahariya, bhariya and bega', which was stopped after the Congress came to power in 2018. The Chief Minister



also said that the Congress government did not implement the schemes; instead it stopped benefit schemes introduced by the BJP government.

He also said that the Congress has once again started preparing its 'vachan patra (election manifesto)', which he termed a bundle of 'fake promises'. "The Congress has now

started preparing vachan patra, which is completely a bunch of fake promises. They did nothing, but stopped many beneficiary schemes for the poor, which were implemented by the BJP government before 2018. Kamal Nath should answer why he stopped the sahariya, bhariya, bega scheme?" Chouhan said.

On the other hand, Kamal Nath also made a quick response. In his counter attack on Chouhan, he said, "Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is still away from the truth." Nath also reminded the CM about BJP's manifesto of the 2018 Assembly elections. "In the BJP's manifesto, you had promised that 50 Gokul villages will be developed in the state in the next five years on the lines of the National Gokul Mission for conservation and promotion of indigenous breeds. Where is this Gokul Gram?"

## BJP MP demands separate state of Bundelkhand in Lok Sabha



Team Absolute | Bhopal/New Delhi

The demand for the creation of Bundelkhand state by separating its districts from Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh is decades old. BJP MP from Uttar Pradesh's Hamirpur Lok Sabha constituency, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel again demanded the formation of a separate Bundelkhand state in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

During Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, Chandel demanded the formation of a new Bundelkhand state by separating its parts from Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, say-

ing that Bundelkhand is a special region, which has its own distinct culture.

He added that as per the intentions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Bundelkhand should be made a separate state for its development and to ensure that organic farming, employment, tourism, culture and religious sectors are promoted in the area.

The BJP MP also praised the work of the Central and state governments regarding the development schemes being run in the region, including the construction of a defence corridor and an expressway among others.

## Public welfare is the priority of our government: CM Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that public welfare is the priority of our government. At present, the Maha Yagya of Vikas Yatra is going on in the state, in which various construction and development works are being dedicated and the foundation stones are being laid. Along with this, the problems of the public are being resolved. Special attention is being given to the service of Divyang, orphan children, patients, elders, poor citizens.

Chief Minister Chouhan was inaugurating Indore Eye Hospital and Bone Marrow Transplant Super Speciality Hospital in Indore on Monday.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that Indore has become the medical hub of entire central India. The hospital which is being inaugurated here today is the Centre for



Excellence for the eyes. I have also got my eyes checked here, my eyes are absolutely fine. There will be free facility of bone marrow transplant here, which is a big boon for poor patients.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that today Indore has become a brand. Recently, green bonds worth Rs. 244 crore were issued by the Indore Municipal Corporation, and Rs. 661 crore came on the very first day. This is a symbol of the public's faith in the Indore brand. Chief Minister

Chouhan said that the team of Indore is amazing. The people's representatives, donors, doctors and the public here are all ideal. Today I have honoured Dr. Prakash Samali and Dr. Rahul Bhargava. Doctors are second only to God.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that no child is an orphan in the state. Those who do not have parents, the government is taking care of them. The government is giving them assistance of Rs. 5,000 per month, food, education fees etc.

## Government is working not only to build infrastructure, but to change the lives of people: Chief Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the state government is not only working to build infrastructure, but is also working to improve the lives of the people. The CM said that the works done in Rajwada and Gopal Mandir have restored the glory of these historical buildings. Foreign guests are also appreciating the Indian heritage while visiting them.

Chief Minister Chouhan dedicated three works worth Rs. 46 crore and performed bhoomi-pujan of three works worth Rs. 113 crore in Rajwada and Gopal Mandir premises under Smart City in Indore on Monday.

Giving information about and the success achieved in several welfare schemes being run by the state government, Chief Minister Chouhan said that the welfare of every class is our commitment. He said that after Ladli Laxmi Yojana, now Ladli Bahna Yojana has been launched in the state. Under the scheme, 1000 rupees will be given every month to the women of lower and middle class. The selection of eligible women under the scheme will be started



after the completion of the Vikas Yatra.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that Indore is a wonderful city. For those who have given some land of their shop for the development of the city, the process of permission and fee for new construction will be simplified. Indore is a wonderful city which tops in the fields of IT, education, health, cleanliness etc. With the new traffic management system, Indore city will also lead in the field of traffic. He said that the Vikas Yatras are going on continuously in the state. Along with



the dedication and laying of foundation stones of development works, the Maha Yagya for public welfare is going on in the entire state. Vikas Yatras are getting good response from the public. Different innovations are taking place, as a result of which Yatra has become multi-dimensional and multipurpose.

MLA Akash Vijayvargiya informed about the development works done in the constituency. He said that in the coming days the schools here will surpass the private schools. Underground power cable will be

laid in the area. Mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava described CM Chouhan as the one who restored the glory of Madhya Pradesh. He said that due to the efforts of the Chief Minister, the work of returning the glory of Rajwada and Gopal Mandir has been done.

At the outset, Chief Minister Chouhan paid floral tributes to the statue of Maa Ahilya. After visiting the Gopal temple, he had a look at the development works done in Rajwada. Chief Minister Chouhan also performed Kanya Pujan.

## Khandwa tense after Hanuman's idol installed in Muslim house

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Forced installation of Hanuman's idol in a Muslim's house triggered communal tension in Madhya Pradesh's Khandwa district but prompt police action prevented the violence from escalating.

The state is yet to get over the horror it witnessed last year in Khargone.

According to official reports, the incident was reported on Sunday in a residential colony located near Munshi Chowk area in Khandwa, around 360 km from Bhopal.

The situation was under control, police said on Monday. However, a heavy police force was deployed in the area and Section 144 imposed in nearby areas.

At least four police personnel, including a Chief Superintendent of



Police and SHO, were reported injured in stone pelting.

Five alleged perpetrators of the incident have been detained so far, and identification of more was under way, police said on Monday.

"On Sunday, around 8.30 p.m, a

group of people barged into the house, installed Hanuman's idol and chanted mantras. This led to people from both communities gathering outside the house. Both sides pelted stones at each other, but police jumped into action and dispersed the

crowd," a senior police official said on Monday.

As per the police, the house where the incident took place belonged to one Ganesh Jadhav, which was recently sold to a Muslim, Shaikh Asagar. The agitated people then attacked the police who arrived to control the situation, prompting them to use tear gas to disperse the crowd.

"Three cases under different IPC Sections pertaining to house-trespassing, attempt to murder and rioting lodged and as many as five persons have been detained so far. The prime accused in the entire incident is a self-styled Hindu leader Ravi Ahwad," police officials said.

Notably, last year (on April 10, 2022), a communal clash had broken out in Khandwa's bordering district - Khargone.

