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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM NEW DELHI, MUMBAI AND BHOPAL

NATION

Tejashwi meet Kejriwal to discuss opposition unity ...



HOLLYWOOD

Kim and Khloe Kardashian flash their matching washboard abs as they ...



SPORTS

Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships: India stun ...

Answer of 'The Modi Question'

► THE BBC STUDIO IS SITUATED IN A COMMERCIAL HUB NEAR THE BANDRA KURLA COMPLEX IN **CENTRAL MUMBAI WHERE** OFFICES OF SEVERAL NATIONAL AND MULTINATIONAL COMPA-NIES ARE ALSO LOCATED. THE INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT OFFI-CIALS REACHED THE BRITISH **BROADCASTING SERVICE (BBC)** OFFICE IN DELHI'S KASTURBA **GANDHI MARG, SAID THE** SOURCES. THE SOURCES ALSO SAID THAT THE TEAM REACHED THERE TO VERIFY DOCUMENTS AND SOME OF THE EMPLOYEES WERE ALSO ASKED TO LEAVE THE OFFICE AND GO HOME. "PHONES HAVE ALSO BEEN SEIZED," SAID THE SOURCES.

Team Absolute | Mumbai/Delhi

team of Income Tax Department sleuths carried out a 'survey' at the global media conglomerate BBC's Mumbai studios and office in Delhi on Tuesday.

The sleuths are understood to have seized the mobiles, laptops, tablets of the staffers present there, though exact details of the investigations by the central probe agency were not available.

A large number of media persons and photographers, besides many curious onlookers out for the lunch break, converged outside the studio building awaiting the nitty-gritties of the ITD operation inside the BBC studio. Though no insiders were available for comments, the survey of the Mumbai studio is connected with an



New Delhi: Soon after Income Tax officials reached the BBC offices in Delhi and Mumbai for a "survey", weeks after a huge controversy over the UK national broadcaster's documentary series on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and allegations linked to the 2002 Gujarat riots, opposition leaders took potshots at the Centre, and called the action 'predictable', 'a sign of panic', and a hint that 'their end is near'.

However, the BJP came down heavily on the British broadcaster, calling it "the most corrupt organisation in the world". The ruling party also attacked Congress, saying it supports 'anti-India' narratives.

Former Finance Minister P Chidambaram said that BBC is next on the target after Amnesty and Oxfam. "Government message to all citizens and organisations is "behave, or else."

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra twitted, "Reports of Income Tax raid at BBC's Delhi office. Wow, really? How unexpected.'

Aam Aadmi Party said it's the BJP's "old excuse" that the agency is acting independently. He added that it's a "sign of dictatorship" that the Centre is not ready to listen to criticism. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said "their (BJP's) end is near".

ongoing similar operation at the BBC offices in New Delhi, which sparked off a major political furore. Though the reasons behind the ITD's survey' or what the sleuths were looking for

are not clear, it is widely suspected to be a fallout of the recent documentary 'India: The Modi Question' on the 2002 Gujarat riots aired by BBC that rankled the Indian government.

We are cooperating with **I-T authorities: BBC**

New Delhi: Following the survey operations by the Income Tax department at British Broadcasting Service offices in Delhi and Mumbai on Tuesday, the BBC said that it was fully cooperating with the authorities."The Income Tax Authorities are currently at the BBC offices in New Delhi and Mumbai and we are fully cooperating. We hope to have this situation resolved as soon as possible," the BBC said on Twitter. According to reports, the employees of the broad-

casting corporation were asked not to use their computer systems and phones, including their personal ones. Reports quoting sources said the employees working in the afternoon shift at the BBC's Delhi office were asked to work from home, while those present in the office were asked to leave early. Reports stated that the searches at the BBC offices were related to allegations of International **Taxation and Transfer Pricing** irregularities.

EDITORS GUILD OF INDIA EXPRESSES CONCERN

New Delhi: The Editors Guild of India on Tuesday expressed concern over the Income Tax (I-T) surveys at BBC India offices.

"This comes soon after the release of two documentaries by the BBC, on the 2002 violence in Gujarat and the current status of the minorities in India. The documentaries stirred political waters with the government criticising the BBC for wrong and prejudiced reportage on the Gujarat violence, and attempted to ban online access and viewing of the films in India," it said.

The guild said that the surveys by the I-T department is in continuation of a trend of using government agencies to

intimidate and harass press organisations that are critical of government policies or the ruling establishment. "In September 2021, offices of NewsClick and Newslaundry were similarly "surveyed" by the I-T department.

In June 2021, there were surveys against Dainik Bhaskar and Bharat Samachar. In February 2021, the ED had conducted raids at the office of NewsClick. In each case, the raids and surveys were against the backdrop of critical coverage of the government establishment by the news organisations," it added.

It said that this is a trend that undermines constitutional democracy.

AIR INDIA PLACES BIG ORDER TO **BUY 250 AIRCRAFT FROM AIRBUS**

With a view to expand its fleet size and operation, the Tata group will buy 250 aircraft from Airbus in one of the largest aviation deals. The deal includes 40 A350 wide-body long-range aircraft and 210 narrow-body aircraft.

Team Absolute New

ata Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekaran on Tuesday said Air India has signed a letter of intent to acquire 250 aircraft from Airbus. It will include 40 wide-body A350 planes and 210 narrow-body aircraft.

Talking about Air India, he said that "a lot of emotions are involved in this project"

"One billion people want Air India to be very successful," he said.

He said that Air India is going through a massive transformation plan in a video conference with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ratan Tata, French President Emmanuel Macron and other leaders on Tuesday.

Earlier, on January 27, Air India CEO Campbell Wilson, in a communication to employees, had talked about the upcoming fleet expansion plan of the airline.

As per industry sources, this is nearly half of the total order of 495 jets which the airline has planned in the coming weeks to stay competitive in the aviation market.



Boeing 777X planes. After 69 years as a government-owned enterprise, Air India and Air India Express were welcomed back into the Tata group in January

The present management at Air India is driving the fiveyear transformation roadmap under the aegis of Vihaan.AI to establish itself as a world-class global airline with an Indian heart.

In November, 2022, Singapore Airlines (SIA) and Tata Sons (Tata) agreed to merge Air India and Vistara. with SIA investing Rs 20,585 million (US\$250 million) in Air India as part of the transaction.

With the integration, Air India became the only Indian airline group to operate both full-service and low-cost passenger services.

Smriti Mandhana: Most expensive player of WPL, Worth Rs 3.4 Crore

Team Absolute | New Delhi

ndia batter Smriti Mandhana was the most expensive buy at the inaugural Women's Premier League auction in Mumbai, when Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) snapped her up for INR 3.4 crore deal.

After bagging a whopping amount paid by the RCB in Monday's auction, Mandhana is set to earn double than Pakistan Super League (PSL) highest-paid players, says a

The top players in the PSL get picked through a draft, which means there is a cap on how much they can earn. The Platinum category is the top tier where players receive a salary within the range of \$130,000 (1.1 crore) to \$170,000 (1.4 crore).

Babar, who played for Peshawar Zalmi side, under the Platinum category, was traded at the season salary of \$1,50,000 or PKR 3,60,00000 (3 Crore 60 lakh).

As per current USD to Indian rupees conversion rate, Babar's PSL 2023 salary amounts to approximately INR 1.23 crore.

Mandhana was also the first player to come

up for bidding at the auction on Monday, having a base price of INR 50 lakh. RCB and Mumbai Indians were locked in an intense battle for her services, before the former managed to acquire her services, offering an open-

ing as well as a captaincy option.

SC CLOSES PETITION SEEKING TO BAN ZOOM APP

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday closed a PIL seeking a ban on the use of the Zoom application over security

Senior advocate Arvind Datar contended before a bench headed by justice Sanjiv Khanna that the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology had found nothing wrong in the usage of the application.

 $\bar{\mbox{D}}$ Datar further contended that many use Zoom and the petition against it does not survive. He pointed out that the concerned ministry had said there is nothing wrong in using Zoom, and queried why only target us and not WebEx etc?

The petition was filed by one Harsh Chugh, who had sought a ban on the use of Zoom for official and personal purposes. The petitioner had argued that the software gives rise to several privacy and security concerns.

After hearing Datar's submissions, the bench, also comprising justice M.M. Sundresh, closed the proceedings in the matter. The top court also declined to entertain an intervention application to place the additional documents in the matter.

CRPF jawans on duty in Pulwama 4 yrs ago remember fallen colleagues

Absolute | Srinagar

wreath-laying ceremony by CRPF was organised at the Martyrs Memorial in Lethpora in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Tuesday in honour of the bravehearts who laid down their lives on February 14, 2019.Tributes were paid to the 40 CRPF jawans who died in that terror attack.Fondly remembering the fallen heroes, the CRPF jawans, who were also on duty in Pulwama on February 14, 2019, said they miss their colleagues but their morale is high to take on

the militants and end



terrorism in Kashmir. Karan Singh, a CRPF jawan who was a part of the convoy that was targetted by terrorists said

they initially thought that it was a grenade blast or a tyre burst, but soon realised it was a terrorist attack on their

"We promptly took control of the situation and secured the area. he said.

WHOLESALE **INFLATION FALLS TO 4.73% IN JANUARY**

New Delhi: The wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation for January 2023 fell to 4.73 per cent against 4.95 per cent in December 2022, according to data released by the commerce ministry on Tuesday. The fall in wholesale price inflation was owing to a decline in the rate of mineral oils, chemicals and chemical products, textiles, crude petroleum and natural gas, textiles and food products.

The wholesale inflation had fallen to 4.95 per cent in December 2022 against 6.12 per cent, which was recorded

in November 2022. The fall in WPI inflation in December 2022 too was primarily due to fall in prices of food articles, mineral oils, crude petroleum & natural gas, food products, textiles and chemicals & chemical products.

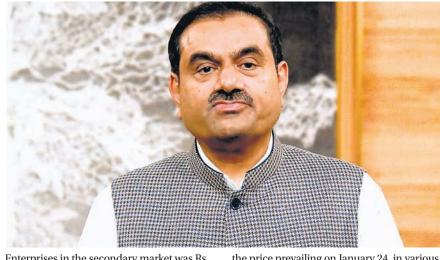
Congress leader moves Supreme Court seeking probe against Adani

New Delhi | Agencies

Congress leader has moved the Supreme Court seeking probe against Adani Group of companies against the backdrop of Hindenburg report, and also sought probe into the role of the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and the SBI for allegedly investing "huge amounts of public money" in the FPO of the enterprises.

The plea filed by Jaya Thakur through advocate Varinder Kumar Sharma urged the top court to direct probe against Adani group of companies through chairman and his associates who have swindled lakhs of the crores of public money and money of the government exchequer, by various investigating agencies, i.e. CBI, ED, DRI, CBDT, EIB, NCB, SEBI, RBI, SFIO under the supervision and monitoring of the sitting judge of the

"To direct the investigating agencies to investigate the role of Respondent No. 11 (LIC) & 12 (SBI) to invest huge amount of public money in the FPO of the Adani Enterprises @ Rs 3200/- per share whereas the prevailing market arte of shares of Adani



Enterprises in the secondary market was Rs 1800/- per share approximately," said the plea. The plea contended that subsequent to disclosure made by Hindenburg Research report on January 24, the share price of the Adani Group of companies came down drastically and reached to almost 50 per cent of

the price prevailing on January 24, in various stock markets in India and abroad, due to which the millions of common men of this

country lost more than Rs 10 lakh crore. The apex court is already hearing two petitions in connection with the Hindenburg report controversy.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER DIE IN FIRE DURING DEMOLITION DRIVE, MURDER CASE FILED

Kanpur | Agencies

45-year-old woman and her daughter, 20, died in a fire during an antiencroachment drive at a village in Kanpur Dehat district of Uttar Pradesh on Monday.

