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NATION

Displaced 26 years ago, 14K Reang tribals to cast vote in Tripura...



HOLLYWOOD

'I bought myself flowers' ...

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SPORTS

India beat West Indies by 6 wickets ...



3RD DAY OF AERO INDIA



IAF Sarang helicopter aerobatics team performs during the 3rd day of Aero India 2023 at Yelahanka Air Base in Bengaluru on Wednesday,

Petroleum products can be brought under GST if consensus reached: Sitharaman

inance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said that if states arrive at a consensus,



Council is scheduled to meet on February 18. Meanwhile, the Finance

'QUALITY OF WITNESS, NOT QUANTITY MATTERS': SC UPHOLDS CONVICTION IN MURDER CASE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

he Supreme Court on Wednesday said it is not the quantity but the quality of witnesses which matters, as it upheld the conviction and life term handed down to three for murdering four members of a family in Uttar Pradesh in 2007.

A bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and Vikram Nath said: "It is the discretion of the prosecution to lead as much evidence as is necessary for proving the charge. It is not the quantity of the witnesses but the quality of witnesses which matters.

The bench noted that one of the daughters of deceased Vijay Pal Singh had seen the assailants murdering her family members and also causing injury to one of them and wisely did not speak out anything in their presence and

out the demolition at 10 a.m.



allowed them to remain in the dark that she had actually seen them committing the crime.

It further added that the daughter of one of the deceased, who was examined as a prosecution witness in the case, was injured during the incident, was a "fully reliable witness and has stated the things in natural course".

The top court judgment came on a clutch of appeals, including those filed

one of the convicts, Ajai, has since died. The trial court had awarded the death sentence to the accused but the high court, while affirming their conviction, commuted it to life term. SC AGREES TO EXAMINE PLEA ON 'MENSTRUAL

by the convicts, challenging the

February 2012 Allahabad High Court

judgment, which affirmed their conviction in the case. The court noted that

PAIN LEAVE' NEXT WEEK New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to examine a PIL seeking direction to state governments to frame rules for menstrual pain leaves for female students and working

Advocate Vishal Tiwari mentioned the plea for urgent hearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and it agreed to consider the plea on February 24.

The plea, filed by advocate Shailendra Mani Tripathi, said: "Few states provided menstrual pain leaves and ancillary benefits, women in their counterpart states are still bereft of any such benefits. It is accordingly a violation of Article 14 of the Constitution in as much as the Maternity Benefit Act differentiates women in the name of federalism and state policies." The plea contended that Bihar introduced menstrual leave for women employees in 1992, however menstrual periods have been largely disregarded by society, government, and other stakeholders, but some organisations and states

Team Absolute | New Delhi

SWAMI PRASAD MAURYA, MAHANT RAJU DAS COME TO **BLOWS AT TV CONCLAVE**

came to blows in the lobby of a five-

The two were there to attend a

channel during which they got into

news conclave organised by a TV

a heated argument which turned

physical. The security personnel

rushed in to separate the two. Das

had recently announced a reward of

Maurya's head after the latter made

Ramcharitmanas. The Mahant later

claimed that he was attacked by the

SP leader's supporters and said that

he would lodge a complaint against

Maurya.Maurya was not available

for comment.

some objectionable remarks on

star hotel here on Wednesday.

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party leader

Swami Prasad

Maurya and

Mahant Raju

Das of Hanum

Garhi in

Ayodhya

then petroleum products can be brought under the GST regime. Addressing a post-budget interactive session organised by industry body



agree, then petroleum products can be brought under the GST ambit. The GST Minister, during the interactive session with industry captains, said that the government, over the years, has striven to increase public expenditure, which

India delivers relief material to quake-hit Syria

Damascus | Agencies

n Indian Army team deployed in United Nations Force (UNDOF) on Wednesday delivered relief material to quakerattled Aleppo in Syria.

The material included rations & medicines from Government of India as well as contributions from the international community.

"#IndianArmy team deployed in @UNDOF delivers relief material to Aleppo, #Syria. This included rations & medicines from Government of #India as well as contributions from the international community. Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADG PI) posted

on Twitter. On Tuesday, Union Health Ministry said that it provided lifesaving humanitarian medical assis-



tance to quake-hit Turkey and Syria. Under operation Dost, emergency relief material comprising life-saving medicines, protective items and critical care equipment valued at over Rs 7 crore were arranged and promptly dispatched to Turkey and Syria, the Ministry tweeted.

Union Health Minister on Tuesday post on Twitter: India provided life-saving emergency medicines, protective items, medical equipment, critical care drugs, etc as part of the country's efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to Turkey and Syria

Apple Watch Crash Detection alerts rescuers of severe car crash in Germany

London Agencies

WILL CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF REHABILITATION,

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it will now have to exam-

ine the rehabilitation issue, after it was informed about the demolition carried

out by authorities of a night shelter located at Delhi's Sarai Kale Khan earlier in

the day. Advocate Prashant Bhushan mentioned the matter before a bench of

Justices Hrishikesh Roy and Dipankar Datta, saying that the night shelter, being

availed of by over 50 people, has been demolished and that authorities carried

examine the question of rehabilitation. Bhushan had mentioned the matter

while the bench was in the middle of hearing a case. After the hearing of the

case was over, Bhushan said that authorities have come there with bulldozers

and the homeless matter is pending before this court, and this issue is about a

night shelter for homeless people. He contended that without providing alterna-

tive accommodation, a night shelter is being demolished by the authorities. The

bench told Bhushan it could hear the matter on February 22, and asked him to

The bench said if the night shelter has been demolished, then it would have to

SAYS SC ON NIGHT SHELTER DEMOLITION

incorporate the subsequent developments in the matter.

he Crash Detection feature of the Apple Watch Series 8 has helped resa serious car crash which fell down a 20-meter-deep

embankment in Germany. According to the initial investigations, the car was driving on the

Bundesautobahn 20 (a road in Germany) when it "left the lane to the right, drove through a green strip, and was catapulted over the crash barrier, reports 9to5 Mac.

The three passengers were "partially trapped in the vehicle wreckage in the accident", and there were no witnesses to the accident, nor could it be seen from the highway above, according to the report.



automatically shared the exact location of the accident with first responders, allowing police and fire rescue workers, as well as a full rescue service, to arrive at the scene.

Moreover, the report stated that the driver suffered minor injuries while the two passengers "suffered serious injuries."

All three were taken to nearby hospitals. Meanwhile, Apple has released a new iPhone update -- iOS 16.3.1, including "optimisations" for the iPhone 14 and 14 Pro's Crash Detection feature, which has been criticised by some search and rescue personnel for causing false alarms during winter sports activities.

Another Hindu temple defaced in Canada; India seeks action



Toronto Agencies

trongly condemning the defacing of a Hindu temple in Canada, India on Wednesday asked authorities in the country to investigate the incident and take swift action against the perpetrators.

The Ram Mandir in Mississauga city was vandalised with anti-India slogans, sending shockwaves across the Indian community.

"We strongly condemn the defacing of Ram Mandir in Mississauga with anti-India graffiti. We have requested Canadian authorities to investigate the incident and take prompt action on perpetrators," the Consulate General of India in Toronto tweeted early on Wednesday.

The incident also evoked sharp reactions from Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown, who said that hate has no place in Canada, and police are investigating it. "I am saddened to hear of the hate motivated vandalism at the Ram Mandir Temple in Mississauga. Unknown suspects spray painted the walls on the back of the temple. This

Wednesday. "The Peel Police & Chief Nish (Chief of Peel Regional Police Nishan Duraiappah) are taking this potential hate crime very seriously. 12 Division has carried out the investigation & they will find those responsible. Religious freedom is a Charter right in Canada & we will do everything we can to make

type of hate has no place in Peel

Region," Mayor Brown tweeted on

sure everyone is safe in their place of worship," Brown added.

Starting 2023, a string of attacks has been unleashed upon Hindu temples across Canada with close to half-adozen incidents of vandalism, spiteful graffiti, break-ins and burglaries.

Last week, an unsuccessful burglary attempt also took place at the same temple, according to media reports. The thieves reportedly fled after a security alarm went off. A day after, the Bharat Mata Mandir in Brampton was burgled with the thieves escaping with the donation box collections, according to media reports.

Last month, the Gauri Shankar Mandir was vandalised with "anti-India" graffiti in Brampton, with leaders in Canada and India asking the Ottawa government to take the matter 'seriously'. "I call on govt at levels in Canada to start taking this seriously," Indo-Canadian MP Chandra Arya had tweet-

"The attack on Gauri Shankar Mandir in Brampton is the latest in attacks on Hindu temples in Canada by anti-Hindu and anti-India groups. From hatred on social media, now physical attacks on Hindu temples, what next?" Arya, MP from the ruling Liberal Party, had asked.

Musk says he may step down as Twitter CEO by 2023 end

Team Absolute New Delhi

lon Musk has said that he might step down as Twitter CEO by the end of this year, after stabilising the company and making it more financially viable.

After conducting a poll on stepping down as Twitter CEO in December last year, Musk has not offered any indication as to when he is going to appoint a new CEO to run the daily affairs at the micro-blogging platform.

"I need to stabilise the organisation and just make sure it's in a financially healthy place in that the product roadmap is clearly laid out," Musk said via video link at the World Government Summit in Dubai. "I'm guessing probably towards the end of the year would be good timing to find someone else to run the company," he was quoted as saying in reports.

"I think it should be in a stable position around the



end of this year," Musk added.

Musk has said that he does not want to be the CEO of any company, be it Tesla or Twitter. "I frankly don't want to be the CEO of any company. At SpaceX, it's really that I'm responsible for the engineering of the rockets and Tesla for the technology in the car that

said. "So, CEO is often viewed as somewhat of a business-focused role, but in reality, my role is much more that of an engineer developing technology and making sure that we develop breakthrough technologies and that we have a team of incredible engineers who can achieve those goals,"

Musk elaborated. He said he does not wish to remain CEO of Twitter forever.

"I expect to reduce my time at Twitter and find somebody else to run Twitter over time," he added.

Earlier on Wednesday, Musk had said that he has hired a dog to replace him as the Twitter CEO.

DISPLACED 26 YEARS AGO, 14K REANG TRIBALS TO CAST VOTE IN TRIPURA POLLS

total of 14,005 Reang tribals, displaced from Mizoram 26 years ago following ethnic troubles, will cast their votes for the first time in Tripura on Thursday, officials said on Wednesday.

