

## absolute india

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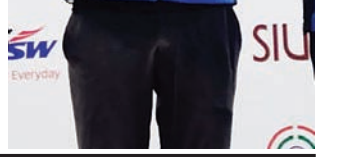
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BILKIS BANO PLEA AGAINST  
RELEASE OF 11 CONVICTS

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to set up a special bench to hear a plea against the release of 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano gang-rape case, which also involves the killing of her several family members during the 2002 Gujarat riots.

Advocate Shobha Gupta, representing Bano, mentioned the matter for urgent hearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud. The bench, also comprising Justices P.S. Narasimha and J.B. Pardiwala, assured Gupta that a new bench will be formed to hear the case.

The Chief Justice said, "I will have a bench constituted. We need to break two benches for it. We will look at this in the evening."

In January this year, the top court had said the question of maintainability would not arise in a matter related to remission of 11 life terms convicts.

In the plea, Bano said release of all the convicts came as a shock to the petitioner, to her grown-up daughters, to her family, and also to the society at large, nationally, and internationally.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it will hear on May 9 a clutch of pleas in connection with the criminalization of marital rape.

Senior advocate Indira Jaising mentioned the matter before a bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud. Jaising submitted before the court that common compilation and the order of arguments in the case is ready.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said the Centre's reply is ready and it has to be vetted, and added that he would argue the case for

one-and-a-half days as it pertains to an important issue. The bench said, "List this on May 9, 2023".

On January 16, the Supreme Court sought response from the central government on a clutch of petitions seeking criminalization of marital rape.

The top court decided to take up the matter itself instead of letting different high courts take a call.

In May last year, after the Delhi High Court's verdict that expressed 'split views' on criminalisation of marital rape, an appeal was moved in the Supreme Court challenging the exception to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code.

Also, in July last year, the top court had stayed the Karnataka High Court judgment, which allowed the trial of a husband for allegedly raping his wife. In May, the apex court had issued notice in the husband's plea against the Karnataka High Court judgment, however, it had then refused to stay the high court's judgment and trial proceedings. And, petitions have also been filed in the apex court seeking criminalisation of marital rape.

On May 11 last year, a high court bench of Justice Rajiv Shakdher and Justice C. Hari Shankar expressed different opinions in the judgment on the exception to Section 375 of the IPC, which exempts forceful sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife from the offence of rape.

Justice Rajiv Shakdher supported striking down the contentious law stating that the exemption of the husband from the offence of marital rape is unconstitutional to which Justice Hari Shankar did not agree. "The impugned provisions in so far as they concern a husband having intercourse with his wife without consent are violative of Article 14 and are therefore struck down," said Justice Shakdher.

4-DAY-OLD BABY DIES  
AFTER POLICEMAN  
STEPS ON HIM  
DURING RAID

**Ranchi:** A four-day-old baby died during a police raid which was conducted to arrest his grandfather in Jharkhand's Giridih district on Wednesday, after a policeman allegedly stepped on him.

Chief Minister Hemant Soren has directed the police headquarters to probe the matter and initiate action. The incident took place in Kosogondighi village of the district. According to sources, a team led by Sangam Pathak, in-charge of Deori police station, reached the house of one Bhusan Pandey to arrest him in the wee hours.

When the family members did not open the door, the team forcibly entered inside and a policeman climbed on the bed where the infant was sleeping and allegedly crushed him to death.

The police did not arrest Pandey after the incident and left the spot, said sources.

The incident created uproar among the villagers who are demanding that a murder case be registered against all the policemen present in the team.



## PM Modi unveils 6G test bed, industry hails move

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After a successful 5G rollout in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday announced the Bharat 6G vision document and launched the 6G research and development (R&D) test bed.

Inaugurating the new International Telecommunication Union (ITU) area office and innovation centre during a programme at Vigyan Bhawan here, he said that the 6G R&D test bed will help faster adoption of the new technology in the country.

The government said that the Bharat 6G vision document and 6G test bed will provide an enabling environment for innovation, capacity building, and faster technology adoption in the country.

The Prime Minister emphasised that India was only a user of telecom technology before 4G, but today, it is moving towards being the biggest

exporter of telecom technology in the world. "India is working with many countries to change the work culture of the whole world with the power of 5G," he said.

"These 100 new labs will help in developing 5G applications according to India's unique needs. Be it 5G smart classrooms, farming, intelligent transport systems or healthcare applications, India is working fast in every direction", the Prime Minister added.

Noting that India's 5G standards are part of the global 5G systems, he said that India will also work closely with ITU for the standardisation of future technologies, underlining that the new Indian ITU area office will also help in creating the right environment for 6G. The industry hailed the PM's move to roll out the 6G test bed in the country.

In August last year, PM Modi had said that the government is preparing to launch 6G by the end of this decade.

महा मुंबई मेट्रोने मिळाली  
जीवनाला गती,  
महाराष्ट्राची अभिनव प्रगती

**निर्णय वेगवान**  
**#महाराष्ट्र**  
**गतिमान**

**नरेंद्र मोदी**  
प्रधानमंत्री

**एकनाथ शिंदे**  
मुख्यमंत्री

**गतिमानतेचे प्रमुख टप्पे**

- महाराष्ट्र सरकारचे 'मुंबई इन मिनिट्स' स्वप्न साकार करण्यासाठी महामुंबई मेट्रोचे योगदान
- मुंबईकर लवकरच मुंबई महानगरात इच्छित स्थळी कमी वेळात पोहचू शकणार
- मुंबईत २०२६ पर्यंत ३३७ किलोमीटर मेट्रो मार्ग पूर्ण करण्यासाठी अष्ट प्रहर मेहनत
- अवघ्या २ महिन्यात ७० लाखाहून अधिक लोकांचा आरामदायक प्रवास
- मुंबईमधील सर्व मेट्रो कार्यान्वित झाल्यावर दरदिवशी १० दशलक्षाहून अधिक प्रवासी प्रवास करू शकतील
- हा पर्यावरणपूरक प्रकल्प मुंबई महानगराला आधुनिक, स्वच्छ आणि रहिवाशांसाठी उत्तम राहण्यायोग्य शहर बनवण्याचे साधन

**एकनाथ शिंदे**  
मुख्यमंत्री

**देवेंद्र फडणवीस**  
उप मुख्यमंत्री

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## BRIBE FOR TENDER SCAM: KARNATAKA BJP SHIFTS VENUE OF AMIT SHAH'S EVENT

Bengaluru | Agencies

The ruling BJP in Karnataka has shifted the venue of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's meeting following party MLA Madal Virupakshappa being named the prime accused in a bribe for tender scam, party sources confirmed on Wednesday.

The programme was fixed for Honnali town in Davanagere district earlier. Virupakshappa represents Channagiri constituency in Davanagere district. Fearing embarrassment, the party has decided to hold the programme on March 27 in Chitradurga city.

The party had organised a mega event of the beneficiaries of various programmes launched by the BJP governments at the Centre and in the state at Honnali city. Channagiri is located close to Honnali.

Bharatiya Janata Party sources said that the party has taken the decision following the opposition launching attacks on the party and central leaders. The programme was being held in the same district where the BJP MLA has been named as the prime accused by the Lokayukta police in the bribe case. Sources said that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is also likely to attend the programme and the party wants to make the maximum impact on the voters, and not give any room for criticism by the opposition parties. The party is planning to bring 10 lakh



people for the rally on that day. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and former CM B.S. Yediyurappa will also attend the event.

Madal Virupakshappa's son Prashanth Madal, a government official, was caught red-handed by the Lokayukta police while accepting Rs 40 lakh cash as bribe at his office in Bengaluru. The authorities have also recovered Rs 8 crore from the residence and offices of the BJP MLA.

## Delhi Police bust tiger skin smuggling gang; 5 held

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With the arrest of five men, the Crime Branch of Delhi Police has busted a racket that indulged in smuggling and selling skin of Royal Bengal Tigers, an official said on Wednesday.

The accused have been identified as Amir Khan, Deepak Kumar, Mohit, Shivam Sisodia, and Rahul Rawat, all residents of NCR. The police have also recovered two tiger skins from the possession of the accused.

According to the police, information was received that a racket indulging in smuggling of tiger skins was active in Delhi and its surrounding areas.

"Specific input was received that the members of the racket would come to the Chhatrapur Metro station to strike a deal with some prospective buyers. The gang was active in Delhi-NCR, and was illegally selling tiger skins for Rs 20 lakh each," said Ravindra Singh Yadav, Special Commissioner of Police (Crime).

Accordingly, a trap was laid in the Vasant Kunj area from where Amir Khan was apprehended and one tiger's skin was recovered from his possession.

"The wild life team was called to the spot and



after the inspection of the recovered skin, it was confirmed to be a genuine tiger's skin," Yadav said.

On interrogation, Amir disclosed that his two other associates -- Rahul and Mohit -- were also with him but they managed to flee.

"All the three accused had come to meet Deepak

who was to provide some prospective buyer. A case under the relevant sections of the Wild Life Protection Act and Indian Penal Code was registered at the Crime Branch police station and investigation was taken up," the officer said.

Amir also disclosed that the seized tiger skin was provided to him by Rahul and Deepak. "Deepak was apprehended from Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, while Mohit was arrested from Delhi," said the officer.

Mohit told the investigators that the recovered tiger's skin was provided to him by Shivam and some more skins could also be recovered from the latter.

"The police conducted a raid and apprehended Shivam. At the instance of accused Mohit and Shivam, one more tiger's skin was recovered from a jungle area near Qutub Vihar, Delhi and Rahul was also arrested," Yadav said. "Shivam was the main source for tiger's skins. He had four in his possession. He had approached Mohit and asked him to look for some buyers, and gave him one skin as a sample. Mohit then contacted Rahul, who got in touch with Amir and asked him to look for some buyer. Amir further contacted Deepak, who was tasked with arranging customers for the illegal deal," the officer said.

## Railways lowers fare of AC-3 tier economy ticket



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The railways ministry has issued an order to reduce the price of AC-3 tier economy class ticket with effect from Wednesday. Along with this, bedding

will be made available as before.

According to railway officials, passengers who have booked tickets online and over the counter will be given a refund of the extra amount for the pre-booked tickets.

As per the order, the fare for a 3-tier economy class ticket, which had been made equal to the fare of an AC-3 tier ticket through a circular issued last year, has been reduced. Three tier economy coaches were introduced by the Railway Board to provide the 'Best and Cheapest AC travel' service. The fare of these coaches is 6-7 per cent less than the usual AC 3 tier.

According to officials, while an AC 3 tier coach has 72 berths, AC 3 tier economy has 80 berths. The Railways earned Rs 231 crore from the AC-3 tier economy class in the first year of its introduction. According to data, during April-August, 2022, 15 lakh people travelled in these coaches, generating earnings of Rs 177 crore.

## 8 KILLED IN EXPLOSION AT TN FIRECRACKER UNIT



**Chennai:** At least eight people were killed and 13 others injured in an explosion at a firecracker unit in Tamil Nadu's Kancheepuram on Wednesday, said police. The injured have been admitted to the Kancheepuram district hospital.

The reason for the explosion is not yet known. Police said that 25 persons were working in the unit when the explosion took place Wednesday afternoon. Four units of fire force reached the unit and doused the fire. More information on the explosion are awaited.