The family alleged that cops set their hut ablaze when the women were inside. Local cops yesterday claimed that the two set themselves on fire, but the state police have now registered a murder case against 13 people. Those charged include the subdivisional magistrate, the station house officer and the bulldozer operator. They have also been charged with attempt to murder and voluntarily causing hurt.

The incident took place in the Madauli village in the Rura area of the district where the police, district administration and revenue officials had gone to remove encroachments from a "gram samaj" or government land, a police official said.

The villagers say the officials arrived in the morning with a bulldozer and they were not given any prior notice.

"They started the fire while people were still inside. We were just about able to escape. They broke our temple. Nobody did anything, not even the DM (District Magistrate). Everybody ran, nobody could save my mother," said Shivam Dixit.

Local police yesterday claimed that Pramila Dixit and her daughter Neha set themselves on fire. Station House Officer Dinesh Gautam and Pramila's husband, Gendan Lal, sustained burn injuries when they tried to save the victims, a police officer said.

The family of the two women who died in a fire during an antiencroachment drive in Madauli village in Kanpur Dehat district on Monday evening, has finally agreed to allow the district police to take the bodies for a postmortem examination.

DELHI MAN MURDERS GIRLFRIEND TO MARRY ANOTHER WOMAN, STUFFS BODY IN DHABA'S FRIDGE

Team Absolute New Delh

n a horrific incident, a Delhi man murdered his girlfriend after an argument over his impending marriage to someone else, stuffed her body in a refrigerator at his dhaba, and went on with his wedding the same day, police said on Tuesday.

Accused Sail Gehlot was arrested after the body of a woman, a resident of Haryana's Jhajjar, was found inside a fridge at a dhaba, owned by him, on the outskirts of village Mitraon in Delhi.

According to police, on February 10, an input were received that a person named Sahil had killed his girlfriend and married another girl on the day of murder.

"A police team was formed and on checking, no case or complaint about any missing girl was found reported. The team reached Mitraon village in search of the accused Gehlot, but his mobile phone was found switched off and he was not present in his house. Intensive search was made in the village and nearby area," Special Commissioner of Police, Crime, Ravindra Singh Yadav said. However, Gehlot was nabbed by police

from Kair village crossing. "On interrogation, initially, the accused

tried to mislead the police. But on sustained interrogation, he disclosed that he had killed



his girlfriend, Nikki Yadav, in the intervening night of February 9 and 10 Feb and kept her dead body in a refrigerator at his dhaba in a vacant plot situated on the outskirts of village Mitraon," Yadav said.

Sahil Gehlot further disclosed that in 2018, he met the woman at a coaching centre in Uttam Nagar area of west Delhi where he had joined to prepare for SSC exams.

"At that time, Nikki was also preparing for a medical entrance examination in Akash Institute at Uttam Nagar. Both used to travel to their respective institutes daily in the same

bus, and they became friends, and later on fell in love," said the Special CP.

"The duo started meeting before and after the coaching classes. In February 2018 the accused took admission in D. Pharma in Galgotia College at Greater Noida and she also took admission in the same college in BA (English Hons.). Thereafter, both of them started living together at Greater Noida in a rented house.

They became very close to each other and also travelled to several places such as Manali, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Dehradun etc, '

However, during Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, they returned to their homes and after the end of the lockdown, they again started living together in a rented house in Dwarka

"The accused did not inform his family members about this relationship. His family was putting pressure on him to get married with some other girl and finally in December 2022, engagement and marriage of the accused with another girl were fixed for February 9 and 10," the Special CP said. Gehlot did not inform Nikki about his

engagement or marriage plans. "Somehow she came to know about this and confronted the accused and arguments started between the two. The accused strangulated the deceased with the help of a data cable of his mobile phone kept in his car. Thereafter, he went to the dhaba owned by him and put her dead body in a refrigerator," he said, adding that Gehlot then went back to his home and solemnised his marriage with another woman. "The dead body of Nikki was recovered from the fridge at the instance of the accused. A case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code has been registered and the version disclosed by the accused is being verified during investigation," said the

Lord Buddha's ashes to be displayed for 'darshan' in Mumbai on Feb 15



Team Absolute Mumbai

he country's first Buddhist Dhamma padayatra, carrying an urn containing the ashes of Lord Gautam Buddha, brought by 110 monks from Thailand -- will conclude in Mumbai on Wednesday after traversing 570 km from Parbhani, an official said here on Tuesday.

The marchers will bring the urn from Thailand in a ceremonial manner, and it will be displayed for a large number of Buddhists to take a 'darshan' here on Wednesday.

Congress SC Division President Siddharth Hattiambire, and actor and Dhammadoot Gagan Malik - will terminate at the famed Chaityabhoomi in Dadar in the presence of lakhs of Buddhist devotees from all over Maharashtra and other places.

The marchers, who included 110 monks from Thailand representing the International Buddhist Bhikhu Sangha, have brought the ashes of Tathagata Gautama Buddha from Parbhani in the metal urn and will place it at

Tejashwi meet Kejriwal to discuss opposition unity

Patna | Agencies

ihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav met Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the national capital on Tuesday to discuss various matters, including opposition unity for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

An RJD spokesperson said that Tejashwi Yadav and Kejriwal discussed current social and political issues as well as state of the economy at the meeting at the latter's official residence.

The two leaders also raised concerns over the BJP government which is putting the national assets in the hands of private players. Tejashwi Yadav appeared to all the people to work together to save the country," the spokeperson said.

The AAP has governments in two states -Delhi and Punjab - as well as some MLAs in Gujarat and Goa. Recently, Kejriwal was seen in Telangana with opposition leaders including state Chief Minister and BRS chief K



Chandrashekhar Rao, Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav, and those of the

RAJ POLICE OFFICER'S SUICIDE: WARRANT AGAINST CONG MLA KRISHNA POONIA

Jaipur | Agencies

bailable warrant was issued against former Olympian and Sadulpur (Churu) MLA Krishna Poonia on Tuesday. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court has issued an order for Poonia to appear on March 4. The MLA is accused of inciting Vishnudutt Bishnoi, the then SHO Rajgarh (Churu) police station in Bikaner division, to commit suicide.

On May 23, 2020, Vishnudutt Bishnoi, the then station officer of Rajgarh, had committed suicide. Vishnudutt's brother Sandeep Bishnoi had accused Krishna Poonia of harassing him. Sandeep lodged an FIR stating that Krishna Poonia was responsible for Vishnudutt's suicide.

The matter was earlier investigated by the CB CID. The local people demanded handing over the investigation to the CBI. After this, the state government handed over the case to the CBI which had imposed FR in its investigation. The FR report was sub-



mitted to the ACMM (CBI), Jodhpur. Here the court dismissed the FR while ordering re-investigation of the case. Also, it summoned Krishna Poonia, issuing a bailable warrant against her. A screenshot of a WhatsApp chat between the SHO and his activist friend went viral where the police officer claimed that he was

"being trapped in dirty politics at the local level". However, the representative of Krishna Poonia, Virendra Poonia said: We are completely innocent in this case. We will appeal this in the High Court.

It has been accepted in the CBI report that Poonia used to call the police. He was also upset because of

Srinagar | Agencies

inal on Tuesday fo

demanding and accepting

Official sources said

Professor Tariq Ashai, the

Principal of a government degree college Pattan in

arrested while accepting a

bribe of Rs 60,000 in Srinagar

Baramulla district, was

this. After Vishnudutt's suicide, his minor son also hanged himself at home. He was a student of class XI and was quite upset over his father's death. After the death of both father and son, the whole family was bro-

Vishnudutt Bishnoi had written two suicide notes. One suicide note was written to his family members, the other to the then Churu SP Tejaswini Gautam. In this he wrote: Respected madam, sorry, please, so much pressure was created around me that I could not bear the stress. I tried to give my best to Rajasthan Police till my last breath. It is requested not to disturb anyone. I was not a coward. Just couldn't take the stress. I am my own culprit.

Meanwhile, Krishna Poonia speaking to the media said, "I haven't received the court warrant yet and have received information only from the media. I've been interrogated once but have not been called anywhere for further probe," she added.

AFTER TOWER D, CHINTELS PARADISO'S E AND F TOWERS DECLARED UNSAFE

Gurugram | Agencies

Ranchi: A love-struck

tragic end at the hands of

her lover in an anti-climax

to her expectations of mak-

ing Valentine's Day a mem-

According to the police,

the 17-year-old girl was first allegedly raped by her lover

before killing her by insert-

ing an iron rod in her pri-

took place in Jharkhand's

vate parts. The incident

The girl's body was

by some local residents

who then informed the

found in a field close to her

partner's home on Monday

The incident took place

"On Sunday night, the

accused without informing

The police officer said

that an FIR had been regis-

tered against the accused

in connection with the inci-

The local residents also

went to the accused's resi-

dence to look for him but

he was not found there.

in Ajni village on Sunday.

girl had gone to meet the

her family. On Monday

morning, her body was

found," SHO Santosh

Kumar Ravi said.

orable one with her part-

ner-turned-killer.

Garhwa district.

police.

girl in Iharkhand met a

urugram's Addition Deputy Commissioner (ADC), TVishram Kumar Meena, said on Tuesday that a report ed by IIT Delhi has found structural defici cies in the construction of Towers E and F of Chintels Paradiso residential apartment complex where two persons lost their lives after a portion in its Tower D collapsed last

Repair is not possible on technical and economic grounds, so Towers E and F of Chintels Paradiso condominium in Sector 109 are also unsafe and not fit for habitation,

There are 28 flats in Tower E and 22 in Tower F.

"In the recent report too, the concrete used in the construction of the buildings has been found with high amount of chloride. Due to this, steel and concrete used in the construction got eroded. Earlier, the IIT Delhi team had also recommended that E and F towers be closed. Based on the investigation report of IIT Delhi, the allottees of E and F tow-



ers would be rehabilitated as per rules," Meena said. Similarly, the sampling work for the structural audit has been completed for Towers A and G of the condominium,

while the sampling work is in process for Tower H, he said. On February 10, 2022, two persons lost their lives after a slab on the sixth floor of Tower D collapsed partially during repair work. Following the incident, the state government had formed a committee to probe the matter, and a structural audit of the building was also ordered.

A committee was constituted under the chairmanship Meena to probe the matter.

The IIT Delhi team was asked to conduct a structural audit of the towers.

IIT Delhi had earlier declared Tower D unsafe in its investigation report released in November 2022. The report was also shared with the residents of the tower and the developer for settlement-related processes.

Deputy Commissioner of Gurugram, Nishant Kumar Yadav, had in November last year given the demolition order

city. "A case was registered based on the complaint by the complainant in ACB police station.

"A team of sleuths was



organised and Tariq Ashai was arrested while accepting a bribe of Rs 60,000 in presence of witnesses," an official said, adding that he is lodged in a Srinagar police station while further investigations

LOVELORN GIRL 40 COUPLES IN PUNE SAY 'I DO', WED ON V-DAY **MEETS TRAGIC END** AHEAD OF **VALENTINE'S DAY**

On Valentines Day on Tuesday, at least 40 couples said "I Do" and tied the knot at the marriage registrar's office in Pune, accompanied by their families, friends and curious onlookers.