The 14,005 voters are part of the 37,136 Reang tribals who fled to Tripura in October 1997 and in subsequent years and took shelter in seven relief camps in north Tripura's Kanchanpur and Panisagar subdivi-

Election officials said that the Reang tribals, locally called "Bru", would cast their votes in different polling stations in four districts.

As per the four-partite agreement, signed on January 16, 2020, between the Union Home Ministry, Mizoram and Tripura governments and the Reang tribals, the 37,136 tribals comprising 6,959 families would be settled in Tripura's different districts and 21,703 eligible voters from among the displaced people would be enrolled in the electoral lists of



"As the resettlement process is not yet completed, the names of all the 21,703 eligible voters could not be included in the voters' list of Tripura.

Those 14,005 enrolled names would he allowed to exercise their franchise," an election official said.

He said that after their settlement, necessary documents are being

issued against their names.

The Revenue and Relief department officials requested the Reang tribals to come to their settlement camps at the earliest.

The Reang tribals are being rehabilitated in 12 locations in four of Tripura's eight districts -- North Tripura, Dhalai, Gomati and South Tripura.

The target for the resettlement of these displaced Reang tribals by August 31 last year could not be achieved due to the numerous landrelated issues, forest land clearance, fresh troubles, agitations against the rehabilitation and numerous other issues," a Revenue Department official said.

Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF), an apex body of the displaced tribals, has urged the government to expedite the rehabilitation of the tribals.

The Central government had announced a Rs 600 crore package for the resettlement of the Reang tribals, recognised as a primitive

Gangster Bhagwanpuria's aides held in Punjab, heroin seized

n aide of jailed gangster Jagdeep Singh, alias Jaggu Bhagwanpuria, was held

with 1 kg heroin and Rs 27 lakh drug money in raids across the state at suspected hideouts of persons linked with him. Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said on Wednesday.

The arrested accused has been identified as Jaipal Singh, alias Gumta, of Patti in Tarn Taran. Based on inputs, the police have also booked his accomplice, Harmandeep Singh, alias Harman, of Gulalipur village in Tarn Taran, who is said to be a close associate of Bhagwanpuria.

The DGP said following a tip off that Gumta, along with Harmandeep Singh, was going to deliver an arms and drug consignment, police teams set up a



and drug money from his SUV (without number plate), in which he was trav-

Senior Superintendent of

Police Gurmeet Chauhan said the police teams have launched a manhunt to arrest the absconding accused Harmandeep

I-T 'survey' operations at BBC offices continue for 2nd day

Team Absolute | New Delhi

he Income Tax (I-T) department 'survey related operations at the BBC offices in Delhi and Mumbai continued for the second day on Wednesday, according to sources aware of the developments.

The 'survey' operations, which had begun on Tuesday at around 11.30 a.m., continued the whole day and even throughout the night, and are currently going on at the UK's official broadcaster's premises in Delhi and Mumbai, reports quoting sources said.

Meanwhile, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is learnt to have informed its employees to work from home and has even advised them to refrain from answering questions related to personal income.

However the broadcaster has at the same time directed its employees to answer other salary-related questions.

The employees have been asked to cooperate with the officials and answer their queries comprehensively. The I-T department's "sur-



vey" is learnt to be focussed on accounts,

The operation by the I-T department came just weeks after the BBC released a two-part documentary titled 'India: The Modi Question', which focuses on the 2002 post-Godhra riots in Gujarat. The documentary had created furore throughout the country after it went viral, and was later taken down from all platforms as well as social media outlets. Several opposition parties led by the Congress have criticised the survey operations at BBC's premises.

India developing in every field under Modi, immense possibilities in Raj: UK MP Blackman

Jaipur | Agencies

nder the able and strong leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is making development in every field," said British MP and Padma Shri Bob Blackman in Jaipur on Wednesday. He added that "India-UK business relations have become very strong, which will further strengthen in the future. Both countries will progress rapidly with the help of each other.' Blackman was in Jaipur on

Wednesday. During his visit, he went to Amer Fort, the Rajasthan Assembly and to the residence of BJP state president Satish Poonia.

"Amer, Jaipur and the whole of Rajasthan are very beautiful, the forts, palaces here are historical and people and hospitality are very good. Rajasthan has immense future possi-



bilities in every field," he said. Blackman had a cordial meeting with BJP Rajasthan president Satish Poonia at his residence.

Poonia presented a Lord Krishna idol to him.

Poonia said that Bob Blackman is a supporter of the interests of India

and Indians in the UK. He supported India on the issue of Kashmir from Parliament to public events. On behalf of all Rajasthanis, I heartily welcome and congratulate him on the land of Jaipur.

Earlier, Bob Blackman visited Amer Fort, and appreciated its historical art and beauty.

On reaching Amer Fort, Satish Poonis and Amer residents welcomed him with turbans and gar-

Bob Blackman along with Satish Poonia, Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathod, state chief spokesperson Ramlal Sharma, MLA Nirmal Kumawat, Gopichand Meena along with all BJP MLAs met Assembly Speaker CP Joshi in the assembly. They also had a courtesy meeting with state government ministers Parsadi Lal Meena, Lalchand

9, including 2 IDBI bank officials, awarded various jail terms by CBI court



Team Absolute New Delhi

special CBI court in Visakhapatnam awarded various jail terms to nine accused including the then AGM, Assistant Manager of IDBI Bank, five private persons and two private firms in connection with a loan fraud case.

The court sentenced

Surendranath Datti and Dwibhashyam Karthik both then Assistant General Manager-cum-Centre Head, IDBI Bank Ltd to undergo two years rigorous impris-

The court also slapped a fine of Rs 60,000 on Datti and Rs 30,000 on Karthik.

The CBI had registered a case on the allegations that Datti and

Karthik in connivance with the borrowers, Panel Valuers and others had sanctioned and disbursed the loans to ineligible borrowers by accepting fake income tax returns, ignoring adverse CIBIL reports, violating the laid down procedures and norms of IDBI bank.

By this the accused caused a total loss of Rs 99.21 lakh to IDBI Bank Limited.

DMK COUNCILLOR ARRESTED IN KRISHNAGIRI FOR MURDER OF ARMED **FORCES PERSONNEL**

Chennai: A DMK councillor and five others in Tamil Nadu's Krishnagiri were arrested on Wednesday in a case related

M. Prabhu, 29, had an altercation with DMK councilor, M. Chinnaswamy near Velampatti in Pochampally on Tuesday

The issue, according to local people, commenced after Chinnaswamy abused the wife of Prabhakaran, Prabhu's elder brother, for washing clothes with water from the panchayat's water tank.

Chinnaswamy and his accomplices attacked Prabhakaran and Prabhu with lethal weapons inflicting serious wounds on them. They were admitted to a private hospital in Hosur and Prabhu succumbed to injuries on Tuesday late night. The Pochampally police had registered a case under Section 307 (attempt to murder) but subsequently changed it to Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code. Police said that other than Chinnaswamy, the accused include Guru Suryamurthy, a member of the armed police reserve.

Delhi murder: DCW steps in, issues notice to police

Team Absolute New Delhi

aking suo-moto cognisance of media reports on the murder of a 24-year-old woman, the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Wednesday issued a notice to the police.

The DCW in the notice said: "The commission has sought the copy of FIR and the details of accused arrested in the matter. Whether any other accomplice was also identified? If yes, please provide details of the same.

"As per media reports, the accused killed the girl in a car near ISBT, Kashmere Gate by strangulating her. Thereafter, the accused drove the car with her body to Najafgarh and hid the body in a refrigerator at a dhaba," read the DCW notice issued to the Deputy Police Commissioner of the Delhi Police's Crime Branch.

Highlighting the matter as "very serious", the DCW has sought the details of action taken report and the details of any missing complaint received by Delhi Police from the family of the deceased girl along with details of action taken thereon, by February 17.

The victim, identified as Nikki Yadav, was



a resident of Haryana's Jhajjar. She was living at a rented accommodation in west Delhi.Yadav was strangulated by her partner Sahil Gehlot -- a resident of Mitraon village on February 9, hours before his wedding to another woman.

The murder was committed near the Kashmere Gate area.

Gehlot then drove along with the body all the way to his dhaba -- situated at a distance of around 36 km. He then stuffed her body in a refrigerator and went on with his wed

ONE DEAD, 30 ILL AFTER **DRINKING POLLUTED WATER IN KARNATAKA'S YADGIR**

Yadgir (Karnataka): A woman died, while more than 30 other persons fell ill after drinking polluted water in a village in Karnataka's Yadgir district, officials

said on Wednesday. According to authorities, the incident had taken place in Anapura village of Gurumathakal taluk

of Yadgir following sewerage water getting mixed with the pipeline which supplied drinking water to the villagers.

The deceased has been identified as 35year-old Savithramma. The villagers had symptoms of vomiting and loose motion since Tuesday night, and those with severe symptoms were admitted in a private hospital in neighbouring Telangana

The 13 persons are admitted to the Yadgir district hospital. The authorities have sent a

team of doctors there with an ambulance. Last October, three persons died and more than 200 fell sick after consuming polluted water in Hotapete village of Shahapur taluk in

Punjab Chief Minister shuts down three toll plazas

Hoshiarpur Agencies

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Wednesday announced shutting down three toll plazas, which, he said, were allowed to operate by the connivance of the Akali-BJP alliance and Congress to loot the public.

Interacting with the media after closing three toll plazas at Majari (SBS Nagar), Nangal Shaheedan, and Mangarh (Hoshiarpur), he said with the closing of these toll plazas, a daily sum of Rs 10.52 lakh of the public will be saved.

Mann said these toll plazas should have been closed around 10 years back as their term had expired but instead of closing them the previous governments connived with them to mint the money illegally.

He said it is unfortunate that politicians of the state backstabbed the people for their vest-



ed interests.

The Chief Minister said the previous governments of SAD-BJP alliance and the Congress didn't bother about the interests of the people and looted the state exchequer. He said this is evident from the fact that the PWD ministers, including Congress' Partap Singh Bajwa (now Leader of Opposition) and Akali Dal's Parminder Singh Dhindsa along with Sukhbir

Singh Badal, plundered the public money mercilessly. The Chief Minister dared these leaders to explain why they had ditched the people of state for their personal

He said under this project of Rs 123.64 crore, the Rajdeep Tollways company had to constructed a 104.96-km-long road, the agreement for which was inked by Bajwa on December 6,

Mann said the Capt Amarinder government extended largesse of Rs 49.45 crore in form of subsidy to the company out of the total project cost. The Chief Minister said the

company had operated all three toll plazas on March 6, 2007, before the formation of a new government. He said the company had to complete the project of laying bitumen on road by March 5, 2013 which was accomplished on April 30, 2015 with a delay of 786 days.