## Oppo mobiles Maharashtra manager nabbed for Rs 19cr GST fraud

Thane | Agencies

The CGST Bhiwandi, Thane unit has arrested an Accounts and Finance Manager of Oppo Mobiles India Pvt. Ltd. for alleged fraudulent availing of input tax credit to the tune of Rs 19 crore on fake invoices from a non-existent supplier, an official said here on Wednesday.

The CGST sleuths swooped on the Oppo office and presented the Manager, identified as Mahendra Kumar Rawat, before a court which remanded him to judicial custody till April 3.

Rawat has been charged under CGST Act, 2017 Section 69 and 132 based on his confessions pertaining to committing the irregularities.

The Anti-Evasion Wing of CGST Bhiwandi learnt during investigations that the Oppo Maharashtra was indulging in availing fake ITC without receiving any goods from



Gain Hero India Pvt. Ltd., a non-existent (fake) company. The sleuths verified 16 e-way

bills for the purported transactions which turned out to be fake.

They also recorded the statements of transporters and vehicle owners which revealed that there was no supply of any goods to Oppo Maharashtra. The Oppo mobiles manufacturing global giant is headquartered in Dongguan, China.

The manager Rawat, who is also the authorised signatory, has emerged as the main person who played a key role in availing the fraudulent ITC amounting to over Rs 19 crore against the invoices of more than Rs 107 crore issued by the non-existent supplier, Gain Hero India Pvt. Ltd., without receiving the goods, said the CGST.

The CGST Commissioner Bhiwandi, Sumit Kumar said that this case was part of a special drive launched by the Mumbai Zone against tax fraudsters and evaders, and led to 24 arrests in the past 18 months.

## WBSSC scam: Calcutta HC declines stay on counselling for replacement of terminated staff

Kolkata | Agencies

The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday refused to grant an interim stay on the counselling process for freshly recruited non-teaching staff in state-run schools as replacement for those whose services have been terminated on charges of irregularities.

On March 11, following an order by a single judge-bench of Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay, the services of 842 non-teaching staff in Group C category were terminated. The terminated staff subsequently approached the division bench of Justice Subrata Talukdar and Justice Supratim Bhattacharya.

Meanwhile, as the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) had started the process of counselling for the replacements,



counsel for the terminated staff urged the division bench to grant an interim stay on the counselling process, but the court refused.

"The WBSSC is also at fault in this entire process. Let there be a departmental probe against the commission as well. The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education and the district inspectors of the schools should also not be spared. They all cleared the appointment of those whose services have been terminated

now," counsel argued.

He claimed that all the punitive steps have been taken on the basis of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)'s report on the optical mark recognition (OMR) sheets recovered from the hard-discs of NYSA in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad.

"Who can say the OMR sheets presented by CBI have also not been tampered with?" the counsel questioned.

However, the CBI objected to this course of argument claiming that the OMR sheets submitted by the central agency are not merely scanned copies. "OMR sheets are not simple pieces of paper. There is a highly technical process of keeping it protected," the CBI counsel said. Finally, the division bench refused to grant a stay on the process of counselling.

## K'TAKA YOUTH ABDUCTED, STRIPPED NUDE, THRASHED FOR APPLYING COLOUR TO GIRL IN BUS

**Kolar (Karnataka):** A youth in Karnataka's Kolar district was abducted, stripped nude, and assaulted for applying colour to a girl in a bus, police said on Wednesday.

According to police, the incident had taken place on the occasion of Holi.

The victim is identified as Madhu, a resident of Belamaranahalli and he has been admitted to the hospital, they added. A group of youth got enraged that he applied colour to a girl from their village. Madhu has told police that he was called by the youths, known to him and questioned for applying colour to the girl of their village. Later, they abducted him, locked him up in the shed, and stripped him nude and beat him up. Veagal police have registered a case in this regard and launched a hunt for the accused. Further investigation is on.

## B'luru cop suspended for flirting, misbehaving with female complainant

Bengaluru | Agencies

A police inspector attached to the Kodigehalli police station in Bengaluru has been suspended for allegedly flirting and misbehaving with a female complainant, authorities said on Wednesday.

Sources have said that the Karnataka police department will also lodge a FIR against the accused, Rajanna.

The Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) of Yelahanka Sub-Division had submitted a report in this regard to South-East DCP Lakshmi Prasad.

The accused had allegedly sent unnecessary messages on WhatsApp continuously to the woman. She claimed in her complaint that after she was called to the police station, the accused inspector had given her a cover containing dry fruits and a room key.

The victim had approached the Kodigehalli police last month regarding cheating of Rs 15 lakh. The inspector got her mobile number



and started chatting with her after a few days. As she could not take the harassment by the inspector, the woman complained to jurisdictional DCP in this regard.

The DCP then ordered a probe into the incident and asked the ACP to take up the investigation and submit a report.

The action has been taken as directed by the Bengaluru Police Commissioner Pratap Reddy, police sources said.

## As Covid cases crosses 1,000, Kerala on alert, use of masks recommended

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

Kerala Health Minister Veena George, chairing a meeting to review the increase of Covid cases in the state on Wednesday, said it would be better if the aged, children and those with ailments use masks in public places.

In the meeting, which came on the eve of the third anniversary of Kerala announcing a lockdown due to Covid, she said the use of masks when visiting hospitals should be a must.

George noted that the total number of active Covid cases in the state, as on Tuesday, was 1,026 with 172 new cases and 111 of them were being treated at various hospitals in the state.

"We have asked for a caution to be maintained and surveillance also will be strengthened. Officials have been asked to prepare a surge plan and also to have a look into the ICU and ventila-



tor facilities besides being given instructions to see adequate stock of medicines and testing kits are readily available. However there need be no worry at all," said George. It was on March 23, 2020,

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan announced a week-long lockdown to counter the spread and soon Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the nationwide lockdown.

## Axis Mutual Fund launches 'Axis S&P 500 ETF Fund of Fund'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Axis Mutual Fund, one among the fastest growing fund houses in India, announced the launch of their New Fund Offer - Axis S&P 500 ETF Fund of Fund (an open ended fund of fund investing in Exchange Traded Funds replicating S&P 500 TRI, subject to tracking errors). The new fund will adhere to the S&P 500 TRI (INR) benchmark. Mr. Vinayak Jayanath would be managing the fund and the minimum investment amount is Rs. 500 and in multiples of Re. 1/- thereafter. The exit load is as mentioned below:

Unlike a regular mutual fund that invests in distinct asset classes, a Fund of Fund invests in schemes of its own or other fund houses. In the case of international Fund of Funds, the fund manager invests in units of offshore mutual fund schemes by ensuring that the target fund's investment philosophy and risk profile matches with that of the fund's mandate. Fund of Funds can



be an interesting entry point for new as well as seasoned investors. In addition to diversification, investors may also benefit from the meticulously structured risk mitigation techniques.

Following a passive investment strategy, the Axis S&P 500 ETF Fund of Fund endeavours to invest at least 95% of the net assets in units/shares of overseas Exchange Traded Funds replicating S&P 500 TRI, subject to the availability of Eligible Investment Amount and the remaining in Debt and Money Market investments. The indicative list of overseas Exchange Traded Funds in which the Scheme proposes to invest is as follows

The list of overseas Exchange

Traded Funds provided is indicative and the Scheme can invest in any other overseas Exchange Traded Fund which shall have similar investment objective, investment strategy and benchmark. (Please refer to SID for detailed Asset Allocation & Investment

### Highlights:

- Category: An open ended fund of fund investing in Exchange Traded Funds replicating S&P 500 TRI, subject to tracking errors
- Benchmark: S&P 500 TRI (INR)
- Fund Manager: Mr. Vinayak Jayanath
- NFO open date: 22nd March 2023
- NFO close date: 05th April 2023
- Minimum Investment: Rs. 500 and in multiples of Re. 1/- thereafter

Strategy and other scheme related features available at [www.axismf.com](http://www.axismf.com)

Therefore, the investment objective of the newly launched fund is to replicate the performance of the S&P 500 TRI by investing in Exchange Traded Funds replicating S&P 500 TRI, subject to tracking errors. However, there can be no assurance that the investment objective of the Scheme will be achieved. Given the mutual fund structure, investors can look to invest through various systematic options like SIPs, STP's & lumpsum investments.



# HOW HINDU, MUSLIM & CHRISTIAN LANDLADIES PROPPED UP PUNE DOC'S 'SAVE GIRL CHILD' MISSION

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

It was on the auspicious Gudi Padwa festival in 2007 that Pune gynaecologist Dr Ganesh Rakh had started his small Medicare Hospital in a modest, three-storied building in Hadapsar locality.

His mission was clear - 'Save the Girl Child' - which he started doing in a big and unique way from 2012 onwards, and the hospital's journey completed 16 years on Wednesday (March 22, 2023).

"All deliveries of any female infant in my Medicare Hospital are absolutely free of cost for the parents, whether they are paupers or prosperous. Even all the post-delivery care, follow-up treatment, emergency surgeries in case of complications etc are also complimentary for the girl child and her mom," Dr Rakh told correspondent.

The three-winged Medicare Hospital straddling three buildings has an interesting story of its origins and how their owners - the landladies - directly and indirectly helped Dr Rakh's unparalleled mission.

The first building is owned by a Muslim lady - Shagufta Mushtak Khan, 40 and her husband is employed as a tanker-driver.

The second building belongs to a Hindu lady - Anuradha Sadashiv Gopale, 70, whose husband is a retired schoolteacher.

The third building is owned by a



Christian lady - Jennifer Eric Menezes, 56, and her husband is a para-gliding pilot.

"I rented the first building, from Shagufta Madam in 2007, where 'Medicare Hospital' was born in a small way. The second building came up in 2009 and Anuradha Madam made me her first tenant as the hospital had started flourishing slowly. In 2014, Jennifer Madam rented her building to me, when the 'Save Girl Child' mission was taking its first baby-steps," said a beaming Dr Rakh.

While the landlady Khan charges Rs 32K rent per month, Gopale takes Rs 44K and Menezes rakes in Rs 40K each month. Dr Rakh acknowledges warmly, that "without these three genteel-ladies, hailing from different religious-social-economic-cultural backgrounds, the Medicare Hospital dream would have been stillborn".

To ensure hassle-free operations, the three buildings are now 'inter-connected' and function as a single-

entity, with the trio of landladies, their husbands and families going all out to support the 'Save Girl Child' initiative.

"They have witnessed the 'birth', 'childhood' and 'teen' of Medicare Hospital, my tribulations after I announced totally free deliveries for the girl-child born here and they stood behind me like three mountains during any crises," Dr Rakh said with pride, as he along with family and the entire staff stood outside to celebrate the hospital's 16th anniversary-cum-Gudi Padwa this afternoon.

He recalled instances when he was down to the last penny, with no money to pay staff salaries, electricity bills, domestic grocery bills and of course, the rentals of the three landladies.

"However, the three women never ever reminded me or pressured me or gave me an ultimatum." They are also lenient about hiking the rents, they spare me an annual increase and

instead hike it every 3-4 years, but only after discussing with me and my family," said a grateful Dr Rakh.