## Church torched in village, "Ram" written on wall inside

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A group of unidentified people torched and defiled a church in Madhya Pradesh's Narmadapuram district, police said on Monday. Locals found burnt furniture inside, walls blackened with smoke from the fire, and 'Ram' written on the wall inside the Christian prayer hall in Chauki Pura village in tribal dominated Sukhtawa block of the district. A case was filed under Indian Penal Code Section 295 (Injuring or defiling place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class) against unidentified accused.

According to initial investigation, the vandals entered the place of worship, built around five years ago and located 40 km from the district headquarters, by removing a window net and burnt it from inside, Gurukaran Singh, Superintendent of Police, Narmadapuram, said. Some religious texts and other items including furniture were also destroyed in the fire, an official said, quoting a complaint filed in connection with the incident. The church, located in Sukhtawa village of Kesala block,



was connected to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, locals said.

Another communal face-off over the forcible installing of a Hanuman idol in a Muslim man's house in the state's Khandwa city was reported today. The police used force to disperse both sides, which was met with stone pelting, injuring four police personnel. Three cases under different sections of the IPC pertaining to house-trespassing, attempt to murder, and rioting were filed. Five men have been detained so far. The main accused in the incident is a self-styled Hindu leader, Ravi Ahwad.

## MAN HELD FOR BLACKMAILING DOCTORS WHILE POSING AS HEALTH DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL

Bhopal: The Talaiyya police station staff on Monday arrested a man for blackmailing doctors while posing as an official of the health department. The son of the accused is also a listed criminal. Talaiyya police station house officer Rakesh Sahu said that the accused first began blackmailing Dr Krishna Katave, resident of Rohit Nagar in Bawadiya Kalan, who is the director of a private cancer hospital in Bhopal. He identified himself as Uday Pratap Singh and used to threaten Dr Katave by listing fake complaints regarding her conduct of treatment.

He used to demand lakhs of rupees from her. When she began receiving calls, she informed Shahpura police, who began probe and identified the accused as Mridul.

After this, Mridul also blackmailed Dr Arvind Bedkar who runs a clinic at Talaiyya, after which the police swung into action and arrested him.

## Former municipality president joins BJP in Sardarpur

Team Absolute | Sardarpur

Despite winning Sardarpur and Rajgarh municipal council, the Congress got a big blow here on Monday as Sardarpur's former municipal council president and younger brother of sitting MLA Pratap Grewal, Brajesh Grewal joined BJP. Badnawar MLA and the state cabinet minister Rajvardhan Singh Dattigaon administered the oath to Brajesh Grewal at Badnawar circuit house.

Sources close to both Grewal brothers claimed that, Brajesh took the decision after a dispute with MLA Pratap Grewal.

They added that both brothers chose different candidates for the post of Sardarpur president. MLA wanted Meenakshi



Grewal to take charge as president and she did. On the other hand, Brajesh wanted Ward no 10 councillor Komal Pargi to run as president.

This created a scuffle between the two brothers at Sardarpur Circuit House on February 11. As a result, Brajesh Grewal shook hands with the BJP. When Grewal was asked about leaving INC

he criticised his elder brother and blamed him for not supporting his decision even after Brijesh supported him for the past many years.

'For 20 years, I have sacrificed everything for my brother. When the younger brother requested the elder brother (MLA) to accept a small decision, he denied it on the spot', Brajesh said.

## DSP TRIES TO FOOL BANK MANAGER, ASKS HIM TO PAY RS 1 LAKH, SUSPENDED

Bhopal: In yet another case, a Bhopal police officer was suspended on Monday. Deputy Superintendent of police (DSP) Yogesh Kurachaniya was suspended for allegedly trying to fool a bank officer and asking him to pay Rs 1 lakh to settle the case. Kurachaniya, recently, got transferred to Bhopal Police Headquarter and was earlier working in Lokayukta.

Recently, on February 10, he was released from the Lokayukta office, said official sources. On the same day, he along with his two allies, left for Nagrik Sahkari bank situated in Ganjbasoda of Vidisha district. Kurachaniya called the manager of the bank Hariom Bhavsar and cited a case against him over disproportionate income. He further lied that he was appointed to investigate the case. To convince the bank manager, Kurachaniya also showed him a fake notice which read that DSP Rajendra Singh Sengar is the in-charge of the case. The DSP asked Rs 1 lakh to settle the case. The state government suspended the officer and attached him to the PHQ till further orders.

## Kamal Nath visits Bageshwar Dham, prays for MP's future in election year



Team Absolute | Bhopal

State Congress President Kamal Nath, on Monday, visited Bageshwar Dham that recently rose to fame. The former chief minister is on a tour to Panna and Chhatrapur districts in the poll-bound year. "I visited Bageshwar Dham to pay my obeisance to Lord Bajrangbali and seek his blessings for MP's safe future. I had also met Maharaj, said former chief minister Kamal Nath to media, in Panna, on Monday. Currently, the former

chief minister is on a tour to Panna and Chhatrapur districts. He held a meeting with the Congress workers, asserting that he wants to focus at root-level.

"My effort is to strengthen the roots of the party in all the districts of Madhya Pradesh, because we are not competing with the BJP, but with the organisation of the BJP, so we focusing on the mandal sector and booth-level. Local candidates with clean image would be given tickets in the upcoming elections, he asserted.



EDITOR'S SPECS

FLOOD-RESISTANT RICE

The Agriculture institute in Karaikal, Puducherry has developed a new rice variety that can tolerate floods. The rice variety was developed with the support of the Department of Biotechnology, Central government. The rice variety, KKL(R)2 was developed by a team of researchers led by Dr. S. Thirumeni, Head of the Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics, at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru College of Agriculture and Research Institute. During samba/thalady season, the paddy crop is affected in rain and short-term submergence leads to the destruction of these crops. The institute has been working on the development of water submergence-tolerant rice varieties. Dr. S. Thirumeni said, "The new variety KKL(R)2 was developed by crossing ADT 46 and Swarna Sub 1 through the 'Marker Assisted Backcross Method' three times." He also said that the new rice variety matures in 135 days and is suitable for the Samba season. The scientist said that this rice variety is tolerant to flash floods and submergence for a period of 14 days during the tillering stage. Dr Thirumeni and his team told IANS that the average grain yield of KKL(R) 2 is 6,850 kg per hectare under normal circumstances but under submerged conditions, it can give a yield of 3,600 kg per hectare. KKL(R) 2 is the first rice Puducherry rice variety that is recommended for release by Central Variety Release Committee (CVRC). Scientists also said that this rice variety is moderately resistant to pests including brown plant hopper, white-backed brown hopper, and blast and brown spot.

