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## RBI imposes monetary penalty of Rs 3.06cr on Amazon Pay (India)

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Reserve Bank of India on Friday said that it has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 3.06 crore on Amazon Pay (India) Private Limited for non-compliance with certain provisions of the Master Directions on Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) and the Master Direction - Know Your Customer (KYC) Direction, 2016 dated February 25, 2016.

(RBI) has imposed monetary penalty of Rs 3,06,66,000 on Amazon Pay (India) Private Limited for non-compliance with certain provisions of the Master Directions on Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) and the Master Direction - Know Your Customer (KYC) Direction, 2016 dated February 25, 2016. The penalty was imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI under

Section 30 of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. This action is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the entity with its customers. It was observed that the entity was non-compliant with the directions issued by RBI on KYC requirements.

Accordingly, a notice was issued to the entity advising it to show cause as to why penalty should not be imposed for non-compliance with the directions, said the statement. After considering the entity's response, RBI concluded that the aforesaid charge of non-compliance with RBI directions was substantiated and warranted imposition of monetary penalty, it added.

## ON RAHUL GANDHI'S "SNOOPING" ALLEGATION, BJP'S "HALLUCINATION" RETORT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The BJP on Friday made light of Rahul Gandhi's allegation that he was being spied upon, saying that the Congress leader was "hallucinating" and makes such claims as he wants to create headlines wherever he goes.

"What we can say for Rahul Gandhi's hallucinations. If he makes his (Congress) MoU with China public, we will be interested and people of India will also like to know. Who is interested in his telephonic conversations," BJP spokesperson Tom Vadakkan told reporters.

During a lecture at Cambridge University, Gandhi alleged that Indian democracy is under threat and several politicians, including himself, are under surveillance.

"A large number of political leaders have Pegasus on their phones. I myself had Pegasus on my phone. I've been called by intelligence officers who say please be careful of what you say on the phone as we are recording the stuff," the former Congress chief has claimed. Vadakkan noted that the Supreme Court has closed the Pegasus matter. He added that Gandhi had not even given his mobile phone for inspection during the inquiry, directed by the Supreme Court, into the Pegasus issue. What was he so scared to hide, the BJP spokesperson asked.

"Why is he not raising questions about the attack on Indians abroad. It has happened in Canada and Australia. The issue is he wants to create headlines wherever he goes and in that process, he loses votes in India



### Privilege Committee to hear BJP's demand for action against Rahul Gandhi on March 14

**New Delhi:** The Privilege Committee of the Lok Sabha will take up the breach of privilege notice against Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on March 14. The Privilege Committee directed BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, who had filed the notice against Rahul Gandhi, to appear before it on March 14 and present his case.

Dubey had sent a notice of breach of privilege claiming that Rahul Gandhi had levelled derogatory allegations against Prime Minister Narendra Modi without any evidence and facts during a discussion in the Lok Sabha on the motion of thanks on the President's address.

Acting on the notice as per the laid down parliamentary convention and rules, the Lok Sabha Secretariat issued a notice to Rahul Gandhi, asking him to reply by February 15.

According to sources, Rahul Gandhi had sent his reply based on which the Committee has summoned the complainant.

because people of India have woken up," he said. Vadakkan, a Christian leader from Kerala, also hailed the

BJP's performance in assembly polls in three northeastern states, noting that minorities have voted for the party.

### HE HAS A HABIT OF DEFAMING INDIA IN FOREIGN LANDS: ANURAG THAKUR



**New Delhi:** Union Minister Anurag Thakur while criticising former Congress president Rahul

Gandhi over his statement regarding Pegasus, said that Pegasus existed in Gandhi's heart and mind and it had become his habit to defame India in foreign lands using the foreign media, agencies and friends. Thakur on Friday demanded an answer to Gandhi not submitting his mobile phone for the investigation into the Pegasus issue.

He added: "What did the leader (Gandhi), who is out on bail in a corruption case had in his phone that he needed to hide? Why did he and the other leaders not submit their phones?"

Thakur said that the Congress leader should at least listen to what the Prime Minister of Italy had to say about Prime Minister Narendra Modi if not anyone else. Italy's Prime Minister said that Modi had emerged as a big leader today and has received love from all over the world, stated Thakur. He added that Gandhi and the Congress party are unable to digest this.

## HIMACHAL BRINGS OPS FOR EXISTING, FUTURE EMPLOYEES



Shimla | Agencies

The Himachal Pradesh government on Friday decided to implement the old pension scheme (OPS) for the existing 1.36 lakh employees, and for the future employees too.

A decision in this regard was taken at the Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu here. It was decided that the OPS beneficiaries would also be brought under the ambit of GPF and those employees under the new pension scheme (NPS), who retired after May 15, 2003, will be given OPS from the prospective date.

It was decided that after necessary amendments to rules, the contribution by the government and the employees under the NPS will stop from April 1, 2023.

No deductions would be made from the employees from their salary under the NPS

from April 1. If any employee wants to be governed under the NPS, he/she can give his consent to the government in this regard.

The government will spend an additional amount of Rs 1,000 crore in fiscal 2023-24 on the implementation of the OPS.

The Cabinet also passed a resolution to be sent to the Central government to return Rs 8,000 crore under the ambit of the state's NPS.

The Cabinet asked the Finance Department to amend the rules and issue necessary instructions in this regard.

It was also decided to engage 780 ASHA workers under the National Health Mission (NHM) on an incentive basis to provide affordable and reliable healthcare to the people.

It gave nod to guidelines for the engagement of ASHA facilitators under the Community Process Programme.

## SC junks Vijay Mallya's plea challenging proceedings to declare him a fugitive

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court Friday dismissed a plea by businessman Vijay Mallya, facing extradition, against proceedings in a Mumbai court to declare him a fugitive economic offender and confiscate his properties.

Counsel, representing Mallya, contended before the court that he was not receiving any instructions from him in the matter. A bench of Justices Abhay S. Oka and Rajesh Bindal said counsel for the petitioner states that Mallya is not giving any instructions. "In view of this



statement, the petition is dismissed for non-prosecution," said the bench. In December 2018, the apex court had

issued notice to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Mallya's plea but declined to stay the proceedings before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court at Mumbai, where the probe agency sought a 'fugitive' tag for him under the Fugitive Economic Offenders' Act, 2018.

The prosecuting agency has the powers to confiscate his property, once a person is declared a fugitive economic offender under the provisions of the Act.

Mallya was declared a fugitive under the Act in January 2019, by a Mumbai special court.

## Record 14 women elected to Tripura, Meghalaya and Nagaland Assemblies

In Tripura, BJP candidates Mina Rani Sarkar (from Badharghat assembly constituency), Pratima Bhowmik (Dhanpur), Antara Sarkar Deb (Kamalagar), Santana Chakma (Pecharthal), Swapna Majumder (Rajnagar), Swapna Das Paul (Surma), Kalyani Saha Roy (Teliamura) and Tipra Motha Party nominees Swapna Debbarma (Mandai Bazar) and Nandita Debbarma Reang (Raima Valley) were elected to the state assembly in the February 16 elections.

In Meghalaya, former state minister Mazel Ampareen Lyngdoh and Santa Mary Shylla, both from the ruling National People's Party (NPP) and Miani D. Shira of the Trinamool Congress, were elected to the assembly.

**Sujit Chakraborty | Agartala/Shillong/Kohima**

Days ahead of the International Women's Day on March 8, good news from three northeastern states -- Tripura, Meghalaya and Nagaland -- that 14 women were elected to the state assemblies in the recent polls against six women legislators in the outgoing houses. The highest number of nine women were elected to the Tripura assembly followed by three in Meghalaya and two in Nagaland.

Scripting history in 60 years of statehood, two women, Hekhani Jakhlu and Salthoutonuo Kruse of the ruling Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), were for the first time elected to the Nagaland assembly from Western Angami and Dimapur-III assembly constituencies respectively.

In all 183 candidates including four women nominees contested the February 27 assembly elections in Nagaland.

With nine of the 31 women contestants winning, the Tripura assembly now has the highest number of women legislators since it became a full-fledged state in 1972. In 2013, five of the 15 women contestants became lawmakers in Tripura, while three women were elected in the assembly polls in 2018. In Meghalaya three women, the same number as in the previous election (2018), were elected in

the February 27 assembly elections when 36 women fought the poll battle. In the 2018 assembly elections, five women contested in Nagaland and none was elected while in Tripura 24 women fought and three women won. In Meghalaya 32 women tried their electoral fortunes and three were successful. Congress turned NPP leader Lyngdoh retained her East Shillong constituency while Shira made it to the Assembly once again from Ampati. Shylla marked one of the biggest upsets of this election by defeating Lok Sabha member from Shillong parliamentary constituency and Meghalaya state Congress president Vincent H. Pala in the Sutnga-Saipung assembly seat.

In the assembly elections in the three northeastern states, women voters' turnout was higher than men.

For the past many years, women voters have outnumbered their male counterparts in the electoral lists of several northeastern states. Of the total 21,61,729 voters in Meghalaya, the number of male voters is 10,68,801 and that of female voters is 10,92,326. In Nagaland, the number of male voters is 6,52,938 and that of female voters is 6,55,144. In Tripura, in seven of the 60 assembly constituencies, women voters outnumbered their male counterparts. The number of women ministers, MPs and MLAs in several northeastern states is very less compared to their percentage in population.

### WITCHCRAFT PRACTICED IN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL IN SURAT

**Surat:** In a shocking incident, witchcraft was practiced in a government-funded residential school in Surat to treat a girl student who was unwell.

As soon as the reports about the incident spread, the state government on Thursday evening directed tribal development commissioner to inquire into the matter. According to sources, a student of Vatsalya Kanya Asram Sala at Madhi village, a vocational training residential school for tribal girls, fell ill, however, instead of taking her to a doctor, hostel warden called an occult practitioner who carried out witchcraft on all 140 girls of the institution. The rationalist group demanded an inquiry and Vignyan Jatha group leader Jayant Pandya demanded that the government should file a criminal complaint against the warden and the trustees of the residential school.

### Hijab not allowed during exams: Karnataka Education Minister

Bengaluru | Agencies

Karnataka Education Minister B.C. Nagesh on Friday asserted that students wearing hijab will not be allowed inside the examination centres. The II PUC (class 12) examinations are set to begin from March 9 in the state. Speaking to reporters he maintained that it has been clarified that all students should attend exams wearing uniforms. Hijab is not part of it. Those who want to write exams wearing hijab won't be allowed into the examination hall, he added. Minister Nagesh further claimed that there is an increase in the number of Muslim students who appeared for the examinations after the hijab ban. "After hijab ban, more



number of Muslim sisters appeared for examinations and the enrolment of Muslim girl students has increased," he added. The hijab case, which is in the Supreme Court, is likely to be taken up after Holi vacation. Many students abstained from attending the examination as they were not allowed to wear hijab and write exams.



# ED seizes Rs 3.5 cr cash in MGNREGA fund scam involving IAS officer Pooja Singhal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a latest development in the MGNREGA fund scam involving suspended IAS official Pooja Singhal and others, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday said that they conducted raids in Jharkhand's Hazaribagh at the premises of Mohammad Izhar Ansari and recovered cash around Rs 3.5 crore.

Ansari is said to be an aide of one of the accused in scam.

The ED had on February 23 arrested Virender Ram, the chief engineer working with Rural Development Department of Jharkhand Government in connection with the case. The ED team took him to Ranchi where his arrest was made.