Nevertheless, at times, Sadashiv Gopale played truant, but his wife sternly stood behind Dr Rakh to ward off any crises.

"Sadashiv Sir was my high school teacher for English... He retains the old strictness... Occasionally, when the rentals were delayed, he would hound me... Fortunately, his wife Anuradha would rescue me from his onslaught," Dr Rakh chuckled.

From January 3, 2012 till March 21, 2023, Medicare Hospital has performed 2,470 deliveries of girls without charging a single paise from the parents. With a strength of 16-beds, the hospital has all other facilities like an OPD, consultations, a path-lab, labour room, operation theatres, delivery rooms, two deluxe rooms, two general wards, a creche, pharmacy, plus separate residential quarters for staff, nurses, medicos and even interns.

Initially ridiculed as the 'Mad Doctor', today Dr Rakh has a huge following of over a million people with many hospitals, doctors, nurses, participating or contributing in their own ways to the 'Beti Bachao' Mission. His fame spread abroad and he was invited to Africa and other countries for similar initiatives, and will soon travel to Europe, the US, Gulf and Far East to conduct 'Save Girl Child' programmes.

# J&K and Ladakh trade fair in Mumbai paves way for socio-economic links with Maha

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A five-day trade fair cum expo of the Union Territories of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh is likely to pave the way for establishing a socio-economic corridor with Maharashtra, and also to promote them afresh as a Bollywood shooting destination, organisers said here on Tuesday.

The event, which concludes on Wednesday, saw around 150 leading businessmen from the three UTs showcasing their diverse range of products and services to attract the business communities in Maharashtra and later investments in their sectors.

The included stalls of saffron, all major dry fruits of the region and much coveted handloom products like carpets, rugs, pashmina and kani shawls, pheran, namda, etc., at the Athwas 2023.

Athwas President Gagan Mahotra said that Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh have immense potential as an investment destination in India and the Athwas-2023 is expected to unleash enormous opportunities for growth and development there. The five-day event attracted a host of celebrities



and people from different walks of life including Tourism Minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha, MLC Shrikant T.P. Bharatiya, Marathi superstar Swapnil Joshi, Gauranga Das of Govardhan Ecovillage, Balaji Infra Projects Ltd Chairman and Managing Director Vijay Kalantri, who is also Chairman of World Trade Center Mumbai.

The other prominent persons included venture capitalist Mahmood Ansari of Saara Group, J&K Federation of Social Organisations & Trusts President Riyaz Malik, Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry President Milind Kamble, Sahakarbharti's Sanjay Pachpor and Shrikant Patwardhan, Madhuri Sahasrabude, Ruchita Rane, Irfan Ali Pirjade of Gulshan

Foundation and more. Besides opening it as the gateway to business with J&K and Ladakh, the organisers also promoted it as a film destination for Bollywood, which in the past used to shoot many movies on location there, said Mahotra.

The five days saw several interactive business meetings, discussions focussed on key growth sectors, the existing markets and investment opportunities in the three UTs, plus tourism potential and close interaction with the people of Maharashtra, said Rane. Athwas is a non-profit socio-cultural organisation of British Kashmiris which aims to bring the diaspora together to promote Kashmiri culture and heritage and is involved in multiple activities across sectors.

# Kangana takes a dig at Diljit, warns he'll be arrested for 'supporting' Khalistanis

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut once again took on Punjabi actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh and cryptically warned him about getting arrested for "supporting" Khalistanis.

Kangana took to Instagram, where she borrowed a line 'Pols aagai pols' from a trending meme over the crackdown on radical Sikh preacher and Waris Punjab De chief Amritpal Singh by Punjab Police and tagged Diljit Dosanjh.

Kangana took to Instagram stories, where she shared a post by a food delivery group.

It showed a variety of lentils with 'pulse aagai pulse' written on it.

Kangana tagged Diljit and wrote 'just saying'. She added



a Khalistan sticker on Instagram Stories, with the word crossed out.

For the caption, she wrote: "Diljit Dosanjh ji pols aagai pols." "All those who supported Khalistanis, remember next number tumhara hai, pols aa chuki hai, yeh woh

waqt nahi hai jab koi bhi kuch bhi karta tha, desh ke saath gaddari ya tukde karne ki koshish ab mehengi pade-gi," she wrote in another post.

Kangana and Diljit have previously engaged in a war of words in 2020.

# One-MLA-party MNS chief Raj Thackeray billed as 'Future CM'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Hours before the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) rally, banners proclaiming party President Raj Thackeray as a 'future CM' came up in the vicinity of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Park in Dadar, here on Wednesday.

Raj, the estranged cousin of Shiv Sena (UBT) President and former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, is scheduled to address a large rally this evening for which thousands of party workers have started trooping in from Nashik, Pune, Raigad and parts of Mumbai.

Setting the tone for the meeting on Gudi Padwa -- the Maharashtra New Year, the MNS Dadar unit chief Laxman Patil has put up the banners conferring the status of 'Hindu Jannayak' and 'The future CM in the minds of the people of Maharashtra!'

The posters have been put up opposite the Shiv Sena Bhavan -- controlled by Uddhav Thackeray in what is considered a Shiv Sena (UBT) bastion.



The banners have started political tongues wagging, particularly since the 17-year-old MNS has only a lone MLA in the 288-member Assembly, despite being led by the fiery orator Raj Thackeray, the nephew of the legendary Balasaheb Thackeray. With the entry of Raj Thackeray, 54, the wishful state 'future CM' platform has become more crowd-

ed and varied. Earlier, there posters-banners heralding his nephew and Uddhav's son, Aditya Thackeray as a 'future CM', then Nationalist Congress Party's top leaders like Jayant Patil, Ajit Pawar and Supriya Sule seen straddling posters with a 'future CM' tag, and other leaders from different parties, including the ruling ally Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Political circles say the latest MNS manoeuvres are intended to create a strong 'pro-Hindutva' impression ahead of the upcoming chief election, and the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in 2024. Today's Gudi Padwa rally comes a month after the split in the Shiv Sena -- founded in June 1966 by the late Balasaheb Thackeray -- was formalised with the original party name-symbol going to the break-away faction headed by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. Though Raj Thackeray has been hobnobbing with Shinde and BJP top leaders, he has not declared his political strategy on any alliance with them so far.

# BOOKIE'S AIDE ARRESTED IN AMRUTA FADNAVIS EXTORTION CASE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai Police said they have arrested Nirmal Jaisinghani, a close aide of bookie Anil Jaisinghani, in connection with the blackmail and extortion case filed by Amruta Fadnavis, wife of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

"Nirmal helped Anil Jaisinghani hide and provide him with logistic support and to book hotel rooms in his name," an officer of the Mumbai police said.

"Further investigation, in this case, is underway," he added.

Mumbai Police on Friday said they added an extortion section against Anishka, who was arrested for



allegedly threatening and blackmailing Amruta Fadnavis.

"Extortion section 385 of the Indian Penal Code has been added against

the accused, who threatened to make two videos viral and demanded a bribe from Amruta Fadnavis," said an officer of Mumbai Police earlier in the month.

According to police, Anishka was arrested from Ulhasnagar on Thursday (March 16).

"The accused woman had sent two videos to Amruta Fadnavis, threatening to make them viral unless she paid a bribe of Rs 10 crore. The videos were not made by the accused woman," the officer had said.

The Mumbai Police informed further that they were on the lookout for the person who made the videos with which the accused woman tried to extort the Deputy Chief Minister's wife.

# Two held for multiple chain snatchings in Navi Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With the arrest of two men, Navi Mumbai Police on Wednesday claimed to have solved 12 cases of chain snatching reported in the limits of Kharghar, Nerul and Vashi police stations.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Pankaj Dahane said there were two incidents last month where motorbike-borne persons snatched a chain.

Police worked on several leads including CCTV footage and nabbed the duo, he said.

One of them was held from Ambivli in Kalyan area.

Also Read: Traffic likely to be hit in parts of city on March 22, Mumbai Police issues



restrictions ahead of Raj Thackeray's MNS 'Padwa Melawa'A total of 81.45 gm of chains including a few mangalsutras, altogether valued at Rs 6.04 lakh, were seized from their possession.

A motorbike used for chain snatching was also recovered. Further probe is on, the DCP said.

# Thane to face 24 hour water cut beginning March 24

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) on Wednesday said that water supply will be suspended in some areas for 24 hours due to major repair work on March 24.

According to TMC, there will be no supply from Friday (March 24) 12 pm to Saturday (March 25) 12 pm to carry out immediate maintenance and repair work at various places in the city.

"Water is supplied through Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) in Mumbra, Diva, Kalwa, Majivada Manpada and Wagle wards. As the MIDC has taken up the urgent work of commissioning the newly laid Barvi gravity channels under the water supply scheme, the water supply will be suspended for 24 hours on Friday," the civic body said. The major affected



areas will include all areas in Diva and Kalwa, from Y Junction in Mumbra to Mumbra Fire Brigade area and Rupadevi Pada in Wagle Ward, Kisanagar no. 2, Nehrunagar as well as Kolshet Khalcha village under Manpada ward.

The civic body has warned residents of supply to be available at low pressure for the next two days even after the shutdown ends.

The civic body has also asked residents in the city to store water and use it judiciously.

# Mumbai received highest single-day rainfall in month in 17 years on March 21

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai received 16.6 mm of rainfall on Tuesday, the highest in a day in March since 2006, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said.

The Santacruz observatory had recorded 11.9 mm of rainfall on March 10, 2006, said IMD, Mumbai scientist, Sushma Nair.

It (Tuesday) was the highest single-day rainfall recorded in the last 17 years, Nair said.

In 1918, the Colaba observatory recorded the highest single-day rainfall ever in March in the city, measuring 34.3 mm.

It is very unusual for Mumbai to witness rains in March. The IMD attributed the westerly wind and moisture incursion from the Arabian Sea as the reason behind the spell. Meanwhile, the Meteorologists attributed the weather condition to westerly winds picking up. "Westerly winds lead to moisture incursion from the Arabian Sea. Mumbai is



currently experiencing light to moderate rain, mostly in the suburbs," said Sushma Nair, scientist with India Meteorological Department's (IMD) Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC), Colaba. After a break

of two days, on Tuesday, Mumbaiers awoke to an unusually rainy morning, with the unseasonal rain pounding the western suburbs. Following the rain and thunder in the morning on Tuesday the IMD

updated their nowcast (immediate forecasts) stating the city and adjoining areas would witness thunderstorms with lightning, light to moderate rain, and gusty winds reaching 30 to 40 kmph.



EDITOR'S SPECS

EVs trending in India

Over 21.70 lakh electric vehicles registered in India, Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 4,65,432 EVs, followed by Maharashtra and Delhi with 2,26,134 and 2,03,263 respectively, the government said in Parliament on Tuesday.

Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries Krishan Pal Gurjar said in a written reply in Lok Sabha that total sales of electric vehicles in the year 2022 stood at 10,15,196 as against 3,27,976 in the previous year 2021. Total 2,56,980 EVs have been registered in the current year till March 15. The Ministry of Heavy Industries has given incentives to buyers and manufacturers of electric vehicles through three schemes, the Minister said. The Government notified Phase-II of FAME India Scheme initially for a period of five years commencing from April 1, 2019 with a total budgetary support of Rs 10,000 crore. Under FAME-India Scheme phase-II, incentives are provided to buyers of electric vehicles in the form of an upfront reduction in the purchase price of electric vehicles.