Delhi BJP slams AAP's Sanjay Singh for statement on L-G



Team Absolute New Delhi

elhi BJP working president Virendra Sachdeva has said that the Aam Aadmi Party is an anti-Constitution and extra-constitutional

authority party. Sachdeva said that Wednesday' statement of AAP MP Sanjay Singh that the post of Lt. Governor

should be abolished, on the one hand shows his anarchic nature while on the other hand it is also an attack on the constitutional

arrangements. Sachdeva said that the Aam Aadmi Party is in government in two states and it is ironical that on Tuesday Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann refused to give a clarification to the Punjab Governor on the issue of foreign training of teachers, while in Delhi MP Sanjay Singh went two steps further and demanded the abolition of the Lt.

Governor's post. He said that when it comes to their rights, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Keiriwal and his party leaders start invoking the Constitution, but when the time comes to answer for their actions, they disrespect the constitutional posts.

CBI QUESTIONS SATYENDAR JAIN IN TIHAR JAIL IN EXCISE SCAM



New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday interrogated Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain in the Tihar Jail in connection with the Delhi excise policy scam.

The CBI on Friday moved the Rouse Avenue District Courts seeking permission to interrogate him in the matter, and the court allowed its plea. The CBI interrogated Jain about scam accused Vijay Nair and other related

things. The CBI has already filed a charge sheet in the matter, and sources said that they are in process of filing a supplementary charge sheet in the matter and hence they wanted to collect more evidence to make the case water-proof.



madhya pradesh

CONGRESS ESTABLISHED ONLY 74 AIRPORTS IN 70 YEARS, MODI GOVT DID IT IN 9: SCINDIA

nion Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia along with Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday laid the foundation stone of an airport in Rewa district. This will be the sixth in the state after Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Khajuraho. The project, which is in its initial stage with land acquisition underway, will be established on 300 acres of land in the Chorahta area of Rewa city. It is estimated to be completed

While addressing the gathering on this occasion, Scindia said that until a few years back, people were demanding railway connectivity in their cities, but things have changed now, and people are demanding airports. Scindia, who switched to the BJP in early 2020 and became Civil Aviation Minister in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet, said till 2016 India had around 74 airports, and the BJP government has established the same number of airports in just nine years. "Today is a historic



day for Rewa and the Vindhya region when we are laying the foundation stone for this airport, and it happened only because of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. You can see that 74 airports were established during the 70 years of Congress rule, while the same number of airports

has been established within just nine years of Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's leadership," Scindia added. Scindia also attacked Madhya Pradesh Congress president and his ex-cabinet colleague Kamal Nath saying the latter was lamenting the shortage of money during his 15-

kursi rone ke liye nahi hoti, janta ki seva karne ke liye hoti hai. (Jansevak's post is not for lamenting but to serve the people). Had the same excuse been given by Shivraj Singh Chouhan, this project would not have been possible today. This is the difference between the BJP and the Congress," Scindia said.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan asserted that the people of Rewa deserve this gift (airport) because they had given all eight assembly seats to the BJP in 2018. Chouhan also announced to develop a Vindhya Expressway which will connect the region directly from the state capital Bhopal.

Chouhan also attacked the Congress saying that despite a strong presence in the state cabinet, Vindhya region did not see any development till 2003. "You might remember what kind of roads there used to be during the Digvijaya Singh led Congress government, and now you can see the roads of Rewa and entire Madhya Pradesh," Chouhan

Digvijaya Singh will now focus on assembly polls, MP's politics expected to heat up

on February 17, during

leaders, as well as the

poll preparations. He will

also conduct one-to-one

to note down their chal-

lenges," the spokesperson

meetings with party workers

Team Absolute Bhopal

ormer Chief Minister and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh will now actively participate in public meetings of the Madhya Pradesh Congress in different constituencies. The veteran Congress leader, who has been out of the state for the last few months as he was one of the key members of the Rahul Gandhi led 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', will be focusing on the upcoming state assembly elections.

Singh, who has a strong dominance in the state's politics, will kick-off his first public meeting on February 17 in two assembly constituencies in Bhopal districts Bairasia and Govindpura, both won by the ruling BJP in 2018. A decision in this regard was taken on the direction of MP Congress chief Kamal Nath, a party spokesperson said on Wednesday.

Singh will be meeting the Digvijaya, who leaves no opportunity to attack Prime district and block committees of the state Congress to Minister Narendra Modi and

make headlines with his controversial remarks, is expected to heat up Madhya Pradesh politics. The election for the 230 Assembly seats is due at the end of this Despite a snub from Rahul Gandhi during his Bharat Iodo Yatra over his remarks

raising questions regarding the surgical strikes and the Pulwama terror attack, Singh again kicked off a row on Tuesday, saying the CRPF take stock of their preparasoldiers lost their lives in the tions for the assembly elec-Pulwama incident in tions. "The first round of his Kashmir four years ago due (Digvijaya Singh) will start to a "blatant intelligence failure". "Today we pay homage which he will be meeting the to the 40 CRPF Martyrs who district and block level party died because of the blatant intelligence failure in women and youth wing of Pulwama. I hope all the the party to take stock of the Martyrs families have been suitably rehabilitated," Singh

> said on Tuesday. He was attacked by the ruling BJP's central and state leaderships for his remarks. However, he remained firm and kept questioning PM Modi while talking to the press and using social media.

Unmarried rape survivor kills her newborn in MP's Jhabua

Team Absolute Bhopal

earing social stigma, an unwed rape survivor killed her newborn in tribal dominated Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh, police said on Wednesday.

As per the police, the young woman who gave birth to a baby boy four days back, was assaulted sexually by an unidentified man last year.

On learning about her pregnancy, the police asked her family to inform them when the baby was born, but fearing social stigma, the family decided to kill it.

The matter came to light. when the police went to her house for collecting DNA samples for investigating the rape case. Upon reaching there, the police learnt that



the baby was killed and buried at a secluded place.

As per the police, first she deprived the baby of her milk and then killed him by crushing his neck under her foot. "Newborn's brutal killing was confirmed after the body was

exhumed from grave and subsequent autopsy revealed multiple fractures on top of cervical spine. All 3 accused, the woman and her uncleaunt, were arrested and booked for murder," police



Artist Sarfaraz Haasan honored with the National Youth Award by the Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Government of India, J.Kishan Reddy at a prestigious

G20: CULTURE WORKING GROUP TO MEET IN KHUJARAHO

he first Culture Working Group meet, under India's G-20 Presidency, will be held in Madhya Pradesh's temple town Khajuraho from February 22.

Officials of the Ministry of Culture said that India's G20 Culture Track is predicated on the idea of 'Culture for LiFE' - an environmentally conscious lifestyle as a campaign for sustainable

The CWG will evolve through four meetings in four historic cities of India and steer the G20 discourse on four priority areas. India's CWG will reflect the emergence of culture as a prominent theme on the global stage, it will adopt culture to renew multilateral and multicultural cooperation at all levels, and will aim to forward this ideal and inform future global cultural policies and initiatives.

An ancient city, Khajuraho is known for its majestic temples and elaborate sculptures. A UNESCO



World Heritage Site, Khajuraho's monuments were constructed by the Chandela Dynasty between 950-1050 AD. The aesthetic of the Nagara-style architecture, ornamented with the intricate and detailed sculptures, acts like a window into the socio-cultural

practices of the time. According to historical records, there were 85 temples in the temple site in Khujaraho, covering 20 square km, in the 12th Century AD. However, today, only 25 of these temples - scattered throughout a 6 square km area - have sur-

Officials said that as a part of the meeting, there will be an exhibition titled "Re(ad)dress: Return of Treasures" at the Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre (MCCC), which will be inaugurated by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Culture and Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy.

The delegates from the G20 countries will get to experience cultural programmes including the Khajuraho Dance Festival. They will also get to visit the Western Group of Temples along with a tiger safari at the Panna

Tiger Reserve. India assumed the G20 presidency on 1 December 2022, articulating the theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' -One Earth. One Family. One Future', which aims to foster, celebrate, and incorporate the diversity of cultural traditions amongst the member states while striving towards holistic living and creating a pro-people planet.

CM Chouhan plants Peepal, Saptaparni and Guggul saplings

Team Absolute Bhopal

hief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Peepal, Saptaparni and Guggul in the garden located at Shyamla Hills. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, President of District Panchayat Bhopal, Ramkunwar Naurang Singh Gurjar and Corporator Brijjula Sachan planted saplings on their birthday. Naurang Singh Gurjar, Mohan Singh Jat, Vinod Rajoria, Chandresh Suresh Rajput, Ashok Meena, Gajendra Solanki, Samandar Gurjar, Balram Gurjar, Jitendra Srivast, Gyan Singh Gurjar, Inder Singh Gurjar, Deepak Singh Gurjar, B.K. Shukla, Ajab



Antar Singh, Harinarayan, Sachin and Govardhan participated in the plantation. Dev Hari Sachan, Abhishek

Sachan, Rampal Tiwari, Laxmi Narayan Gaur and Divya Sachan also planted saplings.

Local Congress Leader's Remains Found In Forest

Team Absolute Mandla

ore than three months after he went missing, the skeletal remains of a 65year-old local Congress leader were found in the forest area of Niwas town in Mandla district of the state, a police official said on Wednesday

The dead, Hari Lal Maravi, who had been missing since October last year, was not keeping well mentally for the past one year, he

The remains of Maravi were found in the bushes of Badhiya Tendu forest area by his family members, who identified him on the basis of his clothes and Congress party 'gamcha', Niwas police station in-charge Suresh

Solanki said. Prima facie, it appears that he died of starvation in the forest area and it is also possible that wild animals devoured his body parts, he said. "Maravi was not keeping well mentally for nearly a year. In the past also, he had gone away from home without informing anybody. This time, he went away in a similar manner and probably lost his way in the forest area," he said. "A forensic team will examine the



remains and post-mortem will be conducted to know the exact cause of the death," Solanki added. Only the skull and bones of legs were recovered from the spot, he said. Maravi had gone missing on October 28 last year. On November 1, his family members had filed a missing person's report with the police, he said. "The skeleton was found by Maravi's family members as they were looking for him in different areas on a daily basis ever since he went missing," the official said. Hirna Chapar village sarpanch Kanshi Ram said that Maravi was a member of the local janpad panchayat and also the block president of Kisan

Team Absolute Bhopal

wo days after a church was vandalised in Madhya Pradesh's Narmadapuram, police on Tuesday said that they had arrested three accused, including two from neighbouring Uttar

During the interrogation, the trio claimed they were "hurt" over the incident of burning of copies of Ramcharitamanas by activists of an OBC outfit in Lucknow last month, and committed the vandalism as "revenge", a police official said.