POJK-GB: ALL STAKEHOLDERS HAVE TO BE BANG ON THE BEAT

Amjad Ayub Mirza

While Pakistan sinks deeper into economic crisis, the plight of the people of Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan (PoJK, PoGB) has increased many folds. As I sit down to write this piece, both PoJK and PoGB are suffering from severe shortages of both wheat and electricity. Hundreds of families are starving and thousands have become unemployed as a result of the closing down of small businesses and workshops. Protests against economic deprivation have been a daily occurrence for almost a year now. People have braved minus 20 degree celsius temperatures to observe daily sit-ins. Pensioners have not been paid for months in both territories as the treasury has gone dry. Government employees in PoJK have not been paid their salaries for three months. An attempt to garner support for Pakistan in PoJK-GB by observing February 5 as Kashmir Solidarity Day has also backfired. On the day, protests were held in several cities in which, one after the other, speakers rejected Pakistan's claim that India was mistreating Kashmiris in the union territory. A comparison of prices of flour, onion, tomatoes and other daily essentials between the Kashmir Valley and PoJK is the talk of every town and village in PoJK-GB. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) team has arrived in Pakistan and are dictating Islamabad to make deep cuts into the privileges and perks of military and bureaucracy. The IMF has asked for an increase in fuel and electricity prices and to raise \$6 billion in the next five months and a total of \$16 billion in foreign exchange before it presents the next fiscal budget in June this year. The IMF is demanding these reforms to be made and targets to be achieved in order for it to release a mere \$1.3 billion loan, which the IMF has held back since November last year. As Pakistan's economy is in a freefall, its military has just earned a whopping Rs 40 billion profit from a record sale of fertilizer worth Rs 109 billion by Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited, which is a military business enterprise. Not to mention that its former Army chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, had accumulated Rs 12 billion before he retired in November last year. Millions of dollars' worth of lithium and other precious minerals from PoJK-GB are being looted and smuggled into Pakistan on a daily basis and are unaccounted for. Just to give you a perspective of the value of the loot, I must tell you that one truck load of 25 tons of lithium is worth Rs 53 crore. Pakistan is not poor and neither is PoJK-GB. However, the Military-Mullah-Feudal troika has collectively usurped the land and the minds of its people. Baloch, Sindhi, Pashtun and the people of PoJK-GB are liv-



ing under the barrel of the military gun. No real political or economic rights are allowed to be freely exercised by them. They have been indoctrinated for 75 years that Pakistan was Allah's creation and that 'Hindu' India is their enemy who wants to destroy Pakistan at the first available opportunity. Under the pretext of Jinnah's communal two-nation theory and the propaganda that what unites all nations occupied Pakistan is the bond of 'Qalma' or faith in Islam, Pakistan's above-mentioned troika has oppressed the people for all nations and exploited their lands. The tide is now changing. With the Baloch and the Pashtuns up in arms and the people of PoJK-GB out on the streets, Pakistan's troika's control of these oppressed nations is slipping out of its hands. At the moment, the current economic crisis is moving in one direction only and that is a total collapse. Most of the check posts erected by the Pakistan military in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces are said to have been abandoned by the soldiers. Tensions are high between Pakistan and neighbouring Afghanistan. China is abandoning project after project in PoJK-GB for non-payment of services and materials provided by Chinese companies.

The political crisis has also deepened to the level of the pre-1971 war when the Pakistan military began operation Blue Star in east Pakistan to crush the mandate of the Awami League, which had won most seats in the National Assembly a year before. A 13-party dysfunctional coalition is running the country. Under the current scenario, it is very much possible that the Balkanization of Pakistan could take place, thus freeing all oppressed nations. However, in order to achieve liberation from Pakistan, all stakeholders, including the oppressed people of PoJK-GB, Balochistan, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have to be bang on the beat and that can only become possible if they form a collective warring alliance.

(Dr Amjad Ayub Mirza is an author and a human rights activist from Mirpur in PoJK. He currently lives in exile in the UK.)

international

BEIJING DENIES THREE 'OBJECTS' DOWNED BY US CAME FROM CHINA

Beijing | Agencies

Beijing has denied any knowledge of the three "airborne objects" that the US military shot down in North American airspace over the weekend as China prepares to take down an unidentified flying object near one of its main naval bases, media reports said. Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesperson Wang Wenbin told reporters in Beijing on Monday that any suggestion that they came from China is just a "smear", RFA reported. The US North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) announced that "an F-16 fired an AIM9x to successfully shoot down an airborne object flying at approximately 20,000 feet altitude in the US airspace over Lake Huron in the state of Michigan" at 2:42 p.m. on Sunday. This object was first spotted on Saturday over Montana, when it flew near sensitive military sites, U.S. officials told the media, RFA reported. However, NORAD said it was not assessed "to be a kinetic military threat to anything on the ground," but a safety flight



hazard and "a threat due to its potential surveillance capabilities." Before this, a "high-altitude object" was shot down on Saturday over the Yukon territory in Canada and another "flying object" on Friday off the Northern coast of Alaska, both by US F-22 fighters. Authorities have yet to determine

whether the flying objects are linked to China as recovery efforts continue, RFA reported. Meanwhile, China's Foreign Ministry said the US has flown balloons into its airspace more than 10 times in the past year, BBC reported. Questioned on Monday, Beijing said the US had made many airspace breaches. "It's not uncommon as well for the US to illegally enter the airspace of other countries," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin at a regular press briefing. "Since last year alone, US balloons have illegally flown above China more than 10 times without any approval from Chinese authorities. "The first thing the US side should do is start with a clean slate, undergo some self-reflection, instead of smearing and accusing China," he added. He said Beijing had responded to the incursions in a "responsible and professional" manner. "If you want to know more about US high-altitude balloons illegally entering China's airspace, I suggest you refer to the US side," he said, BBC reported.

4,300 DEATHS REPORTED IN NW SYRIA FOLLOWING EARTHQUAKE: UN

Damascus: A total of 4,300 deaths and 7,600 injuries have been reported in northwestern Syria as a result of the massive earthquake that hit the country a week ago, a UN relief agency said on Monday. The tally reported by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs does not include the condition in government-controlled areas, Xinhua news agency reported. The district with the highest death toll and injuries as of Sunday is Harim, followed by Afrin and Jebel Saman in northwestern Syria, said the agency. The Syrian health ministry said in an update on Sunday night that 1,414 people in the country had been killed and 2,349 wounded. Meanwhile, the latest statistics from the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights showed that the quake has killed about 5,329 people in government and rebel-held areas.

Iranian Prez to visit China on February 14

Beijing | Agencies

President of Islamic Republic of Iran Ebrahim Raisi will pay a state visit to China from February 14 to 16 at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping. Raisi, 63, previously served as the country's chairman of the General Inspection Office, Prosecutor-General and Chief Justice of Iran, Xinhua quoted. He was elected to the presidency in June 2021 and sworn in as president in August that year. The spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry Hua Chunying announced on Sunday that the president of Iran will travel to China at the official invitation of his Chinese counterpart, Tasnim News Agency reported. "At the invitation of President Xi Jinping, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ebrahim Raisi will pay a state visit to China from February 14 to 16," she said.