The incentive is linked to battery capacity which is Rs 10,000/KWh for e-3W and e-4W with a cap 20 per cent of the cost of the vehicle. Further, the incentive/subsidies for e-2W has been increased to Rs 15,000/KWh from Rs 10,000/KWh with an increase in cap from 20 per cent to 40 per cent of the cost of the vehicle from June 11, 2021. The Government on September 15, 2021 approved the PLI Scheme for Automotive Sector with a budgetary outlay of Rs 25,938 crore to support domestic manufacturing of vehicles. Electric vehicles are covered under this PLI scheme. On May 12, 2021, the government had approved PLI Scheme for manufacturing of ACC in the country with a budgetary outlay of Rs 18,100 crore. The scheme envisages establishing a competitive ACC battery manufacturing set up in the country for 50 GWh. Additionally, 5GWh of niche ACC technologies is also covered under the scheme.

TOUGH WEEK AHEAD FOR MARKETS; US FED MEETING HOLDS THE KEY

Arun Kejriwal

Markets were volatile last week not only in India but globally. There were sharp moves on both sides and one saw intraday gains and losses being erased and markets closing in the opposite direction. Global banking was what kept everyone on their toes.

After Silicon Valley Bank followed by Credit Suisse, it's the turn of First Republic Bank. As mentioned last week, can this become a contagion? The situation is too fluid as of now, but there are concerns and the important point coming out is the close link with crypto with these banks and the banking sector.

The BSESENSEX lost on three of the five trading sessions and gained on the remaining two. The losses were on the first three days of the week followed by recovery.

BSESENSEX lost 1,145.23 points or 1.94 per cent while NIFTY lost 312.85 points or 1.80 per cent to close at 17,100.05 points. The broader indices saw BSE100, BSE200 and BSE500 lose 1.69 per cent, 1.68 per cent and 1.75 per cent respectively.

BSEMICAP lost 2.06 per cent while BSESMALLCAP lost 2.81 per cent. In the previous week the midcap and Smallcap indices had actually gained while the benchmark indices and the broader indices had all lost. Probably playing catchup, but this is where the pain still lies.

The Indian Rupee lost 51 paise or 0.62 per cent to close at Rs 82.55 to the US Dollar. The Dow Jones was volatile and lost on three alternate days while gaining on the remaining two. It ended the week on a losing note and was down 47.66 points or 0.15 per cent at 31,861.98 points at close. Friday saw Dow lose 384 points.

The banking industry is in a turmoil with many banks facing the heat post SVB and Credit Suisse. First Republic Bank is yet another facing the heat. In such a situation, the US FED would be meeting between Monday the 20th of March and Wednesday the 22nd of March for its meeting to review interest rates. Prior to the SVB crisis, the expected rate hike was likely at 50 basis points, but now the street has discounted the same to 25 basis points.

What would be the actual hike is unknown and what is even more intriguing is how the street would behave if the rate hike is different



from the expectation. Suppose it is 50 basis points, would markets tank? Only Wednesday would give clarity and till then global markets would be cautious and on tenterhooks.

The primary markets seem to have gone in slumber. At the beginning of the month there were expectations that half a dozen issues would hit the market in March. With 20 days gone, there is nothing that appears likely and it would be interesting to see which company ventures in these uncertain times. The financial year is coming to an end and money markets as usual have become very tight for a short period of time till the year end.

As far as FPIs are concerned, they seem to be sellers on most days and have sold on the last seven trading sessions continuously. With rising interest rates and dear money, the possibility of them remaining sellers continues. The lows intraday during the week were 57,158.69 on BSESENSEX and 16,850.15 points on NIFTY, while the highs made were 59,510.92 points and 17,529.90 points. The

range is huge and gives a feeling that there is a certain amount of uncertainty and nervousness in the marketplace.

Coming to the markets in the week ahead, expect markets to remain volatile and uncertain. Sharp movements would be the order of the day. Two sided movements during the week would be expected and the week is likely to close with a negative bias. However, there would be attempts to take the market up based on news flow.

The budget day lows were decisively broken this week and we need to seek new levels of support. Key support for the market would now be around 16,900-16,950 on NIFTY and 57,400-57,550 on BSESENSEX. These are marginally higher than the intraweek lows. This would be followed by support at 16,600-16,650 on NIFTY and 56,500-56,650 on BSESENSEX. These levels are likely to hold for the week unless something unexpected happens post the FED meeting

in the US. On the resistance side, the first level is 17,300-17,350 on NIFTY and 58,600-58,750 on BSESENSEX. The next level would be the intraweek highs made last week at 17,529-17,570 on NIFTY and 59,510-59,650 on BSESENSEX. The strategy for the week would be to sell on rallies and avoid overnight exposure. Focus on just intra day trades and as far as possible avoid any positions at the end of day on Wednesday before the FED meeting. Use rallies to sell and allow the markets to find their own levels. The week would be yet another with losses at the end of it all.

(Arun Kejriwal is the founder of Kejriwal Research and Investment Services. The views expressed are personal)

international

POWERFUL QUAKE KILLS 12 IN PAK, AFGHANISTAN

At least 12 people were killed in Pakistan and Afghanistan following a powerful 6.5-magnitude quake that struck the two neighbouring nations, with tremors also felt across north India.

According to the US Geological Survey (USGS), the epicentre of the Tuesday night tremor, with a depth of 187.589 km, was initially determined to be at 36.5227 degrees north latitude and 70.9787 degrees east longitude in Jurm, Afghanistan, reports Xinhua news agency.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Disaster Management Authority in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said five men, two women and two children were killed in the Pakistani province.

At least 21 women, 19 men and seven children were also injured and admitted to different hospitals for treatment, the Authority added.



Ensnared landslides have also blocked roads in the city of Abbottabad as well as the Karakoram Highway in the Harban area of Kohistan.

Major Pakistani cities, including Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Lahore, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Muzaffarabad, Peshawar, Haripur, Mardan, Chitral, Charsadda, also felt the quake.

Videos from Islamabad show panic-stricken people, especially those living in high-rises, rushing out of their

homes, reports Dawn news.

According to initial reports, cracks appeared in the Al-Janaat Mall in Rawalpindi and buildings in Islamabad.

Following the earthquake, emergency response centres were established and an emergency was declared in hospitals in northwest Pakistan.

Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif ordered the National Disaster Management Authority and other institutions to be ready to deal with any emergency.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, two people died in the Takhar province and a third fatality was reported in Laghman.

Spokesman for the Public Health Ministry Sharafat Zaman Amar on Wednesday said that at least 44 people were also injured, adding that the number of casualties might increase as search and rescue operations are currently underway.

'Change is coming that hasn't happened in 100 years and we're driving it': Xi's parting message to Putin

London | Agencies

China's President Xi Jinping told a grinning Vladimir Putin 'change is coming' in an ominous parting message as he departed Moscow following talks with his Russian counterpart, the media reported.

"Change is coming that hasn't happened in 100 years. And we are driving this change together," Xi told Putin via his interpreter - words sure to set alarm bells ringing in the West, Daily Mail reported.

"Please, take care, dear friend," he added, gripping Putin's hand warmly before being waved off by the Russian President who bid Xi a "safe journey".

After the two leaders hailed a "new era", Xi's plane left Moscow's Vnukovo airport on Wednesday. He was seen off by a guard of honour who played the Russian and Chinese national anthems, Russia's RIA Novosti news agency said.

In February 2022, the pair announced they had forged a "no limits" friendship and Putin invited Xi to visit the Russian capital. They have since publicly talked of strengthening their "special relationship", with



Moscow and Beijing both rejecting what they say are US attempts to create a "unipolar world" controlled by Washington.

Xi finally met Putin at the Kremlin yesterday, with both leaders appearing keen to promote their positive relations. They signed a series of memorandums

and agreements designed to boost bilateral co-operation on a number of issues, and were pictured coiffing champagne together in the Kremlin's Palace of the Facets as Xi invited his Russian counterpart to visit China later this year, Daily Mail reported.

New York beefs up security measures amid uncertainties over Trump case

New York | Agencies

Law enforcement in New York City stepped up security measures in sensitive areas after former US President Donald Trump recently suggested that he would be arrested and called for his supporters to stage protests.

The New York Police Department erected many barricades and deployed police around Manhattan Criminal Court and Manhattan District Attorney's Office in Lower Manhattan as well as at Trump Tower on the Fifth Avenue in Midtown, reports Xinhua news agency.

But, no big crowd was seen in New York City on Tuesday despite a heavy presence of media representatives on the venues.

Also, there was no report of Trump's charge by the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

The Manhattan District Attorney's Office is investigating whether Trump falsified business records in connection with an alleged hush-money payment made to Stormy Daniels, an adult film star, during the 2016 presidential cam-



paign, according to media reports.

Manhattan District Attorney's Office declined to confirm or comment on whether Trump will be indicted, saying it "will be not be intimidated by attempts to undermine the justice process". Some individuals in support of or against Trump appeared on Tuesday in Collect Pond Park opposite Manhattan Criminal Court and at the Trump Tower in Midtown.

People from both sides exchanged barbs for some time, with no physical clash seen or reported.

The New York Young Republican Club staged a rally on Monday with around 100 participants, according to its posts on social media.

S.KOREA, US SET FOR 'LARGEST-EVER' LIVE-FIRE DRILLS

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea and the US plan to conduct the "largest-ever" combined live-fire drills in June as part of a program to celebrate the 70th anniversary of their alliance, Seoul's Defence Ministry said on Wednesday.

The Ministry unveiled the program designed to strengthen the allies' solidarity, demonstrate their militaries' technological edge and highlight their focus on "realising peace through strength via action", reports Yonhap News Agency.

"We are planning to conduct various events, through which the South Korean and US militaries can show to the international community and North Korea what achievements we have made in the defence, military sector," a Ministry official told reporters.

For the live-fire training set for June, the two sides will mobilise high-tech military equipment, including pieces integrating both manned and unmanned assets, to demonstrate the alliance's firepower and maneuverability.

More than 10 such high-profile firepower demonstrations have taken place since 1977. They include both combined and South Korea-only drills.

South Korea is also seeking to hold the Armed Forces Day ceremony with the participation of the US Forces Korea (USFK) in late September to demonstrate the alliance's "overwhelming" deterrence and response capabilities against North Korean threats, according to the ministry.



In addition, Seoul and Washington are working to craft a future defence vision of the bilateral alliance to be announced at their annual defense ministerial talks, called the Security Consultative Meeting (SCM), expected to take place in October.

The South and the US signed their mutual defence treaty, a bedrock alliance document, in October 1953, after the Korean War ended in a truce three months earlier. Meanwhile, the veterans ministry plans to hold a series of events to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the signing of the armistice that halted the Korean War, officials said.

Those include a major ceremony to be held on July 27 in Busan.

BORIS JOHNSON ADMITS MISLEADING IN 'PARTYGATE' SCANDAL

London: Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has admitted that the Parliament was "misled" by his statements on rule-breaking government parties held during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I accept that the House of Commons was misled by my statements that the rules and guidance had been followed completely at No.10," Johnson said on Tuesday.