Pune | Agencies

he excited young boys and girls, some arriving from even far-off places in the district, started queuing up early at the marriage office this morning to ensure they could register their marriage and start a life of wedded bliss on what is celebrated as the 'day of love' worldwide.

A majority of the nervous youngsters had turned up in eye-catching wedding attires - the grooms in glowing sherwanis-kurta-pyjamas of various hues, and the demure brides in glittering saris or chaniyacholis of different colours, decked up in make-up and sparkling jew-

A local eyewitness said that as the couples entered the office in turns, accompanied by witnesses, signed the bulky marriage register, thanked the officials and completed the for-

The others waited impatiently outside in the queues, cracking jokes among themselves or clicking photos of the happenings around,



letter date - February 14, 2023 - as a

After being officially proclaimed

lifelong memory

awaiting their final call.

The officials had gone a step forward to make the day memorable for the couples by arranging to issue

couples posed in different styles for their thrilled families and friends who clicked photos/videos on the staircase, the corridors or outside the building. Later, amidst cheers of joy, rounds of congratulations, lot of

as 'Husband' and 'Wife' many of the

felicitations, greetings and merrymaking, the respective couples departed for more celebrations with their near and dear ones.

Valentine's Day is considered a hot favourite marriage date for many couples annually, but locals said that the past three years - 2020, 2021 and 2022 - the mood was subdued owing to the Covid pandemic.

This year, the couples were in high spirits, planned weeks in advance to get their names registered for a V-Day wedding and finally kickstarted their new life on the auspicious day of love.

Besides the registered marriages, there are many more wedding ceremonies and receptions organised on Tuesday in Pune, Mumbai, Nagpur, Aurangabad and other cities coinciding with V-Day.

Over 100 shanties gutted in Gurugram fire

Gurugram | Agencies

major fire broke out at Ghásola village in Sector-49 Gurugram here on Tuesday afternoon. The fire engulfed several huts of which more than 100 shanties were completely gutted.

The cause of the fire is suspected to be blast in small cylinders or an electric shortcircuit.

Fire personnel and police evacuated people from the huts and it took them several hours to control the fire. However, no casualties or injuries have been reported. According to the fire officials, they received the fire incident call at around 1.00 p.m. at the Sector-29 fire station.

They suspect that the blaze may have broken out due to blasts in small cylinders which caused the fire in the area, further spreading to other huts

A fire official said, a dozer fire tenders reached the spo and brought the situation under control in three hour "Teams of several fire persor nel, civil defence and police personnel were deployed in the fire-fighting and evacua tion operations," he said.

These huts are covered with plastic covers, tarpaulir



sheets, wood and bamboo These materials were another reason for the fire to spread across the area very rapidly.

"There was some property loss to residents but no death or injuries were caused. The residents are daily wage labourers working at construction sites and houses. An actual reason behind the incident is yet to be known,' Rajesh Kumar, SHO sector-50 police station, said.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MEEMLA DEVI is legally

M/o No. 4579038K Rank- NK Name- BHAGAT SINGH presently residing at Gram devpur makanpurPost office Iqbalpur Tahsil Roorkee district Haridwar Uttrakhand Pin- 247668 have changed my name from MEMLA to MEEMLA DEVI and also Changed my DOB from 01/01/1960 to 01/01/1956 vide Affidavit No. BC 466533.



madhya pradesh

CM CHOUHAN SLAMS CONGRESS LEADER DIGVIJAY SINGH, SAYS 'HIS INTELLIGENCE HAS FAILED'

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has slammed former CM and veteran Congress leader Digvijaya Singh over his tweet which again raises questions on Pulwama attack.

Team Absolute Bhopal

M Chouhan on Tuesday said, "I think Digvijay Singh's intelligence has failed. He insults the Indian Army; he speaks the language of Pakistan and tries to lower the morale of the Army." "Now, an investigation should be done of Digvijay Singh that, who sows the seed of speaking against the country and against the army in his mind. The DNA of the Congress party should be investigated which walks in Padvatra along with people who break India in the name of Bharat Jodo. It is a wonder," Chouhan said.

He further said, "A leader of a party (Digvijaya Singh) is constantly questioning the patriotism of the Indian Army, questioning their bravery and speaking the language of Pakistan. Congress President Sonia Gandhi and



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should also answer it."

CM Chouhan made the remark in

Sabha MP Digvijay Singh's tweet this morning offering homage to the martyred soldiers in Pulwama attack in

age to the 40 CRPF Martyrs who died because of the blatant Intelligence Failure in Pulwama. I hope all the Martyred Families have been suitably

On this day in 2019, 40 CRPF personnel lost their lives in the Pulwama terror attack four years ago. The jawans lost their lives after a suicide bomber drove a car laden with explosives into the security force convoy.

The attack was carried out by the Pakistani terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed, which is led by Masood Azhar based in Bahawalpur.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also paid homage to the soldiers. He wrote in a tweet, "Remembering our valorous heroes who we lost on this day in Pulwama. We will never forget their supreme sacrifice. Their courage motivates us to build a strong and

BBC raided merely for making documentary on Gujarat': Digvijaya

Team Absolute Bhopal

Senior Congress leader and and Member of Parliament Digivijaya Singh condemned the Income Tax department's raid at BBC offices on Tuesday. "I think it's for the first time in the 100 years of the history of BBC that they were raided merely for making a documentary on Gujarat showing all the sides. Won't this be a blot on PM Modi's international image? he said, the Income Tax department raided the BBC office in Delhi and Mumbai on Tuesday morning. The searches come amid the uproar over a documentary about Prime Minister Modi.

As per information, the search was conducted as part of the probe into alleged tax evasion.

Press Club of India (PCI), too condemned the incident. The recent raids are part of

a series of attacks on the the media that the govern-

media by government agenment perceives as hostile to cies in recent times, especialit," the PCI said in a state-

Narendra Tomar visits Gwalior, claims BJP's win in upcoming MP elections

Team Absolute Gwalion

nion Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar claimed BJP's victory in the upcoming MP assembly elections, on Tuesday. Tomar was speaking to media during his visit to Gwalior on Tuesday. On being asked about the Congress' face for the chief minister position, he said, "No matter who is announced as the CM candidate of the Congress party, BJP will win MP.

In Gwalior, minister will lay the foundation stone and inaugurate the cricket tournament at Gwalior Rural Vidhan Sabha. Tomar will be accompanied by Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia at the event. Later, the two leaders will leave for Delhi in the evening. Regarding the launch of Kamal Nath as CM, minister says it is their inter-



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Punishment against those delaying action on public applications

Team Absolute Bhopal

hief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan today participated in Samadhan Online through video conferencing from Samatva Bhawan, Chief Minister's residence. CM Chouhan got pending problems of the applicants of various districts resolved online. The Chief Minister congratulated the best performing officers who resolved 100 percent complaints lodged in departments, districts and CM Helpline.

Chief Minister Chouhan has issued instructions to stop the increment of a development block medical officer guilty of delay in various cases, suspension of a Patwari, departmental inquiry in one case, stop one increment each of two Tehsildars and give show cause notice to a principal.

Chief Minister Chouhan ensured the payment of an amount of Rs 51,000 made to an applicant Neetu



plaint of non-receipt of assistance amount in the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah/Nikah Yojana. Janpad Office Sidhi was directed to provide immediate assistance in such cases in future. In a similar case, necessary action was taken and payment of

amount made on the application of Purushottam Singh of Umaria district. Action was also taken on the complaint of the applicant Brijesh of Singrauli district. In this case, there was a delay due to the change of mobile number by the officer who

resolved the case registered in the CM Helpline. Chief Minister Chouhan said that it should be ensured that the facility of changing the mobile number should not be misused by the officials who are responsible for disposal of applica-

Chief Minister Chouhan also took serious note of the inaction on the application of Shyamlal Prajapat of Ujjain district to feed his land details online. He has given instructions to stop one increment each of two Tehsildars found guilty and to suspend one Patwari. Chief Minister Chouhan had been given an application for non-receipt of compensation amount by Meghraj Gond of Jabalpur, who was injured in an attack by wild animals. In this case, the applicant was immediately paid the compensation amount of Rs. 50 thousand. In two cases of Chhindwara district also, Chief Minister Chouhan got the prob-

Vikas Yatras are continuing with all round development-Chief Minister Chouhan

Team Absolute Bhopal

hief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the Vikas Yatras are continuing in the state which are bringing allround development. So far, 16 thousand 318 dedications and 12 thousand 526 bhoomi-pujans and laying of foundation stones have been performed in the yatras. Development works are going on in different areas of the state with the funds of crores. The multidimensional and creative works being done in Vikas Yatras are connecting the society. Among the innovations taking place in Vikas Yatras, baskets of happiness are being given to malnourished children in Dewas district with the coop-



eration of district administration and society, in which multi-vitamins, roasted gram, sesame (til) laddoos and other nutritious ingredients are being made available. These works are being conducted with the participation of the society. The initiative taken by the society to eradicate malnutrition is commendable. Along with this, digital education and the work of collecting books for hostel and library is also going on in the district. This works, which are being done on the basis of public participation, will definitely be successful. Chief Minister Chouhan was discussing with media persons after planting saplings in the garden located at Shyamla Hills.

22 INJURED AS BUS OVERTURNS

Sehore: As many as 22 people sustained minor injuries when a passenger bus overturned in Madhya Pradesh's Sehore on Tuesday. The bus was on its way to Nasrullaganj from Narmada Puram.

'22 people have suffered minor injuries. The passenger bus was going to Nasrullaganj when it overturned," said SP Mayank Awasthi,

The injured were being admitted to Budhni Hospital, he added. Further details are awaited.

26th State Level Forest **Sports Competition**

The 26th State Level Forest Sports Competition is being organized by the Forest Department from February 15 to 17 in Bhopal.

Team Absolute Bhopal

t will mainly have competitions in 15 sports activities. Around 500 participants will take part in the competition. All sports competitions will be held at Bhopal's Tatya Tope Stadium, Arera Club, Prakash Taran Pushkar and Sports Complex 74 Bungalows.

Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Sports Co-ordinator Harishankar Mohanta informed that after the state level competi-

tion, the 26th All India Sports Competition 2023 will be held in Haryana from March 10 to 14. A team of Madhya Pradesh Forest Department will also participate in this competition.

Weightlifting (Men/Women)

and Shakti Tolan (Men/Women) in the state level forest sports competition will be held at Khel Bhawan 74 Bungalows, Bhopal from 9 am to evening, between February 15 and 17. Table Tennis, Carrom, Chess, Badminton and Athletics Competition from 15

to 17 February at T.T. Nagar Stadium Bhopal and lawn tennis competition will be held in Arera Colony from 15 to 17 February. Swimming in Prakash Taran Pushkar, Tulsi Nagar, bridge, rifle shooting, squash and billiards competition will be held at TT Nagar Stadium on February 16 from 9 am to evening. On the third day, on February 17, snooker competition will be held at TT Nagar Stadium. The closing ceremony will be held at TT Nagar Stadium from 4 pm.

12 South African cheetahs to land in India on Saturday STIPEND LESS THAN LABORER'S WAGE, VET STUDENTS ON DAY-2



OF 'DHARNA

Jabalpur: As many as 350 veterinary students of Jablapur's Nanaji Deshmukh Pashu Chikitsa Vigyan Vishwa Vidyalaya complained that their stipend is less than that of a labourer's wage, as they continued 'dharna' for the second straight day on Tuesday. The students are demanding a raise in the internship stipend, along with an increase in the number of posts for veterinary surgeons.