In a congratulatory message to Xi Jinping on securing a third term as the Communist Party's leader in October 2022, Raisi described the goals of strategic cooperation between Tehran and Beijing as a model of broad relations on the basis of mutual respect. The Iranian president also noted that cooperation between Iran and China within the framework of multilateral organisations and institutions would serve the interests of the two nations and help protect international peace and stability.

Sikh professor deported in 2021 returns to Fiji

Suva | Agencies

A Sikh professor, who was deported from Fiji in 2021 by the then government over his efforts to expose financial mismanagement in a top university, returned after two years to a warm welcome. Professor Pal Ahluwalia, Vice-Chancellor and president of the University of South Pacific (USP), and his wife were received at the Nadi International Airport by students and staff from the university. "We have arrived in Nadi. What a fabulous reception. USP Staff, Students and so many well wishers to meet us fills our hearts with joy. Beautiful singing and prayers. Thank you Fiji," Ahluwalia tweeted upon his arrival. "We want to thank God and the new Fiji government for allowing this. To our USP students and staff we are so humbled by your support and very much look forward to seeing you," he wrote. Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka revoked the prohibition order on



Ahluwalia in December 2022 to ensure the exiled professor and his wife's return to Fiji. "I will apologise on behalf of the people of Fiji for the way they were treated," Rabuka had said, adding that the prohibition order against Ahluwalia was "unreasonable and inhumane". Ahluwalia has been working out of the USP's Samoa Campus in Alafua since December 2021. The Kenya-born professor, who holds Australian and Canadian citizenships, had angered the then Fijian government over a leaked internal report, which he wrote in 2019.

Another shock as milk price reaches Pak Rs 210 a litre in Karachi

Karachi | Agencies

In uncertain economic conditions, consumers in Karachi continue to receive severe price shocks following an unchecked hike in the prices of daily use items. Loose milk, which has been increased to Pak Rs 210 from Pak Rs 190 per litre by some shopkeepers and live broiler chicken which has seen an increase of Rs 30-40 per kg in the last two days, taking the cost to Rs 480-500 per kilogram, Dawn reported. Earlier this month, the live bird was available at Rs 390-440 per kg while it was being sold between Rs 380-420kg in the last week of January, 2023. The chicken meat is now being sold at Rs 700-780 a kg which was Rs 620-650 per kg a few days ago, Dawn reported. Boneless meat price hit a new peak of Rs 1,000-1,100 per kg, showing a jump of Rs 150-200 per kg in



the same period. Boneless poultry meat rate has crossed the price of boneless veal which is currently being sold at Rs900-1,000 per kg, while meat with bones is selling at Rs 800-850 per kg. On loose milk, Karachi Milk Retailers Association media coordi-

nator Waheed Gaddi claimed that "over 1,000 shopkeepers are selling milk at an inflated rate. These are actually shops of wholesalers/dairy farmers and not our members." He said: "Our 4,000 retail members have kept the price unchanged at Rs 190 per litre." In case the price hike announced by dairy farmers and wholesalers is not reverted, retailers will be bound to charge Rs 220 per litre instead of Rs 210 from the consumers as per new rate calculation after Rs 27 per litre jump in procurement price, he added, Dawn reported. On Dec 16, 2022, retailers got an increase of Rs 10 per litre from the commissioner of Karachi to sell milk at Rs 180 per litre, but majority of retailers continued to sell milk at Rs 190 per litre, rejecting the official rate. At that time, the official wholesale rate was also increased from Rs 160 per litre to Rs 170.





# 'RICK EDWARDS IS A DAD!'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Presenter Rick Edwards has become a father for the first time. The T4 star and his wife Emer Kenny took to social media to announce the happy news, sharing the first pictures of their newborn. Emer wrote: 'Bit of news... rickedwards1 & I have had a beautiful baby boy. He is just magic.'

In the snap, Rick could be seen beaming down at his son with a look of pure joy on his face.

A second picture showed Emer kissing her baby's face as she sat up in bed.

The couple kept their pregnancy under wraps on social media until now.

Along with the new photos, Emer shared a video of Rick talking about the news on Radio Five Live.

He said: 'I've not been off filming an exciting new TV show. Better than that, Emer and I have just had our first baby.'

'He's a beautiful baby boy. He's amazing. I may be biased but this guy is fantastic, hungry and fantastic and the three of us are just hanging out and getting to know each other.'

Emer also shared some pictures of herself when she was pregnant with her baby as she updated her followers on her happy motherhood journey.

Rick and Emer tied the knot in a romantic ceremony at London's Kew Gardens back in 2016.

The Safe Word host and the



**Emer Kenny made surprise announcement they have welcomed a baby boy**

EastEnders star, who played Zsa Zsa Carter, married in front of friends and family.

Emer said at the time there was no time to enjoy a proper honeymoon as she was straight back to work.

Snapping a selfie of herself in her dressing room alongside her new husband, the actress wryly captioned the selfie, writing: 'Bring your husband to work day. (Who needs a honeymoon?)'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Jennifer Lopez was caught scolding her husband Ben Affleck yet again - this time for a hilarious Dunkin' Donuts Super Bowl ad.

The Marry Me star - who was recently caught 'snapping' at her beloved during the Grammy Awards - was surprised when she pulled up to the coffee and baked goods chain only to find the Argo director working at the drive-through window.

'What are you doing? Is that what you do when you say you're going to work all day?' she asked the actor.

Lopez looked fabulous as ever, wearing a white puffer jacket as she drove up to the window. Meanwhile Ben acted as the perfect Dunkin' employee, wearing their logo T-shirt and a matching visor hat.

In the video, Affleck is pictured surprising unassuming customers, with a hidden camera recording him as he takes orders.

'Do I look familiar?' he hilariously asks one customer. 'No,' the man replies.

Towards the end he gets surprised by Lopez, who instructs him to grab a glazed donut before he signs off work.