"But when the statements were made, they were made in good faith and on the basis of what I honestly knew and believed at the time," he added in written evidence published a day ahead of an interrogation by lawmakers over the "partygate" scandal.

Johnson was forced to resign in July last year over a string of scandals. These included partygate, and Johnson's appointment of Chris Pincher, who has been accused of sexual misconduct. Johnson's resignation, followed by Liz Truss' short-lived premiership will be remembered as a summer of political chaos for the UK, Xinhua news agency reported.



CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN HOLDS MARATHON MEETING TO DISCUSS PLAN ON 3-YR COMPLETION OF BJP GOVT

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has chaired a high-level meeting with some ministers and senior officials at his residence to discuss various programmes.

The meeting was held on Tuesday night and concluded mid-night. The BJP government will complete its three years in office on March 23 after the Kamal Nath-led Congress government was toppled following a major political crisis in the grand old party in March 2020.

Jyotiraditya Scindia along with 22 Congress MLAs were moved to the BJP and subsequently, Shivraj Singh Chouhan took oath as the Chief Minister fourth time on March 23, 2020.

During the late night meeting, plans were discussed to highlight development works done by the BJP government during the last three years. Through various programmes, the ruling side would try to make an impression among the people of



Madhya Pradesh that the decision for ousting the Congress from power was taken in the interest of people of the state, sources told reporter.

"The BJP government will successfully complete a three-year tenure on

March 23. On the line of 'sal-bemisal', various programmes will be organised from March 23 to April 10," state Home Minister Narottam Mishra, who is also the spokesperson of the Shivraj Singh Chouhan govern-

ment, told the media after the meeting was over.

A mega programme -- 'Youth Panchayat' will be organised at Motilal Nehru Stadium, Bhopal on March 23. All BJP MLAs and MPs along with party workers will attend the event.

Besides these, central BJP leaders would also be visiting the poll-bound Madhya Pradesh. Union Home Minister Amit Shah would arrive here on March 25. He will be participating in a roadshow in Chhindwara, the political bastion of Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Kamal Nath. Shah will be meeting with the district BJP workers beside addressing the rally in Chhindwara.

BJP national president J.P. Nadda is scheduled to arrive here on March 27. As per the information during the visit, Nadda will lay the foundation stone for a new building of the state BJP headquarters in Bhopal. Sources said the Nadda will also hold a close door meeting with the state working committee of the party to review the poll preparations.

CM CHOUHAN EXTENDS CONGRATULATIONS FOR BEST STATE PROMOTING WILDLIFE TOURISM AWARD

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that Madhya Pradesh is continuously moving ahead in the field of tourism. It is a matter of pleasure that in the recent ET Travel and Tourism Award-2023, the state received the Best State Promoting Wildlife Tourism award for its efforts to promote wildlife tourism. All concerned deserve congratulations on this. Chief Minister Chouhan was in a discussion with media representatives after planting saplings in the garden located in Shyamala Hills.

Chief Minister Chouhan has said that news is being received continuously about works being done through public participation in various areas of the state. Public participation has an important role in the development of the state. Taking a wonderful initiative, the youth of Indore rejuvenated a school in Ralamandal with their own money and resources in four months. Apart from providing blackboards and furniture to the school, the school premises have been enriched with greenery by planting trees in front of the classes to protect the environment. Six classrooms are ready in the school. I congratulate the youth of Indore for this positive thinking and the initiative to implement it with their resources.

Kailash Kher launches Mahakal Anthem 2.0 in Indore; calls rap-music 'stinking drain'

Team Absolute | Indore

Singer Kailash Kher launched the second version of his famous Mahakal anthem on the occasion of Gudi Padwa in Indore on Wednesday. Famous singers Arijit Singh, Shankar Mahadvan, Sonu Nigam and Shaan can be heard in the trailer, apart from Kher. While stating the importance of music in one's life, the singer called the rap songs a 'stinking drain'.

The second version of the Mahakal anthem is called Mere Mahadev Ka Manan. Its first version was launched at



the inauguration ceremony of Mahakal Lok in Ujjain last year. Talking to the media, the Padma Shri awardee said, "The purpose of this song is to make humans realise the importance of humanity. Though we are born in human flesh, we don't live like one. If you nurture your values with music, you will

find humanity." Talking about the rap-music industry, Kher said, "Some drains are also flowing on earth along with rivers. Raps are like stinking sewers. It is your choice whether you have to fall in the dirty drain or go towards the rivers and Devlok. If you want to go to the rivers, then you have to work hard. We don't even know about rap music. We have neither seen nor heard rap music till date." He also talked about India becoming Vishwa Guru and said that the nation is already playing the role of a 'guru' for other countries.

Indore hospital suspended from providing treatment under Ayushman scheme

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A private medical college and hospital in Madhya Pradesh's Indore has been suspended from the Ayushman Bharat scheme over several irregularities found by the state health authority team.

"Index Medical College, Hospital and Research Center has been suspended from the scheme for violating the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) made in the Ayushman Scheme and committing irregularities to get undue benefits of the scheme," stated the official order.

During the audit conducted in the first week of March, the Authority noted that while 500 patients were registered online, only 76 patients were found in the hospital.

No satisfactory reply was provided by the hospital



administration in respect of the remaining patients.

The audit team discovered that patients who were not in need of admission and intensive care were being admitted and were being unnecessarily treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The administration had also been extending the hospitalisation time of patients for no good reason.

The hospital also treated

many on the card of one patient to take undue financial advantage, wherein they were made to spend money for medical supplies and tests, which was mandatory to be made available free of cost under the scheme.

The hospital administration was also non-cooperative with the audit team and did not provide the documents on demand, said the official release.

IIM INDORE STUDENT LANDS RS 1.14 CRORE PAY PACKAGE

Indore: A student of the Indian Institute of Management-Indore has been offered an annual salary package of Rs 1.14 crore for a domestic job, an IIM-I official said on Wednesday.

This is the highest pay package offered during the final placement of this session at the institute and is 65 lakh more than the previous time, the official said. In the last session, the highest salary offered during placement of IIM-I students was 49 lakh, the official said.

During the final placement of this session, more than 160 domestic and foreign companies offered an average salary of Rs 30.21 lakh to 568 students of IIM-I. Those who bagged the offers include students of the two-year Post Graduate Programme (PGP) and five-year Integrated Programme in Management (IPM). Both courses are considered equivalent to MBA, the official said.

IIM-I Director Prof. Himanshu Rai said, "We have always been ready to strengthen our relationship with the industry by providing world-class management education to the students. The excellent placements received by our students despite the challenging times are proof of this." According to IIM-I, during the final placement, the highest number of job offers, 29 per cent, came from the field of consultancy, followed by general management and operations at 19 per cent, finance and marketing at 18 per cent each, and information technology at 16 per cent.



CM Chouhan wished everyone on the occasion of Indian New Year, Gudi Padwa, Chaiti Chand and Chaitra Navratri

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has greeted the people of the state on the auspicious occasion of Hindu New Year Vikram Samvat 2080, Chaitra Navratri and Gudi Padwa. Chief Minister Chouhan gave a message through social media that it is my prayer to Mother Goddess that the New Year should be auspicious for all, happiness, peace, prosperity and happiness should come in everyone's life.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the entire state is engaged in devotion to the mother during Navratri. This is the festival of true worship. We have considered daughter, sister and mother as Shakti-goddesses. It is the core of our country. Society and the country cannot be empowered without the empowerment of mother, sister and daughter. The campaign for their political, social and economic empowerment will continue in the state. The Chief Minister said that today is Ugadi along with Navratri, the New Year is about to begin. Happy Indian New Year, Gudi Padwa, Chaiti Chand, and Chaitra Navratri to everyone. Chief Minister Chouhan was discussing with media representatives after planting saplings in the garden located in



Shyamala Hills. On Gudi Padwa, Chief Minister Chouhan along with his wife Sadhna Singh installed Gudi at Chief Minister's residence. This Gudi is in the form of auspicious symbol and victory flag. On the day of Gudi Padwa, there is a tradition of setting Gudi at the door of the house. It is more prevalent in Maharashtra. In the Indian cultural tradition, auspicious works begin with Gudi Padwa.

'Will end Gunda Raj', says Bhopal's new commissioner Harinarayan Chari Mishra

Team Absolute | Bhopal

IPS Harinarayan Chari Mishra took charge as the new police commissioner of Bhopal on Wednesday. Talking to the media later, he said that the police will not spare the criminals and will end the 'Gunda Raj' in Bhopal, as have done in Indore. Taking stock of the law and order situation in the city from the officials, Mishra said that police is continuously updating their ways to fight off crime with changing times.

"We are working to deal with criminals more strictly, simultaneously adapting a sensitive approach towards general public. Along with this, direct communication with the general public, better sensitivity towards crimes mainly against women apart from strict action against criminals will be the priority of the police." He also talked about giving priority to the safety of senior citizens as he did during his earlier tenure as the police commissioner of Indore.

Harinarayan Chari Mishra, an IPS officer of 2003 batch, had taken some



major steps as the Indore Deputy Inspector General (DIG). During his tenure, several houses belonging to

the land mafia and the miscreants who acquired property illegally were demolished. Mishra has also served

as the Superintendent of Police (SP) in Gwalior, Jabalpur, Balaghat and Khandwa.

BJP supporter from Ashoknagar joins Congress along with 500 workers

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Alleging 'corruption' in the saffron party, BJP supporter from Ashoknagar and district panchayat member Yadendra Singh joined Congress on Wednesday.

Yadendra Singh, son of three times Ashoknagar MLA Rao Deshraj Singh, joined the Congress party along with 500 workers in presence of MP Congress president and former chief minister Kamal Nath.

"A few new leaders who have joined the BJP after toppling the Congress government have started exploiting the BJP workers. Annoyed with the top leadership of the party, hundreds of BJP workers have decided to join the Congress party," said district panchayat member from district Ashoknagar, Yadendra Yadav, here at PCC, on Wednesday. "The ideology of the BJP has changed. Now the party is being headed by the people who are capturing



the lands of SC/ST people and also suppressing the old BJP workers. We have raised their complaints several times, but to no avail", he added.

Alleging corruption in the saffron party, Singh accused BJP MLAs and ministers for sabotaging the rights of the suppressed people, while addressing the party workers. He said "I thought those who

had toppled the Nath government, for them Rs 35 crore is a sufficient amount, but their greed have not ended. Their brothers have captured the ponds of fisheries, made for the marginal fishermen".

In the programme former minister Jaivardhan Singh, MLA Gopal Singh Chouhan, former Union minister Arun Yadav and many other leaders of the party were present.



# Vanessa Hudgens

## to inspect family's Asian heritage in new documentary

Los Angeles | Agencies

Asian American actor Vanessa Hudgens, who gained stardom with her work in Disney's 'High School Musical' series, is set to shoot a travel documentary in the Philippines, the country of her mother's birth.

The untitled project will shoot in Palawan and Manila in March, reports 'Variety'.

Paul Soriano, who is attached as the director, is known for directing the 2019 film 'Mananita' and Manny Pacquiao biopic 'Kid Kulafu'.