According to police, the accused were also planing something big, and they could have targeted some more religious places, but were arrested soon after the incident.

The arrested persons have been identified as Akash Tiwari, 24, of Jhansi and his close friend Avanish Pandey, 28, a resident of Ayodhya, and the third as Shiva Rai, a resident of Narmadapuram.

"Trio have confessed that they were hurt with Lucknow's incident and they wanted to do something for their dharma. They were targetting to vandalise non-Hindu religious places. After torching a church and Christian prayer hall in Narmadapuram district, they had planned to com-



mit similar acts at churches and mazars in Narmadapuram town followed by similar incidents at churches, mazars and mosques in Bhopal," a senior police official said.

The police official further said that Tiwari masterminded the vandalisation of the church hall by sharing actual locations of the targets and also funded the crime, while his friend Pandey, with whom he had studied together and did initial private sector jobs in Lucknow, was living in Itarsi town of Narmadapuram and working as sales executive at a car showroom in Bhopal, executed the plan. Pandey came to Narmadapuram (MP) in December 2021 for apprenticeship in Railways at

Itarsi - a major junction of the West Central Railway). He completed the apprenticeship in December 2022, after which he joined a car showroom in Bhopal as sales executive. Since Bhopal is just 90 odd km from Itarsi, he continued to stay in Itarsi only and daily shunted between Itarsi and Bhopal. During the investigation, police found that Pandey had thrown a bottle of liquor inside a church earlier in January but it wasn't reported. On January 9, he burnt the gate of a church and also a copy of the holy Bible in Itarsi's Kheda area, after which the police lodged a case, the official added. A month later, Pandey convinced Rai to burning furniture and writing 'Ram' on the wall inside a Christian prayer hall in Chauki Pura village under Kesla police station of the district. The incident came to light on Sunday, after the hall was opened for prayers

"After lodging a case under Section 295 IPC, we formed three teams and following sustained investigation, our teams were able to track two of the accused, including prime accused Avanish and his helper Shiva Rai on Monday late night. Their grilling led to the arrest of Jhansi-based mastermind Tiwari. All three are now in police custody," Narmadapuram SP, Dr Gurkaran Singh said.

absolute edit



EDITOR'S SPECS

MARINE SCIENTISTS BAT FOR ARTIFICIAL REEFS

7ochi: India's marine fisheries is on the verge of a transformation, with marine scientists proposing artificial reefs to increase fish production and promote fishermen's livelihood.

The scientists opened up on this topic at a brainstorming session held on the sideline of the ongoing symposium on innovations being held here.

Scientists from the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) said the deployment of artificial reefs (AR) on the sea bed would enhance the growth of marine fauna and flora, and stimulate natural settings for fish production.

Artificial reef is a sheltered human-built structure, submerged on the sea bed as a substitute for natural habitats. Having a fixed scientific design, it functions as a self-sustaining production system on the sea bed.

According to a report presented by the CMFRI during the session, a total of 280 AR sites have been deployed in India's coastal waters, including 243 in Tamil Nadu and 28 in Kerala.

"The artificial reefs could offer opportunities for a substantial increase in fish catch, especially for smallscale fishers using hook and line. It will help save costs besides offering a lot more environmental benefits such as enhancement of biodiversity, reduction of the carbon footprint of the fishing operation, reduction of wave energy and thereby coastal erosion, and stabilisation of islands," said the CMFRI report prepared by its Director A. Gopalakrishnan, V.V.R. Suresh and Joe K. Kizhakudan.

However, the CMFRI maintained that only designated sites after studies by competent authority could be used for the deployment.

Kizhakudan said over 300 species coexist in a settled AR habitat.

"The commercial varieties being attracted to the AR include breams, groupers, snappers, perches, cobia, sea bass, rabbit fishes, silver biddies, seer fish, barracuda, mackerel, trevallies, queen fish etc.," said Kizhakudan, adding that he is receiving overwhelming response for the artificial reefs from the fishermen community.

Union Fisheries Secretary Jatindra Nath Swain said the artificial reefs and sea ranching present a solution to the crisis prevalent in the sector.

BJP COMES WITH AIRPORT FOR VINDHYA REGION IN POLL YEAR, FOUNDATION STONE LAID IN REWA



PRAVEEN DWIVEDI

hopal: Amid a statewide massive drive -Vikas Yatra' - aimed at informing the citizens about the BJP government's development vision, the foundation stone was laid on Wednesday for developing a big airport in Rewa district. It would be the sixth airport in Madhya Pradesh after Bhopal, Indore, Khajuraho, Gwalior and Jabalpur, but the first in Vindhya region.

The process for acquiring land and other work had begun two-three years ago. However, this development came when the assembly elections are just a few months

Till a few years back, Vindhya region comprising the districts of Rewa, Satna, Sidhi, Singrauli and Anuppur used to be dominated by the Congress. However, the BJP managed to win 24 out of 30 assembly seats during the 2018 elections, which was a major setback for the Congress. Now, when the assembly elections are getting closer, the ruling BJP has

come with a major gift for the citizens of this area, for which they were waiting for the last several years

At present, the people of Vindhya Pradesh have to travel around 250-300 km to take a flight. In an emergency, they have to either go to Jabalpur or Prayagraj (Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh), and therefore the construction of an airport in Rewa will be a crucial development for the people of over two dozen districts. The airport will be established in the outer part of the city in the Chorahata area, where a helipad already exists.

Officials working on the project said that a feasibility study such as a 'wind diagram' of the city, land availability, spending money capability of the people in the area etc has been completed. "Wind direction is one of the main possibilities to set up an airport in a particular area. In our report, we have submitted an assessment of wind direction for the last 50 years," said Ramji Awasthi, who had been working on the Rewa airport project earlier, and is currently the director of Raja Bhoj

Airport in Bhopal.

The approval for the airport is part of the Central government's UDAN-RCS, the initiative to provide flight connectivity to regional cities, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 21, 2016. The process for establishing an airport in Rewa was initiated during the tenure of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

And this is connected with the devastating floods and landslides in Uttarakhand in 2013, said Rewa MLA and a former cabinet minister of Madhya Pradesh, Rajendra Shukla, who has been working for the last eight years to make flight connectivity in the district a reali-

ty.
"During the 2013 disaster, most of the roads in Uttarakhand were washed away in floods which made it difficult for our army and other disaster management authorities to reach the people trapped in floods and to rescue them. It was a difficult task to rescue stranded people.

Central government to establish regional small size airports across the country to be prepared for such devastating floods," Shukla

He continued, "After that devastation the Central government of Manmohan Singh proposed a plan to set up around 50 small size airports in different parts of the country and Rewa was included in this. Since, I was a cabinet minister in the state and being an MLA from here, I took over this responsibility to bring an airport to the district. Finally, approval for running RCS flights has been received but I assure you that in the next five to six years Rewa will have a full-fledged air-

Rewa, which is located in the north-eastern part of Madhya Pradesh, is around 450 km away from state capital Bhopal and around 230 km from Jabalpur.

international

ALL PACKAGED ITEMS BECOME EXPENSIVE IN PAKISTAN AFTER GST HIKE

Islamabad | Agencies

The Pakistan government on Wednesday increased the General Sales Tax (GST) on all packaged items to 18 per cent, along with increasing tax on cigarettes, media reports said.

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) issued a notification in this regard, following which the implication of GST will be effective immediately, Samaa TV reported. Edible oil, ghee, biscuits, spices, jam, jelly, noodles,

toys, chocolates and coffee falling under the category of packed items will become expensive, the report said. The new notification will also apply on make-up products, shaving foam, gel, cream, blade, shampoo,

cream, lotion, soap and toothpaste. With an increase in GST percentage, TV, LED, LCD, smartphones, iPods, computers, laptops and gadgets,

juicers, blenders, shakers and other electronic items will become more expensive. Economists said that a 1 per cent increase in the GST rate will put a burden of more than Rs 50 billion on

Pakistani population, Samaa TV reported. After getting approval from the federal cabinet on a mini-budget in the shape of Tax Laws Amendment Bill 2023, the FBR issued the statutory regulatory order (SRO) for hiking the GST rate from standard 17 per cent

to 18 per cent and increasing the Federal Excise Duty



(FED) on cigarettes in order to fetch an additional Rs 115 billion out of Rs 170 billion agreed to by the government in line with the IMF conditions, The News reported. However, top official sources disclosed that the government also approved the GST on hundreds of highend luxury items at the rate of 25 per cent but it will be introduced through the Tax Amendment Bill 2023, which would be laid down in the Parliament.

The FBR enhanced the GST rate on all those imported luxury items which were banned by the Ministry of Commerce sometime back in order to make imports more expensive. The enhanced rate of GST on some locally made luxury goods has also been proposed, The



QUAKE SURPASSES 41,000 Ankara Agencies

he combined death toll in Turkey and Syria quake on February 6 has topped 41,000, media reports said. Over 41,000 people have lost their lives in the devastating quake, of which 1,414 deaths were reported by the Syrian government's Health Ministry, and 4,400 by the UN humanitarian agency in rebelheld northwestern Syria, The Washington Post reported.

"At least 35,418 people have been killed in the twin quakes and 13,208 injured are still receiving treatment in our hospitals," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was quoted as saying Anadolu News Agency.

Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) said 195,962 people have been evacuated.

Turkey's Forrign ministry said around 100 countries have offered assistance and a total of 9,046 foreign personnel are working in the disaster zone.

Putin preparing new aerial attack on Ukraine

And that had prompted the

Russia is preparing to send a new force of fighter jets and attack helicopters to regain ground in Ukraine, intelligence officials have warned, according to a media report. Western analysts have said a build-up of aircraft on the Ukrainian border could see Vladimir Putin's forces attempt to push the offensive in the Donbas region, Daily Mail reported. It comes as NATO defence ministers meet for a two-day summit in Brussels to discuss plans for military support for the wartorn country. NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg told the military alliance's member countries that they must step up deliveries to ensure Ukraine can fight back against Russian aggression as Europe risks running out of ammunition, Daily Mail reported.