Veterinary students allege that in the name of internship stipend, they were given Rs 4600, amount less than a MGNREGA worker, which makes it difficult for students to survive. Also, students mentioned that the existing posts of veterinary surgeons are 1671, whereas according to government rules, there should be one veterinarian for 5000



where eight such spotted cats were brought from Namibia last year, a wildlife expert associated with India's cheetah revival project has said. These big cats - seven males and five females - will embark on journey to their new home thousands of miles away aboard an Indian Air Force (IAF) transport aircraft from the OR Tambo International Airport, Gauteng, South Africa on Friday evening, the project participant and expert said. He said the South African cheetahs will first arrive at the Gwalior Air Force base in MP on Saturday morning and 30 minutes later they will be transported some 165km away to KNP in Sheopur district by IAF

helicopters. After landing at KNP around 12 noon, they will be put into quarantine bomas (enclosures) after half an hour (12.30 pm), added the expert.

KNP Director Uttam Sharma said they have set up 10 quarantine bomas for South African



cheetahs. In two of these facilities, two pairs of cheetah brothers would be kept. "We have completed our preparations to receive the big cats on Saturday," he added.

Experts said a delegation from South Africa visited KNP in early September last year to see arrangements at the wildlife sanctuary for housing the world's fastest land animals. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India and South Africa last

month for the translocation of the mammals. South Africa has donated these big cats to India. But India has to pay USD 3,000 for the

capture of every cheetah to the African nation before they are translocated, said the wildlife

India had planned to airlift these South African cheetahs in August last year but couldn't do so due to delay in signing a formal translocation agreement between the two countries. Due to the delay in the MoU signing for the inter-continental translocation of these big cats, some experts had in December expressed concern over the health of the South African cheetahs as these animals have been quarantined in their home country since July 15 in anticipation of their transfer to India.

As a result of long quarantine, these animals might have lost their fitness, they had said. Prolonged quarantine could be taking a toll on the health of these felines, who are slated to join the eight cheetahs imported from Namibia and released into KNP in mid-September, the experts had said. In fact, the 12 South African cheetahs earmarked for India have not hunted for themselves after being kept in bomas, wildlife experts in the know of India's cheetah reintroduction plan had said.

First G20 culture track meet to be held in Khajuraho

Team Absolute Bhopal

he first G20 meeting under the culture track is slated to be held in the last week of February in Madhya Pradesh's Khajuraho, home to exquisite temples that are part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The meeting will be held from February 22-25, a senior

The G20, or Group of 20, is an intergovernmental forum of the world's major developed and developing economies.

official said.

The bloc comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkiye, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU). India assumed the presidency of the G20 on December 1.



Over 200 meetings at 55 locations across the country will be held during this period, culminating with a summit in September in Delhi.

The first G20 Tourism Working Group meeting was held at the pristine Rann of Kutch in Gujarat from February 7-9. The Culture Ministry has also shared digital posters on its Twitter handle about the upcoming event.

The venue for the G20 **Culture Working Group** meeting is Maharaja **Chhatrasal Convention** Centre in Khajuraho. In another post on Twitter, the ministry shared a message from Union Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy.

EDITOR'S SPECS

HATE AGAINST LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY SURGES ON TWITTER UNDER MUSK

🕇 witter under Elon Musk has failed to protect LGBTQ+ organisations and individuals from online violence and abuse, according to a new survey. The survey by Amnesty International USA (AIUSA), GLAAD and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) revealed that the harassment of LGBTQ+ activists intensified since Musk acquired Twitter in October 2022. About 60 per cent of respondents reported that they had experienced an increase in abusive and hateful speech on Twitter since Musk took over as CEO. The other 40 per cent reported that they had experienced the same level of abusive and hateful speech as before. None of the survey respondents reported a decrease in abusive and hateful speech.

"Twitter considers itself a 'common digital town square', yet it's a town square where LGBTQ+ voices are all too often shouted down and silenced by constant hateful speech and harassment," said Michael Kleinman, senior director of technology and human rights at Amnesty International USA. When respondents tried to report the abuse to Twitter, 88 per cent (eight out of nine respondents) said that Twitter took no action to mitigate or take down the reported content. About 60 per cent of all respondents said that hateful and abusive speech has impacted how they use the platform including posting to Twitter less frequently, sharing less information regarding their work, and limiting with whom they interact on the platform. This problem was particularly acute among activists, with eight of nine activists surveyed reporting that harassment impacts how they use the platform. About 65 per cent of all respondents said that there is more hateful and abusive speech on Twitter compared to other platforms they use.

BJP, BIHAR GRAND ALLIANCE PLOT WAYS TO UPSET CASTE EQUATIONS OF RIVALS

he 2024 Lok Sabha elections are crucial for the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The ruling party is facing antiincumbency due to the rising prices of every essential commodity, growing unemployment, unresolved farmers' issues and non-fulfilment of old election promises, such as Rs 15 lakh in the bank account of every individual, two crore jobs per year, 'Achche Din', and others, say analysts. The BJP has managed to gain political ground in states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Haryana on the basis of Hindutva and the politics of breaking the government. Maharashtra is an example of breaking the government. However, the BJP also lost power in a similar way when Chief Minister Nitish Kumar used the same tactic in August last year and forced the saffron party out of power in Bihar.

The BJP think tank believes that a caste census will give an edge to Nitish Kumar and Tejashwi Yadav in Bihar. Hence, it is trying every possible way to enter into the caste combination of the JD-U and the RJD and create divisions in their core voters.

The JD-U has its core voters among the Kurmis and the Koiris (Kushwaha) in Bihar. People of these two castes are financially very sound thanks to the government of Nitish Kumar for the last 17 years. They are loyal to Nitish Kumar. The recent rebellious moves of Upendra Kushwaha could be an attempt by the saffron party to create confusion in the Kurmi vote bank. Upendra Kushwaha openly denied the leadership of Tejashwi Yadav and asked Nitish Kumar to avoid promoting him.

"The statement of Upendra Kushwaha to CM Nitish Kumar not to promote Tejashwi Yadav for the 2025 assembly poll was a clear indication that he is talking the language of the BJP. Uncle and nephew are united and going strong in Bihar and BJP wants to create differences among them. The BJP actually wants to deceive the voters of the Koiri community through Upendra Kushwaha and hurt the vote bank of the JD-U," said Mritunjay Tiwari, national spokesperson of the RJD.

Upendra Kushwaha has said that the JD-U is weakening in Bihar after the formation of the Mahagathbandhan (Grand Alliance) gov-



ernment. Moreover, promoting Tejashwi Yadav by CM Nitish Kumar for the 2025 assembly poll is sending a wrong message to the Kurmi and Koiri voters who believe that once Tejashwi Yadav becomes the chief minister of Bihar, Yadavs and Muslims will become the dominant groups.

Reacting to Upendra Kushwaha's statement, Nitish Kumar on Friday without taking his name said: "He used to give statements against me in the media every day and I learned through newspapers. What is the meaning of his statement? I believe he has an alignment with others (BJP) and hence he is talking its language. He is free to say anything, we do not care.'

"Kurmi and Koiri voters have been anti Yadav in Bihar for years. It is true that Kurmi and Koiri give their votes in the name of Nitish Kumar. Similarly, Yadav voters give their votes in the name of Lalu Prasad Yadav and now Tejashwi Yadav. Now, Nitish Kumar is promoting Tejashwi Yadav for the 2025 assembly election," RJD vice president Shivanand Tiwari told correspondent.

"Mahagathbandhan alliance partners have announced the Purnea rally on February 25

where leaders of all 7 parties including Nitish Kumar and Tejashwi Yadav will be present. It will be interesting to see how Kurmi-Koiri voters would share the same space with Muslims and Yadavs. The success of the Purnea rally will give a strong message to the BJP in Bihar,' Tiwari said."The Upendra Kushwaha episode may create confusion in the Koiri caste but we have to see how he is capable of taking away the voters from Nitish Kumar. The relevance of leaders like Upendra Kushwaha will be tested only when he is capable of individually taking away the majority of voters of his caste and form the government with the BJP. I am not sure if he is popular enough in his caste. If we analyze, a number of Kushwaha leaders are present in every party and they are popular in their respective constituencies. Upendra Kushwaha may create uncertainty in the mind of some voters of his caste but not all," Tiwari

Nitish Kumar has the sharpest political brain in the country. He finds out the "Jaichands" within his party and picks them out. Upendra Kushwaha and RCP Singh are examples of it, he said.

Nitish Kumar is currently doing the Samadhan Yatra in Bihar and making every possible effort to attract the EBC vote bank. The EBC voters play a crucial role in deciding the fate of political parties in Bihar. They have an estimated strength of 23% percent in Bihar. Hence, the role of leaders like Jitan Ram Manjhi and Mukesh Sahani becomes more important. Manjhi represented the Mahadalit community while Mukesh Sahani called himself the "Son of Mallah" (Fisherman). These two are loyal to Nitish Kumar, he added.

For the RJD, Tejashwi Yadav wants to transform his party's image of Muslim-Yadav to A to Z to lure voters from the upper castes. The RJD under Tejashwi Yadav conducted special events for the Rajput and Bhumihar castes. He gave portfolios to Kartikeya and Sudhakar Singh soon after the formation of the Mahagathbandhan government. They belong to the Bhumihar and Rajput castes respectively. Jagadanand Singh is also a Rajput and the state president of the party.

international

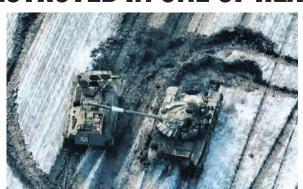
RUSSIA'S MARINE BRIGADE OF 5,000 MEN ALMOST **ENTIRELY DESTROYED IN ONE OF HEAVIEST LOSSES**

of the heaviest military losses in a single battle since the start of the war in Ukraine after elite units repeatedly tried to storm a fortified coal mining town in broad daylight, media reports said.

Ukraine officials said that one marine brigade of 5,000 men was almost entirely destroyed, for the third time since Kremlin launched the full-scale invasion nearly a year ago, Daily Mail reported.

The carnage and loss of at least 130 armoured vehicles led Russian hardliners to call for public show trials to punish incompetent generals responsible for the repeated battlefield massacres of their soldiers.

"Some of them are complete cretins all the mistakes that were made before were repeated," said Igor Girkin, a former



Russian intelligence officer who helped stage the pro-Moscow 2014 insurgencies in Donetsk and Crimea.

Girkin complained that Russian soldiers were killed 'like turkeys in a shooting range' as Ukrainians held higher positions, Daily Mail reported.The latest attempt to seize Vuhledar began in late January with Spetsnaz special forces, armoured battalions and

infantry troops attacking from several directions. But in an early setback for the Russians, the Spetsnaz commander was

> The mining town, home to 14,000 people before the war and sitting on high ground close to the only rail link between Crimea and Donetsk, was fortified with artillery after withstanding three months of attack. The heaviest waves of

to the bloodbath of marines,

Evgeny Nazarenko, spokesman for one of the defending Ukrainian units, said the Russian advances had been easily spotted from high-rise buildings as they crossed open fields towards the town.

"We are at the top and they are at the bottom. They are perfectly visible," Nazarenko said. Tom Cooper, a military histo-

rian who has studied the battle, described Vuhledar as "a big, tall fortress in the middle of an empty, flat desert".