The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of multiple FIRs registered by Jharkhand Police and Vigilance



Bureau Jharkhand." Investigation revealed that the Proceeds of Crime (POC) generated from the MGNREGA scam in the form of commission was deposited in different bank accounts belonging to Pooja Singhal and her relatives. The said POC was mixed and layered with the other

unaccounted money generated by Singhal, by misusing her official position," the ED claimed.

The probe agency has said that initially the POC was generated from MGNREGA scam only, which was subsequently intermixed with other unaccounted funds generated

from the corrupt practices of Pooja Singhal and these funds were layered as investment and further funds were generated from these funds, both as legitimate profit as well as by further infusion of POC.

"By this modus-operandi, Singhal amassed huge wealth disproportionate to her known source of income, and source of funds invested in these immovable properties were primarily from the unaccounted cash profits generated from these POC and therefore termed as POC," the ED has alleged. The Supreme Court on January 3 had granted interim bail to Pooja Singhal, Jharkhand cadre IAS officer suspended in a money laundering case, to look after her ailing daughter. The former state mines department secretary in Jharkhand, had been in custody since May last year, after raids were conducted at properties connected with her. She has been accused of money laundering.

Team Absolute | Kolkata

Senior BJP leader and former minister of state Satyabrata Mukherjee passed away due to age-related ailments at his residence on Friday. He was 91.

Mukherjee was Minister of State for Chemicals & Fertilisers and Commerce & Industries in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led government from 1999 to 2004.

Mukherjee, who also served as the former state president of BJP in West Bengal, was a high-profile practicing lawyer with the Supreme Court and Calcutta High Court.

He was elected BJP Lok Sabha member from Krishnanagar Lok Sabha constituency in Nadia district of West Bengal from 1999 to 2004. However, in 2004, he was defeated from the same constituency by CPI(M) candidate and at-



lete-turned-politician Jyotirmoyee Sikdar.

Mukherjee was popular in both the legal and political circles as 'Jolubabu'. In 2008, he became party's West Bengal chief. However, the very next year, he was replaced by Rahul Sinha.

He was born on May 8, 1932 in Sylhet, which is now

in Bangladesh. He earned his reputation as a corporate lawyer at a very young age and was active in his profession even four years back.

He was popular among the leaders of other political parties for his amicable nature and philanthropic activities.

## Madhya Pradesh Assembly adjourned till March 13 amid ruckus

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh Assembly on Friday witnessed uproarious scenes over the 'no confidence' against Speaker Girish Gautam, leading to disruption of the House's functioning, and eventually the adjournment of the fifth day of the Budget Session without any business.

The continuous ruckus in the Assembly prompted Speaker Girish Gautam to adjourn the House till March 13.

As the opposition Congress was already prepared to bring a 'no confidence' motion against the Speaker following his decision to suspend former minister and Congress MLA Jitu Patwari from the House for the remaining Budget Session on Thursday, they (Congress MLAs) raised slogans and demanded a debate on the matter.

Gautam tried to control the situation and begin the House's proceedings. However, relentless noisy scenes prompted him to adjourn the Assembly first for 10 minutes, soon after the House met.

When the House resumed its business for the day again, the Congress MLAs continued their demand to have a debate over the 'no confidence' motion brought against the Speaker.



The Congress legislators led by the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Govind Singh, an MLA from the Lahar seat, reached the Speaker's podium, and shouted slogans against him.

The Speaker tried to calm down the situation and requested the legislators to go back to their seats, saying he had not received any information regarding a 'no confidence' motion.

The Opposition tabled a 'no confidence' motion against Speaker Girish Gautam, accusing him of acting on behalf of the ruling BJP, and "shrinking the duration of the session".

However, the ruling BJP hit back on them for not having the signature of the Madhya Pradesh unit Congress president Kamal Nath.

Meanwhile, Madhya Pradesh Parliamentary Affairs Minister Narottam

Mishra intervened into the matter by showing the 'rule book' of the House.

As the Congress MLAs had already approached the Speaker's podium, the BJP MLAs stood in the Speaker's support, and eventually, the MLAs from both sides came face to face against each other briefly.

Further, LoP Govind Singh alleged that Narottam Mishra had thrown a book at him to hurt him. This again created an uproar in the house. The LoP demanded suspension of the minister for the entire Budget Session, on the lines of the suspension of Jitu Patwari.

Mishra, however, tried to clarify that he was trying to move the pen when the 'rules book' accidentally slipped from his hand.

"I had no intention of hurting anyone. I have apologised for this in the House," Mishra said.

## 7 ARRESTED, SEX RACKET BUSTED IN NOIDA; 2 GIRLS RESCUED

Team Absolute | Noida

The Kotwali Sector 39 police along with the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of Noida police arrested 7 people including a woman in connection with a flesh trade being run from a rented house in Noida's Salarpur village. Two girls have been rescued from their captivity.

The officials raided the place on Thursday night.

The kingpin, Mala Devi, had been running the racket along with her associate, who has been identified as Manpreet from a rented accommodation in Salarpur.

DCP Noida Zone, Harish Chandra said that upon receiving information, the officials sent their own agent to pose as a customer in front of the



duo. After receiving the agent's signal, they raided the place and Devi and Manpreet along with five customers were detained.

The arrested customers have been identified as Anil, Rajan, Sagir, Abhishek and Harish.

The house belongs to one Neeraj Bhati.

Police recovered six mobile phones, Rs 2,100 in cash and objectionable items from their possession.

The official added that Devi and Manpreet had rented two rooms at Bhati's place some days back and had started the business here.

The police have registered a case against the accused persons under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 and is gathering information about the others involved.

## 5 arrested for duping banks of over Rs 90 L using PAN details of 95 celebrities

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Five people have been arrested for duping banks of over Rs 90 lakh by using PAN details of 95 celebrities including Bollywood actor Abhishek Bachchan and former captain of the Indian cricket team M. S. Dhoni, and getting credit cards issued in their names, an official said on Friday.

According to officials, the cards were issued from Pune-based fintech startup 'One Card'.

Some of the other celebrities whose names and details were used by the fraudsters were Shilpa Shetty, Madhuri Dixit, Emraan Hashmi, Saif Ali Khan,

Sachin Tendulkar, Alia Bhatt, Sonam Kapoor, Hritik Roshan, among others.

The accused were identified as Puneet, Mohd Asif, Sunil Kumar, Pankaj Mishra and Vishwa Bhaskar Sharma.

Addressing a press conference, the Joint Commissioner of Police (Eastern Range), Chhayya Sharma said that a complaint was lodged by Prem Shekhawat authorised representative of M/S FPL Technologies Private Limited Pune -based company wherein it was alleged that several accused persons have cheated their company to the tune of Rs 21,32,572 by creating fake PAN Card and Aadhar card of

celebrities.

During investigation, police collected the IP Addresses from one card credit card company, device ID of accused persons, IPDR of 95 mail IDs, CDR of mobile numbers and details of bank accounts which were involved in settling the cheating amount.

"Banks and credit card companies are also under investigation regarding their KYC procedure. Money trail of over Rs 90 lakh has been obtained. Further investigation is underway regarding misuse of aadhar updation process and KYC verification processes of banks by the gang," the official added.

## FORMER MP MEENA SINGH QUILTS JD-U

Patna: After Upendra Kushwaha, two-time MP Meena Singh also left the Bihar's ruling Janata Dal-United on Friday.

Meena Singh won the bypoll to the Birkramganj Lok Sabha seat in 2008 after the death of her husband and sitting MP Ajit Kumar Singh, and won from Arrah in the 2009 Lok Sabha elections. She contested the 2014 elections from Arrah but lost and did not fight in 2019.

She sent her resignation letter to party as state President Umesh Kushwaha.

"I have resigned from the primary membership of the party. The resignation letter is sent to the JD-U state President. I have not decided to join any party. My priority is to go among the people of the constituency and then decide further course of action," Singh said. Sources, however, said that she is expected to join the BJP.

## Sukesh's another letter levels fresh allegation against Kejriwal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Another letter by incarcerated alleged conman, Sukesh Chandrashekhar has now surfaced, which is addressed to the media and social media pages, making fresh allegations against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and Satyendra Jain.

Chandrashekhar, who is lodged in the national capital's Mandoli jail, has alleged in his five-page letter that Sisodia's arrest by CBI is just a starting and that he has "looted commissions" in every department that he was heading as being a Deputy Chief Minister.

"All that matters to them (AAP leaders Kejriwal, Sisodia and Jain) is commission," he wrote.

Referring to a tablet scam, Chandrashekhar has alleged that he had bought tablets (for distribution to children) from a Chinese company, which the Kejriwal government decided to hand over the tender to someone else in exchange for 20 per cent extra commission.

He said that every single decision in terms of commission and kickbacks were always discussed in Kejriwal's presence and were finally decided and proved by him (Kejriwal).

Chandrashekhar has claimed that kickbacks more than a "1000 odd crore" were decided and routed to Kejriwal through various person's nationally and internationally.

Recalling how Kejriwal and Jain in



2017 sang "Ye dosti hum nahi todenge" on his (Sukesh) birthday to "persuade" him to bring in contributions from Middle East and South India, Chandrashekhar wrote that there is only "payback" now and no friendship.

In reference to an international newspaper article backing the government, Sukesh claimed the same was published through him and was used by the AAP leaders to their benefit. On Jain's recent resignation, Chandrashekhar has alleged that Kejriwal made Jain resign only after the alleged conman challenged him during the ED custody four days ago. He wrote: "As you knew I was taken to ED custody, and you got to know through reports that Chaturvedi who is yours and Satyendra Jain's hawala operator and shell entry operator has been summoned by ED in my case, you, and

Jain got spooked to what all disclosures I must be making in ED against Satyendra Jain, Chaturvedi and you, 4 days ago."

"You know I have disclosed the role of Satyendra Jain in my case, and both of you know very clearly what's going to hit you on this regards, that's why you decided to make Satyendra Jain also resign along with Sisodia, or else why 9 months not this step and now suddenly when I have made disclosures and Chaturvedi summoned by ED, in my case," he added.

Chandrashekhar has ended his letter by sending Holi greetings to his well-wishers and actor Jacqueline Fernandez.

"I wish all media friends, my family, well-wishers, supporters, and my love, my princess ever beautiful Jacqueline a very Happy Holi... I love you my baby girl, my bomma (doll) forever," he said.

## SISODIA MOVES DELHI COURT SEEKING BAIL IN LIQUOR POLICY CASE

New Delhi: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Friday moved a bail plea at a court here after he was arrested by the CBI in connection with the now-scrapped excise policy.

Special Judge M.K. Nagpal on Monday sent Sisodia to the custody of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for five days. The custody ends on March 4.

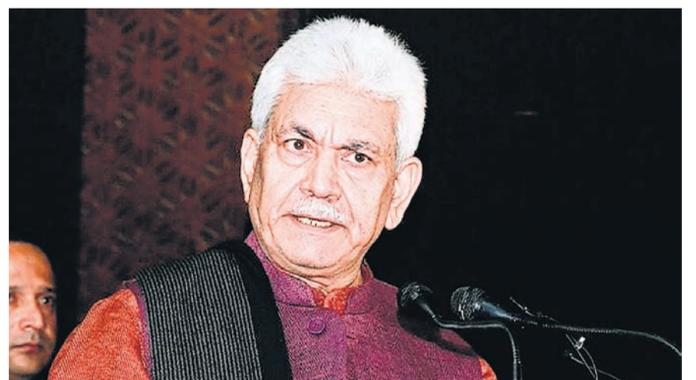
The probe agency arrested Sisodia on February 26 after eight hours of questioning.