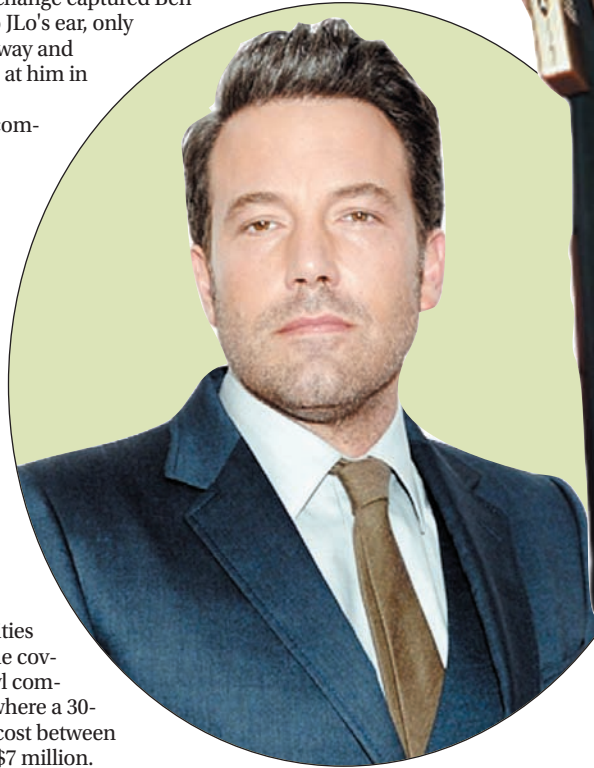
'I think people already sort of think that I work for Dunkin',' Affleck told People about the commercial. 'In Boston, it was such a big deal. I think I became kind of associated with it, and this sounded like a fun opportunity to kind of play with that association, and a chance to come back here to shoot it at home in Boston.'

It comes after the couple got people talking once again after an eyebrow-raising clip captured them sharing an awkward moment at the 2023 Grammy awards.

The tense exchange captured Ben whispering into JLo's ear, only for her to jerk away and seemingly snap at him in response.

A lip reader commissioned by DailyMail.com has since revealed what the two had actually said during the awkward moment that went viral. 'Stop,' Lopez tells him. 'Look friendlier. Look motivated.' Affleck replies: 'I might.'

The couple was among many celebrities featured in the coveted Super Bowl commercial spots, where a 30-second ad can cost between \$6 million and \$7 million.



**Jennifer Lopez scolds Ben Affleck for a Dunkin' Donuts ad**



Los Angeles | Agencies

Nine-time Grammy Award winner Rihanna has confirmed she is pregnant with her second child after surprising fans with a baby bump during her highly anticipated comeback at the Super Bowl 57. The singer, who gave birth to her first child just nine months ago, sent social media into frenzy as she took to the stage and rubbed her tummy in front of a global audience of millions at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona, where the Philadelphia Eagles are taking on the Kansas City Chiefs. A representative for star confirmed the baby news shortly after the performance finished.

It marks the first time she has performed on live television since 2018, where she joined DJ Khaled on stage to sing Wild Thoughts at the Grammy Awards. Rihanna started off the show suspended on a platform high above the field as she belted out her single B\*\*\*\* Better Have My Money. She was dressed in a baggy scarlet jumpsuit that covered up her curves and was strapped loosely on her. However, she wore a skin-tight bodysuit underneath that highlighted her burgeoning baby bump.

She shares her first child, who was

born on May 13, 2022, with the rapper ASAP Rocky, who kept a low profile at the event. The two have kept their growing family under the radar, and so far neither musician has shared the name of their child. The hitmaker paired the suit with a set of chunky red trainers. The platform she was suspended on then descended toward the field, where she joined a bevy of dancers in white on stage. She kept her dancing moves to a minimum while letting the backup dancers pick up the slack.

**Rihanna confirms pregnancy, expecting her second child**



**LEWIS CAPALDI GOES PUBLIC WITH HIS NEW GIRLFRIEND ELLIE MACDOWALL AT THE BRITS AFTERPARTY**

Los Angeles | Agencies

Lewis Capaldi was keen to show off his new girlfriend Ellie MacDowall as they attended a BRIT Awards afterparty together on Saturday night. The singer was said to be all over Ellie as they kissed and partied together at 180 The Strand during the Universal Music bash following the ceremony. The couple had previously been keeping their romance out of the spotlight, but after dating for months it appears that they were ready to go public.

Insiders at the event reported that they looked smitten as they flirted up a storm before hitting the dancefloor together and partying the night away.

The source told the Sun: 'It's official, Lewis is in love and he couldn't be happier.'

'He has been dating Ellie for some time now and while they are usually very low key, he couldn't keep his hands off her at the after-party. It was very sweet to see him so happy, and Ellie clearly adores him too. Actress Ellie is thought to be playing Cary Grant's daughter Jennifer in Archie, an upcoming ITV biopic.'



**EVA LONGORIA LOOKS INCREDIBLE IN A PLUNGING CUT-OUT SWIMSUIT, POSED FOR A SIZZLING INSTAGRAM SNAP**

Los Angeles | Agencies

Eva Longoria showcased her jaw dropping figure in a plunging cut-out swimsuit as she posed for a sizzling Instagram snap.

The actress looked nothing short of sensational in the striped one piece as she posed in front of a lavish swimming pool.

She styled her long brunette tresses poker straight as they cascaded down her back from under a black sun hat.

Eva asked her 9.1 million followers: 'anyone ready for summer?'

It comes after the Desperate Housewives star announced that her new film Flamin' Hot will debut on June 9.

Flamin' Hot will have its world premiere in March at the SXSW Film Festival, and also comes months after she filmed her new project Land of Women in Barcelona.

The movie is based on the true story of Richard Montanez, who started working as a janitor at Frito-Lay's Rancho Cucamonga, California factory in 1976. After a machine broke down, he took a bunch of unflavored chips home and came up with a blend of spices reminiscent to Mexican street corn. He pitched the idea for what would become Flamin' Hot Cheetos to Frito-Lay CEO Roger Enrico and the product was launched in 1992.

That led to an expansive product line that led to billions of dollars in new revenue.

Jesse Garcia will portray Montanez, who rose through the ranks from janitor to an executive level position before he retired in 2019 to embark on a new career as a motivational speaker. The cast also includes Annie Gonzalez as Richard's wife Judy, Emilio Rivera as Vacho Montanez plus Matt Walsh, Tony Shalhoub and Dennis Haysbert in unknown roles.

Eva directed from a script by Lewis Collick and Linda Yvette Chavez, with DeVon Franklin producing.

**ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY**



Gemma Owen



# SHUBMAN GILL NAMED ICC MEN'S PLAYER OF THE MONTH

Dubai | Agencies

India's Shubman Gill, who hammered a magnificent double hundred against New Zealand last month, has been named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for January 2023, voted ahead of New Zealand's Devon Conway and compatriot Mohammed Siraj.

This is the first time that Gill has won the ICC Player of the Month award following another fine series of performances in ODI cricket.

Gill was the top contender in the shortlist with 567 runs during January, which included three century-plus scores, and the 23-year-old batter expectedly won the award.

Gill had wowed fans in January with a lethal combination of graceful and attacking strokeplay.

His stand-out performance came in the form of a stunning double-hundred in the nail-biting victory over New Zealand in the series opener in Hyderabad.

Gill's unbeaten 208 came in just



149 balls with 28 boundaries - a startling feat not just because it made him the youngest double-centurion in the ODI format, but because all those around him seemed to falter on a difficult pitch for batters.