The defeat came days after Sergei Shoigu, the Kremlin defence minister, boasted about a "successful offensive near Vuhledar".

Kiev's Defence Ministry responded by posting a video showing the destruction of a Russian military column in the area, Daily Mail reported.

3 KILLED, 9 **INJURED IN BOMB BLAST IN MYANMAR**

were killed and nine others injured when a blast hit a railway station in the Bago region of Myanmar, according to the Information Team of Myanmar's State Administration Council.

The explosion occurred at around 12:20 p.m. local time on Monday at Nyaunglebin township of the Bago region, the information team said in a statement, Xinhua News Agency reported.

One man and one woman died on the spot, while three men and seven women who have been wounded were sent to a nearby hospital for medical treatment, it said. Investigation into the incident is underway,

according to local

authorities.

statue of Maratha Shivaji Maharaj that

went missing from a park in San Jose, California, last month has been found. The statue at the Guadalupe River Park, depicting the leader on

horseback clutching a sword, was a gift from Pune, San Jose's sister city. The 440-pound sculpture of the 17th century ruler was found last week next to a soda machine in the lobby of Tung

Tai Group, a San Jose metal scrapyard north of downtown, the Mercury News reported. After being notified of the statue's location, two police officers and two

detectives went to the scrapyard and interviewed its workers. Workers told the investigators that

two men and a woman came to the site at 1726 Rogers Avenue on January 29 to drop off the sculpture, but did not provide a more detailed description of the

Missing Shivaji statue found in San Jose scrapyard

New York | Agencies



An officer and one of the scrapyard workers then loaded the statue into the back of a patrol car.

"I am so glad that it is back... People wanted to know where it was," Sunil Ganu, a San Jose resident who helped get the statue installed over two decades ago, told Mercury News.

He said the statue had to be hoisted by a small crane when it was originally

The statue, which was first brought to the city in 1999, is the only statue of Shivaji Maharaj in North America.

20 KILLED IN VEHICLE COLLSION IN SOUTH AFRICA



Johannesburg: At least 20 people were killed after a cash-in-transit truck lost control and collided head-on with an oncoming bus in South Africa's Limpopo province, local transport authorities said on Tuesday.

"The accident occurred at around 5 p.m. on Monday on road N1-29 Mashovhela towards Musina in Vhembe District," Limpopo Provincial Department of Transport and Community Safety said in a statement, Xinhua News Agency reported.

"Ten passengers are reported to have sustained serious injuries, 16 moderate, and 35 minor injuries," the department said, noting that passengers with injuries were transported to hospitals for medical attention.

The cause of the accident is still under investigation, and the police diving team has been activated to search the nearby river for people who might have

been swept away, according to the department. The road is now open for traffic and motorists are advised to proceed with caution, it said.

Turkey-Syria quake death toll tops 37,000

Ankara/Damascus | Agencies

he death toll from a massive earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria on February 6 mounted to over 37,000, the media reported. The devastating 7.8 magnitude quake toppled thousands of buildings and killed more than 37,000, Turkish and Syrian officials were quoted as saying by ABC news. Relief Aids continue to pour in the affected countries from various quarters.

According to Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), 99 countries have offered assistance so far and seven more countries are expected to send rescue teams, Anadolu News Agency reported. Nearly 238,500 search and rescue personnel are currently working in the field and over 158,000 have been evacuated, it added. Syrian President



Bashar al-Assad has agreed to open two border crossings so that aid can reach to the affected areas in the region. Expressing gratefulness to the countries extending help, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in a video message, said rescue teams

have pulled out more than 8,000 people alive from the rubble since the strong quakes jolted Turkey, Anadolu reported.

Over 81,000 people injured in the quake in Turkey have been discharged from hospitals, Erdogan said.

AFGHAN FORCES RAID IS HIDEOUT IN KABUL, SEVERAL INSURGENTS KILLED: OFFICIAL



Kabul Agencies

fghan forces raided a hideout of the IS in Police District 8 of Kabul, killing several insurgents, chief spokesman of the Taliban-run caretaker administration Zabihullah Mujahid said on Tuesday.

"The security forces attacked an important hideout of the IS in Kartai Naw locality of Police District 8 on Monday evening, killing several insurgents," Mujahid tweeted.

Since the operation site is at a

residential area, the operation was carried out slowly and carefully to protect the locals, the chief spokesman said, Xinhua reported.

A number of foreign nationals were among the IS militants but didn't identify their nationalities, Mujahid said, adding that the militants had been involved in recent terrorists attacks in Kabul.

Kabul police spokesman Khalid Zadran has also confirmed the operation, saying the crackdown on the hideout of IS militants in Police District 8 of Kabul is still going on.







MAHA WILL CHIP IN LION'S SHARE TO INDIA'S \$5 TRILLION ECONOMY DREAM: CM SHINDE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

aharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has said that the state will contribute a "lion's share" to India's ambition to become a 5 trillion dollar economy by

For achieving this goal, it was imperative for Maharashtra to become a USD 1-trillion economy with a holistic growth focused on agriculture, industries and infrastructure development, he said.

"Maharashtra is the country's growth engine... Our effort is to increase its capacity, output and productivity; we have potential in all sectors. We shall work to upgrade the living standards of our farmers," said Shinde.

He was speaking late on Monday after the first meeting of the Maharashtra State Economy Advisory Council (EAC), which was set up in December 2022, billed as a revolutionary step for inclusive growth with the common man at the centre.

The EAC Chair and Tata Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekaran said



that India is well-poised to achieve the highest growth among large nations globally for many years to come.Maharashtra, being one of the largest economies in the country, with a GDP of over USD 4.50 billion, can accelerate growth and immensely contribute to India's goal of achieving

a five-trillion dollar economy, he

For this, the EAC will focus on increasing the per capita income by tackling key sectors like agriculture, technology like AI, machine learning, new market trends, supply chains, green energy, improving quality of

life, and the EAC members coming from diverse backgrounds would help formulate a blueprint for the state's economic growth, said Chandrasekaran.

Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis said the EAC gave a presentation of the state's current status, vision for the state's development, what needs to be done and has "set a timeline for achieving aggressive growth in Maharashtra". "The EAC has discussed the agriculture sector, skill development, financial inclusion, eliminating regional imbalances and people with various backgrounds in the EAC expressed their views," said Fadnavis.

Formed on the lines of the planning commission, the EAC will advise the state on financial and policy matters, formulate growth strategies and submit a five-year-plan to the government, besides an interim report in the next three months.

However, two members -- Reliance Industries Ltd. Executive Director Anant Ambani and Adani Ports CEO Karan G. Adani -- remained absent in the first meeting of the EAC.

Dalit student suicide

BJP, Shinde Sena will contest together in next Lok Sabha polls in Kalyan: Anurag Thakur

Team Absolute Mumbai

he Eknath Shinde-led Balasehabanchi Shiv Sena and the Bharatiya Janata Party will together contest in Kalyan in the next Lok Sabha elections, said Union minister Anurag Thakur on Tuesday, dismissing claims that the BSS-BJP government in Maharashtra won't last till then. Thakur said no one should worry about aspects like which of the partners will contest and who will be the candidate. "One thing is for sure that this time we will win the election with a big margin," he said.

Chief Minister Ekanth Shinde's son Shrikant Shinde had won from the Kalyan Lok Sabha constituency in 2019 as a candidate of the undivided Shiv Sena. This was Thakur's second visit to Kalyan in the past six months where the BJP is trying to strengthen its organisation.

When it comes to Maharashtra, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a lot with an open heart for the state's development, he

Asked about the Opposition's claim that the present government will collapse anytime, the minister, who holds the Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports portfolios, said they will get only disappointment. "We (the government) won't collapse but get elected with a huge margin (in the next election)," he said.



On a question about Shiv Sena (UBT) leader calling Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and BJP leadership "ajoobe" (marvels), Thakur said one should not pay much attention to what he comments. 'Let them explain the frauds committed by them first and then comment on us," he said.

With reference to certain demands that members of the minority community be given preference in the Army, he said candidates are selected in the field of sports or Army based on their calibre and performance and not caste, creed or religion.

The minister said he will make more visits to the constituency to make the organisation strong. "The party realises that it survives and grows only on the contribution of its activists,

5 killed as SUV hits group of women crossing highway in Pune

Team Absolute | Pune

ive women were killed and three others were injured when a speeding SUV knocked them down while they were crossing the Nashik-Pune highway along with others in Pune district of Maharashtra, police said on Tuesday.

The incident occurred when a group of 17 women was crossing the highway at around 10.45 pm near Shiroli village, about 50 km from Pune city, to reach a marriage hall for catering work, an official said.

"These women had come from Pune city for catering

work at a marriage hall located along the Pune-Nashik highway. While they were crossing the highway, an SUV (Sport Utility Vehicle) crashed into them. After the accident, the SUV driver sped ahead before taking a U-turn and driving back towards Pune," said a police officer from Khed police sta-

While two women died on the spot, three others succumbed to their injuries in a hospital, he said, adding three women are hospitalised. A case has been registered against an unidentified SUV driver and a probe

IIT-BOMBAY JUNKS CLAIM OF 'CASTE DISCRIMINATION' ON CAMPUS Team Absolute Mumbai

he IIT-Bombay on Tuesday strongly refuted claims suggesting that 'discrimination' caused the death by suicide of a First Year B.Tech. Dalit student on its campus on February 12 or allegations that it amounted to 'institutional murder'.

"Based on initial inputs from friends (of Darshan Solanki, 18), there is no indication that the student faced any such discrimination. It is wrong to make such accusations when the police are still investigating the case. Please wait for the completion of the ongoing police investigation as well as an internal investigation by IIT-B which will be done in a time-bound manner," said an official spokesperson.

The reaction came a day after the Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle-IITB (APPSC-IITB) issued three-pager detailing alleged caste discrimination on the campus, the challenges facing students from the reserved categories, certain lapses by the IIT-B authorities and related issues, and demanding their immediate resolu-



Referring to Solanki's suicide, the APPSC-IITB termed it as 'an institutional issue', as students from non-urban, non-English speaking backgrounds, oppressed castes (SC/ST) and lowincome families "face immense harassment and discrimination" on the campus from students,

faculties and employees.

"The IIT-B takes utmost precautions to make the campus as inclusive as possible. IIT-B has zero tolerance for any discrimination by faculty. Caste identity is never disclosed to anyone (whether students or faculty) once the admission is done," said the spokesperson.

It said that the IIT-B has taken multiple steps over the years to support and protect the mental health of the students, has an SC/ST cell where students can reach in case of any issues, including discrimination.

Besides, the IIT-B also runs an active mentor program which reaches out to all the new students, it added."There have been very few complaints to the cell, whether against faculty or other students, over the past many years, and only one case was found to have substance and strict action has been taken," the IIT-B stated.

Although some who need it do not seek support due to societal norms, many students have benefited from the support, and the IIT-B is working hard to ensure everyone who needs support gets it, the spokesperson said.

IIT-MADRAS STUDENT FOUND HANGING IN HOSTEL ROOM

Chennai: A Master of Science student at the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras was found hanging in his hostel room on Tuesday, officials said.

The deceased was identified as A. Steven from Navi Mumbai. He was found hanging in his room in the Mahanadi hostel inside the

As Steven did not reach the class on Tuesday, his classmates informed the hostel warden who informed the police and opened the door to find him hanging.