Sisodia had moved the Supreme Court challenging his arrest by the CBI on Tuesday. His plea, however, was declined by a bench comprising Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and justice P.S. Narasimha.

The apex court said that Sisodia has alternative remedies available before the Delhi High Court.

The top court also stressed that he must move either the trial court or the high court for the relief he is seeking from the apex court.

## Narco-terrorism is one of the biggest threats to society: J&K L-G



Jammu | Agencies

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday that we need to be vigilant and determined to neutralise the ecosystem providing ideological and financial support to terrorists and added that we are committed to dealing with challenges of narco-terror in a comprehensive manner.

The Lieutenant Governor said that while attending the Attestation-cum-Passing out Parade of Recruit Constables of 29th BRTC Batch at S.Prithinandan Singh Police Training School in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir. The Lt Governor congratulated and welcomed new recruits to one of the finest police forces in the country.

I am confident that you will discharge your responsibility towards the nation with utmost sensitivity, commitment and dedication, added the Lt Governor.

"The integrity, dedication and professionalism of J&K Police are pivotal in the fight against terrorism. We all take pride in the excellence and professionalism displayed by

J&K Police in handling narco-terrorism and enforcing the rule of law," said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor stressed upon the future-ready policing strategies to tackle the new forms of internal security challenges.

"These are challenging times for our police forces as the world today is facing conventional and non-conventional threats. We need to be vigilant and determined to neutralise the ecosystem providing ideological and financial support to terrorists," the Lt Governor said.

"We believe in 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and peaceful coexistence. There is no place for subversive elements in a civilised society," observed the Lt Governor.

"Today, narco-terrorism has become one of the biggest threats to the society. The UT Administration, J&K Police and our Security Forces are committed to dealing with challenges of narco-terror in a comprehensive manner. J&K UT is on the march and is being transformed. It is our sacred duty to provide a safe, secure and right environment to fulfill the aspirations of the common man," he said.



# THE CONCEPT OF DHARMA-DHAMMA HAS BEEN THE BASIC VOICE OF INDIAN CONSCIOUSNESS: PRESIDENT

## Religion will prove useful for the world- Dhamma Conference. Murmu inaugurated the 7th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference

Team Absolute | Bhopal

President Draupadi Murmu has said that understanding the cause of suffering of humanity and showing the way to remove that suffering is the specialty of humanism of the past, which has become more important in today's era. The concept of Dharma-Dhamma has been the basic voice of Indian consciousness. It is said in our tradition that the one, who holds everyone, is religion. The entire humanity rests on the foundation stone of religion. Development of individual and society with the spirit of friendship, compassion and non-violence, free from attachment and hatred, has been the main message of humanism of the East. Personal conduct and social order based on morality is the practical form of earlier humanism. It has been considered the duty of every person to preserve and strengthen this system based on morality. In our tradition of Dharma-Dhamma "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhin." Prayer has been a part of our life. This is the essence of humanism of the past and also the biggest need of today's era. This conference is a meaningful effort towards fulfilling a great need of humanity. It is the wish that the entire world community should be benefited by the humanism of the East. President Smt. Draupadi Murmu Kushabhau Thackeray was inaugurating the 7th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference in Bhopal recently.



Our national symbols clearly show the spirit of Dharma-Dhamma. President, Murmu said that in the tradition of our country, religion occupies a central place in the social system and political activities since ancient times. The deep impact of Dharma-Dhamma is clearly visible on the democratic system we adopted after independence. This is clearly reflected in our national symbols. Representatives from vari-

### ESTABLISHMENT OF SANCHI UNIVERSITY IS A MATTER OF FORTUNE FOR THE STATE - CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the establishment of Sanchi University is a matter of fortune for the state. Here opportunities will be created to study Indian knowledge and Buddhist philosophy. The basic thinking of Eastern humanism is that the same consciousness is the scholar in all matter and consciousness, the whole earth is one family. Live and let live in our country and the idea of "Victory to Dharma - Destruction of mediocrity - Harmony among beings and welfare of the world" prevails everywhere. Animals, birds, rivers, trees and mountains have also been worshipped in Indian culture. This is clearly reflected in the concept of Dashavatara. In the Indian tradition, the whole earth has been considered as one family.

### MINISTERS OF BHUTAN AND SRI LANKA AND DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF INDONESIA ATTENDED THE INAUGURAL SESSION

State Culture Minister Usha Thakur, Bhutan's Home and Cultural Affairs Minister Ugen Dorji, Sri Lanka's Culture and Religious Affairs Minister Vidur Wickramanayake, Sri Lanka's Prof. Rahul Anunayak Thera, Deputy Governor of Indonesia Prof. Dr. IR Tjokorda Oka Artha Ardana Sukwati was present. Culture ministers from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan including India are participating in the 7th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference, which continues till March 5, to discuss cultural harmony and other topics in different countries. Scholars and researchers from UK, USA, France, Spain, Mauritius, South Korea, Nepal, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Mongolia and Bhutan are also participating in the conference.

## Leader of Opposition accused the Home Minister of trying to kill him in the House, Minister clarifies

Team Absolute | Bhopal

There was a lot of uproar in the Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly on the fifth day of the budget session. While the Congress brought a no-confidence motion against the Speaker, Leader of the Opposition Govind Singh accused Parliamentary Affairs Minister Narottam Mishra of throwing a book at him. The suspension of Congress MLA Jitu Patwari for the rest of the budget session has thrown the entire party into gear. In the presence of State President Kamal Nath, in the meeting of party legislators, it was decided to bring a no-confidence motion against Speaker Girish Gautam, according to which, on Friday, the Congress tabled a no-confidence motion in the House, which created a lot of uproar. Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition Singh accused Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mishra of throwing a book and killing him. Leader of the Opposition Govind Singh wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary of the Vidhan Sabha saying that on March 3, members of the Congress party were demanding a discussion on the resolution given against the Speaker under my leadership. In the meanwhile, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Narottam Mishra, using indecent language, in a fit of rage threw the booklet of Madhya Pradesh Vidhansabha Procedure and Conduct Rules aimed at me, which fell in front of my table. Congress turns aggressive after action on Jeetu Patwari,



will bring no-confidence motion against Assembly Speaker.

### ACCUSATION ON NAROTTAM MISHRA

Leader of Opposition has further written in his letter that this behavior of Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mishra is unparliamentary, this kind of attack on the Leader of Opposition in the history of Vidhansabha is extremely humiliating. This act of his comes under the ambit of contempt of the House as well as the violation of my special rights along with the members of the opposition, so I give notice of breach of privilege against the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs for the said act. At the same time, while expressing regret on the allegations of the Leader of Opposition, Mishra said that the book fell while removing the peon from the middle.

### DHARMA-DHAMMA CONTEMPLATION WILL PROMOTE HARMONY

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that the validity of our Indian philosophy lies in the belief that the world belongs to all. There is no need for war. Peace, love and trust towards each other are necessary for the welfare of humanity. The Governor said that the age-old tradition of our country believes in and promotes world peace and welfare of mankind. The Buddhist approach to the ethical and practical realm is also important for the well-being of mankind. There is a need of the time to think about the centuries-old thought tradition of Indian cultural and civilizational interrelationships with a new perspective in the changing times and perspective for building a prosperous society, nation and the world. Extremism, expansionism in the global scenario, the way to save humanity from the adverse effects of climate change will be found only in the thoughts of Indian sages and sages. He said that mutual exchange of ideas between ancient civilizations through Dharma-Dhamma contemplation would promote harmony. He said that Buddha is the solution to a world plagued by violence and war.

## Chief Minister will transfer 605 crore rupees of Sambal scheme to the accounts of 27 thousand 310 laborers

### State level program will be held on March 4 in Mauganj of Rewa

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will transfer ex-gratia amount of Rs 605 crore to 27 thousand 310 labor families with a single click in the state level program of Sambal Yojana at Mauganj in Rewa on March 4. Under the scheme, Rs 75 crore in 3509 cases of construction workers and Rs 530 crore in 23 thousand 801 cases of Sambal Yojana will be transferred to the beneficiary's account. Labor Secretary Sanjay Jain told that M.P. Building and other construction workers welfare board

and M.P. The Urban and Rural Unorganized Workers Welfare Board is running several schemes for the workers and their families working in the unorganized sector of the state. In this, Rs 4 lakh is given in case of accidental death and Rs 2 lakh in case of normal death under the Anugraha Sahayata Yojana. Rs 2 lakh for permanent disability, Rs 1 lakh for partial permanent disability and Rs 5,000 for funeral assistance. Under the Sambal Yojana, women laborers are given Rs 16,000 as maternity assistance and free education is also being provided to the children of

the labourers. Sambal is a very important scheme for lakhs of workers working in the unorganized sector in the state. Under the scheme, the laborer gets financial assistance from birth till death. This scheme launched by the Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the strength of the workers in real sense. The scheme has been emulated by many states of the country. Madhya Pradesh also for lakhs of construction workers of the state. 18 schemes are being run by the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

### MAN HANGS SELF FROM TREE NEAR MGM COLLEGE, COMMUTERS THROG CRIME SPOT JAMMING ROAD

Indore: A man died by suicide after hanging himself from a 50 ft tall tree in the premises of Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College on Friday morning. This caused an unexpected traffic jam at the nearby BRTS as the commuters stopped to look at the dead body hanging from the tree. Long queues of vehicles including an ambulance, were honking at each other while drivers still trying to take a peek at the crime spot. Traffic police took the matter into their hands and tried to clear the traffic from the area, but to no avail. The identity of the victim has not been ascertained yet.

## 1500 MBBS STUDENTS TO TAKE EXAMS ON MARCH 5

Team Absolute | Bhopal

About 1500 MBBS students will appear for National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (PG) to be held on March 5 in Madhya Pradesh. Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya has informed Lok Sabha that NEET for PG would not be postponed. Earlier, Supreme Court had dismissed the petition filed to postpone the NEET PG. The aspirants under internship period had demanded to postpone the exam as the candidates were finding it difficult to prepare for it and continue with their internship. The National Board of Education had told Supreme Court that 2.09 lakh students had registered for NEET PG and it would be difficult to hold the exam later if



it is cancelled. Junior Doctors' Association (undergraduate) member Dr

not have any option. We did not find much time for preparations," he added.

not have any option. We did not find much time for preparations," he added.

## CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN PLANTED SAPLINGS ALONG WITH MEDAL WINNING PLAYERS



Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan congratulated Kumari N., who received gold medal in the 40th Junior National Soft Ball Championship. Along with Sonia and silver medalist Shreyasi Katiyar, planted saplings of Champa, Sarika indica and Mulberry in the garden at Shyamala Hills. Nishika Thakur along with Chief Minister Chouhan planted a sapling on her birthday. Chief Minister Chouhan along with the coach of the winning girls Vijay and Kumari N. Sonia's father Subramaniam and mother Anita also planted saplings. Vinay Nagmal, Ajay Sahu, Saloni were also present in the plantation. Varsha Thakur and Prabal Thakur also planted saplings along with Manohar Singh Thakur of Bansal News.