Besides the superb double century, Gill also scored two more centuries -- 116 in a dominant victory over Sri Lanka and 112 in the final ODI against New Zealand. Gill overcame a competitive field to

claim the award, beating New Zealand opener Devon Conway and compatriot Mohammed Siraj in the global vote. In doing so, he becomes the first Indian winner since Virat Kohli in October 2022, the ICC informed in a release.

Reflecting on his excellent month and the ICC Men's Player of the Month prize, Gill said, "I am thrilled to have been voted the ICC Men's Player of the Month by the ICC panel and global cricket fans. January was a special month for me and winning this award makes it all the more memorable. I owe this success to my teammates and coaches who continue to support me as a player, and I'd like to congratulate my fellow nominees on their excellent performances also. "It is always heartening to be recognised for your performances, and I will take great confidence from these innings, especially as we head into an extremely important period before an ICC Men's Cricket World Cup on home soil." Gill was quoted as saying by the ICC.

## IND V AUS Third Test moved from Dharamshala to Indore



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The third Test between India and Australia in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy series has been shifted from Dharamshala's HPCA Stadium to Holkar Stadium in Indore, BCCI said.

The third Test is slated to take place from March 1 to March 5. "Owing to harsh winter conditions in the region, the outfield lacks sufficient grass density and will

need some time to develop fully," the BCCI said in a statement.

The Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) had relaid the entire outfield, including the pitch. The issues with the relaid pitch at the HPCA Stadium have forced the game to be moved.

Dharamshala hosted its only Test in 2017. Incidentally, that game too was played between India and Australia.

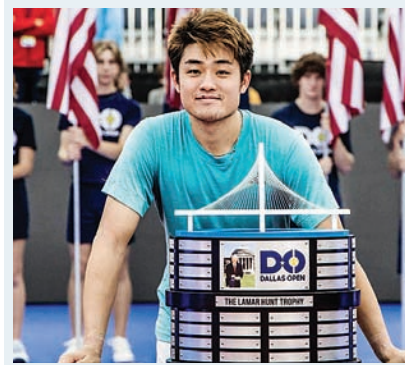
The Holkar Cricket Stadium has previously hosted

two Tests against New Zealand and Bangladesh in 2016 and 2019 with India winning both by huge margins.

India has a formidable record at Indore's Holkar Stadium. The home side hammered Bangladesh by 321 runs in 2016 before thrashing New Zealand by 130 runs in 2019.

India is leading in the present series 1-0 after an emphatic win over Australia in Nagpur.

### WU YIBING SCRIPTS HISTORY; BECOMES FIRST CHINESE TO WIN ATP TOUR TITLE IN OPEN ERA



Dallas (USA) | Wu Yibing became the first Chinese player in Open Era to lift an ATP Tour trophy. The fast-rising 23-year-old saved four championship points before downing John Isner 6-7(4), 7-6(3), 7-6(12) in the Dallas Open final.

Before this week, no Chinese man had ever reached a tour-level final in the Open Era or defeated an opponent in the Top 10 of the ATP Rankings. Wu achieved both of those in one go with his semifinal victory against World No. 8 Taylor Fritz, and he continued his history-making run in Sunday's final with a milestone victory.

"I made history here for my country and my home," Wu was quoted by the Dallas Open website. "I'm very proud of myself and especially thanks to all the fans and my team who came here to support me. I couldn't do this without any of you guys."

After the win, Wu became just the second Chinese player to crack the Top 100 in the ATP Rankings on Monday. He will rise to a career-high World No. 58 just one week later.

### WPL Player Auction

## Harmanpreet signed up by MI for INR 1.80 crore

Team Absolute | Mumbai

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur was signed up by Mumbai Indians (MI) for INR 1.80 crore in the inaugural Women's Premier League (WPL) Player Auction.

"I have always seen Mumbai Indians do well in the IPL and now I also have a chance to be

part of the Mumbai Indians team and I hope we will make a good team. It's a gamechanger for all of us because we are going to experience this kind of pressure for the first time."

"I am very excited and at the same time this will entirely change women's cricket not only in India but world cricket too. It's a great initiative and we are looking forward to that. We all are coming to Mumbai and hope we will get all the support from Mumbai Indians. MI



fans have always been very great and like how MI men have been doing, we would like to contribute the same way." India all-rounder Pooja Vastrakar will pay for Mumbai

Indians after bagging a 1.9 crore deal in the all-rounder list of the Women's Premier League (WPL) Player Auction. While Yastika Bhatia, who entered on a base price of Rs

30 lakh, got Rs 1.5 crore from Mumbai Indians. Vastrakar entered the auction for a base price of Rs 50 lakh. While Yastika Bhatia, who entered on a base price of Rs 30 lakh, got Rs 1.5 crore from Mumbai Indians.

### DEEPTI SHARMA PICKED BY UP WARRIORZ

Mumbai | India's off-spin all-rounder Deepti Sharma was signed up by UP Warriorz for INR 2.6 crore.

Starting from a base price of INR 50 lakh, Deepti was involved in a tight tussle between Delhi Capitals, Gujarat Giants and Mumbai Indians. UP Warriorz then made a surprise first bid at INR 2.2 crore and eventually signed the all-rounder.

"Obviously it is a nice opportunity. I will look to do well for the UP team. I am looking forward to it. This is a new beginning because we were waiting for this for a long time. My role will be to do well. Works well for all Indian players, who were waiting for it. Will aim to contribute to the UP team," she said.

Apart from Deepti, UP Warriorz have also signed England's left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone, Australian duo of Tahlia McGrath and Alyssa Healy, followed by South Africa fast bowler Shabnim Ismail.

Left-arm seamer from India Anjali Sarvani joined UP Warriorz for INR 55 lakh.



### GUJARAT GIANTS TAKE HARLEEN DEOL, DEANDRA DOTTING

Mumbai | Gujarat Giants acquired the services of Harleen Deol at a price of Rs 40 lakh and also took

West Indies all-rounder Deandra Dottin for Rs 60 Lakh. While Australian Annabel Sutherland went to Gujarat Giants for Rs 70 lakh.

Gujarat Giants bolstered their batting stocks by getting in Australia's Beth Mooney and England's Sophia Dunkley for INR 2 crores and INR 60 lakhs.

Another Indian all-rounder Sneha Rana, with a base of INR 50 lakh, went to Gujarat Giants for INR 75 lakh.



### DELHI SIGN JEMIMAH, SHAFALI, MEG LANNING

Mumbai | Delhi Capitals didn't sign a single player despite being in contention in the first two marquee sets of the Women's Premier League (WPL) player auction in Mumbai.