His batchmates said that he was depressed for the past week. A suicide note was recovered from his room in which he had scribbled "Don't Prosecute". Senior police officers reached the spot. Police said that the reason for the extreme step is not known and police were investigating the case.

Water tanker body calls off strike after Dy CM Fadnavis assures action

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Tater Tanker Association has announced to end the strike after Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis assured them that their demands will be considered. The Association was on strike to protest against the implementation of Central guidelines for bulk water supply and (action by) Mumbai Police. The strike affected water supply for major infrastructure projects, hotels, malls and clubs, an association member claimed on Tuesday.

The association held a meeting with Mumbai (suburban) guardian minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha and Deputy Chief Minister Fadnavis that was also attended by officials of the Mumbai civic body and the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA).

"The Deputy Chief Minister has agreed to consider our demands. Also, he assured that the government will come up with a solution on

was trying to escape after

allegedly killing his live-in part-

ner. The accused was held by Railway Protection Force per-

sonnel from a train at Nagda in

Madhya Pradesh, a police offi-

cial said here. Megha, who was

found dead in her rented house

in Tulinj area on Monday after

The body was found stuffed

in a mattress. She was suspect-

inspector Shailendra Nagarkar.

ner, was jobless and they used

allegedly killed her, the official

sister about the killing and sold

added. He also messaged his

off furniture in the flat before

The accused, her live-in part-

During one such quarrel he

ed to have been killed some-

time last week, said senior

foul smell began to emanate

from inside and neighbours

alerted the police.

to quarrel often.

fleeing.

a nurse by profession, was

क्यार गहिनिशाया र प WATER TANK

CGWA guidelines," Rajesh Thakur, a representative of the association,

said. He said the association members will meet other members "finalize the decision".

Meanwhile, Guardian minister Lodha said that there are issues which need to be addressed. The Deputy Chief Minister has assured the demands will be considered and tankers won't be troubled unnecessarily. "The successful intervention has benefitted the Mumbai residents and we hope the regular water supply will resume.

Ankur Sharma, a spokesperson for Mumbai Water Tankers Association (MWTA) said the implementation of guidelines issued by the CGWA, responsible to regulate and control the development and management of groundwater resources in the country, is not feasible.

"Tanker owners are being slapped with notices for the last few months by various departments of the BMC. Earlier this month, the BMC wrote to the Mumbai police commissioner asking to file FIRs against tanker operators violating the guidelines, Sharma said.

First phase of Delhi-Mumbai Expressway opened



Team Absolute Jaipur

ravel time on the existing Delhi-Jaipur highway (NH-48) shall be reduced with the opening of the first phase of Delhi-Mumbai Expressway on Tuesday.

The route will ensure that the Delhi-Jaipur travel time

gets reduced by two hours. Total one way toll for a private car on the New Delhi-Jainur route will be Rs 585 Toll on the new-way will be based on total number of kilometres travelled.

The eight-lane expressway will have a 120kmph speed limit for cars with wayside facilities every 30km. It will

reach Delhi in less than four hours via Sohna, Dausa, Lalsot stretch.

The entire stretch has CCTV surveillance and at every 20 km, speed detection boards have been installed to alert drivers about the speed of their vehicles

Inter-state drug trafficking gangs busted in Hyderabad MAN HELD FOR **'KILLING' LIVE-IN PARTNER IN PALGHAR** Mumbai: The Tulinj Police in Maharashtra's Palghar district on Tuesday arrested a man who

Team Absolute | Mumbai/Hyderabad

yderabad police have busted two inter-state drug trafficking gangs with arrest of eight persons, all with links to Mumbai, in three separate cases and seized 244 grams of MDMA and 110 kg

The sleuths of Hyderabad Narcotic Enforcement Wing (H-NEW), along with Gopalapuram police arrested a drug supplier, a drug transporter, and two peddlers. They seized 204 grams of MDMA, four mobile phones and a four-wheeler all valued at Rs 20 lakh.

Hyderabad Police Commissioner C.V. Anand told reporters that the drug supplier, transporter and two peddlers are all from Mumbai. Jatin Bhalchandra Bhalerao, Javed Shamshair Ali Siddique, Junaid Shaik Shamshuddin, and Vikas Mohan Kodmur were arrested during the investigation into separate cases registered earlier in which three accused were arrested.

Jathin was procuring cocaine from Emmanul Osondu, a Nigerian who was



arrested by Hyderabad police earlier for drug peddling.

The police also found Sana Khan, an IT employee and a resident of Kondapur, consuming and selling MDMA in Hyderabad. She was arrested earlier. According to police, she used to travel to Mumbai frequently and buy drugs from Jatin. She used to buy 1 gram of MDMA for about Rs 3,000

in Mumbai and sold it for about Rs 7,000 in Hvderabad. Police had seized 15 grams of MDMA from her. During the investigation, police found 40 to 50 consumers in

Hyderabad and 70 consumers in Mumbai. The Hyderabad police have shared with Mumbai Police the information regarding the drug racket obtained during investiga-

846 schools to be developed under 'PM SHRI' scheme

Team Absolute Mumbai

n an important decision, 846 schools in Maharashtra shall be comprehensively developed under the 'Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India' scheme launched last September, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said here on Tuesday.

The state has signed an MoU with the Centre for the purpose under which the National Education Policy-2020 will be implemented here. In the first phase, over 15,000

schools in India -- including 846 from Maharashtra -- shall be developed into foremost institutions providing high quality education for students.

Under the PM SHRI, the Central government will provide Rs 1.88 crore and the state will allocate Rs 75 lakh for each school for five years in a 60:40 partnership with the state.

For the 846 schools, the Centre will provide an amount of almost Rs 956 crore while the state will give its share of Rs 634.50 lakh for implementing the scheme

In the second phase of the PM SHRI, schools from 408 groups, 28



municipal corporations and 383 from other civic bodies shall be selected for development.

Shinde said that students shall be imparted experiential learning through these schools, and will be assessed on the basis of their conceptual understanding plus application of the knowledge in real-life situations.

Even former students of the schools shall be involved with these schools to provide career guidance and educational support to the students, and in case of dropouts for any reasons, such students will be mainstreamed by re-admission.

hollywood



Kim and

Kardashian

flash their

matching

washboard

abs as they

smoldering

display in

coordinat-

and skirts

ing bras

put on a

Khloe

LESLIE GRACE LOOKS BACK AT JUNKING OF 'BATGIRL', QUESTIONS STUDIO'S MOVE

Los Angeles | Agencies

hen the "Batgirl" unit completed its seven-month production schedule in Scotland, Leslie Grace received a gift from Brendan Fraser, who played her nemesis, Firefly, in the DC movie -- a gold necklace that included two charms, a little bell and a pair of dice, reports 'Variety'."The card said a lot of really sweet things, but he (Fraser) basically said, 'I give you this necklace because in this business you gotta have a little luck. So ring your bell and never stop'," Grace recalls, according to 'Variety'. "It was just like, whoa. And after all this, it has had so

much meaning."

"All this" is the August bombshell that Warner

"All this" is the August bombshell that Warner Bros Discovery had decided to kill the film, co-directed by Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah. After the first disappointing test screenings, WBD CEO David Zaslav chose to take a tax write-off instead of trying to complete work on the film, which had cost the debt-ridden studio \$90 million, and would have cost many more millions to finish, 'Variety' adds.

Grace says she had no idea the movie, originally set to stream on HBO Max, was shelved, until it

was first reported by the 'New York Post'. "I found out like the rest of you," she says, according to 'Variety'. "And then my phone just started blowing up." One of the callers was Fraser.

"What I find most lamentable is that now a whole generation of little girls are going to have to wait longer to see a Batgirl and say, 'Hey, she looks like me'," he says, according to 'Variety'. "That makes me sad. I know how good she was. And I know what this would mean to so many people.'

Iwins!



Los Angeles | Agencies

▼im Kardashian and her sister Khloe Kardashian put on a sizzling display in new photos shared to Instagram on Monday.

The 42-year-old mogul and her younger sibling, 38, looked like dolls as they bared their enviable abs.

The duo - who each recently shared photos of their combined broods matched each other in gray and black versions of the same outfit.

Both were tantalizing as they flashed their ample and perky cleavage in plunging bra tops.

The mother-of-four wrote in the caption of her post,

Kiki & Koko,' and added an infinity emoji.

The family members zeroed in on their sex appeal as they showed off their vixen-like qualities, reports dailymail.co.uk. Kim's low-slung skirt was set beautifully on her curvy hips, flattering her figure as it draped over her.

She played up the placement of the piece as she donned a glinting diamond chain around her belly. Her maxi skirt featured a thigh-high slit that flashed her

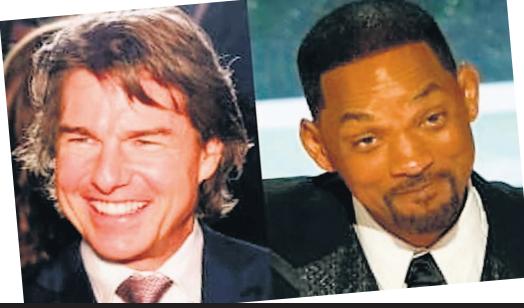
toned and tanned leg and showed off a sparkling anklet around

Additionally, the billionaire businesswoman wore a diamond-encrusted 'KIM' nameplate necklace.

The former Mrs. West wore her lustrous dark locks in a center part as she let the butt-length tresses tumble down her back and over her shoulder.

The superstar was typically gorgeous with her world-recognized visage made up to perfection.

She looked glowy with her eyebrows arched, eyes highlighted with fluffy lashes, and her cheeks blushed.



TOM CRUISE ENJOYS 'FUN' OSCAR LUNCHEON, **ACADEMY ADDRESSES WILL SMITH'S SLAP**

Los Angeles | Agencies

he 2023 Academy Awards nominees gathered at the 41st Oscar Nominees Luncheon. Taking place roughly a month before the main ceremony, the event saw Hollywood's biggest stars and filmmakers such as Tom Cruise, Brendan Fraser, Hong Chau, Angela Bassett, Austin Butler, Michelle Williams and Steven Spielberg greeting each other and posing together.

Cruise, who starred in 'Top Gun: Maverick' and is nominated as producer of the film, made his first appearance of the season on the awards circuit that night. He was swarmed by everyone else in the Beverly Hilton's International Ballroom and was enjoying the moment. "This is fun," he told People at one point during the luncheon. "I'm enjoy-

The 60-year-old was also seen taking picture with 'Elvis' star Butler, while "Everything Everywhere All at Once" star Ke Huy Quan reunited with Spielberg, who directed him in "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom". The two posed together for a goofy selfie, reports aceshowbiz.com.

In a more serious note, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences president Janet Yang took the opportunity to address Will Smith's slap of Chris Rock at last year's Oscars. "I'm sure you all remember we experienced an unprecedented event at the Oscars," she told the group, before admitting, "What happened onstage was fully unacceptable, and the response from our organisation was inadequate.'

She added: "We learned from this that the Academy must be fully transparent and accountable in our actions, and particularly in times of crisis we must act swiftly, compassionately and decisively for ourselves and for our industry. You should and can expect no less from us going forward."

Bruce Springsteen pens song for Rebecca Miller

Los Angeles: Bruce Springsteen has penned an original song for Rebecca Miller's new film 'She Came to Me', which will have its world premiere at the Berlin Film Festival this week, reports 'Variety'

The song, 'Addicted to Romance', was written and performed by Springsteen, and will be heard by audiences for the first time during the movie's February 16 screening, when it plays over the end credits, adds

A romantic comedy, 'She Came to Me' stars Peter Dinklage as a moody classical composer struggling with writer's block.