## MP, Vidarbha and Gujarat in for unseasonal rain and thunderstorms from march 4

Team Absolute | Bhopal

While March signifies the beginning of the scorching summer season in India, some of the country's central and western states look set to kickstart the month's first weekend on a wet and thundery note. As per the India Meteorological Department (IMD), a north-south trough in lower-level easterlies is likely to trigger some unseasonal rainfall and thunderstorm activity over the two regions. Under its influence, isolated light rainfall has been forecast over north Maharashtra, south Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat from Saturday to next Tuesday, March 4-7. Furthermore, light-



to moderate-intensity thunderstorms will also impact isolated locations across West Madhya Pradesh this weekend,

East Madhya Pradesh from Sunday to Tuesday, and Maharashtra's Vidarbha subdivision on Monday and Tuesday. Given these thunderstorm predictions, the IMD has issued a yellow watch over West MP on Saturday, the entirety of MP on Sunday, and East MP and Vidarbha on Monday and Tuesday. This advisory urges the residents to 'be aware' of the local weather situation. On the temperature front, the IMD expects no significant change in Central India's daytime mercury levels during the next two days, but they may fall by about 2°C thereafter. As for West India, the maximum temperatures are likely to rise by 2-3°C during the next two days, with no significant changes thereafter.

## 56-yr-old dies, family donates his eyes at AIIMS Bhopal

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Arvindam Gupta a resident of Barkheda, died on Friday, but passed on his vision to needy. The family of the 56-year-old deceased donated his eyes at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bhopal. The cornea of his eyes was transplanted to two young patients who were in great need. Due to his kindness, both these patients have got vision in their life and now they will be able to see the beautiful world around them. Donor Arvindam Gupta's wife Suma Gupta and her brother Vijit Gupta came to AIIMS

Bhopal and donated the eyes of Arvindam Gupta after his death. Dept of ophthalmology AIIMS Bhopal has an eye bank for collection, preservation and processing of healthy cornea of donors. The department has a dedicated team who counsel the attendants of a deceased person for eye donation so that the eyes of the deceased can see the world even after death through some other needy patient. Administration of AIIMS Bhopal requests everyone to voluntarily donate eyes after death so that they can survive in this world through someone else.

## SATPURA NATIONAL PARK WINS BEST WILDLIFE DESTINATION AWARD

Team Absolute | Indore

On March 3, World Wildlife Day is celebrated, and Madhya Pradesh, known for its rich flora and fauna, has added another feather in its cap with Best Wildlife Destination award. Satpura National Park won Best Wildlife Destination award, which was presented by Union minister of state for culture and parliamentary affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal. On behalf of Madhya Pradesh, field director L Krishnamurthy and assistant manager tourism board Neelam Rawat received the award. The duo said that award will act as an inspiration to develop more facilities for tourists in



Satpura National Park. Apart from tigers, various wild animals including leopard, Indian bison, Indian giant squirrel, Sambar, Cheetah, Deer, Nilgai, Langur, Bear, Wild Boar are easily cited during the safari here. Satpura Tiger Reserve is also a habitat for arboreal mammals such as Flying Squirrels, Giant Squirrels, Leaf-Nosed Bats, and many more. The park features a historical and archaeological important site with

over 300 ancient caves. Panchmarhi, a popular hill-station in the state, has the nearest bus stand and also the entrance to the sanctuary. Furthermore, MP nails it by being the first ever to conduct non-invasive method for rapid estimation of amphibian population in India. First-ever comprehensive amphibian inventory was done based on an integrated approach from Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh. MNMH and its regional centres set up thematic/online exhibitions such as Air pollution, Save the Sea Turtles, 'Bats of Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh for general public to enhance their knowledge on environmental awareness and sensitisation.

### Some unique wildlife achievements of MP

- MP has highest tiger population in India and is the Tiger State of the country.
- The state is also home to the only white tiger sanctuary.
- MP has highest leopard population in India and is the Leopard State of the country.
- MP has highest Ghariyal population in India and is the Ghariyal State of the country.
- A forest-rich state, Madhya Pradesh is a haven for wildlife spotting and has been adding to its green cover. A survey by the Forest Survey of India says that the forest cover in Madhya Pradesh increased to 77482.49 sq km!



EDITOR'S SPECS

Schools without boundaries

Nearly 75 government primary and upper primary schools in Bijnor either have no boundary walls or have dilapidated boundary wall, and since majority of these schools are located near sugar cane fields, 3500 children are under the constant fear of leopard intrusion in attack-prone region. Three leopard attacks have been reported in the last 10 days, and a 14-year-old girl was killed. The sugar cane fields are safe haven for leopard. According to officials, at least 150 leopards live amidst the cane fields. With cane harvesting having begun, leopard sightings have also increased in the area. "Leopards have been attacking villagers after sugarcane harvesting. Three leopard attacks have occurred in Nagina area in the last 10 days. A 14-year-old was killed by leopard and two days ago, a 60-year-old woman was attacked in Fatehpur village when she was mowing grass in a sugarcane field," said a local resident. Villagers are now scared to send their children to school as there is no boundary wall around it. Many schools are located on the outskirts of villages and the routes to reach them are unsafe. Teachers are also scared to take such routes. Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) Jai Karan Yadav said, "We have prepared proposal to construct boundaries around primary and upper primary schools for the safety of the children. The walls are to be built under MNREGA."

# ACTUAL MEANING OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Justice G K Vyas  
Chairman, Rajasthan human rights commission

Our 'Father of Nation' Late Mahatma Gandhi stated for human being: "The greatness of humanity is not in being human, but in being humane." "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed." "Your must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is like an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty." As per the thoughts of our 'Father of Nation', our framers of the Constitution prepared the draft for providing fundamental rights and duties to the citizens of India. The said Constitution was implemented on 26th January, 1950. The basic structure of Constitution is based upon the human rights because our country suffered the slavery for years together. For the first time the freedom of speech and right to life is given to the public after implementation of the Constitution. Human Rights are the most basic rights which are bestowed on each and every individual. These human rights take up their action rights from the birth of these individuals till their death do them apart with their own rights. Every other human on this planet, irrespective of their caste, religion, creed, gender, nationality, social status or color are entitled to these rights. While their rights are being protected by respective country laws. To demonstrate the rights and the freedoms of these human beings, a historical document known as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), was set up in the year 1948. This was indeed the first intentional agreement on the basic principles of human rights. At times, our rights are defined as mere privileges, but I would agree with this notion that our rights are described as to be something more than basic privileges. In simpler words, the entitlement of the fundamental rights which are conferred on every individual is called human rights. We are born with these rights that are present until our death. All the humans surviving on this planet are entitled to these rights. These rights prove to be effective for each and all, irrespective of the fact of who they are or where they come from or how they choose to live. The reason why these rights



are formed is to protect anyone who wants to harm or to violate someone. These human rights give people the freedom to live and to express themselves as to how they want to. Everyone deserves to be themselves and this is supported by human rights. The Indian Parliament enacted the Human Right

Protection Act in the year 1993 in which in every State of the country the Human Rights Commissions were constituted so as to protect the human rights of the citizens. Not only the Central Government, but the State Government is making policies for protection of human rights and a task is given to the State Human Rights Commission to watch the implementation of the policies for protecting human rights. It is very sorry to see that policies were framed by the legislation but implementation of policies are very slow and the administrative officers are not paying heed to the policies for its true implementation and therefore, the National Human Rights Commission as well as the State Human Rights Commission are repeatedly making recommendation for implementation of the policies. Human Rights include- i. Right to life and liberty. ii. Protection from torture. iii. Fair trials. iv. Freedom of expression, religion, peaceful assembly. Human Rights are inclusive of many other rights, as we deepen our thoughts the circle will get bigger. Economic, social and cultural rights cover rights which are namely the right to education, housing and health facilities. All these are available resources are required to be utilized by the government to achieve them. Treaties are formed to protect the rights of women, children, refugees, the LGBTQ+ society, minorities the disabled and domestic workers. We are appreciating two policies of State- namely- (i) for providing free medical facilities to the poor persons- the policy of CHIRINJEEVI YOJNA, in which the poor persons can get best treatment in any of the Hospital free of cost; (ii) likewise, the State Government has established "INDIRA RASOI" which is meant for providing food for the poor people. In these Kitchens the poor person/s can get food after paying consideration of Rs. 8/- only. And the State Government is bearing rest of the expenditure occurred for their food. I have visited so many hospitals as well as Indira Rasoi in which I found that these policies are protecting not only the human lives but also protecting health facilities to the poor people. In these circumstances, I congratulate the State Government because State Government is having intention to protect human rights of the people.

## international

## HAVING BEEN DUPED, US CITY SCRAPS AGREEMENT WITH NITHYANANDA'S 'KAILASA'

Arul Louis | New York

Having been duped, a US city has scrapped a sister-city agreement with the fictional nation of "Kailasa" that the fugitive godman Nithyananda's outfit claimed was recognition by Washington. "Based on deception, the (sister-city) ceremony was groundless and void," Newark Press Secretary Susan Garofalo said in a message to correspondent on Wednesday. "As soon as we learned about the circumstances surrounding Kailasa, the City of Newark immediately took action and rescinded the sister-city agreement on January 18," she added. Despite Newark revoking the agreement, the make-believe "government of Kailasa" continues to post it on its website with the claim, "The United States of America recognises the United States of Kailasa (USK) and signs a bilateral agreement." The Newark caper illustrates how easy it is for groups to manipulate municipal and state bodies taking advantage of their lack of international sophistication to unwittingly make them appear to confer legitimacy on their causes, even when they are at odds with official US positions. "USK's" Newark effort was a part of the



disinformation campaign claiming legitimacy for the "nation" set up by Nithyananda, who fled India in 2019 while facing charges of rape and abduction. Last month, two members of "USK made an appearance at a meeting of a United Nations panel in Geneva when the session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) on sustainable development opened up for questions and comments from the audience. One of them injected their claims that Nithyananda was being "persecuted" into her comments. They then created the false impression on social media that "USK" was recognised

by the UN. In January when a UN panel in Geneva asked for comments on the sexual exploitation of children for a report, USK sent in comments that the panel collated along with those of others. USK then claimed that their report was an official UN document. The agreement with Newark was signed on or around January 11 at a ceremony at which Newark's Mayor Ras Baraka and other city leaders were present. A picture on the "USK" website showed Baraka signing the since revoked agreement with a woman with a turban and a pendant on her forehead and wearing several necklaces while another similarly dressed woman in their trademark attire looked on. Council Member Luis Quintana, who made the motion to junk the agreement, said, "We cannot bring Sister-Cities International into an issue where there is controversy." "We cannot put ourselves in a situation where we put a sister-cities (agreement with a city) that has no human rights and (is involved) in terms of the issues that are created elsewhere," he added. He said, "This oversight cannot happen any longer." There have been other instances of cities and states stepping into controversies involving India.

## 32 PEOPLE DIE FROM LEPTOSPIROSIS IN INDONESIA

Jakarta: At least 32 people died from leptospirosis in Indonesia from January to early March, the Health Ministry said. These death cases were reported in Central Java (18), Yogyakarta (12), and West Java (2), Xinhua news agency reported. "Leptospirosis bacteria spread more readily during the rainy season, which leads to flooding or inundation in many areas," Health Ministry spokesperson Siti Nadia Tarmizi told Xinhua on Thursday. Out of 1,408 cases, 139 leptospirosis deaths were reported in the country last year.