The documentary is said to showcase the relationship between Hudgens and her Filipino mother, Gina, who emigrated to the US at the age of 25, as well as Hudgens' sister, Stella.

Since 'High School Musical,' Hudgens has notched up key roles in 'Spring Breakers,' 'Gimme Shelter,' 'Bad Boys for Life,' and the Oscar-nominated Lin-Manuel Miranda-directed musical 'Tick, Tick... Boom!'.

Hudgens executive produced and starred in the film 'The Knight Before Christmas' and all three installments of 'The Princess Switch' series for Netflix. Hudgens is next set to star in the upcoming films 'French Girl' and 'Bad Boys 4'.

"I feel like ours is such a relatable story to so many women all over the world," Hudgens said in a statement announcing the documentary. "The more that we can share, the more we can lift each other up."

"We are honoured to work with Vanessa for this film project. It's inspiring to note that with everything she has achieved in life, she wants to discover her Filipino roots and pay homage to her mother's country. Hopefully, this opens doors for many more collaborations to come," said Soriano in a statement.



# Ed Sheeran revealed about his struggles with suicidal thoughts

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Ed Sheeran was plagued with suicidal thoughts after the death of his friends Jamal Edwards and Shane Warne within weeks of each other. He was heartbroken by the February 2022 passing of music producer Jamal, the son of 'Loose Women' star Brenda Edwards, who died after a cardiac arrest brought on by cocaine and alcohol, and has now said the death a month later of his late cricketer pal Shane Warne aged 52 left him feeling like he was "drowning"

in his life-long fight with depression, reports aceshowbiz.com.

In an interview with Rolling Stone, the dad-of-two - who has daughters Lyra, two, and 10 month old Jupiter with his wife Cherry Seaborn - also talked about how he developed an eating disorder as he compared himself to toned pop stars such as Justin Bieber.

He said, "My best friend died. And he shouldn't have done. I've always had real lows in my life. But it wasn't really till last year that I actually addressed it. I felt like I didn't want to live anymore. And I have had that throughout

my life... you're under the waves drowning. You're just sort of in this thing. And you can't get out of it."

Sheeran added being depressed made him feel "selfish" as a father, and said about seeking help, "No one really talks about their feelings where I come from. People think it's weird getting a therapist in England..."

"I think it's very helpful to be able to speak with someone and just vent and not feel guilty about venting. The help isn't a button that is pressed, where you're automatically OK. It is something that will always be there and just has to be managed."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Comedian Taylor Tomlinson has sealed a deal with Netflix for her next two standup specials to premiere on the streamer. Tomlinson is currently touring her latest show, which will tape later this year in Washington, D.C., for a 2024 premiere date, reports 'Variety'. Her hour-long standup debut, 'Quarter-Life Crisis', premiered on the platform in 2020, followed by 'Look at You' in 2022. "That's a level of security that you don't get very often in this business," Tomlinson told 'Variety'. "It's a huge weight off your shoulders... I feel incredibly grateful and lucky."

**Taylor Tomlinson will be having two more stand-up specials**

Tomlinson noted that her next special will be shot at the end of this current tour (currently dubbed the 'Have It All Tour'), right around when she's about to turn 30. And much of her material this time out explores what it's like to be at that life crossroads where parts of your life are taking off, while other parts are not.

"I'm a pretty personal comedian," she said. "I'm not super topical or political. I am generally writing about things happening in my own life, in what I hope is a very relatable way. And the question I think everybody around my age grapples with and my friends around me are grappling with, which is comparing yourself to everyone else. "Why do I have the relationship I want but I can't figure out my career? Or, why do I have my career stuff figured out, but I don't have the relationship I want? Maybe I'm changing my mind about what I want, or do I want to have kids? Everyone I know is having that struggle." Meanwhile, Tomlinson said she's still at work on a Village Roadshow Pictures film based on her upbringing, which she's writing with Taylor Tetreau and will star in, for director Paul Weitz. And she continues to kick around series ideas with Netflix - but isn't eager to sacrifice standup for it. "What it really comes down to is, I love touring so much," she said. "You don't really ever have to do a show or a movie, so all the projects that I'm developing or I'm interested in are things that I really love and think could be great," she added. "Because I'm just so happy with where I'm at with standup. This is all I ever wanted."



# 'I was struggling to find my own voice'

## BROOKE SHIELDS 'AMAZED' AS SHE 'SURVIVED' BEING SEXUALISED FROM AGE OF 11

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Brooke Shields will use her upcoming documentary to open up about her amazement over how she "survived" being sexualised from the age of 11. 'The Blue Lagoon' actress who recently revealed she was raped by a man after they had dinner to discuss her film project dreams, tears up as she tells in her two-part documentary 'Pretty Baby' how she was "catapulted into the world of adult sexuality" as a child, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She said in a trailer for the film, due out April 3: "That always just seared me. I was struggling to find my own voice, I wasn't told it was important to have agency."

Shields said the words as those interviewed for her documentary referred to her as "the most pho-

tographed woman in the world," an "iconic American beauty," "object of desire," "sexualised child model" and "vulnerable".

Named after one of her first films, in which she played a child prostitute, the documentary charts her rise to fame before she found her confidence and what she calls in the trailer her "own opinion" and "own voice."

She adds at the end of the teaser: "Now, it's like I'm allowed to be a human being."

She added she picked up a pair of binoculars in the room and was using them to watch some volleyball players out of the window when he returned naked and launched his assault.

The actress said: "I put the binoculars down and he's right on me. Just like, was wrestling. I was afraid I'd get choked out or something. So, I didn't fight that much. I didn't. I just absolutely froze. I

thought one 'No' should've been enough, and I just thought, 'Stay alive and get out, and I just shut it out."

"God knows I knew how to be disassociated from my body. I'd practiced that."

She said she told her head of security Gavin de Becker about the incident, who told her: "That's rape."

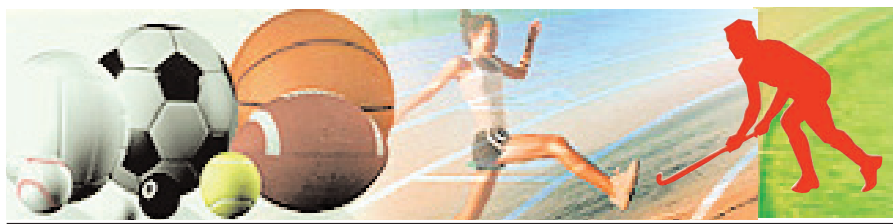
But she said she responded she was not "willing to believe that" and hasn't detailed the incident publicly until now.

She said she wrote to her attacker years later, but he did not reply.

Shields added despite his silence she refused to feel like "a victim" and had "wanted to erase the whole thing from my mind and body and just keep on the path I was on".



Kate Hudson



### IND vs AUS 3rd ODI

## AUSTRALIA WIN SERIES 2-1, BEAT INDIA BY 21 RUNS



Chennai | Agencies

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa took four wickets while left-arm spinner Ashton Agar chipped in with two scalps to lead Australia to a 21-run victory over India in the series decider at the M A Chidambaram Stadium, to win the series 2-1.

strokeplay wasn't easy, Zampa and Agar helped Australia fight back in the middle overs to break the back of India's batting. Even though Mitchell Starc went wicketless, the rest of bowlers along with fiery fielding show and spot-on fielding placements led to India being bundled out for 248 in 49.1 overs. Despite India having a 65-run opening partnership, India lost four wickets for 43

runs after Virat Kohli and KL Rahul had put on 69 runs for the fourth wicket. But after Rahul and Kohli fell, the chase went downhill and India ended up on the losing side, which meant they lost an ODI series at home after four years. Rohit Sharma joined the boundary-hitting party in the seventh over with an elegant loft over long-off for six against Starc, followed by a pre-mediated scoop and

pull off Sean Abbott to get two boundaries. After he lofted Adam Zampa over long-on for six, Rohit couldn't keep a swipe down and was caught at deep square leg off Abbott. Kohli reached his fifty in 61 balls. Agar produced a twist in the 36th over - Kohli chipped a drive to long-off. Suryakumar Yadav got out for a first-ball duck for the third time in the series. Pandya and Jadeja kept India in the contest with a 33-run partnership as Australia put the pressure on the duo.

#### Brief scores

Australia 269 all out in 49 overs (Mitchell Marsh 47, Alex Carey 38; Hardik Pandya 3/44, Kuldeep Yadav 3/56) beat India 248 in 49.1 overs (Virat Kohli 54, Hardik Pandya 40; Adam Zampa 4/45, Ashton Agar 2/41) by 21 runs.

### ISSF World Cup

## Sarabjot sizzles golden start for India with 10m Air Pistol gold

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Sarabjot Singh gave India a dream start at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol, demolishing Ruslan Lunev of Azerbaijan 16-0 in the gold medal match of the men's 10m Air Pistol here on Wednesday.

Sarabjot's compatriot Varun Tomar won bronze in the event on the opening day. This was the 19-year-old's second medal this year at the ISSF World Cup, having won the bronze in Cairo earlier this year, his first-ever senior World Cup medal. Sarabjot, however, was the toast of the day, dishing out a dominating performance in his very first senior World Cup final, held at the newly inaugurated Finals Hall at the MP Shooting Academy range.

It was a pillar-to-post finish for the 21-year-old pistol shooter, as he first topped the 60-shot qualification round among the 24 medals with a score of 585.

In the 25-shot top eight ranking round, he topped again with a score of 253.2 before going on to register probably the first-ever blank-out of an opponent in an ISSF World Cup stage gold medal match.



To put the icing on the cake, he shot a perfect 10.9 for his final shot to win his first-ever ISSF World Cup medal in some style. While Sarabjot was among the top three throughout the course of the ranking round, compatriot Varun Tomar had a blow-hot blow-cold final and even as at one stage it looked like it would be an all-India gold medal match, but he finished with a score of 250.3 to settle for the bronze.

Sumit Raman, the third Indian in the field, shot 577 to finish 10th among

medal contenders.

In the women's 10m air pistol event, Divya Thadigol Subbaraju finished fifth with a total score of 197.1, after finishing third in the qualifications with 579.

Two other Indians in the fray, Rhythm Sangwan and Manu Bhaker, shot scores of 572 and 568 in qualification to finish 10th and 12th among medal contenders respectively. China and hosts India ended competition day one with an identical medal tally of one gold and a bronze.

### National Para Table Tennis

## Bharati, Poonam, Pragati, Prachi emerge women's champions

Team Absolute | Indore

Bharti Ben Pabaria, Poonam, Pragati Kesarvani, Prachi Pandey, Kartik Sharma and Sandip Dangi emerged winners in the National Para Table Tennis Championship conducted by the Madhya Pradesh Table Tennis Association under the aegis of All India Para Table Tennis Association.

In the men's Class-1 event, Dangi of Haryana defeated JD Madan of Tamil Nadu 8-11, 11-5, 7-11, 11-6. Karthik of Himachal Pradesh overcame Patrick D'Souza of Goa 11-5, 11-4, 11-4 to clinch the men's Class-2 title.