When he meets a quirky tugboat captain (Marisa Tomei), he finds the muse for his next opus and is encouraged by his therapist wife (Anne Hathaway) to make his big comeback. But just as his career looks to take off, his personal life implodes, according to 'Variety'.

Discussing how she came to work with Springsteen, Miller explained she previously had The Boss's 'Dancing in the Dark' as part of her last film 'Maggie's Plan', which starred Greta Gerwig, Ethan Hawke and Julianne

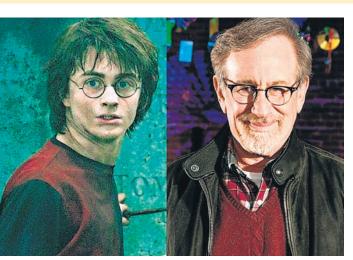
"I really love Bruce's music. For the end of 'She Came to Me', we wanted an original song," Miller told 'Variety'. "I had a secret wish it might be Bruce, but I was reluctant to ask because I felt it was so unlikely, and frankly I was a bit shy.'



Sharon Stone confirms tragic death of brother Patrick in video

Los Angeles: Hollywood star Sharon Stone paid an emotional tribute to her brother Patrick Joseph Stone as she confirmed his death from heart attack.The singer-songwriter died at the age of 57, just two years after the death of his 11-month-old son, River, from organ failure, reports Mirror.co.uk.In a tearful video shared on Instagram, the 'Basic Instinct' actress said: "Hello everybody, this message is to confirm that, ve lose my brother, Patrick Joseph Stone, to a heart attack yesterday.

"Yes, he is the man who was the father to River who we lost last year at 11 months old. He is survived by his wife Tasha and his son Hunter and his daughter Cailee."Mirror.co.uk further states that Sharon, 64, then thanked fans for their support as she opened up about her "immeasurable grief".



Why Spielberg was happy to refuse directing 'Harry Potter'

ward-winning filmmaker Steven Spielberg doesn't regret turning down 'Harry Potter'. The 76-year-old director was asked to direct Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone', the first movie in the wizardry franchise based on J.K. Rowling's novels, but explained that he snubbed the movie as he wanted to spend time with his family rather than

"The personal meaning about (how the conflict between) art and family will tear you in half happened to me later, after I had already established myself as a filmmaker, as a working director," Spielberg, who shares seven children with ex-wife Amy Irving and his current spouse Kate Capshaw, told fellow filmmaker S.S. Rajamouli, reports showbiz.com.

"Kate and I started raising a family and we started having children. The choice I had to make in taking a job that would move me to another country for four of five months where I wouldn't see my family every day.' Spielberg explained that 'Harry Potter' was just one of several projects

that he turned down for family reasons. The 'Indiana Jones' filmmaker said: "There were several films I chose not to make. I chose to turn down the first 'Harry Potter' to basically spend the next year and a half with my family, my young kids growing up. So I'd sacrificed a great franchise, which today looking back I'm very happy to have done, to be with my family.'



Team Absolute | Mumba

he Women's Premier League (WPL) 2023 will begin with a blockbuster clash between Gujarat Giants and Mumbai Indians on March 4 at the DY Patil Stadium, the BCCI confirmed on Tuesday while announcing the schedule for the inaugural edition of the tourna-

In its first season, the WPL will stage a total of 20 league matches and two Playoff games that will be played in a duration of 23 days.

The league, which have five teams -- Delhi Capitals, Gujarat Giants, Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore & UP Warriorz -- will have its first double-header day on March 5 when Royal Challengers Bangalore will square off against Delhi Capitals at the Brabourne Stadium, CCI while UP Warriorz will play their first game of the league against Gujarat Giants at the DY Patil Stadium.

There will be four double headers with the first match starting at 1530 hrs IST and all evening matches will start at 1930 hrs IST. A total of 11



Patil Stadium and Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai, the BCCI said in a media release.

The final game of the league stage will be played between UP Warriorz and Delhi Capitals on March 21 at the Brabourne Stadium, CCI.

The Eliminator will be played at the DY Patil Stadium on March 24. The Final of the Women's Premier League 2023 will be played at the

Brabourne Stadium on March 26. The schedule announcement comes a day after the conclusion of

Sports

the WPL Player Auction in Mumbai. The five franchises splurged their purse to acquire some of the best talents in the international and domestic circuit for the inaugural edition of the league.

India's Smriti Mandhana was the top buy as she was sold for a whopping INR 3.40 crore to Royal Challengers Bangalore. Team India Captain Harmanpreet Kaur was sold to Mumbai Indians for INR 1.80 crore while the rest of the stars from India and around the globe too made the cut in one of the five fran-

Among the foreign players, Australia all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner and England all-rounder Natalie Sciver were the top buys as they were sold to Gujarat Giants and Mumbai Indians for INR 3.20 crore respectively.

From the India U19 stars, ICC U19 T20 World Cup-winning captain, Shafali Verma was the top buy, sold to Delhi Capitals for INR 2 crore.

India stun Kazakhstan in the opener

lead in the tie.

21-10, 21-6,

broke little sweat to dispatch

their opponents, Khaitmurat

Kulmatov and Artur Niyazov.

women's doubles pair, Treesa

The Indians won the match

India's best-ranked

Dubai | Agencies

India registered a clean sweep against Kazakhstan 5-0 in their opening tie of Group B at the Badminton Asia Mixed Team

Championships on Tuesday. The mixed doubles team of Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto got India off to a winning start. The duo trounced Kazakhstan's Makhsut Tadzhibullaev and Nargiza Rakhmetullayeva 21-5, 21-11 at the Dubai Exhibition Centre.

In the second rubber, H.S Prannoy moved past Dmitriy Panarin 21-9, 21-11 in the men's singles match to extend the lead to 2-0 in the

P.V Sindhu, who returned to the action after missing the Indonesia and Thailand Masters last month, registered an easy 21-4, 21-12 win over Kamila Smagulova to give India an unassailable 3-0

Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand In the men's doubles ensured a clean sweep, beating the Kazakh team of match, a dead rubber, Krishna Prasad Garga and Nargiza Rakhmetullaveva Vishnuvardhan Goud Panjala and Aisha Zhumabek by a

> India will play the hosts UAE on Wednesday and will face Malaysia in the final tie on Thursday. The top two teams from each group will progress to the quarter-finals.

21-5, 21-7 in the final rubber.

ICC T201 rankings

South Africa beat New Zealand to save Women's World Cup campaign

Paarl | Agencies

South Africa kept their semi-final hopes alive as they beat Group 1 rivals New Zealand at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023, here.

A shock defeat to Sri Lanka on the opening day had left South Africa reeling, knowing they would have to beat at least one of Australia or New Zealand and potentially both in order to qualify for the final four, reports ICC.

And the Proteas massively boosted their semi-final chances with a brilliant display against a New Zealand side, who have now suffered two heavy defeats in the tour-

Sophie Devine dropped herself from opener down to number five in the batting

in the middle inside the Powerplay as Georgia Plimmer was caught off Marizanne Kapp.

The White Ferns were struggling on 13/3 in their chase of 133, and things went from bad to worse when Amelia Kerr edged behind to depart for 10 (12).

The Kiwis reached just 19/4 at the end of the order, but the captain was out Powerplay, and Chloe Tryon

dismissed Maddy Green to leave New Zealand five down and relying hugely on Devine to bail them out at Boland Park. But wickets continued to fall, and when Devine was trapped in front by Tryon the jig was all but up. And South Africa wrapped up the victory in the penultimate over, winning by 65 runs to give their net run rate a huge and potentially-crucial boost.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

fully completed his

hreyas Iyer has success-

rehab at the National

Cricket Academy (NCA) fol-

lowing his back injury and

Medical Team," Board of

Control for Cricket in India

Shah informed on Tuesday.

New Delhi ahead of the sec-

ond Test of the Australia tour

Iyer had suffered a back

injury ahead of the three-

match ODI series against

New Zealand. He was not

included when the squad for

the first two matches of the

of India for the Border-

Gavaskar Trophy.

Ranchi | Agencies

has been cleared by the BCCI

(BCC) Honorary secretary Jay

Iyer will join the squad in

in New Delhi from February 17.

Dubai | Agencies

ndia's Jemimah Rodrigues and Richa Ghosh moved up to the 11th and 36th spots respectively among batters in the latest ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings released on Tuesday after leading their side to an impressive victory against Pakistan in the Women's T20 World Cup opener.

Jemimah, who smashed 52 not out against Pakistan moved from 13th to 11th, while Richa is up from 42nd to 36th after her innings of 31 not out. Vice-captain Smriti Mandhana,

who missed the campaign opener due to a finger injury, remains the top-ranked India batter in third place. Her opening partner Shafali Verma also remained static at 10th place. Meanwhile, Pakistan captain

Bismah Maroof advanced three slots to reach the 30th position after scoring 68 not out against India.

Australia opener Alyssa Healy's knock of 55 against New Zealand has lifted her two places to seventh while

Border-Gavaskar Trophy

SHREYAS IYER TO JOIN INDIA SQUAD FOR DELHI TEST

Middle-order batter Shreyas Iyer has been declared fit and has been asked to join the India squad for the second Test against Australia, to be played



Border-Gavaskar Trophy series as he had not yet

recovered from the injury.

The team management

had earlier decided to release

pacer Jaydev Unadkat from

the Test squad after the first

India's squad for the

(Captain), KL Rahul (vice-

captain), Shubman Gill,

Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat

Bharat (wk), Ishan Kishan

Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra

Mohd. Siraj, Umesh Yadav,

Jadeja, Mohd. Shami,

Suryakumar Yadav.

(wk), R. Ashwin, Axar Patel,

Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KS

second Test: Rohit Sharma

Saurashtra in the Ranji

Trophy final.

match in Nagpur to represent

Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu, who is the highest scorer in the tournament so far with 83 runs that include a match-winning 68 in a memorable victory over South Africa, sees her gain one spot to reach ninth position.

West Indies captain Hayley Matthews (up four places to 18th), Ireland's Gaby Lewis (up two places to 22nd) and Australia's Ellyse Perry

(up four places to 25th) are among others to gain in the update, which considers performances in the first seven matches of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023.

South Africa's Chloe-Tryon (up three places to 37th), England's Alice Capsey (up 13 places to 38th) and Sri Lanka's Harshitha Samarawickrama (up nine places to 43rd) have also made notable progress, an ICC media

JEMIMAH, RICHA GHOSH MOVE UP; MANDHANA REMAINS TOP-RANKED INDIA BATTER

In the bowling rankings, spinners Sophie Ecclestone of England and Nonkululeko Mlaba of South Africa have consolidated their positions as the top two. Ecclestone, who is the leading wicket-taker in the tournament with six wickets, has moved from 763 to 776 rating points while Mlaba has gained 17 rating points to reach 770 rating points.

Gardner has jumped seven places to sixth position after winning the 'Player of the Match' award for her haul of five for 12 against New Zealand. She remains the top allrounder in the format while Hayley Matthews and New Zealand's Amelia Kerr have inched up a place each to third and fourth positions.

England leg-spinner Sarah Glenn has moved up to third position while former Sri Lanka captain Inoka Ranaweera has advanced 11 places to 10th. Fran Jones, Alana King, Amelia Kerr, Darcie Brown, Nashra Sandhu and Oshadi Ranasinghe are among others to progress.