## Child suicides, abuse cases in Japan hit record high in 2022

Tokyo | Agencies

Suicides committed by school-aged children hit a record high of 512 in 2022 in Japan, data from the education ministry showed on Thursday. According to the data, the reasons for the children taking their own lives spanned the mental burden of entrance exams to schools and universities, general woes about grades, and worries about their future, Xinhua news agency reported. The data covered students from elementary school to senior high school age, with suicides by high school boys markedly higher in the reporting period. As a result of the figures being the highest since comparable data became available, the country's education ministry has pushed local education boards to bet-



ter identify at-risk students. Otherwise, the boards have been pushed to provide better career advice to help ease students' concerns about their job prospects after graduating. The education ministry has also asked high schools, where the number of suicides has been the highest, to report on their efforts to understand why a disproportionately high number of students are taking their own lives, their response in the event of a suicide, and what the schools are doing in terms of suicide prevention. Separate data from the National Police Agency (NPA), meanwhile, on Thursday showed that cases of child abuse in 2022 also hit a record high. The agency said that cases of suspected abuse against children aged below 18 that were reported to child welfare sentences surged by 7,703 from the previous year's record to 115,762 cases. The cases involved murder, physical and emotional abuse, revenge porn and stalking, among others, the NPA said.

## DEATH TOLL FROM GREECE TRAIN CRASH RISES TO 57

Athens | Agencies

The death toll from the train crash in central Greece has increased to 57, authorities said. Forty-eight people remain hospitalised, six of them in intensive care, Greek police spokeswoman Konstantia Dimoglidou told journalists on Thursday. A search and rescue operation is expected to conclude on Friday, Greek Fire Service spokesman Vasilios Vathrakogiannis added. An investigation is simultaneously underway to determine the causes of the crash - how and why a passenger train collided head-on with a



freight train travelling in opposite directions, Xinhua news agency reported. A station master has been arrested and charged with manslaughter by negligence. The government has declared a three-day national mourning until Friday and promised that problems affecting the operation of railways will be addressed to prevent such tragedies in the future.

## Fukushima's nuclear wastewater capable of producing cancers after release

Wellington | Agencies

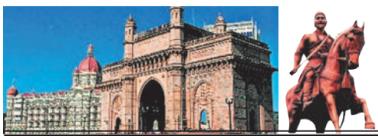
Treated nuclear wastewater from Japan's damaged Fukushima power plant, which, if released into the Pacific Ocean as planned will ultimately reach the High Seas, is "capable of producing cancers", New Zealand scientists said on Friday. Japan has planned to release treated nuclear wastewater from the damaged Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean, reports Xinhua news agency. Jamie Quinton, head of School of Natural Sciences, Massey University, said that in this original unprocessed wastewater, radioactive isotopes of concern were iodine-131 and caesium-137, and that they being used in nuclear medicine radiotherapy means that they have sufficient energy to cause cell death and mutation.



"In other words, they are capable of producing cancers," Quinton said. International law expert Duncan Currie told Xinhua that Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) treatment at best does not remove tritium, and there is next to no sci-

entific information of the effects of tritium on the marine environment, including on different species. Currie noted that planned target in treatment of Fukushima nuclear wastewater is only to remove other radioactive isotopes to "regulatory," rather than detectable, levels. Tests of ALPS treatment systems have not been encouraging, Currie said. "There were several other radioactive products in the unprocessed water that are hazardous to living species and ecosystems. As organisms consume other organisms, more of these radioactive products accumulate in their bodies, which can in turn, end up in humans. So these radioactive elements must be kept out of natural ecosystems as much as possible, especially the ocean," Quinton said. David Krofcheck, senior lecturer in Physics at the University of Auckland, agreed by saying the dan-

ger of indiscriminately releasing nuclear fission products into the ocean is that the products can find their way into the food chain. "Once in the food chain the long-lived nuclear fission heavy nuclei like cesium-137, strontium-90, and iodine-131 tend to concentrate in human muscle, bones, and thyroid, respectively. Cancers can be the result," Krofcheck said. New Zealand should be concerned over nuclear wastewater effects on the Pacific, Currie said, citing modeling that shows movement of radioactive water to the North Pacific, including for instance through uptake in highly migratory fish and marine mammals. Currently, an independent panel of global experts on nuclear issues are supporting Pacific Islands Forum nations in their consultations with Japan over its plans to discharge treated nuclear wastewater into the Pacific Ocean.



# ATTACK ON MNS LEADER STARTS ANOTHER POLITICAL SLUGFEST IN MAHARASHTRA

## Maha breach of privilege move: Sanjay Raut's reply sought



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Soon after the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) spokesperson Sandeep Deshpande was attacked by some unidentified persons during his morning walk, a fresh political ruckus started with finger pointing at each other, here on Friday.

A few hours later, Deshpande, 50, was discharged after treatment, with an arm in a sling, was taken in a wheelchair to his car, and interacted briefly with the media.

"I am not scared by this assault... Everybody knows who is behind it," a defiant Deshpande said without taking names. Dhuri claimed that the sudden assault, the motive of which is not clear, was well-planned one as the assailants, believed to be around four, sported face masks and had come prepared with the weapons to isolate and fatally harm Deshpande.

Earlier, MNS President Thackeray, his son Amit and other senior leaders visited the hospital to enquire after the condition of Deshpande - known for his fiery view on various issues.

Playing the attack, MNS leader Amey Khopkar demanded a probe

into the alleged role of Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders Aditya Thackeray and MP Sanjay Raut behind the assault on Deshpande.

"The police must investigate the involvement of Aditya Thackeray and Sanjay Raut and if anything is found against them, they should be arrested," demanded Khopkar.

Nationalist Congress Party's Leader of Opposition Ajit Pawar took a swipe at Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and said "this is what can be expected in a government of the common masses".

Sena (UBT) Spokesperson Sushma Andhare said the incident proves that Bharatiya Janata Party Deputy Chief Minister is "ineffective" in handling his home portfolio.

NCP MLA Rohit Pawar (grand nephew of NCP President Sharad

Pawar) said it's a matter of concern how many political leaders are being targeted, threatened or attacked in the past few months.

He cited the instances of Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Aditya Thackeray, Pradnya Rajeev Satav, or today's incident of Deshpande - plus Dr. Jitendra Awhad, and wondered if prominent politicians are not secure then how can the common man feel safe. BJP city President Ashish Shelar said even he has been getting similar threats to "spray bullets into him" and wondered whether there was any link with the assault on Deshpande. MNS leader Avinash Jadhav warned that they would not retaliate in stealth, but "we shall storm into their press conferences and public meetings and hammer them".

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra Legislative Assembly has sought Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut's reply to the breach of privilege notice moved by the ruling ally Bharatiya Janata Party members, by Friday (March 3) evening.

Raut, who is currently touring Sangli, told media persons that he has "not received any notice" so far, adding that this is a legal matter and he would require time to file his reply.

"I have already been to jail... If I don't submit the reply, shall I be hanged?" countered Raut, who is under fire for his purported 'chor mandal' remarks that enraged the state's legislators.

On Thursday, the Maharashtra Legislative Council Deputy Chairperson Dr. Neelam Gorhe directed him to file his reply to a similar notice from the Upper House within seven days.

The Opposition Sena (UBT) Leader of Opposition in the Council Ambadas Danve has moved a separate



breach of privilege notice against Chief Minister Eknath Shinde for his remarks calling the Opposition as 'anti-nationals' (desh-drohi) after they boycotted his session-eve tea-party last Sunday.

On Thursday, the Chief Minister clarified that his statement was intended at the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLA Nawab Malik, who is currently in jail for alleged deals with the mafia.

Quickly reacting to this,

Raut said that even his statement ('chor mandal') was directed at the CM Shinde's Shiv Sena MLAs and not at the entire legislature.

A day before, Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar expressed his reservations on the formation of the committee excluding Sena (UBT) members, but including the complainant on the panel, besides the legality and guidelines for such a move since Raut is a Member of Rajya Sabha.

## IPS officer Rashmi Shukla appointed DG of SSB, faced phone-tapping allegations

Team Absolute | New Delhi | Mumbai

The Central government has appointed Rashmi Shukla, an IPS officer of the Maharashtra cadre as the Director General (DG) of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). Shukla has been accused in a phone tapping case.

She was accused of tapping the phones of Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Eknath Khadse among others.

A complaint had been registered in the matter, however the Eknath Shinde government rejected the demands to prosecute her.

Shukla's posting was done on Thursday and she will be replacing Anish Dayal Singh.

The 1988 batch officer has previously headed the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) as Additional Director General and has been the former Chief of Maharashtra Intelligence Department.

The order issued on Thursday read that the



Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved Shukla's promotion to the rank of DG in February. Shukla has also been a recipient of several accolades.

## WOMAN'S BODY FOUND WITH MULTIPLE STAB WOUNDS

Thane: The body of a 33-year-old woman with multiple stab wounds was found in her hut at Kalwa in Maharashtra's Thane city, police said on Friday. The body was found on Thursday evening in Jai Bhim Nagar locality, they said. The woman was identified as Kamlibai Pawar and her body was sent for post-mortem, the police said.

"A police team was informed about a woman lying in her house in an injured condition. The team rushed to the place and found the woman lying in a pool of blood with multiple stab wounds," a police official said. "Someone had attacked her with sharp weapons.

## Ahead of SSC exam, love-torn teen killed by girlfriend's kin

Team Absolute | Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar

In a shocking tragedy ahead of the SSC exams, a love-torn minor boy was killed by his girlfriend's family after they caught them together at their home, an official said here on Friday.

The Vajapur Police have arrested three persons of a single family for murdering the boy and dumping his body in a nearby field, said Investigating Officer Manoj Patil.

The incident happened in Bhivgaon village on the night of February 25, when the boy from the neighbouring Borsar

village had sneaked in to meet his girlfriend at her home.

When the girl's family members learnt of this and their 'affair', they were furious and brutally hammered the boy, dragged him out of the house and then dumped him in an adjoining field.

It was only after around five days that the locals stumbled upon the victim's highly decomposing body and informed the Vajapur Police which rushed a team to the spot, said Patil. After establish-



ing his identity, the police learnt that he had gone to meet his girlfriend -- both aged 15 and classmates in Class 10 in a local school -- and

confronted her family.

Following sustained interrogation, the family finally revealed the truth, and the girl, who was initially unwilling to cooperate also admitted that she was in a serious relationship with her deceased boyfriend.

"We have arrested the prime accused Madhavrao Jangle, 65, and his sons,

Dadasaheb and Sunil on charges of murder. They are the grandfather, father and uncle of the girl," said Patil.

The accused father-sons were produced before the Magistrate Court which remanded them to police custody till March 6, and further investigations would now be conducted by a female officer from the police headquarters.

Incidentally, both the teen lovers were planning to write the SSC public exams which got underway across Maharashtra from March 2, but it is not clear if the girl will appear for the crucial examinations or not after her boyfriend's grisly death.

## Democracy under threat, whole world knows about it: Aaditya Thackeray

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena Leader (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray on Friday said that democracy in India is under threat and the whole world knows about it.

While speaking to the media he said, "Our democracy is under threat and the whole world knows about it. Not only Rahul Gandhi but everyone is saying the same thing. Only those who are standing with Government do not accept the reality of today but deep inside even they know that."