Former Norway Prime Minister Stoltenberg said: "This has become a grinding war of attrition and therefore it's also a battle of logistics. This is a huge effort by allies to actually be able to get in the ammunition, the fuel, the spare parts, which are needed."

He added: "We see no signs that President Putin is preparing for peace. What we see is the opposite, he is preparing for more war, for new offensives and new attacks.



Ukrainian officials said Moscow is plotting a much broader offensive on the eastern Donbas regions, but also fresh attacks on Kharkiv in the northeast and Zaporizhzhia in the country's south-east with aircraft and thousands of tanks and armoured vehicles, Daily Mail reported. On Tuesday, Putin sent two nuclear-capable bombers over the Bering Sea, which separates Russia from Alaska, in a show of strength to the West.

Such moves were common during the Cold War, but it is the first time the Russia Federation has taken such a measure. Ukraine is reportedly preparing to use British long-range missiles to strike the Russian-held Crimea while Russia prepares to launch its new wave of attacks, Daily Mail reported.

73 MIGRANTS MISSING, PRESUMED DEAD FOLLOWING SHIPWRECK IN **MEDITERRANEAN: IOM**

Geneva | Agencies

t least 73 migrants and presumed dead following a tragic shipwreck off the Libyan coast, the International

Organization for

Migration (IOM) said Wednesday.

The boat, carrying around 80 people, reportedly departed from Qasr Alkayar on February 14 heading to Europe, the IOM said in a statement, Xinhua News Agency reported.

The IOM said that seven survivors who swam back to Libyan shores in extremely dire conditions are currently in a hospital, and the Libyan Red Crescent and local police have so far retrieved 11 bodies.

This tragedy has totalled the number of deaths on the central Mediterranean route to over 130 this year,

More than 1,450 deaths were recorded in 2022 by the IOM Missing Migrant Project.

Somalia claims 200 al-Shabab militants killed in week-long onslaught

Mogadishu Agencies

ver 200 al-Shabab militants were killed during a week-long operation carried out by the Somali National Army (SNA) and regional forces in the south and central regions of Somalia, officials said on Wednesday.

The latest onslaught against the al-Qaeda-linked militants had paid off, amid mass casualties, Minister for Information Daud Aweis Jama told a briefing in Mogadishu, the Somali capital, Xinhua news agency reported. He said troops intensified assaults on militants in areas under Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Southwest and Jubbaland states.

More militants surrendered during the operation, including a Shabab commander and bomb expert, Jama said. The SNA said its forces on Tuesday killed 10 al-Shabab militants and injured several others in an operation in Mudug region, central



Somalia. Al-Shabab has yet to comment on the latest onslaught, but claimed earlier this week that it had attacked two bases in Lower Shabelle and Jubba regions, in southern Somalia, killing several soldiers.

The terror group was driven out of Mogadishu in 2011 but is still capable of conducting attacks, targeting government installations, hotels, restaurants and public places

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has declared an all-out war against al-Shabab, vowing to flush out the militants from their strongholds

CHINESE EMBASSY IN PAKISTAN SHUTS DOWN CONSULAR SECTION

hina has announced that it will be temporarily closing ■ down the consular section of its embassy in Pakistan due to "technical issues", local media reported. The Chinese embassy shared no specific information about the nature of the issues nor was a timeline provided for the reopening of the consular section.

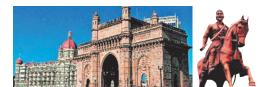
In a notice issued on its official website, China's embassy announced the temporary closure of the consular section for the information of the general public. The closure would remain in place until further orders, according to the announcement, Geo News reported. "Consular Section of the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad will be temporarily closed from February 13, 2023 until further notice, due to technical issues,' reads the notice. Meanwhile, the Chinese government has also advised its citizens to be extremely cautious while in Pakistan due to the security situation. In a Saturday notice, the Chinese Ministry of



Foreign Affairs' consular department warned their citizens that they may be at risk of high levels of security in the country, Geo News reported. The Chinese government's announcement comes a day after the government reiterated its resolve to protect all Pakistani citizens and foreign nationals.

Chairing a meeting in Gwadar on February 12 regarding counterterrorism and security of foreign nationals in the country, Pakistan Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah directed authorities to take all possible measures to ensure the safety of Pakistani and foreign nationals.

He said that foolproof security will be provided to Chinese nationals working on various projects in Pakistan and any negligence in this regard will not be tolerated, Geo News reported.



maharashtra

CONGRESS UNIT HOLDS 'SILENT' PROTEST AGAINST I-T SURVEY AT BBC OFFICES

he Congress's Pune city unit staged a 'silent' protest on Wednesday against the Income Tax department's survey operations at the BBC's offices in Delhi and Mumbai, and claimed media houses and journalists were under pressure since the Narendra Modi government came to power

The action, which sparked a sharp political debate with the ruling BJP accusing the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) of "venomous reporting" and the opposition questioning the timing of the move, comes weeks after the broadcaster aired a two-part documentary "India: The Modi Question" on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the 2002 Gujarat riots. The Congress workers led by Pune unit president Arvind Shinde covered their mouths with black bands during the protest held outside the Patrakar Bhavan here in



Shinde said the Congress condemns the I-T department's action and blamed the central government for it. "We feel that just two weeks back, the BBC had come out a documentary on Gujarat riots and it (I-T department action) is connected to that," he said. Shinde claimed that since the Modi government came to power in 2014, media houses and journalists have been under pressure

and they should day, show and preach whatever the central government wants

Journalists or media houses that do not obey are targeted by the Centre through the Enforcement Directorate and the Income Tax department, he claimed.

The Income Tax department had launched the action on Tuesday at the BBC's Delhi and Mumbai offices along with at least

two linked premises as part of an investigation into alleged tax evasion against the British broadcaster in India.

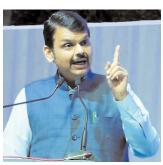
The tax department's survey operation against the BBC India continued for the second day on Wednesday with the sleuths understood to be making copies of electronic and paper-based financial data of the organisation, offi-

"Blatant lies": team Thackeray on Devendra Fadnavis's "arrest" claim

Team Absolute | Mumbai

he Shiv Sena (UBT) on Wednesday took a dim view of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis' claim that the previous Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government had tried to put him in jail, and asked the BJP leader in which case was he "fearing" arrest. An editorial in the Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana' claimed that IPS officers had threatened MVA legislators to support Fadnavis and spied on them by tapping their phones. Devendra Fadnavis should explain if such "illegal" phone tapping is a crime or not, it said.

Maharashtra's political culture has never seen instances of arrest of political opponents and harassment of their family members, the Marathi publication said. After the 2019 Assembly polls, the Uddhay Thackeray-led Shiv Sena snapped ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over the issue of sharing the chief min-Uddhav Thackeray later tied-



up with the Nationalist Congress Party and the Congress to form the MVA in the state.

Fadnavis recently said the previous MVA government had given a target to then Mumbai police commissioner Sanjay Pandey to put me in jail, but the police officer could not succeed as he had done nothing wrong.

Reacting to it, the Saamana editorial on Wednesday asked, "Why is Devdendra Fadnavis scared that he may be arrested?" "In which case was he fearing arrest and what connection did he have with the case... Fadnavis should have clarified," it said. "In the last few days, Fadnavis has been speaking blatant lies," it

claimed, adding this is not the "sanskar" of the Sangh (RSS). The Marathi daily said the MVA government had filed cases against IPS officer Rashmi Shukla in Pune and Mumbai in connection with the alleged phone tapping.

The phones of MVA leaders

were illegally tapped when Fadnavis was the chief minister, it said. The phone numbers of MVA leaders were out for tapping under different names said to be of drug peddlers and terrorists, it claimed. Fadnavis should also explain if such "illegal" tapping is a crime or not, the editorial said. The investigating officers in the case visited Fadnavis when he was the leader of opposition and took his statement respectfully. There was no need to make an issue out of it, the Marathi daily said. MVA leaders Anil Deshmukh, Nawab Malik, Sanjay Raut was arrested by central probe agencies unnecessarily. If the phone tapping case was not serious enough, why former Mumbai police Chief Sanjay Pandey was arrested in the same

To keep track of dogs, Mumbai engineer develops tags with QR code

Team Absolute Mumbai

n engineer and a dog lover from Mumbai claims to have developed tags with QR code technology to keep track of stray dogs. The man behind the idea, Akshay Ridlan aims to provide these tags to people at a nominal price so as to increase the reach of the technology.

"It will also help the government find dogs' locations and make strategies for their sterilization or vaccination. It can be done through the database. We want to offer this QR at a nominal price right now. People and organizations who feed or rescue animals can use this," Akshay said while talking to Reporter.



Akshay further highlighted the various features provided by the technology. He said, "I attach the QR code with the reflective collar and then scan the QR with the scanner on my phone. After scanning, I get all the details in the digital form of a particular dog. This creates a UID (Unique identification), gender, pet name, name of the caretaker, phone number of the caretaker, and medical/vaccination history of the dog.

Gory vendetta

Man burns in-laws' home; father-in-law killed, wife, son injured

Team Absolute Gondia (Maharashtra)

n a shocking revenge over domestic brawls, a man sneaked into his inlaws home in Maharashtra's Gondia town and set it afire around 12.30 a.m. on Wednesday, killing his father-in-law, police said here.

According to the investigators, at that time, Devanand Meshram, his daughter Arti K. Shende, and his four-year-old grandson Jai were fast asleep in the

As per preliminary probe, Meshram's son-in-law, Kishore Shende, allegedly reached their home in Survatola area of Gondia, quietly poured petrol all around and set it ablaze before running away

While Meshram sustained severe burns and suffocation which resulted in



his death, his daughter Arti and her son Jai have suffered grievous burn injuries, said Gondia SDPO Sunil Tajane.

"The accused, Kishore Shende was absconding after the incident, but now we have caught him and he is in our custody. We have lodged an accident death report and are investigating further," Tajane said.

Locals said that the accused Shende

had been estranged from his wife Arti and their son Jai owing to frequent quarrels and assault by him.

Last year, fed up with the situation Arti along with her son deserted Shende's home and went to her father's place and they had been living there

Tajane said that the condition of the victim woman and her son is critical with around 80 per cent burns - and they have been rushed to a Nagpur hospital for treatment after the primary treatment in a local hospital.

Apparently, Shende took advantage of the dark hour when there was nobody around in the dead of the night and the police are scanning for possible witnesses, besides waiting to record the statements of the two survivors before proceeding further.