Samp end Inter's winning streak in Serie A



Katya Coelho becomes first Indian female

iQFoiler to qualify for 2023 Asian Games

Rome | Agencies

nter Milan were forced to slam the brakes on their upswing form, as they were held to a goalless tie by relegation battlers Sampdoria in Serie A.

The Nerazzurri went into Monday's game with three consecutive wins across Coppa Italia and Serie A, but it was far from a vintage performance for Inter at the Luigi Ferraris Stadium as Inter

failed to find the back of the net despite the lion's share of the shots, reports Xinhua

placed Inter saw their gap to table leaders Napoli extended to 15 points with 16 rounds left, while the blucerchiati are in penultimate place with only 11 points. Earlier on Monday, Hellas Verona edged past Salernitana 1-0 thanks to a solo effort from Cyril

news agency. After the setback, second-

Priyanka Goswami, Akashdeep Singh qualify for World Championships, Paris Olympics 20km race walk event

Team Absolute | Mumbai atya Coelho became

the first female IQFoiler to qualify for the Asian Games after winning gold at the third trial in the IQ foil event, a windsurfing class in sailing sport, organised by the Army Yachting node of India.

Katya won gold in the IQ Foil Women's Class at YAI Senior Nationals in the 2nd round of Asian Games Selections Trials for the IQ Foil Category held at INWTC, Mumbai. She has also won gold at Senior Nationals and 1st round of Asian Games Selection Trials for the IQ Foil Category.

She was also the first female Indian surfer to represent at Asian Games 2018.



The 23-year-old international windsurfer has won 2 medals at the Asian Open Championship in 2015 and over 10 national gold medals and also has a silver in the Asian championships 2022 the first international medal in IQFoil by any Indian.

She was the only Indian female windsurfer to compete in the Youth Olympics in



In the women's 20km race walk event in Morabadi, Priyanka clocked 1:28:50s to beat the qualifving standard of 1:29.20s set for the Athletics Worlds in Budapest and Paris Olympics and clinched the top spot.

While the Commonwealth Games silver medallist sealed a spot in the two marquee events but



fell short of five seconds to break her own national record of 1:28.45s. Another Tokyo Olympian Bhawna Jat clocked 1:29.44s to bag the silver medal but missed out on the quota places. Sonal Sukhwal won the bronze medal with a 1:31.03 timing.

In the men's 20km event. Akshdeep clocked 1:19.55 seconds and breached the 1:20.10 qualification mark to qualify for both events. In the process, he beat the national record of 1:20:16, set by Sandeep Kumar at the 2021 National Race Walking Championships at Ranchi.

On the other hand, Suraj Panwar came close to qualifying for the Worlds and Paris Olympics but narrowly missed the berth by 0.01s after clocking 1:20.11s.

Sumit Nagal gets wild card at Bengaluru Open 2023



Bengaluru | Agencies

tar Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal was on Tuesday awarded a wild card entry into the singles main draw at the Bengaluru Open 2023, scheduled from February 20 to 26.

The 25-year-old former India No. 1 is the first wild card entrant at the fifth edition of the prestigious ATP Challenger event, which will be organised by the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA) at the KSLTA Stadium here.

Nagal won his first ATP Challenger title at this tournament in 2017 and went on to put up some impressive performances thereafter in his career. He also had quarter-finals and pre-quarterfinals finishes during his other two outings at this tournament in 2018 and 2020 respectively.

Nagal will be part of the exciting singles field comprising the former World No. 10 Lucas Pouille and last year's champion Chun-hsin Tseng among others.

top of Argentine top flight

Lanus beat Estudiantes to go

Buenos Aires | Agencies

anus scored either side of halftime to climb to the top of Argentina's Primera Division with a 2-0 away victory over Estudiantes.

Jose Canale opened the scoring on the stroke of halftime by firing a rightfooted shot into the top left corner after Cristian Lema's assist.

The visitors were

reduced to 10-men early in the second half when Leandro Diaz was shown a second vellow card for a bad foul on Juan Cruz.

Despite their numerical disadvantage, Lanus continued to push forward in numbers and Franco Troyansky made it 2-0 in the 89th minute with a cool finish to the bot-



tom right corner.

The result leaves Lanus with nine points from three games, two points ahead of second-placed Huracan. Estudiantes are 24th in the 28-team

standings with just one point so far. In Monday's only other Primera Division fixture, Union drew 1-1 with Barracas Central



Sobhita shoot Team Absolute | Mumbai ctress Sobhita Dhulipala, who in 'The Night Manager', had a crisis of sorts on the sets of

Dhulipala took gym membership right after movie

> will soon be seen the show, a rather existential one. And the reason behind the same are the two leading men of the show, one who refuses to age, Anil Kapoor, and the one who can make the ladies go weak on their knees courtesy his chiselled body, Aditya Roy

Sobhita said, "Fitness hasn't featured in my life as a priority and I do take my wonderful genetics for granted - which have supported me in looking good even though I eat crap all the time. I must clarify that I'm not proud of it! But I had a crisis of sorts on the sets of 'The Night Manager' when I saw the two boys diet, workout so hard and take care of their bodies with extreme efforts."She added, "My goodness! And there I was, hogging samosas and biscuits between every shot because I was like 'arey har tarah ka body hota hai, thoda imperfect hai toh kya ho gaya' (people have different types of body, so what if it's a bit imperfect).'

The fact of the matter is that it was a reality check and a learning point for me. Shoot khatam ho gaya, wrap ho gaya and I have taken my first gym membership! Pakka ab continue karungi (Now that the shoot is over, I have taken a gym membership practising healthy living).'

have always spoken to us about how the romantic films of Yash Chopra have pushed them to visit

the Jungfrau Region and Interlaken and make memories

The Swiss authorities will celebrate Yash Chopra's lega-

cy across the country, especially in places where the film-

maker shot mega-hits like Darr and Chandni. His son Aditya Chopra also shot the all-time blockbuster, 'Dilwale

Every Indian has been enchanted by Switzerland's

snow-capped mountains, lush valleys, and pristine lakes

in large part because of Yash Chopra's films. It is said that

he visited Switzerland for his honeymoon and was smit-

ten by the country instantly. The Swiss government has

continuously honoured the legendary filmmaker through

the years. In 2011, Switzerland's Jungfrau Railways inaugu-

rated a train named after him - an honour shared only

Dulhania Le Jayenge' in Switzerland.

with the railway's founder, Adolf Guyer.

Samantha climbs 600 steps barefoot, prays to Palani Murugan

Chennai | Agencies

amantha Ruth Prabhu climbed 600 steps of the Palani Murugan temple in Tamil Nadu on February 13 draped in an all-white churidar-kurta and offered prayers at the temple. She also lit a camphor diya and tweeted on the same. She was accompanied by her 'Jaanu' movie director C. Premkumar and other friends.

The actor, who suffers from Myositis, an autoimmune disease condition that causes acute muscular pain, has started shooting for the web series 'Citadel' in which she shares screen space with Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan.'Citadel' is the Indian version of the international sci-fi action web series of the same name created by the Russo Brothers. In the international series, Priyanka Chopra plays the lead.

The Indian web series is directed by the director duo Raj and DK, who had helmed the popular web

series, 'The Family Man', in which Samantha played the role of Raji, a Sri Lankan Tamil militant.

She had recently tweeted: "I am thrilled to be part of this brilliant universe conceptualised by the Russo Brothers AGBO. I am also looking forwar to working with Varun for the first time. He is someone who is full of life and cheer when you are around him.'



have been a huge hit globally. The film was not only loved for its star power, but also the

DEEPIKA PADUKONE ON SHOOTING FOR BESHARAM RANG

'It was not easy, the weather was really difficult'

Team Absolute Mumbai

hah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone and John Abraham starrer Pathaan

storyline and songs. As we know the songs of the film were released even before trailer, it even drew flak for certain scenes. But eventually audience loved it on screen. Deepika has had several iconic chartbusters to her credit during her incredibly illustrious career but Besharam Rang definitely tops that list. She has been presented at her hottest best in Besharam Rang which fans and audiences have unanimously raved about!Deepika says, "I have been very fortunate to be a part of some iconic songs and I think every time you are given this opportunity as a performer you want to feel confident, you want to look great, you want to give it your all. So, I have always wanted to work with her (Vaibhavi Merchant) and it finally happened and I was nervous because I've heard that she's really strict but it actually turned out to be completely the opposite." Besharam Rang is the quintessential beach party song that has become a rage across the world. Deepika says shooting this Uber stylish song wasn't an easy task. She says, "We had to shoot for five days if I'm not mistaken. It was not easy, the weather was really difficult but Vaibhavi kept the mood light. She made sure everyone was taken care of. Somewhere deep down inside you always hope that people standing around you will start dancing. It happened with both of our songs - they (Spanish dancers and crew) didn't know the language but ing about that emotion would connect like a celebration. It was so lovely to see that beyond a point movies transcend borders. These songs in particular truly did that.'

Switzerland celebrates Yash Chopra for presenting its beauty to Indians



for a lifetime.'

Team Absolute Mumbai

witzerland pays tribute to late legendary filmmaker Yash Chopra, saluting his contribution of having showcased Switzerland's beauty to Indians through

The much-awaited Netflix docu-series, 'The Romantics', is a celebration of the legacy of Yash Chopra and its cultural impact on Indians over the past 50 years. It is set to release this Tuesday.

Remo Kaser, Director of Sales Jungfrau Railways, Switzerland, said: "The legend, Yash Chopra, has presented the beauty of Switzerland and especially the Jungfrau Region to Indians across the world for generations, through his beautiful, soulful cinema.

"Indians, who come to Jungfraujoch - Top of Europe



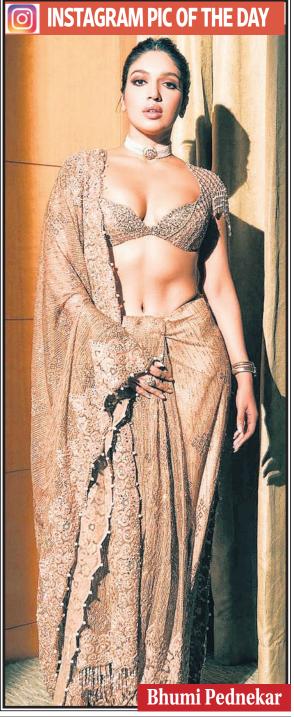
Katrina Kaif check Vicky Kaushal's Phone?

Team Absolute Mumbai

atrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal always throw huge relationship goals! Katrina and Vicky kept their love a secret for a long time before marrying in 2021.

Katrina's beauty brand recently released a video of her spending 'Galentine's Day' with her gal friends Mini Mathur and Karishma Kohli. She plays 'Never Have I Ever' with them, during which she confesses to having snooped through her significant other's phone. Katrina Kaif nibbles the cake before saying, "I will give you an answer, and then I will also give everyone a lesson that I learnt." She said that she had previously checked her significant other's phone, but now that she is wiser, she has learned not to do so. "I have, in my less wiser days, snooped through my significant other's phone. And now that I'm wiser, I will never ever ever do it again. Even if someone opens their phone and puts it beside me I will not look. I have, in the past," said Katrina.

On the job front, Katrina Kaif will next be seen in Sriram Raghavan's Merry Christmas, with Vijay Sethupathi. She also has Tiger 3, in which she co-stars with Salman Khan, and Jee Le Zaraa, in which she co-stars with Alia Bhatt and Priyanka Chopra.



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