The prize distribution ceremony was attended by Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) secretary general Kamlesh Mehta, All India Tennis Association secretary general Anil Dhupar, Nagender Reddy Patel, treasurer of TTFI and Madhya Pradesh Olympic Association vice-president Om Soni among others. In the women's Class-6 category, Chandigarh's Poonam defeated Bhavika Kukadia of Gujarat 11-8, 11-4, 11-2 to emerge



the champion. In the corresponding Class-5 section, Bharati of Gujarat beat stametea Manisha Songara 11-6, 11-3, 11-4 to bag the medal. In the Class-7 competition, Prachi of Uttar Pradesh defeated Dhawani Shah of Gujarat to emerge the winner. Prachi won 11-8, 11-6, 11-4. Pragati of Uttar Pradesh scored a facile 11-8, 11-5, 11-7 victory over Gujarat's Bhavana Champaneri to grab the Class-8 title. In Class 3, Sonal Patel beat Vidya Kumar 3-0 to bag the title while in Class 4 Bhavina Patel bagged the gold blanking Usha Rathore. B Sahana bagged the top award in the Class 10 event scoring a 3-0 win over Devyani Wahle.

### IBA Women's World Boxing Championships

## Nitu, Nikhat and Saweety confirm medals; enter semis

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Riding on impressive performances, star Indian pugilists Nitu Ghanghas, Nikhat Zareen and Saweety Boora registered thumping victories to confirm at least three medals for the hosts at the IBA Women's World Boxing Championships by advancing to the semi-finals at the Indira Gandhi Sports Complex here on Wednesday.

Squaring off against the two-time Worlds bronze medalist Madoka Wada of Japan, the 2022 Commonwealth Games champion Nitu (48kg) secured a scintillating win with the Referee Stops Contest (RSC) verdict in the second round of the bout.

The Indian will now take on the reigning Asian champion and last year's World Championships silver medalist Alua Balkbekova of Kazakhstan in what will be a rematch of last year's World



Championships quarter finals.

Following Nitu's victory, Nikhat (50kg) successfully continued her title defences by recording a hard-fought 5-2 win on points after the

bout was reviewed against the two-time World Championships bronze medalist Chuthamat Raksat of Thailand. Nikhat will face Rio Olympics bronze medalist Ingrid

Valencia of Colombia in the semi-finals.

Contrary to Nikhat, the three-time Asian medalist Saweety (81kg) recorded a dominating 5-0 win against the 2018 World Championships bronze medalist Viktoria Kebikava of Belarus. In what was her first match of the tournament, the experienced pugilist from Haryana was extremely confident throughout the bout and landed strong, accurate punches to seal the win. She will be going up against Emma-Sue Greentree of Australia in her next bout. Meanwhile, the two-time World Youth champion Sakshi Chaudhary (52kg) and the 2022 World Championships bronze medalist Manisha Moun (57kg) went down fighting in the quarter finals despite their best efforts. While Sakshi lost 0:5 against Wu Lu of China, Manisha lost 1:4 against Amina Zidani of France and bowed out of the competition.

### Swiss Open 2023

## GAYATRI-TREESA CRASH OUT, MALVIKA QUALIFIES FOR MAIN DRAW

Basel (Switzerland) | Agencies

The Indian women's double pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly crashed out in the first round while Malvika Bansod qualified for the women's singles main draw at the Swiss Open 2023 badminton tournament, here.

Gayatri and Treesa, who reached the semi-finals at All England Open in Birmingham last week, lost 14-21, 14-21 to second seeds Apriyani Rahayu and Siti Fadia Silva Ramadhanti of Indonesia on Tuesday.

On the other hand, Malvika Bansod beat USA's Lauren Lam 21-17, 21-7 in the women's singles qualifiers to advance to the main draw. In another qualifying match, Aakarshi Kashyap got a bye into the main draw of the BWF Super 300 event, which is the eighth tournament of the 2023 BWF World Tour.



Meanwhile, India's veteran doubles player Ashwini Ponnappa lost both her mixed doubles and women's doubles qualification matches.

In the mixed doubles qualifier, Ashwini, partnering Sumeeth B Reddy, went down 20-22, 12-21 to

Chiu Hsiang-Chieh and Lin Xiao Min of Chinese Taipei. Thereafter, Ashwini and Tanisha Crasto lost in the women's doubles qualifiers, going down 19-21, 15-21 to China's Du Yue and Xia Yu Ting.

However, the doubles pair of N

Sikki Reddy and Arathi Sara Sunil made it to the main draw with a hard-fought 21-15, 15-21, 21-18 win over Lauren Lam and Paula Lynn Cao Hok of the USA.

In the men's singles qualifiers, Meiraba Luwang Maisnam and Priyanshu Rajawat failed to qualify for the main draw.

In other results, the men's doubles pair of Rohan Kapoor and Sumeeth B Reddy crashed out in the qualifiers after losing 15-21, 20-22 to Malaysia's Boon Xin Yuan-Wong Tien Ci. In the mixed doubles, Rohan Kapoor, partnering N Sikki Reddy got past the German pair of Patrick Scheiel and Franziska Volkman 21-17, 15-21, 21-18 to reach the main draw.

The men's doubles pair of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila went down 21-17, 18-21, 11-21 to Japan's Akira Koga and Taichi Saito in the first round of the main draw.

## Men's ODI WC 2023 to begin on Oct 5, final on Nov 19: Report

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023 is likely to start on October 5 and the final to be held at the world's largest cricket stadium -- Narendra Modi Stadium -- in Ahmedabad on November 19.

Apart from Ahmedabad, BCCI has shortlisted at least more than 10 venues for the mega event. The other venues include Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Dharamsala, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Indore, Rajkot and Mumbai.

The World Cup featuring 10 teams, will have 48 matches including three knockouts across the 46-day period, an ESPNcricinfo report said.

Besides the final, the BCCI



has not finalised the specified venues for any games as yet, or the two or three cities where teams will play the warm-ups. The complications posed by the monsoon season receding at different points in different parts of India has caused the delay.

Notably, the ICC announces World Cup schedules at least a year in advance, but this time the

world governing body has also been waiting for the BCCI to get the necessary clearances from the Indian government.

The report further said that getting a tax exemption for the tournament, and visa clearance for the Pakistan team, which has not played in India except at ICC events since early 2013, are the major issues.

### ICC Player Rankings

## Siraj loses top position to Hazlewood in ODI, Kane rises to no.2 in Test

Dubai | Agencies

India pacer Mohammed Siraj lost the top spot to Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood among the bowlers in ODI cricket in the latest International Cricket Council (ICC) Player Rankings, released on Wednesday.

Siraj copped the brunt of the attack by Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head during the second match of his side's ODI series against Australia and as a result, has lost his place at the top of the rankings for ODI bowlers and slipped behind Hazlewood and New Zealand's Trent Boult to be placed at third spot with 702 rating points.

Hazlewood (713 points), whose career-best second position was attained for the first time in June 2017 and which he had kept since August 2022, has become the No. 1 in ODIs for the first time. Australia fast bowler Mitchell Starc's eight wickets in the two matches against India saw him placed in joint-third position with Siraj. In the batters list, Pakistan skipper Babar Azam



maintained a healthy lead at the top of the ODI batting rankings with 887 rating points, followed by South Africa's Rassie van der Dussen (777) in second place. In the Test batter rankings, New Zealand's premier batter Kane Williamson has moved back towards the top spot in the ICC Men's Test Player Rankings. Williamson moved up four slots to take second position in the list led by Australia's Marnus Labuschagne after top scoring with 215 in an innings victory over Sri Lanka in Wellington that helped seal their two match ICC World Test Championship series 2-0.

### Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour

## TVESA FIRES 68 TO RISE TO THE TOP OF LEADERBOARD IN 7TH LEG

Gurugram | Agencies

Tvesa Malik, playing on her home course at the DLF Golf and Country Club, climbed to the top of the leaderboard for the first time this season in the seventh leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour.

Tvesa, who had a none-too-happy season on the Ladies European Tour in 2022, looked determined as she has been shaking off the rust over the last two weeks. A week after losing in a play-off to Gaurika Bishnoi in the sixth leg of the Tour, Tvesa carded 4-under 68, her best round of the year, to take a one-shot lead into the final round.

Following up on her modest 74 on the first day, Tvesa with 68 moved to 2-under 142 and was one shot ahead of last week's winner, Gaurika Bishnoi (71-72).

Amateur Vidhatri Urs, fresh from her experience at the Queen Sirikit Cup where India finished second in the Philippines, and then playing at the Women's Amateur Asia Pacific in Singapore, showed good form with 1-under 71



and was lying sole third at even par 144. Vani Kapoor (72-73) suffered three bogeys in the last five holes and was fourth while Ridhima Dilawari (73-74) and Asmitha Sathish (75-72) were tied for the fifth spot. Gaurika also had two sets of back-to-back

birdies on eighth and ninth and then the 16th and 17th. However she dropped bogeys on first, third, 11th and 13th and finished even par and dropped from being an overnight co-leader to second place. Vidhatri had five birdies against two bogeys and a double bogey and Vani Kapoor had three birdies and three of her four bogeys came on Par-5s as she carded 73.

Seher Atwal (76-73) with one birdie and one bogey on either side of the course was sole seventh, while another amateur, Anvvi Dahhiya (80-73) and Amandeep Drall (74-79), the runner-up at the Hero Women's Indian Open at the same course last year, were tied eighth.

Oviya Reddi (77-77) and Agrima Manral (75-79) were tied tenth.

Amandeep had a round to forge as she parred the whole of front nine and then had four bogeys on 18th. The cut fell at 161 and 23 players made the cut. Among the prominent names missing the cut were Saaniya Sharma and Hitaashee Bakshi.

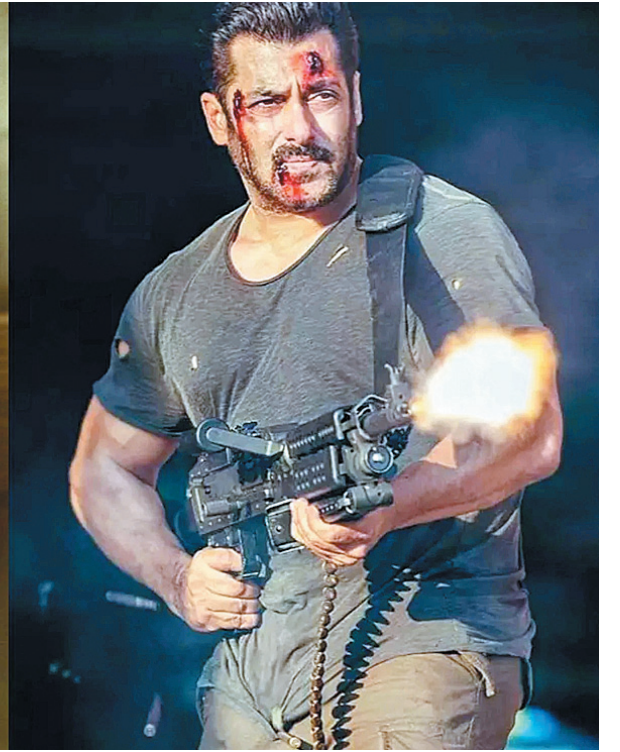


## Varun & Janhvi to be seen together in a romantic action drama movie



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The makers of the Varun Dhawan and Janhvi Kapoor-starrer 'Bawaal' have announced that the romantic action period drama film is all set to release on October 6. Post their successful innings with 'Chhichhore' starring late actor Sushant Singh Rajput, filmmakers Sajid Nadiadwala and Nitesh Tiwari announced their next project - 'Bawaal', took to their respective social media handles to announce the release date. Nitesh tweeted: "My second association with Sajid sir and a rather intriguing one BAWAAL starring Varun & Janhvi Kapoor will hit the theatres on 6th Oct 2023. The release of the 'Bawaal' had been pushed to a later date. It was earlier scheduled to release in April. According to reports, the reason behind it was said to be the VFX and other technical requirements of the film. 'Bawaal' is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala, under the banner of Nadiadwala Grandson, and is co-produced by EarthSky Pictures.