But in set three, they got their first three signing in top-order batter Jemimah Rodrigues (INR 2.2 crore), who led India's chase of 150 against Pakistan in Women's T20 World Cup, followed by India's U19 Women's T20 World Cup winning captain Shafali Verma (INR 2 crores) and Australia's multiple World Cups winning skipper Meg Lanning (INR 1.1 crores). Delhi Capitals have acquired the services of India's Radha Yadav and Shikha Pandey along with South African Marizanne Kapp in the capped all-rounders set. Radha was sold at a base price of INR 40 lakh. Shikha, having a base price of Rs 40 lakh, joined Capitals for a INR 60 lakh deal while Marizanne bagged INR 1.5 crore.



### Eoin Morgan announces retirement from all forms of cricket



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Eoin Morgan, who led England to their first-ever ICC Men's Cricket World Cup title in 2019, announced his retirement from all the forms of professional cricket with immediate effect.

Morgan had retired from international cricket in July last year, following a 16-year-long career that had begun with Ireland, before he moved to England but he continued to play in global franchise leagues across the world.

"It is with great pride that I am announcing my retirement from all forms of cricket. After much deliberation, I believe that now is the right time to step away from the game that has given me so much over the years," the 36-year-old said.

"From moving to England in 2005 to join Middlesex, right up to the very end, playing for Paarl Royals in SA20, I

have cherished every moment. As there are in every sportsperson's career, there have been highs and lows, but my family and friends have been by my side throughout it all.

"Playing for franchise teams across the globe has given me so many memories that I will hold onto forever."

"Since my retirement from international cricket, I have been able to spend more time with my loved ones, and I look forward to being able to do so more and more in the future. Having said that, I will undoubtedly miss the adventure and challenges of playing professional cricket."

"Although I am calling time on my playing career, I will still be involved in the game, working alongside broadcasters at international and franchise tournaments as a commentator and pundit. I am sincerely looking forward to what the future holds."

### La Liga

## Barcelona beat Villarreal to move 11 clear; Depay strikes for Atletico

FC Barcelona opened an 11-point lead over Real Madrid at the top of the La Liga table thanks to a 1-0 win away to Villarreal.

Madrid (Spain) | Agencies

Pedri's first-half goal, which came after a neat flick from Robert Lewandowski, was enough to exert pressure on Real Madrid, who plays after their success in the Club World Cup.

Once again Barca produced an excellent defensive performance to keep Villarreal at bay, although the home side pushed for an equalising goal in the closing minutes.

Memphis Depay's 89th-minute goal for Atletico Madrid, plus a series of saves from Jan Oblak and a stroke of fortune when Iago Aspas hit the crossbar from a free kick, gifted Atletico Madrid a 1-0 win away to Celta Vigo.

Atletico had to play the last 20 minutes with a player less after Stefan Savic was sent off for pulling back Haris Seretovic when he was the last defender. Depay decided the game when he turned home Yannick Carrasco's deflected shot with time running out.

Valladolid and Osasuna drew 0-0 in a game that was more entertaining than the final score may suggest, while Getafe saved a point with a 1-1 draw at home to Rayo Vallecano in a game where it looked as if everything was going against them.

Mauro Arambarri scored an own goal to put Rayo ahead in the 38th minute



and Borja Mayoral then wasted a great chance to level in the 51st minute, when he sent his penalty over the bar.

Carles Alena was sent off two minutes later after being shown a second yellow card, to leave Getafe with 10 men, before luck finally shone on the home side when Enes Unal scored the equalizer. The striker charged down a clearance,

with the fortune that the ball bounced into the Rayo net.

Getafe keeper David Soria was then Getafe's hero after saving an 85th-minute penalty from Rayo striker Raul de Tomas.

Athletic Club Bilbao made it two wins from two games as they beat Valencia 2-1 in the Mestalla Stadium.

### Premier League

## Manchester City narrow gap on Arsenal, Man Utd win at Leeds



London | Agencies

Manchester City has moved to within three points of leaders Arsenal in the Premier League with a 3-1 win at home to Aston Villa.

Rodri Hernandez set City on track after just four minutes with the opening goal that he powered home at the near post. Ilkay Gundogan doubled their lead in the 39th minute and the impressive Riyad Mahrez made it 3-0 from the penalty spot in first-half injury time after Jack Grealish was fouled in the Villa area.

Ollie Watkins scored a consolation goal for the visitors with just under half an hour left to play.

Arsenal were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Brentford on Saturday afternoon as they dropped points for consecutive weeks.

Manchester United were below their best but

strengthened their position in third place with a 2-0 win away to Leeds United.

Marcos Rashford and Alejandro Garnacho scored in the last-10 minutes of the game to give them three valuable points while leaving Leeds dangerously close to the relegation zone.

West Ham and Chelsea drew 1-1 after Joao Felix put Chelsea ahead with his first goal for the club in the 16th minute, only for Emerson Palmieri to level for West Ham before the break.

Eddie Howe's return to Bournemouth (his former club) as coach of Newcastle United ended with a 1-1 draw after Marcos Senesi headed an improved Bournemouth in front on the half-hour and Miguel Almiron levelled for Newcastle in first-half injury time.

Tottenham were thrashed 4-1 away to Leicester City, despite Rodrigo Bentancur's 14th-minute opener.



# SID-KIARA RECEPTION

## B-TOWN COUPLES GRACED THE RED CARPET

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Kiara Advani and Sidharth Malhotra hosted their wedding reception in Mumbai for Bollywood celebrities. Popular B-town celebs were seen gracing the occasion and were all smiling as they were looking forward to congratulating the couple. While some celebs arrived alone, some posed with their friends, and some made a stunning appearance with their partners. Here are five couples who stole our attention with their startling appearance at Sid-Kiara's reception.

Ajay Devgn and Kajol undoubtedly made a gorgeous appearance. Kajol and Ajay Devgn were also seen arriving hand-in-hand as they hugged the couple and congratulate them. Kajol looked gorgeous in a silver shimmery saree. While Ajay Devgn wore a grey blazer and pants with black shirt. Varun and Natasha are one of the close friends of the couple. The two were looking gorgeous as they arrived for the glamorous evening. While Natasha stunned in a gorgeous lavender-hued lehenga, Varun looked dapper in a white-hued tuxedo.

Touted to be the power couple of B-town, Riteish Deshmukh and Genelia Deshmukh was seen twinning in blue attire.

Ayushmann Khurrana and Tahira Kashyap too had their style game on point as they arrived in colour co-ordinated outfits at the event.



# MC Stan is the winner of the Reality Show

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular Rapper MC Stan emerged as the winner of renowned reality show Bigg Boss season 16. MC Stan has a huge fan base and was always adulated for being the most real person in the house.

Stan is known for his epic one-liners and his fans just go crazy on social media whenever he says anything epic. His one liner such as 'Shemdi', 'appreciate you', 'Haq se', 'feel you bro' and 'Hindi matra bhasha' and 'Raavas' have caught attention of all across the country.

As the popular rapper lifts the trophy of Bigg Boss 16, we bring you some of the lesser-known facts about him that will leave you gobsmacked.