Earlier Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a lecture at Cambridge University in London stated that intelligence officers had warned him of pegasus software in his phone and he should be aware of that.



In this regard, Aaditya Thackeray said, "I don't know about his phone being tapped but those who are trying to speak the truth in this country their voices are being stifled"

"People's phones were also tapped in Maharashtra, on which no action has been taken yet", he added. Rahul Gandhi made these remarks at Cambridge Business school on the theme "Learning to Listen in the 21st century".

Congress leader stated that democracy is under threat and all the institutional frameworks required in the country be it judiciary, parliament, or free press are getting constrained.

He further stated that India is a union of states and the Union requires negotiation and conversation and that negotiation is under attack and threat.

## 2 from Surat nabbed for sneaking into SRK's home, cops probe motives

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A day after nabbing two youths from Gujarat's Surat for allegedly trespassing into the iconic 'Mannat' bungalow of Bollywood mega-star Shah Rukh Khan here, the Bandra Police are probing the 'motives' of the duo's action, official sources said here on Friday.

The Bandra Police swung into action after an alert from the actor's team late on Thursday night that they had caught the duo -- who claimed to be fans of the actor -- jumped over the boundary wall and sneaked into the bungalow on Bandra Bandstand ostensibly to meet and greet SRK.

In what is considered as a major security breach, the



two youngsters, aged in their early 20s, managed to reach the third floor of the bungalow, but were apprehended by the startled security personnel after they spied them sauntering on the premises late last evening.

It is not immediately clear

if the actor or his family was present in the bungalow, or whether anything was damaged or stolen, but the Bandra Police are understood to have 'advised' Khan to carry out a review cum audit of his security detail.

## Result of Kasba Peth shows...": Team Uddhav as BJP stunned in Maharashtra

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Launching an attack on the BJP after the latter lost the Kasba Peth Assembly to the consensus MVA candidate, the official mouthpiece of Shiv Sena (UBT), Saamana, today claimed the bypoll result goes to show the deep-seated public discontent against the BJP in Maharashtra and across the country.

In an editorial published on Friday, the mouthpiece said, "The result of Kasba Peth (Assembly bypoll) shows the deep-seated public discontent against the Bharatiya Janata Party in Maharashtra and in India as well. The voters are aware of all that is happening around them and hence voted against the BJP. The bypoll result in Kasba is being celebrated across Pune. This celebration will continue till 2024, not just in Maharashtra but across the country



as well."

Further, on the victory in Kasba Peth, the editorial claimed the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) had breached a BJP bastion.

MVA-backed Congress candidate Ravindra Dhangekar won the Kasba Peth bypoll, trouncing BJP's Hemant Rasane by 10,915 votes.

"These bypolls had to be held owing

to the untimely demise of BJP MLAs Mukatai Tilak and Laxman Jagtap, and it is the BJP, which now has to bear the embarrassment of losing the prestigious seat of Kasba," the Saamana editorial read further.

On the MVA's loss in the other bypoll for the Chinchwad Assembly seat of Pune, the editorial stated that the BJP only emerged victorious after a struggle.

"In Kasba, the Maha Vikas Aghadi's candidate Ravindra Dhangekar defeated BJP's Hemant Rasane (by a comfortable margin), while in Chinchwad, the wife of late MLA Laxman Jagtap, emerged victorious only because of a three-way split in the Opposition votes. Had it been a contest between two candidates like Kasba, the BJP, which believes in 'Khokeshahi' (splashing cash to seize power), would not have won," the editorial read.

"The contribution of the 'original'

Shiv Sena, which was in the alliance at that time, was equally important in the BJP's victory in the town till date. If the Shiv Sainiks had not put its efforts at the time, then this so-called citadel of the BJP would have collapsed long time back," it read.

The Kasba seat was considered a BJP stronghold in Maharashtra as the party held the constituency for 28 years.

The bye-election in Kasba was necessitated after the BJP's Mukta Tilak died after a prolonged battle with cancer in December 2022.

Grish Bapat, who is presently a BJP MP from Pune, represented the seat five times till 2019.

The victory of Congress in Kasba is significant as it was the first direct contest between the ruling BJP-Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the MVA after the change of guard in the state last year.

## GIRL, DIES BY SUICIDE, ACCUSES FATHER OF SEX ABUSE

Palghar: A 14-year-old girl allegedly hanged herself to death at her house in Vasai taluka of Maharashtra's Palghar district, with the police recovering a "suicide note" in which she accused her father of sexually abusing her, an official said. The girl died three days back at her family residence in Valiv and the note was found on Thursday, he said.

After her death, the minor's body was sent to a government hospital for post-mortem and a case of accidental death was registered. "In the suicide note purportedly written by the girl, she alleged that her father sexually abused her. It also said that although she raised the issue with her mother, the latter failed to take any action on it," an official said. In the note, the girl sought strict punishment for her father, he said, adding that a probe into the case is on.



# 'SOCIAL MEDIA WASN'T AROUND US'

Christina Aguilera feels 'bad' for younger generations of social media era

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Christina Aguilera is a "very sensitive person." She's learned how to deal with the scrutiny that's come her way. She told Allure magazine: "I've grown up in this business. I started performing at six or seven and then I broke when I was a teenager. No matter what you do, you're going to have people that hate on you."

"The bigger you are and the more successful, unfortunately, that comes with more hate or more scrutiny. And I'm a very sensitive person, but I'm also very tough at the end of the day."

Aguilera said that social media has changed the landscape for up-and-coming stars. The 'Genie in a Bottle' hitmaker is also conscious of how it might influence her own children.

The pop singer, who has Max, 15, and Summer, eight, explained: "Social media wasn't around when I was coming up, and now I feel bad for people that don't want to be in the business and just look at comments. My daughter's not there yet with looking or posting yet, but I'm very conscious of the day when these things happen."

"The re-release of 'Beautiful' video was about being mindful of what we're teaching our kids. I always try to impose individuality, doing what she feels is right for her. Even when she goes to pick out her clothes and she's like, 'I just don't know what to wear.' I'm like, 'Wear what you like. It doesn't matter at the end of the day. You're going to have an amazing day and you're going to feel amazing. It's just clothes.'"

# Jenna Ortega speaks out against stereotype that Gen-Z is 'unintelligent'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Jenna Ortega has shared her two cents on stereotypes about Gen Z. In a new interview, the breakout 'Wednesday' star spoke out against the stereotypes about teenagers that irk her.

The former Disney Channel star addressed the issue when making an appearance on 'Hot Ones' with host Sean Evans, reports aceshowbiz.com.

In the episode, she was asked if there's a Gen Z Trope or stereotype about teens in scripts that "gets under" her skin.

Unsurprisingly, Jenna was quick to call out some misconceptions about high schoolers.

The 'Scream VI' actress noticed that teenagers are often depicted as "unintelligent," which does not reflect her generation because so much is "accessible to them on the Internet."

She went on to insist, "I wish that they were given a bit more credit. We can be smart, sometimes!"

Prior to this, Jenna talked about how she feels that "a lot of" Hollywood bosses still lack awareness of today's issues. Speaking to New York Magazine's The Cut, the "You" star addressed the challenges of meeting "expectations" of what a Latina actress should look like or the kind of roles she should be taking on.

"It goes back to the 'your own worst critic' thing. Nothing anybody else could say is gonna bother me as much as something I could say," Jenna said. "When it comes to Latina expectations, it's so easy for me to brush those off because the people who are in positions of power right now or who have been in positions of power for so long in the industry, a lot of them are out of touch or just not necessarily familiar because they grew up in a very different time."

"So I think that I personally have so much fun pushing the boundaries and doing all of the things that, you know, the Latina character 'shouldn't' do. We were never the hero of the story or the lead of the story, and I love to be able to push back on that," she elaborated.

# Keanu Reeves shared the experience of working in 'John Wick: Chapter 4'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Keanu Reeves has shared the experience of working with director Chad Stahelski in 'John Wick: Chapter 4'. He said: "Working with this core team of creatives who have been responsible for the visionary look and building the world of the John Wick films has been such an honour. Working with Chad on that vision, plus the story and action, has been a pleasure. His take on the way action and dramatic storytelling must go hand in hand, is aligned to my taste."

The actor further added while sharing his experience of shooting with Chad: "It's been great to have a creative collaborator to put me in dramatic positions and action situations, where we had to come up with new terms, like gun-fu, and car-fu, just to describe them."

"We've created a wonderful playground to explore what you can do with this character. Over the course of these chapters, we've been able to continue to surprise and to world-build and innovate with John Wick."

Lionsgate and PVR Pictures will release John Wick: Chapter 4 in theatres on March 24 in India. This is a direct sequel to the 2019 film John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum and will be the longest film in the Keanu Reeves series.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Selena Gomez broke her brief social media hiatus to compliment fellow superstar Lizzo on her new blue highlights, which she unveiled in TikTok video.

The pop star praised the Truth Hurts hitmaker's look, by dropping a blue heart under her post, which featured audio of Gomez gushing about getting an aqua streak in her hair back in 2007.

"I've got some blue going on!" the two-time Grammy nominee can be heard saying in the background as Lizzo played with her colorful new locks. "I like a little edge, a little pop in my hair, so I wanted to add something different, especially for the Teen Vogue party."

In the recording, Lizzo can be seen sporting a fuzzy white robe after undergoing hair and makeup ahead of a performance in Milan.

The performer looked absolutely radiant in the footage as she sported a smoky blue eyeshadow, plenty of blush and her tresses styled in glamorous curls.

Last Thursday, Gomez announced she was going to spend some time online after defending her 'best friend' Taylor Swift from Hailey Bieber.

Last week, drama began when a clip was unearthed showing her ex-boyfriend's wife and Method Man, who used to co-host the show Drop The Mic, taking aim at Taylor's score-settling songs.

Method Man teased a 'rap battle full of the meanest lyrics about a celebrity since Taylor Swift's last album,' prompting Hailey to mime making herself vomit.

A TikTok account posted the video and wrote: "This is REAL Hailey 'Bieber,' denouncing Hailey as a 'bully' and a 'mean girl!'"

Adding fuel to the fire, Selena leapt into the TikTok comments to write: "Sorry, my best friend is and continues to be one of the best in the game."

Taylor and Selena have been friends since 2008, when they were both teen stars dating two different Jonas Brothers.

Selena Gomez ends social media break!



# ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Yazmin Oukhellou

# That's what you want from an actor: Yorgos Lanthimos

Willem Dafoe made Emma Stone slap him 20 times while filming 'And'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Emma Stone, who hasn't acted in a film since 2021, that will soon change thanks to two new collaborations with her 'The Favourite' director Yorgos Lanthimos.

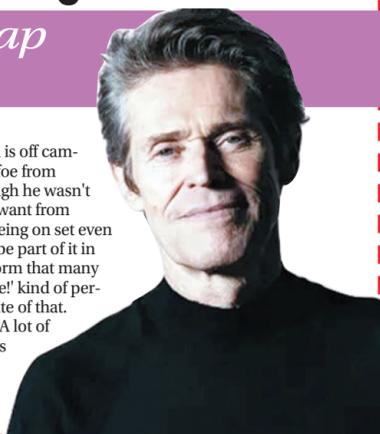
The first is 'Poor Things', a Frankenstein-inspired story in which Stone plays a woman whose brain gets replaced by that of her unborn child, and the second is 'And,' plot details for which remain under wraps. In both films, Stone stars opposite Willem Dafoe. But it was only 'And' that required Stone to slap Dafoe across the face 20 times.