Two held in Thane for robbing senior citizens; 13 cases solved its of Navi Mumbai, Thane

Team Absolute Thane

he Navi Mumbai police claimed to have solved 13 cases of robbing senior citizens with the arrest of two persons in Maharashtra's Thane district. There had been several cases of the culprits posing as policemen or influential persons and robbing elderly people of gold chain and other valuables while they were moving alone, senior police inspector Ravindra Patil of Navi Mumbai Crime Branch Unit II said. The police found it difficult to get details of the accused from the victims.

A police probe team then studied the modus operandi of the robbers and checked for similar crimes in the limand Mumbai police commissionerates, the official said.

The police on Monday nabbed the two accused persons, identified as Naresh Iaiswal from Kalyan and Babu Manchekar from Taloja area, he said. Following their questioning and search, stolen items including gold chains and other valuables worth Rs 5.30 lakh were recovered, the official said.

The police detected as many as 13 cases of crimes committed by them in the limits of Vashi, Turbhe, Koparkhairne, Nerul, Rabale (all areas in Navi Mumbai), Matunga, Sion, Kanjurmarg (in neighbouring Mumbai) and MFC (Thane) police sta-

Man gets 10 years in jail for attacking wife after she refuses to cook

Team Absolute Thane

court in Maharashtra's Thane district has sentenced a man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for seriously injuring his wife after she refused to cook food for him ten years

In her order on Tuesday, Sessions Judge Dr Rachna R Tehra held the 39-year-old man guilty under Indian Penal Code section 307 (attempt to murder) and also imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 on

As per the prosecution, convict Vanya Jagan Korde and his wife Laxmibai frequently fought as he was jobless. On September 22, 2013, the couple got into a fight and the woman refused to



cook for him. In a fit of rage, Korde picked up a log and attacked

Laxmibai, leaving her grievously injured, the court was told. The court refused to accept Korde's request for relief under the Probation of Offenders Act, which provides for the release of offenders on probation or

after due admonition and for matters connected therewith, saying the statute was not applicable to cases under section 307 of the IPC.

During the trial, the court examined eight prosecution witnesses, including a doctor and the woman's brother, said Additional Public Prosecutor E D Dhamal.

Maharashtra Court Refuses To Stop "Pathaan" Teaser, "Besharam Rang" From Streaming

Team Absolute | Mumbai

court in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra **⚠** injunction to restrain streaming of teasers of Shah Rukh Khan-starrer 'Pathaan' movie and its 'Besharam Rang' song on YouTube without showing U/A censor certificate.

P A Patel, Joint Civil Judge at Shrirampur court in Ahmednagar, rejected the plea on February 8, stating that a plaintiff must produce something to show the foundation for his claim.

Suresh Patil, who claims to be a social worker, had moved the court ahead of the release of the movie, which hit the screens on January 25.

Perusal of the complaint and documents filed on record show that the plaintiff is claiming temporary injunction to restrain the defendants (Yash Raj Films) from showing the teaser and 'Besharam Rang' song of "Pathaan" movie without showing U/A certificate, the court said.

The court also said that from the contentions of the plaintiff, it appears that he has seen the song and teaser on YouTube and also noticed that U/A certificate is not shown before streaming of the content. "Therefore he got confused," it said. Patil himself stated that the meaning of U/A certificate (unrestricted public exhibition subject to parental



guidance for children below the age of twelve), the court noted

Thus, no injury is caused to the plaintiff, it said. On perusal of record, it shows that the main relief claim by Patil in present suit is same as the temporary injunction sought by him.

"If the said relief is granted, it is as good as the final relief. Hence, relief cannot be granted," the court noted. "Moreover, from the contentions of the plaintiff, no prima facie case is made out. Plaintiff must come off with something to show foundation

for his claim," the court ruled.

The court observed that no loss will be caused to the plaintiff if application is rejected and he is having another remedy.

Ahead of its release, "Pathaan" was mired in controversy due to its song 'Besharam Rang' as $\,$ many, including politicians, criticised the song for "hurting religious sentiments" of Hindus. Several right wing organisations objected to the "saffron costumes" worn by actor Deepika

Padukone in the song.

Assam govt ads claim 'ownership' of 6th Jyotirlinga; Maha Oppn fumes

Team Absolute | Mumbai

row erupted in Maharashtra on Wednesday over an Assam government advertisement Laiming that India's 6th Jyotirlinga is located at Kamrup in the Dakini hills in the northeastern state. The ad, released by the Assam government on Tuesday in various media, bears the photo of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma greeting and inviting people on the occasion of the upcoming Maha Shivratri (February 18) celebrations. "Welcome to the site of India's Sixth Jyotirlinga,"

says the huge media ads, which have given the names of all the 12 Jyotirlingas in the country, including now showing the 6th one as 'Bhimshankar (Dakini)', prominently in a red box, beside a Shivling, a Trishul and Damru. As per Hindu texts, of the 12 such recognised Jyotirlingas all over India, one is in the Bhimashankar hill forests of Pune district in Maharashtra, where lakhs of devotees go for prayers every year. Taken aback by the 'preposterous' claims, the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) immediately pounced on the Assam government and the ruling Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party regime in

Maharashtra. Firing the first salvo, Congress'

General Secretary Sachin Sawant said: "Leave aside industries (in Maharashtra), the BJP wants to snatch away even Lord Shiva from Maharashtra. Now, the BJP Assam government claims that the 6th Jyotirlinga of Bhimashankar is situated in Assam and not in Maharashtra's Pune district. We strongly condemn this highly preposterous claim." Nationalist Congress Party MP Supriya Sule slammed Assam and demanded whether the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has now decided to give away the cultural and spiritual treasures of Maharashtra along with its industries and jobs. "What the Assam BJP government in Assam is doing is absolutely unacceptable and without any basis," she said, urging Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis to take immediate note of the developments.

Flaying the Assam government, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s national spokesperson Kishore Tiwari said this is just the beginning and the BJP will now take away other important gods and deities of

"Today, it's the Jyotirlinga which represents Lord Shiva. Tomorrow, they will even stake claim on his son, Lord Ganesha, who is the most revered in Maharashtra, where the annual Ganeshotsav festival took birth 130 years ago," a fuming Tiwari said. Sule went on to quote Shrimad Adi Shankaracharya's Brihad Ratnakara Stotra that the Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga is the source of River Bhima in the forests of Dakini, hence the Bhimashankar in Pune is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga Temples, none other. "Who else needs to testify now? However, the BJP-ruled Assam has started promoting the Shivalinga at Parnohi near Guwahati as the 6th Jyotirlingaa. This is very mischievous and false propaganda," Sule said. Hitting back at Sawant for the criticism, BJP spokesperson Ram Kadam presented a press release of December 2021 of the Centre's Department of Tourism mentioning all the Jyotirlingas and also the Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga. Calling Sawant a 'misguided emperor' like the Congressmen, the BJP leader said that from the government, everything is clear. Sawant patiently requested Kadam to first "study the issue and then talk", pointing out that his concern pertained to the Assam government ad of February 14 which mentions that the 6th Jyotirlinga is not in Maharashtra but in Assam. "Even the name has been changed. Surprisingly, it didn't upset you. Maybe the topic is not understood as usual," said Sawant in a sarcastic swipe at Kadam.



NIGERIAN MAN ARRESTED **NEAR MUMBAI SCHOOL** DRUGS, INCLUDING **COCAINE FOUND**

Team Absolute Mumbai

40-year-old Nigerian national has been arrested with Cocaine and mephedrone worth nearly Rs 16 lakh at suburban Borivali, an official said on Wednesday.

The anti-narcotics cell (ANC) of Mumbai Crime Branch had received intelligence about a man carrying drugs at Borivali West, he

He was spotted near an international school on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday and was taken into custody, said the official. The ANC recovered 55 grams of drug mephedrone and 12 grams of cocaine from him, he said, adding that a case has been registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

hollywood



Hollywood's ass:

Steven Spielberg

tells Tom Cruise



Los Angeles | Agencies

The makers of 'Love Again' starring Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Sam Heughan dropped the trailer of the film on the occasion of Valentine's Day, and promised a complete love-filled ride.

It tells the tale of a grieving Priyanka who gives love another chance after a loss. Priyanka's American pop-star husband, singer-actor Nick Jonas has a cameo in the film as they share an awkward kiss.

The trailer starts with a glimpse of Priyanka as Mira who struggles to move on with her life after the death of her boyfriend. She keeps sending texts at the old number which is now being used by Sam, as his new work phone.

Rob, who is a journalist, gets fascinated by Mira's honest and heartbroken texts as she opens up about her old wounds. Rob and Mira cross paths at an opera night and hit it off but Rob is scared to open up about his feelings towards her. 'Love Again', directed by Jim Strouse, is slated to release in theatres May 12, 2023. Based on the 2016 German film SMS fur Dich by Karoline Herfurth, the film was previously titled 'Text for You'.

Los Angeles Agencies

A ctress Emma
Corrin, best known
for portraying
Princess Diana on Netflix's royal
drama 'The Crown', is joining the
Marvel Cinematic Universe.

The actor will star with Ryan Reynolds and Hugh Jackman in the third installment of 'Deadpool'.

Corrin's exact role hasn't been announced, but they are expected to play the villain opposite Reynolds' snarky mercenary and Jackman's Wolverine. 'Deadpool 3' is scheduled to hit theatres on September 6, 2024.

Reynolds celebrated the casting on Twitter, writing: "New addition to the family! The Deadpool family, for clarity. Which is just like a real family except with less swearing. Welcome, Emma Corrin!"

Shawn Levy, who directed Reynolds in 'Free Guy' and 'The Adam Project', is taking over filmmaking duties for 'Deadpool 3' which is the first R-rated installment in Disney's MCU. Fox distributed the first two 'Deadpool' films prior to Disney's acquisition of 20th Century Fox in 2019.

Screenwriters Rhett
Reese and Paul Wernick,
who worked on 2016's
'Deadpool' and its 2018
sequel, are returning to pen
the third entry.

Corrin, who is non-binary and uses they/them pronouns, scored an Emmy nomination for 'The Crown'.



You saved

Los Angeles | Agencies

teven Spielberg and Hollywood star Tom Cruise reunited at this year's Oscar nominees luncheon, where the blockbuster filmmaker praised his 'Minority Report' and 'War of the Worlds' actor for saving the theatrical movie business with 'Top Gun: Maverick'.

Both Spielberg and Cruise are in the running for best picture this year thanks to 'The Fabelmans' and 'Top Gun: Maverick', respectively.