MC Stan hails from Pune and his actual name is Altaf Shaikh. He was just 12 when he began singing qawwali. Stan was into B-boying and beatboxing before he started rapping. He enjoys a massive fan following of 7.7 million on Instagram.

When Emiway Bantai dissed MC Stan in his song "Samaj Mein Aaya Kya," MC Stan was in jail due to legal troubles. He wrote the response diss song "Khuja Mat" while incarcerated, depicting his difficulties.

Both MC Stan and Emiway Bantai are well-known names in desi hip hop. When they became embroiled in a feud in 2018, their supporters rallied to their side. Then, in one of his interviews, MC Stan disclosed that they have no serious beef and Emiway Bantai is his cousin. He releases most of his songs on Friday's.

MC Stan has many expensive things like diamond necklace with the term "HINDI" worth 1.5 Crores, a diamond chain with the rupees "?" logo which is made up of over 60 carat diamonds. His approximate net worth is Rs 15-20 crore. The rapper also owns a Mercedes worth crores reportedly.

Stan has collaborated with some renowned rappers in India, such as Raftaar, Seedhe Maut and others.



# 'Devi turns 3 months old so fast'

Bipasha pens a heartfelt note as her daughter turns 3 months old

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Bipasha Basu, who welcomed daughter Devi in November last year, loves to treat her Instafam to super cute pictures of her daughter.

The actress shared a picture-perfect moment featuring herself and daughter Devi. The occasion? Devi turned 3-months-old. Bipasha accompanied the picture with a caption that read: "Devi turns 3 months old so fast. Every second with her... Is the best memory for us. Papa and Mamma are just sooooo over the moon." She accompanied the post with the hashtags. Madhavan commented on Bipasha Basu's post: "Oh it's just the beginning.. Time will Flyyyyyyyyy... Wait for the first hug." Last week, the actress shared a super cute picture featuring daughter Devi and she wrote: "The most beautiful role of my life... being Devi's Ma." Bipasha Basu loves to delight her Instafam with super cute clicks of daughter Devi.

Bipasha Basu and husband Karan Singh Grover welcomed a daughter in November last year and they named her Devi. Bipasha Basu and Karan Singh Grover announced their daughter's arrival in an Instagram post that read: "12.11.2022. Devi Basu Singh Grover. The physical manifestation of our love and blessings of Ma is here now and she is divine."

Bipasha Basu is best-known for her roles in films such as Dhoom 2, Jism, Phir Hera Pheri, Dum Maaro Dum, Race, Omkara, Bachna Ae Haseeno and Raaz, among others. The actress was a supermodel before entering films. She was also a presenter of the TV show Darr Sabko Lagta Hai. She made her Bollywood debut with Ajnabee in 2001.



# Akshay Kumar says he's inspired from Tiger Shroff

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Akshay Kumar, who is known for his disciplined lifestyle and rigorous fitness regime, has written a heartwarming post for his Bade Miyan Chote Miyan co-star Tiger Shroff.

The actor has also thanked Tiger Shroff for "inspiring" him. Akshay Kumar started the note like this. "Dear Tiger [Shroff], I am not someone who writes letters. In fact, I am someone who does not write at all. But today I felt like doing this to make a special point. It was 32 years ago when I started my career with an action film.

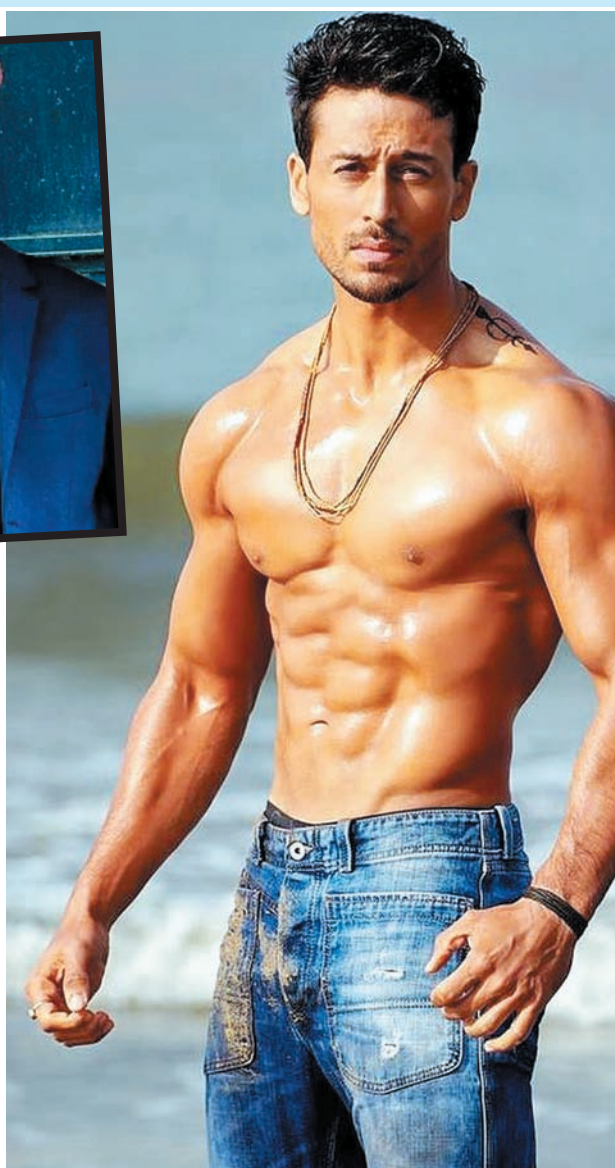
In these decades, I thought I had done it all. But just 15 days into filming one of our most ambitious projects, Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, I already feel tested both physically and mentally."

Akshay Kumar, who is taking physiotherapy sessions, added, "Bhai, (Tiger Shroff) I am taking physiotherapy sessions daily. And, I am not complaining. Because the magic of life is always outside the comfort zone. New doors open when we push. Mountains move when we push. We come into this world with a push... Life happens when we push. I'm enjoying pushing my limits, especially when it is with someone who was born in the year that I started working."

Sharing his experience of working with Tiger Shroff, Akshay Kumar said, "Tere saath yeh shoot karke badiya feel aa rahi hai, Tiger [Shroff] [I am having a lot of fun working with you]. We are doing amazing stunts, we talk fitness, we work out, and then we play volleyball till we crash."

Akshay Kumar continued, "I feel rejuvenated, I feel young from inside and this surge of fitness is making me realise that 55 is the age just on my birth certificate."

The actor also wrote a thank you note to Tiger Shroff for "inspiring" him. "So, thank you Tiger Shroff for inspiring me, challenging me and making me feel joyful in my zone. You and the whole team of Bade Miyan Chote Miyan have all my love and blessings. Cheers, Akshay."



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Divya Agarwal