In a new Dafoe profile published by The New York Times, it's revealed that Dafoe asked to be slapped repeatedly for a scene in which he does not

even appear on camera.

Stone slaps Dafoe's character, which is off camera in the shot. But that didn't stop Dafoe from wanting to be present on set even though he wasn't required to be there. "That's what you want from actors," Lanthimos said about Dafoe being on set even when he's not in the shot. "To want to be part of it in any way." "There's this instinct to perform that many actors have - the 'look at me, look at me!' kind of performer," Stone added. "He's the opposite of that. Maybe it's changed through the years. A lot of actors I bond with have been doing this for a long time, and you know they've gone from 'I' to 'We.'"

'Poor Things' will most likely arrive in theatres ahead of 'And'.





## IND vs AUS 3rd Test Day 3

# Head, Labuschagne take Australia to comprehensive 9 wicket win

Team Absolute | Indore

Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne slammed unbeaten 49 and 28 respectively to take Australia to a comprehensive nine-wicket win over India in the third Test at Holkar Stadium.

Day three's play began with Australia needing 76 runs to win on a minefield of a pitch. Despite losing Usman Khawaja early for a two-ball duck, Head and Labuschagne were able to make short work of the target and got the job done in 18.5 overs to make the four-game scoreline 2-1.

The victory also means that Australia have qualified for the World Test Championship final, to be held from June 7-11 at The Oval in London.

The day began with Ravichandran Ashwin getting an outside edge on Khawaja's forward defence and KS Bharat catching it behind. Khawaja went for a review, but replays showed a healthy spike on the UltraEdge, giving India some relief.

A fiercely determined Ashwin asked tough questions of Head and Labuschagne and even took a DRS against the latter when Virat Kohli, at



leg-slip, took a diving catch, which resulted in India burning a review.

After some quiet overs as Australia were just 13/1 in ten overs, Head broke the shackles by whacking Ashwin over mid-on for four and followed it up with a huge six down the ground in the 11th over where India had first to change the ball. Head welcomed Ravindra Jadeja by hammering

a four over his head and Labuschagne ended the over by sweeping the left-arm spinner through mid-wicket for another boundary in the over.

When Ashwin overpitched, Labuschagne quickly brought out the cover drive for a delightful four. When Jadeja sent in an arm ball, Head played the cut late through backward point for another boundary. Ashwin was taken apart in the 15th over, as Head danced down the pitch to punch through cover while Labuschagne placed a reverse sweep well through backward point to make it two fours in the over.

India introduced Umesh Yadav in the bowling attack as a last throw of dice. But Head and Labuschagne were unstoppable; the former slapped the Vidarbha pacer through cover while the latter pulled past square leg to make it two boundaries.

When Ashwin pitched up, Head smacked down the ground for four. Labuschagne finished off the chase in style by dancing down the pitch and lofting past mid-on for four to take Australia to an emphatic Test victory in India, and their first in the country since the 2017 win in Pune.



## IT WAS A COMPLETE PERFORMANCE IN THE END: SMITH

Indore | Australia's stand-in captain Steve Smith said his side produced a complete performance by the end of the third Test at Holkar Stadium.

"I think obviously that first day, losing the toss and having to bowl first. But our bowlers did really well, especially Kuhnemann. With the bat, Usman was really good in the first innings."

"We had some good partnerships. India bowled really well in the back end; we had a bit of a collapse. We had to toil hard yesterday, Pujji (Cheteshwar Pujara) played a good knock, but all our bowlers did really well. It was a complete performance in the end," said Smith.

"It's a place that I really enjoy and I think I did a reasonable job this week. The approach will be much the same. We have to see what the conditions are like. It's good to be in the WTC final but it's just about playing good cricket. Hopefully, we can finish the series well."

"It's been a pretty remarkable series. But to come out here and put out a good team performance was pretty special. I don't have all the skills and all the tricks in the trade but the one thing I have is the belief in my stock ball."

## THE PITCH IN INDORE HAS BEEN RATED AS "POOR"



Dubai | The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Friday announced that the pitch for the third Test of the ICC World Test Championship series between India and Australia at the Holkar Cricket Stadium in Indore has been rated as "poor" under its Pitch and Outfield Monitoring Process.

ICC Match Referee Chris Broad submitted his report to the ICC expressing the concerns of the match officials and after consulting with captains of both teams. Following the assessment, the venue has received three demerit points.

Following the assessment, the venue has received three demerit points. The report has been forwarded to the BCCL, who now have 14 days if they wish to appeal against the sanction.

"The pitch, which was very dry, did not provide a balance between bat and ball, favouring spinners from the start. The fifth ball of the match broke through the pitch surface and continued to occasionally break the surface providing little or no seam movement and there was excessive and uneven bounce throughout the match," said Broad in an ICC media release.

When a venue collects five demerit points (or crosses that threshold), it will be suspended from hosting any international cricket for a period of 12 months. A venue is suspended from staging any international cricket for 24 months when it reaches the threshold of 10 demerit points.



## WE DIDN'T BAT WELL IN THE FIRST INNINGS, ADMITS ROHIT SHARMA AFTER LOSS

Team Absolute | Indore

After a comprehensive nine-wicket loss to Australia in the third Test here, India skipper Rohit Sharma admitted that the hosts paid the price of not batting well in the first innings.

"When you lose a Test match, there are a lot of things that didn't go our way. To start with, we didn't bat well in the first innings. We understand how important it is to put runs on the board in the first innings. And obviously, when they got an 80-90 run lead, we needed to put in a big performance with the bat but we couldn't do that, taking just a 75-run lead," he said in the post-match presentation ceremony. In the second innings, barring top-order batter Cheteshwar Pujara's 59, none of the batters

stepped up as Nathan Lyon took an eight-wicket haul. We had to try and be brave, which I think we were not. We can take a lot of credit as well, how we batted in the first two games. "One odd game can happen where things don't come together, but even then you need players to come together and chip in. We wanted a few guys to stand up but it didn't happen. We were slightly behind and we did not apply ourselves the way we would have liked to." "Honestly, we haven't thought about it yet. We just finished this Test now so we need to regroup and try. We need to understand that we need to improve as a team. When you are playing on challenging pitches you have to bowl. We allowed their bowlers to bowl in one spot. Not to take any credit away from their bowlers, Nathan Lyon especially."

# "In father's footsteps"

## Ronaldinho's son joins Barcelona academy

Madrid (Spain) | Agencies

FC Barcelona made an important connection with their past when they confirmed the signing of forward Joao Mendes -- the son of legendary Brazilian forward Ronaldinho.

The 18-year-old is expected to initially form a part of Barcelona's B team, which plays in Spanish football's third tier, the club informed.

Mendes, who had been without a club since leaving Brazil's Cruzeiro in February last year, impressed Barcelona coaches during a trial earlier this year, reports



Xinhua.

The youngster has already made his debut with Barca's under-19 side in a friendly against Manchester United. He is a player who can play as a central striker or in a deeper role.

He is right-footed but good with his left, and Barca hope he will be able to follow in his father's footsteps.

Ronaldinho spent five seasons with Barcelona between 2003-2008 and played a huge part in lifting the club to dominance between 2004-2006 when Barca won back-to-back La Liga titles and the Champions League trophy.

He played 207 times for Barca, scoring 94 goals, with arguably his most memorable performance coming in November 2005 when he scored two goals in a 3-0 win away to Real Madrid, which even saw some Madrid supporters applaud him.

# VICTORY IN AHMEDABAD WILL CONFIRM INDIA'S SPOT AFTER DEFEAT IN INDORE

## WTC Final Scenarios

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India's nine-wicket defeat to Australia has made Rohit Sharma & Co's path to qualifying for the World Test Championship (WTC) final, to be held from June 7-11 at The Oval in London, a little bit complex.

While India hold on to second place on the standings with 60.29 of their possible WTC points and are in prime position to qualify for the final, they can still be overtaken by Sri Lanka should results go against Rohit Sharma's side over the coming weeks.

A victory in the fourth Test against Australia in Ahmedabad will ensure India's spot in the WTC Final. But another victory for the visitors or a draw will leave the door open for Sri Lanka to overtake India and snatch the last spot for the final.

Sri Lanka have two Tests to play away from

## AUSTRALIA ON TOP OF ICC WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

TEAM	PCT (%)	PTS	W	L	D	SER	PEN
AUSTRALIA	68.52	148	11	3	4	6	0
INDIA	60.29	123	10	5	2	6	-5
SRI LANKA	53.33	64	5	4	1	5	0
SOUTH AFRICA	52.38	88	7	6	1	6	0
ENGLAND	46.97	124	10	8	4	6	-12
PAKISTAN	38.1	64	4	6	4	6	0
WEST INDIES	37.5	54	4	6	2	6	-2
NEW ZEALAND	27.27	36	2	6	3	5	0
BANGLADESH	11.11	16	1	10	1	6	0

PCT (%): Percentage  
SER: Number of Series played  
D: Number of matches drawn  
W: Number of matches won  
L: Number of matches lost  
PTS: Number of points awarded  
PEN: Number of penalty overs

home against New Zealand this month and know they have to complete a 2-0 series sweep over the Kiwis to have any chance of snatching a spot for the WTC final. But with New Zealand recently holding England to a 1-1 draw at home, it is easier said than done for Sri Lanka to stop India from qualifying for the WTC final unless something dramatic happens.

For Australia, they have now got their first-ever spot in a WTC final. Australia have been the dominant side during this WTC period of 2021-23, with Pat Cummins' side having won 11 of the 18 Tests they have featured in, and winning the Indore Test with Steve Smith at helm.

The victory in Indore has helped Australia amass an impressive 68.52 of their possible WTC points and that means they will finish the current period in first place on the standings regardless of the result in the final Test of their ongoing series against India at Ahmedabad.

# Dubai Tennis Championships Djokovic, Medvedev to face off in blockbuster semifinal



Dubai | Agencies

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic moved into the semifinals of the Dubai Tennis Championships with a hard-fought straight-sets 6-3, 7-5 win against Hubert Hurkacz of Poland, setting up a blockbuster semifinal clash with former world no 1 Daniil Medvedev.

Djokovic, competing in his first tournament since lifting his record-extending 10th Australian Open trophy, is now 15-0 in the season, marking his fourth-best winning streak to start a season.

The Pole threw everything in his deep arsenal at Djokovic on the centre court. From winning a point after hitting a tweener in the early moments of the match to putting pressure on the Serbian by moving forward, the Pole tried to take the 35-year-old out of his comfort zone.

But Djokovic dominated on serve - he did not face a break point - and chipped away to earn opportunities until he broke through. The top seed converted two of his eight opportunities to advance after one hour and 21 minutes and take a 5-0 lead in the pair's ATP head-to-head series.

In the first round, the Serb needed a final-set tie-break to claw past Tomas Machac. Now Djokovic is two wins from capturing his sixth title in Dubai and his 94th tour-level crown overall. That would tie him with Ivan Lendl for the third-most titles in the Open Era.

The 22-time Grand Slam champion will be fully focused on the face-off with Medvedev, who ousted eighth seed Borna Coric 6-3, 6-2 in the last match of the day. The third seed won the last 21 points of the match to send a message to his next opponent.