## Massive set to be built for Salman & SRK's action scene

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The makers of the upcoming actioner 'Tiger 3' will be constructing a huge set for Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan's action scene in the film and it will take 45 days to build it. "Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan will be seen on screen again in 'Tiger 3' and Aditya Chopra and director Maneesh Sharma has planned this to be the biggest surprise element of the film. YRF has quietly commissioned to construct a massive set that will take about 45 days to build to shoot a scene in which Salman and SRK are set to do mind-boggling action!" informed a source. The source added: "When Salman appeared in 'Pathaan' to help SRK, all hell broke loose in theatres and people went into frenzy seeing their biggest cinema idols beat people to pulp! Now, its encore time in Tiger 3 and expect Salman and SRK to pull off crazy, adrenaline pumping, high-intensity action sequences that will blow people's minds.

'Tiger 3' also stars Katrina Kaif as super-spy Zoya and Emraan Hashmi as the villain. It is set to release on Diwali.

## HONOUR TO BE PART OF A SHOW THAT SHEDS LIGHT ON THE REALITIES OF SOCIETY: RASIKA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

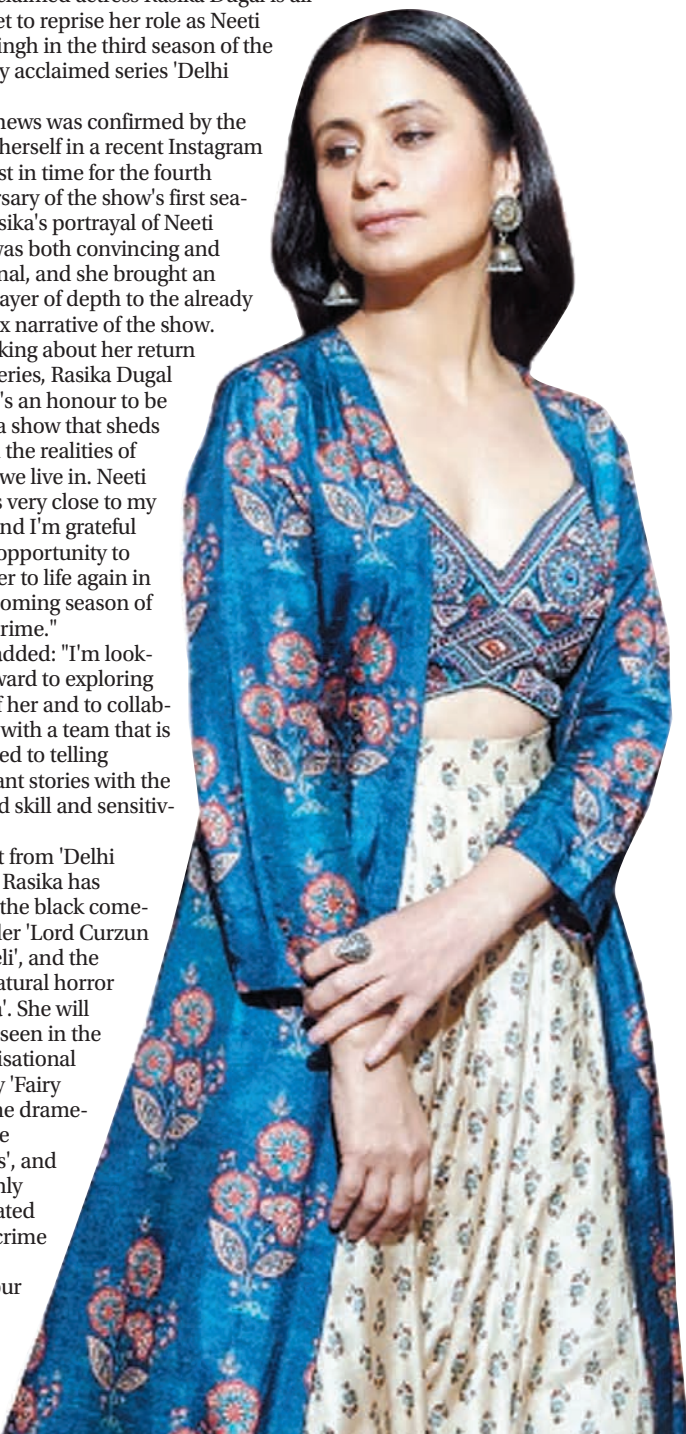
Acclaimed actress Rasika Dugal is all set to reprise her role as Neeti Singh in the third season of the critically acclaimed series 'Delhi Crime'.

The news was confirmed by the actress herself in a recent Instagram post, just in time for the fourth anniversary of the show's first season. Rasika's portrayal of Neeti Singh was both convincing and emotional, and she brought an added layer of depth to the already complex narrative of the show.

Speaking about her return to the series, Rasika Dugal said, "It's an honour to be part of a show that sheds light on the realities of society we live in. Neeti Singh is very close to my heart, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to bring her to life again in the upcoming season of Delhi Crime."

She added: "I'm looking forward to exploring more of her and to collaborating with a team that is dedicated to telling important stories with the required skill and sensitivity."

Apart from 'Delhi Crime', Rasika has 'Spike', the black comedy thriller 'Lord Curzon Ki Haveli', and the supernatural horror 'Adhura'. She will also be seen in the improvisational comedy 'Fairy Folk', the dramedy 'Little Thomas', and the highly anticipated action crime thriller 'Mirzapur 3'.



Shilpa Shetty makes a comeback to Kannada films after 18 yrs

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Shilpa Shetty Kundra is returns to Kannada films after almost 18 years with the upcoming film 'KD - The Devil'.

Shilpa took to Instagram to announce the news on Ugadi.

Wrote the actress, who was born in Karnataka: "On this auspicious day of new beginnings, I'm thrilled to share with you a new character entering the war in KD's battlefield as Satyavati."

Shilpa made her acting debut with Shah Rukh Khan-starrer 'Baazigar' in 1993. 'KD', directed by Prem of 'Kariya' fame, is yet another gangster film in Kannada. The period action film is said to be based on the events that took place in Bengaluru in the 1970s. It also stars Dhruva Sarja, V Ravichandran and Sanjay Dutt in pivotal roles.

Meanwhile, on the Bollywood front, Shilpa has 'Indian Police Force', an upcoming Hindi language cop action drama streaming series.

The series is created and directed by Rohit Shetty. It also stars Sidharth Malhotra and Vivek Oberoi in the lead. The series is set in Shetty's fictional Cop Universe.

## SATISH KAUSHIK HAS NOT JUST BEEN A GREAT ACTOR BUT ALSO A FATHER FIGURE: VARDHAN PURI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Vardhan Puri feels privileged to have had the chance to share screen time with the late versatile actor Satish Kaushik twice in his career thus far, including his upcoming and soon-to-be released film, Vivek Agnihotri's 'Nautanki'.

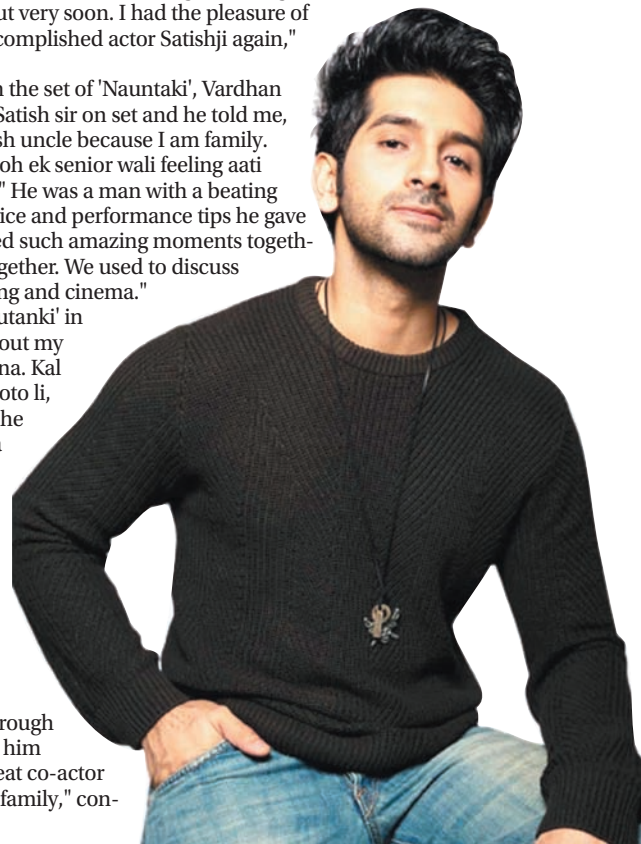
The actor while talking about late actor Satish Kaushik shared, "Satishji has not just been a great actor and co-actor but also a father figure, well-wisher and someone I considered as a family member."

"I remember praying that I want to work with this beautiful human being and marvellous actor (Satish Kaushik) again because the experience that I had on set of 'Yeh Saali Aashiqui' was beyond phenomenal. And as luck would have it, within a year, filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri signed me for his next film 'Nautanki' which will be out very soon. I had the pleasure of working with the most versatile and accomplished actor Satishji again," adds Vardhan.

Sharing an interesting anecdote from the set of 'Nautanki', Vardhan reveals, "I remember once calling him Satish sir on set and he told me, 'Bete, I would prefer if you call me Satish uncle because I am family. Uncle will make it more loving. Sir se woh ek senior wali feeling aati hai. And we are equals as actors on set.' He was a man with a beating heart of gold and the kind of acting advice and performance tips he gave me will always be cherished... we shared such amazing moments together and we used to have all our meals together. We used to discuss everything under the sun, not only acting and cinema."

"We were shooting on the sets of 'Nautanki' in Bhopal one day and Satishji just called out my name and said, 'Vardhan bete idhar aana. Kal tune Anupam (Kher) ki bahot achhi photo li, meri bhi ek bahot achhi photo le... mujhe dekhna hai mera get-up kaisa jach raha hai mere pe'. I clicked this picture immediately and when he saw it, he said in his style, 'Arre yaar, badi achhi photo li hai tune. Mera ek baar photo-shoot tu khud apne haathon se zaroor karna. Mazaa aa jayega! Aur saath mein bhi lenge achhi photo jo Instagram pe daalenge'."

"It's a great loss to humanity and our film industry that Satishji is not with us today but I will always celebrate him through his films. I will keep loving and missing him dearly because I have not only lost a great co-actor but I lost someone who was as good as family," concludes Vardhan.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Avneet Kaur