"You saved Hollywood's ass and you might have saved theatrical distribution," Spielberg said to Cruise in a video originally shared on Instagram by director Kartiki Gonsalves, whose film 'Who Can Say No to Baby Elephants!' is nominated for best documentary short film.

Spielberg added: "Seriously, 'Top Gun: Maverick' might have saved the entire theatrical industry."

'Top Gun: Maverick' was the second movie to gross over \$1 billion at the worldwide box office amid the pandemic, following 'Spider-Man: No Way Home'. With a \$1.48 billion gross, 'Maverick' ranks as the 11th highest-grossing movie in history worldwide. The film is the fifth-highest grosser at the domestic box office with \$718 million.

Although 'No Way Home' grossed more, that was a Marvel movie with three generations of Spider-Man actors in it.

Although 'Maverick' is a sequel, its success was hardly pre-ordained. Yet the follow-up to 1986's 'Top Gun' became a rare old-fashioned hit that legged out at the box office for months based on worth of

CORRIN JOINS
RYAN REYNOLDS IN
'DEADPOOL 3'

Kevin Feige confirms 'Spider-Man 4' movie is being written

Los Angeles | Agencies

arvel Studios president Kevin Feige has confirmed in a new interview that Tom Holland's fourth 'Spider-Man' movie is being written. Marvel had one of its biggest hits ever with Holland's third-outing, 'Spider-Man: No Way Home,' which became the first pandemic release to gross over \$1 billion worldwide.

"All I will say is that we have the story," Feige said about Holland's anticipated 'Spider-Man' return to Entertainment Weekly.

"We have big ideas for that, and our writers are just putting pen to paper now."
Whether Holland will once again team up with 'Spider-Man' actors Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield remains to be seen. Both actors have expressed interest in returning for a

new 'Spider-Man' movie.

Elsewhere in the EW interview, Feige confirmed that Marvel's Mahershala Ali-starring 'Blade' movie will be filmed this year. Production on 'Blade' hit a speed bump in 2022 when original director Bassam Tariq exited the project in September. Yann

Demange stepped in to helm the vampire tentpole.

"It's going well," Feige said about 'Blade'. "Our director Yann (Demange) is down in Atlanta right now. Cameras roll in, like, the next 10 weeks or so." Feige also championed the upcoming Marvel debut of Harrison Ford, who is taking on the role of Thaddeus Ross in "Captain America: New World Order." Disney and Marvel have not yet announced a second season of 'Moon Knight' with Oscar Issac, but Feige said: "There's a future for that character as we move forward." He also compared the upcoming 'Captain Marvel' sequel, 'The Marvels' to the first 'Avengers' movie.

'I bought myself flowers'

REBEL WILSON PRETENDED
SHE HAD A 'SECRET
ADMIRER', SENT HERSELF
FLOWERS ON V-DAY

Los Angeles | Agencies

A ctor Rebel Wilson, who is in a relationship with Ramona Agruma, has opened up that she used to send herself gifts during her school years, admitting that it was always a "lonely day" for her. "I bought myself flowers and pretended it was from an anonymous admirer because a lot of the girls would get flowers on Valentine's Day. And I didn't have anyone to send, so I bought myself. I was like, 'Oh my God, I must have a secret admirer ... I'm so popular.'... But I think people were just looking at me like I was an

idiot," Rebel shared.

"But then it would always be a bit of a sad, lonely day,
I think. But especially in the last few years, I really
worked on myself and have done a lot of healing and a
lot of positive things. And then I was like, well, maybe it's
not a coincidence that then I did find a really deep loving
connection that's working really well." Rebel went public
with her romance with Ramona in 2021. And the Hollywood
star - who welcomed her first child, a daughter called Royce,

via surrogate in November 2022 - has admitted to being "shocked" by their romantic connection. She told PEOPLE, "I always was a bit of a girls' girl and had deep friendships with women, but this was the first time that it was a romantic connection and I was just shocked. And then I was like, 'Oh, well, what if that was just part of my personality that I was repressing and wasn't exploring?' And maybe I should have ten years earlier. My journey is what it is, but it's just awesome now to be in a relationship."





Women's T20 World Cup

INDIA BEAT WEST INDIES BY 6 WICKETS

Cape Town | Agencies

disciplined bowling A performance from Team India bowlers kept the Windies down to 118/6 in 20 overs. Opener Stafanie Taylor top-scored for West Indies with a 40ball 42 while Shemaine Campbelle contributed 30. Deepti Sharma was the most successful bowler for India with three wickets for 15 runs while Pooja Vastrakar and Renuka Singh got one apiece.

Chasing 119 to win, India lost their top three batters within the first seven overs, making it a tricky run-chase. However, the duo of Harmanpreet Kaur and



Richa Ghosh once again joined hands in the middle and stitched a brilliant fiftyrun partnership to take India to victory. Earlier, West

Indies skipper Hayley Matthews won the toss and opted to bat against India. India has made a couple of changes with vice-captain

ner Devika Vaidya replacing Yastika Bhatia and Harleen Doel. West Indies have made one change with spinner Karishma Ramharack coming in for Zaida James.

"I feel good. What we dis-

cussed in the meeting and the plans I had against the West Indies batters, we were able to apply that in the middle. That is a milestone and I am happy with the achievement (first Indian to 100 T20I wickets). I am focusing on the rest of the World Cup games. There is a bit of turn in this surface and I focus on bowling stump to stump," said Deepti Sharma, Player of the match

ICC Rankings

India become No. 1 in all three formats



Dubai | Agencies

ndia's massive victory in the first Test against Australia in Nagpur took them to the top in the latest ICC's Test rankings on Wednesday, making them the No. 1 ranked team in all three formats.

India recently became the top-ranked ODI team after beating New Zealand 3-0 in January,

to go with their No. 1 T20I ranking.

The Rohit Sharma led side will need to win the second Test against Australia in Delhi, which starts on February 16, to stay on top of the Test rankings and also move a step closer to qualifying for the World Test Championship final in June. They need to win the series 3-1 or 3-0 to make the final.

ICC TEST BOWLERS RANKINGS: ASHWIN CLIMBS TO 2ND SPOT, JADEJA MOVES UP TO 16TH

Dubai| India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin on Wednesday climbed to the second spot while left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja also moved up to the 16th position in the latest ICC Men's Test Bowlers Rankings after their superb show against Australia in the opening Test in

The Indian spin twins haunted Australia in the first Test between the two leading nations in the current cycle of the ICC World Test Championship with a combined 15 wickets as hosts won by an innings 132 runs.

Ashwin ensured India wrapped up their stunning victory before tea on the third day, as the veteran off-spinner took 5/37 in the second innings to go with 3/42 earlier in the match. The 36-year-old is now just 21 rating points behind Australia captain Pat Cummins and a return to the No.1 ranking for the first time since 2017.

While Ashwin stepped up in what turned out to be the last session of the Test, Jadeja did the damage on the first day with 5/47 including the prized wickets of Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne. Jadeja then took 2/34 in the second innings to partner with Ashwin as the spin twins quickly dismissed Australia's top seven batters and left them reeling at 67/7 on the way to being all out for just 91. Meanwhile, India captain Rohit Sharma has been rewarded for his match-defining ton in Nagpur with a rise from 10th to 8th in the ICC Men's Test Batting Rankings.

Ind vs Aus Test Series

'Still, a good chance', Starc hopeful of returning for second Test

Team Absolute New Delhi

ustralia pacer Mitchell Starc believes he has "still a good chance" to feature in the second Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series despite not being as close to full fitness as he would like.

Starc missed the series opener with a finger injury, which he picked up while fielding against South Africa last December. Captain Pat Cummins and Scott Boland were Australia's only fast bowlers in Nagpur, as allrounder Cameron Green missed out, who is also nursing his broken finger.

The pacer did not travel with the team to Nagpur and instead remained in Sydney to do four bowling sessions at home. He arrived in India on Saturday, and joined up with his teammates in Delhi on Tuesday night ahead of the second Test."I'd like to be a little further down the road. Still, a good chance so it'll come down to how it reacts by the end of (Wednesday), how the medical staff see it,



how the selectors and Pat (Cummins) and Ronnie (coach Andrew McDonald) feel about it as well," Starc told reporters in the national capital."I'll do everything I can to be fully available for selection, then it's a discussion for the rest of the group involved. I don't think (batting will be an issue) so it's going to be uncomfortable but I don't think it's an issue."I think I'll still field with a cap on (the finger), that's what I did in Melbourne. I don't field myself in slip anyway," he added.

LANNING STEERS AUSTRALIA TO 8-WICKET WIN OVER BANGLA

Gqeberha (South Africa) Agencies

eg Lannings unbeaten 48 guided Australia to an eightwicket win over Bangladesh as the reigning ICC Womens T20 World Cup champions recorded their second successive victory.

Lanning led a successful pursuit of Bangladesh's 107, of which captain Nigar Sultana Joty contributed 57, with Georgia Wareham (3/20) among the Australian bowlers to shine on Tuesday night.

Darcie Brown chipped in with two for 23 before Alyssa Healy and Lanning's partnership of 72 laid the foundations in the chase.

Bangladesh opted to bat upon winning the toss but they lost Shamima Sultana early, Beth Mooney taking a brilliant catch at extra cover from the bowling of Brown. The fast bowler's second wicket soon followed as she



Women's T20 World Cup

uprooted Murshida Khatun's leg stump with just 11 runs on the board.

Up stepped Bangladesh's leading run scorer and captain Joty, who struck back-to-back fours to inject some momentum into the innings. By the end of the powerplay, she had 21

off 13 after hitting Alana King for four and a six in quick succession.

Wareham struck twice in the 17th over, bowling Shorna for 12 shortly after the teenager's first boundary, before repeating the trick to dismiss Rumana Ahmed and leave the score

90 for five. Marufa Akter, who shone in Bangladesh's opener against Sri Lanka, picked up where she left off in the reply by taking the key early wicket of Mooney for two, but Alyssa Healy and Lanning soon started motoring. They hit five boundaries, including a fine six from the former, in the space of 11 balls to carry Australia to 45 for one by the end of the powerplay. The second-wicket partnership soon passed 50 but was ended when Healy picked out Joty to provide Shorna with a breakthrough.

Brief scores

Bangladesh 107/7 in 20 overs (Nigar Sultana 57; Georgia Wareham 3-20, Darcie Brown 2-23) lost to Australia 111/3 in 18.2 overs (Meg Lanning 48 not out, Alyssa Healy 37; Shorna Akter 1/12) by 8

WPGT

ROOKIE JASMINE SHARES LEAD WITH SEASONED AMANDEEP IN 3RD LEG

Kolkata | Agencies

engaluru teen Jasmine Shekar, playing only her third event as a pro, moved into shared lead with one round to go in the third leg of the Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club. Jasmine, who opened the tournament with a first round of even par 72, added a solid 1-over 73 in the second round.

Jasmine now shares the lead with favourite Amandeep Drall (70-75) who had a rough time in the middle of the second round.

Yet another rookie, Kriti Chowhan (75-71) carded one of the only two under par rounds of the day to move into sole third place. Sneha Singh, who disappointed on the first day with 77, was the best of the second day with 2-under 70 and was tied fourth alongside Khushi Khanijau

Seher Atwal, winner of the first leg on the WPGT 2023, was tied sixth



with amateur Saanvi Somu (73-76). Jasmine, who has on a few occasions played the WPG Tour as an amateur, had just one bogey and 17 pars. It was a creditable round that gave an indication of her solid play.

Amandeep opened with a birdie on the second but ran into problems towards the end of the front nine of the RCGC, as she bogeyed three times in a row from seventh to ninth. Further bogeys on the 13th and 17th with a birdie in between on 15th meant she finished the day with 75 but still had a share of the

Kriti Chowhan, also a rookie, who did not play in the first two events, had as many as five birdies but she also gave away two bogeys and a double bogey in her round of 71.

Amateur Janneya Dasanniee (76-74) was eighth, while Shweta Mansingh (71-80) was ninth and Shagun Narain (78-74) rounded off

AC Milan beat Spurs 1-0 in Champions League

Rome (Italy) | Agencies

C Milan registered a morale-boosting victory, as they beat Tottenham Hotspur 1-0 in the first leg of the UEFA Champions League round of 16, with Brahim Diaz's early strike proving decisive.

It was Milan's first knockout fixture at the European elites stage since the 2013-2014 season, as they entered the San Siro stadium without Mike Maignan, Ismael Bennacer and Zlatan Ibrahimovic. Spurs also had a long list of absentees, as they lost Hugo Lloris and Rodrigo Bentancur due to injury, with Pierre-Emile

Hojbjerg suspended. Milan had a poor domestic form since the start of 2023, but made short work of Italian tactician Antonio



Conte's Spurs, as they scored the solo goal just seven minutes into the game when Fraser Forster denied Theo Hernandez at the near post and made a save on Diaz's rebound, but could do nothing to the Spaniard's follow-up, a Xinhua report said.

Racewalkers Ram Baboo, Manju

The Rossoneri remained firm after going ahead and held onto their 1-0 lead, while Tottenham's trump card Harry Kane was under the constant watch of Simon Kjaer. The return leg will be held on March 8 at the Tottenham Hotspur

Stadium.

Argentina Open

Dominic Thiem earns first win of 2023 season

Buenos Aires | Agencies

fter a disappointing start of the season at the Australian Open, Dominic Thiem of Austria registered his first win of 2023, beating Slovakia's Alex Molcan 7-6(4), 6-3 in the Round-of-32 of the Argentina Open.

Former World No. 3 will next face Peruvian qualifier Juan Pablo Varillas, who earned a 6-2, 7-5 win against Joao Sousa earlier on Tuesday. Third seed Lorenzo Musetti will be a potential third-round opponent at the ATP 250 tournament.

Thiem and Molcan traded breaks from 5-5 in the opening set, with Thiem racing to



a 5/1 lead in the tie-break after failing to serve out the set. The 29-year-old Austrian did not face a break point in set two as he improved to 12-1 with the victory.

Thiem won the Buenos Aires title in 2016 and 2018. But the Austrian had a forgetful start to the season as he crashed out of the Australian Open in the first round after suffering a defeat at the hands of Andrey

Manipur rout mighty Bengal to keep Riyadh dreams alive

National Football

anipur team stung by the defeat to Meghalaya in their previous game ran rampant against a hapless Bengal side at the Kalinga Stadium in the evening kickoff. The loss means Bengal are now knocked out of the competition, with two games yet to play.

Manipur's architect in chief was Subash Singh, who rolled back the vear in a scintillating performance right from the start. Singh had a part to play in each of Manipur's goals, his pass sending Naoba Meitei into space on the right in the first half, from which the youngster finished brilliantly, shooting into the far corner, from an acute angle. For Bengal,



the pain soon got worse. Having conceded a needless freekick at the top of the box, Bengal saw the effort tipped on to the crossbar by Raja Barman, only for it to loop back straight into Subash's path a yard from goal. He gratefully headed it in, sparking a melee inside the goal

Bengal came out with a bit more

energy in the second half, utilising their wings, and doing damage from crosses from both sides. Within nine minutes of the restart they had their reward, Souvik Kar heading it in to halve the deficit. A period of Bengal pressure followed, Manipur happy to play on the counter, with Subash constantly pulling the strings to set up chances for his younger teammates. None of them could finish. With the game edging towards a close finish, came disaster again, Biswajit Hembrom volleying a cross from the right into the top corner of his own goal to give Manipur breathing space. The defender had been under just the mildest of pressure by Subash, enough to put him

ndian race walkers Ram Baboo and Manju Rani set new national records to win the mens and women's 35km races, respectively, to win the gold at the National Open Race Walking Competition

En route to their win, both the race walkers also breached the qualifying standards for the Asian Games set by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI).

Uttar Pradesh's Ram Baboo won the men's 35km race walk after clocking two hours, 31 minutes, and 36 seconds, improving his previous national record of 2:36.34, set at the National Games in Gandhinagar last year. The entry standard for Asian Games 2023 in men's 35km is 2:35:00.

The last edition's winner, Juned Khan, clocked 2:36:04 to be placed



second while Chandan Singh came third with the timing of 2:36:55

Manju from Punjab, meanwhile, clocked 2:57:54 to create a new national record. The entry standard for the women's 35km at the Asian Games was set at 2:58:30. The previous national record was 3:00:04 set by Ramandeep Kaur in the last

edition of the tournament. Payal of Uttarakhand (3:05:34) and Bandana Patel of Uttar Pradesh (3:11:35) came second and third, respectively.





MY KIDS
SEE ME ON
SCREEN &
SAY DAMN
COOL BODY
PAPA: SRK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, who flaunted a perfect eight-pack abs in the song 'Jhoome Jo Pathaan' in his latest release 'Pathaan', is happy that youngsters find his chiselled body "cool".

SRK, who is a father of three, said: "When they were doing Jhoome Jo Pathaan song, I think a conspiracy was hatched to make me go shirtless. There was no way that I was sure about doing it (taking my shirt off) but then they made me do it!" He added: "I think it was already planned that slowly, slowly, they will start opening my buttons. I have never done my signature steps with abs! So, ya, it took a lot of

"I'm very happy now when youngsters, my kids see me on screen and say damn cool body papa! I feel very happy but it is really scary! I don't know if I will be able to do it again."

About what he loves about the chartbuster song Jhoome Jo Pathaan, SRK said: "Jhoome Jo Pathaan is a song that I feel makes you want to dance. Just wanted to do a step which everyone can do with ease. It comes when it's like all things are done well now and so let's celebrate, it's a party song in the film."



who is in LA as part of his work commitments joined the talented bunch and

extended his cheer for the Indian films representing the country.

It was tough to play 'Bihari' role for the first time: Poonam Rajput

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Begum Jaan' actress Poonam Rajput has been roped in for Anurag Kashyap's directorial short film 'Chaar Chappalein' also starring Manav Kaul, Randeep Jha, and Sanjay Gandhi. Poonam shared her experience working with the ace filmmaker and also revealed how challenging it was to play a Bihari character for the first time.

She said: "'Chaar Chappalein' is an international short film set in Bihar. I portray a 21-year-old newly married woman and am playing the lead opposite Randeep Jha. The film was shot in Varanasi."

The 'Mirzapur 2' actress added that she never played a Bihari character before and language was a challenge for her.

"I had never played a Bihari character in my acting career, so I needed to learn the dialect and accent as I hail from Himachal Pradesh. The shoot started 2 days after I was selected to play the part, so I needed to quickly get into the skin of my character. I tried to keep it natural and real without losing the authenticity of her coming from a small town. Also, she is an introvert and simple girl which is the opposite of who I am in real life."



intimidated by sir but my co-actor Randeep Jha and I gave the first shot in one take. It took off some pressure from me and I felt proud of myself. Also, the shooting schedule was preponed, we were not mentally prepared for that but still, we gave our best efforts came out



PER EVE IS A MY RIS SI

PERFORMING
EVERY SCENE
IS A PART OF
MY JOB:
RUCHI
SINGH

Team Absolute | Mumbai

ctress Ruchi Singh, who has been part of mythological dramas like 'Santoshi Maa Sunayein Vrat Kathayein 2' and 'Vighnaharta Ganesh', said that she is now interested in grabbing different kinds of roles and is not hesitant to do a bold scene if the character demands.

Ruchi said: "I do feel that acting is a profession where you have to be ready to essay any kind of role, be it a negative one, positive one or a romantic one. Being in this profession, I can't create boundaries or inhibitions for myself because, nowadays, there are a lot of good projects which demand bold scenes. So, I don't believe in rejecting a

project only because it has a close-proximity scene."

She further added: "If I feel the scene justifies the screenplay and story and if it enhances the scene, I would love to perform it. For me, performing every scene is a part of my job, whether it's a drunken scene or bold scenes, and I don't find anything negative in this."

At last, she shares that she is open to taking up any role or scene if it is the demand of the script and "shot aesthetically".

"Nowadays, the choice of the viewers is also changing and everyone is open to the idea of adult scenes in any project. I am open to stretching the boundaries but the scene should be justified and shot aesthetically," she concluded.

'I think everything happens for a reason'

Anchal Sahu believes fame comes at a price and for her it was letting go of school life

Team Absolute | Mumbai

ctress Anchal Sahu, who is currently seen essaying the role of Parineet Kakkar in the show 'Parineeti', recalled how tough it was to balance her studies and acting career, and how she also had to let go of her school life.

Anchal said: "I do believe that being an actor, managing everything is not an easy task because you tend to lose some or other things. Due to work commitments, I was also not able to attend my school on a regular basis; however, I tried my best to be present on important days."

"Initially, I used to struggle to find a balance between my work and studies, but gradually, I learned to balance everything. I carry books with me on the set and study whenever I find time between the

"I think everything happens for a reason. To be honest, I don't regret anything in life, I do believe that fame comes at a price and for me, it was letting go of my school life," she concluded.





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