# Copa del Rey Barcas make case for defense with 1-0 win at Real Madrid in semis

FC Barcelona produced a rock-solid and very untypical defensive display to beat Real Madrid 1-0 at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in the first leg of their Copa del Rey semifinal.

Madrid | Agencies

Real Madrid dominated possession in the first half, with Luka Modric running on goal in the first minute, although the offside flag went up. The flag went up again in the 12th minute to rule out an effort from Benzema after a good cross from Vinicius Junior, who was involved in most of Madrid's attacking play, but also looking for niggles with the Barca players, reports news agency Xinhua.

Barca opened the scoring with a touch of fortune in the 27th minute. Eduardo Camavinga lost possession in his own half, the ball was threaded to Kessie and although Thibaut Courtois saved well with his feet, the ball rebounded into the net off Eder Militao.

Vinicius responded with a cross that was cut out by Ter Stegen and after Gavi's cross just evaded Raphinha, Dani Carvajal wasted Real Madrid's best chance of the half, drifting in unmarked behind the Barca defense before volleying high and wide.

Madrid came strongly out of the blocks at the start of the second half, but despite Barca at times being reduced to clearing the ball aimlessly upfield for Raphinha to chase, the only save Marc-Andre ter Stegen had to make was from Vinicius' curling cross.

Barca could have made it 2-0 only for



Ansu Fati to deflect Kessie's shot wide when it looked to have beaten Courtois, and Rodrygo fired wide in the closing

moments, but Barca will be happy with the result ahead of the return in the Camp Nou on April 5th.

# Ability to stay grounded makes Kohli champion: Dinesh Karthik



Bangalore | Agencies

Virat Kohli's ability to stay grounded despite achieving so much is the reason for the cult-like following the former India and Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper has developed over the years, says his former India and RCB teammate Dinesh Karthik, now gaining a reputation as a noted commentator.

Karthik described Kohli as an emotional, caring and reactive person who has achieved so much on and off the field makes him a champion in all walks of life.

"He has carried the team for the last 10 years. His consistency and mastery over the game. I don't think anybody has achieved it in the world of cricket for a very, very long time," said Karthik, who has seen Kohli up close while sharing the dressing room with him for Team India and the Royal Challengers Bangalore.

"His dominance for about close to a decade is unparalleled. We have to understand

that there are three different formats, and playing three different formats itself is difficult and then there he is averaging 50 in all of them, travelling abroad and scoring as well. I can speak about him a lot. He is very chill, very easy, with the bowlers, the young guys," Karthik said.

Karthik also gave an insight into the man beneath the imposing Kohli persona.

"I have a nice equation with Kohli, I think I really like him as a person. The way he's able to handle the situation right now, a lot of credit to him for that, and he still has a smile on his face. I give him a lot of respect. The love and affection he's getting from the world, he deserves it, and it is good to see him in good spirits. You know, he is a very, very emotional, caring, and reactive person," said the RCB batter.

The wicketkeeper batter from Tamil Nadu said his own contented state of mind helped him view the achievements of Kohli and other contemporaries like MS Dhoni with positivity.



## "DEEPIKA PADUKONE IS ONE OF THE CHOSEN FEW FROM THE WORLD"

**DEEPIKA JOINS DWAYNE JOHNSON, MICHAEL B. JORDAN AS PRESENTER AT OSCARS 2023**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Deepika Padukone is one of the chosen few from the world who will be presenting an award at the Oscars 2023 ceremony. Deepika joins the likes of Emily Blunt, Samuel L. Jackson, Dwayne Johnson, Michael B. Jordan, Janelle Monae, Zoe Saldana, Jennifer Connelly, Riz Ahmed, and Melissa McCarthy among a few others to be part of this honour. The 95th Oscars will air live on ABC on Sunday, March 12, 2023.

A list of names was shared on The Academy's Instagram handle. The caption read: "Meet your first slate of presenters for the 95th Oscars. Tune into ABC to watch the Oscars LIVE on Sunday, March 12th at Oscars95."

On the work front, Deepika will next be seen in 'Fighter' starring Hrithik Roshan and Anil Kapoor. The film is directed by Siddhant Anand. She will also be seen in 'Project K', alongside Prabhas and Amitabh Bachchan.



## 'Gen Z... HA HA their limbs & legs are like sticks'

**KANGANA CALLS GEN-Z 'GAJAR MULI', SAYS THEY 'HATE TO COMMIT, LAZY TO HAVE SEX'**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut has said that Gen Z can't afford to buy homes, hate to commit and are too lazy to even have sex. She even tagged them as 'gajar muli'. She wrote on her Instagram Stories: "Gen Z... HA HA their limbs and legs are like sticks, they spend most of their time on phones than actually interacting, observing or reading, they are incapable of consistency and seriously believe that they should simply be given the post of Boss who they don't respect because their Boss believes in discipline and came up hard way and GenZ only respect quick success." She added:

"GenZ loves starbuds and Avocado toast but can't afford to buy a home, they can rent branded clothes to impress on SM but hate to commit or marry, studies even show that they are too lazy to have sex as well, the woke worm GenZ are literally like gajar muli."

"Rolling Eyes And Silly Slang GenZ is easy to influence manipulate even brain wash. Well!! millennials are so much better, we rule!! How about some yoga sports and exercises GenZ...?" Kangana is currently shooting for Chandramukhi 2. Helmed by P. Vasu, it is the sequel to the Tamil horror comedy film Chandramukhi which features Rajinikanth and Jyothika.



**THE FILM HAS FIGHTS AND CHASES THAT ARE RAZOR-SHARP & SUPER-FAST: AJAY DEVGN**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor-filmmaker Ajay Devgn is gearing up for the release of his upcoming film 'Bholaa' and has hinted that it's going to have unique stunts. The trailer of the film is all set to release in 3D and for the first time ever, a Hindi film trailer will be launched in an IMAX format. So, the decibel levels surrounding the trailer in the trade and audiences are truly understandable.

"I want people to see the action and feel the vibe before saying anything about

it," said Ajay Devgn. But he hints that the stunts, the chases, and the fights seen in Bholaa are going to be definition-changing. "The approach is raw; it is based in rural India and it has fights and chases that are razor-sharp and super-fast. The terrain is rough, the fighters are menacing. The whole idea is to give the action a newer dimension because I am partial to action." "I grew up doing innovative action under my father Veeru Devgan's supervision and I like the challenges around stunts."

**I PRAY THAT AUDIENCE WATCH MY MOVIE IN THEATRES: SHRADDHA KAPOOR**

Aakruti Bagla | Mumbai

Actress Shraddha Kapoor is all set to mark her comeback on the big screen with Luv Ranjan's Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar. The flick also stars Ranbir Kapoor in a pivotal role and is all set to release on 8th March.

Ahead of the release, the actress divulged in a freewheeling chat with the media.

The actress will soon clock 13 years in showbiz. When asked about what have been her learnings from the highs and lows she went through in her career, Shraddha shared, "You definitely feel good when a movie goes well. Nothing, in my opinion, is more important than the audience's judgement. They ultimately decide on the highs and lows, and I appreciate that. However, viewers today are more selective than ever. They don't care who the actor is, who the director is, or what banner the movie is from. All they need is a decent movie. This encourages us to put out our best effort. At the end of the day, all I want to do is be in movies that entertain people."

Talking about why audience response is validating, Shraddha shared, "We make films for the audience. So going and watching the film is the ultimate. Their likes and dislikes are to be considered because they will decide on this film as well. So their love and support is the biggest validation."

She further added, "It's been my childhood dream to be an actor. My family has been my eternal support. They have been patient and supported me throughout. I can be very stubborn sometimes and my dad handles me well."

The film is releasing on the occasion of Holi. Spilling beans about her plans, she said, "I pray that people are going to theatres to watch my film. I hope that people get entertained and they are eating lots of popcorn and watching my film."

Aashiqui 2 was the turning point of Shraddha's career. As the film is all set to complete 10 years the actress reminisced about getting more opportunities post the success of the film. She said, "I am grateful for Aashiqui 2 as I feel before that no one wanted to work with me. It was difficult to get people to believe in me. I had auditioned for so many films. People feel I belong to the film family so things are easy for me. But my journey has more of been like an outsider. I started getting better offers post Aashiqui 2's success."



**MY PERSONALITY IS VERY BORING : RANBIR KAPOOR**

**Ranbir feels that it is not possible for him to keep entertaining people all the time on social media**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Ranbir Kapoor said that he prefers to stay away from social media or show less of his personal side so that his fans can relate to his character and are more interested in watching him on-screen.

He also found himself "boring" as a person and he felt that it is not possible for him to keep entertaining people all the time on social media.

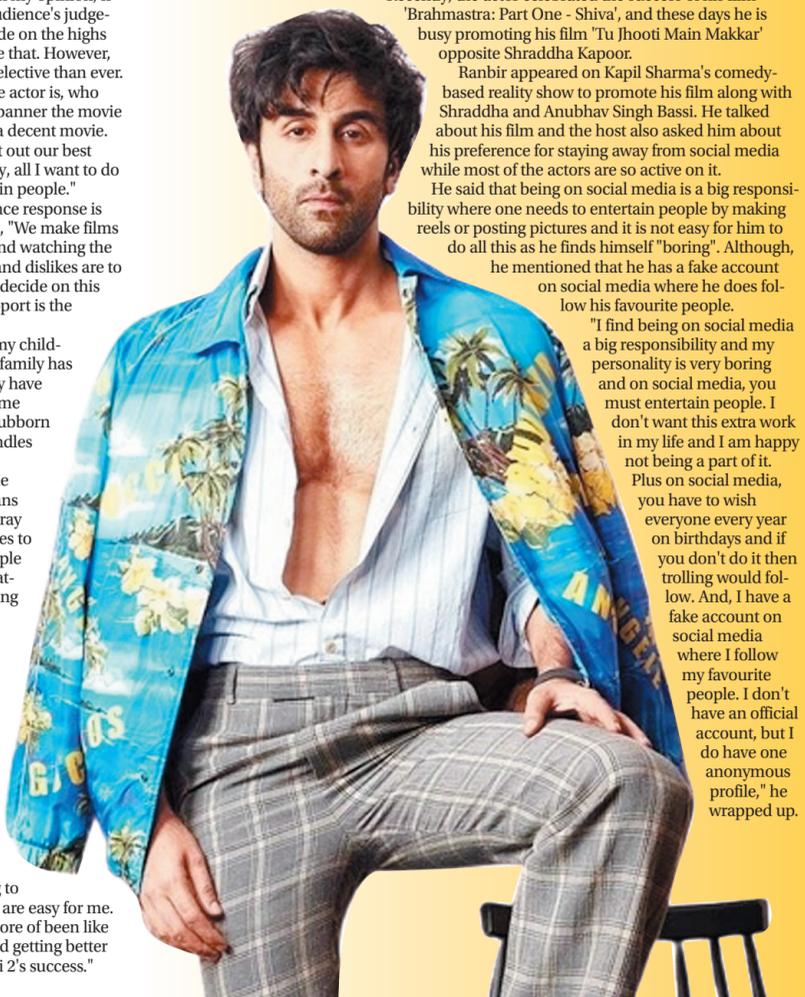
He shared: "Actually there are a lot of reasons but I feel that these days, the mystery surrounding us as actors is gradually fading. People are watching us everywhere on screens while promoting or doing ads, and now they see us on social media, and that's why they will to watch us in theatres is reducing according to me. So, my vision was that I should show myself to the audience less so that they could better relate to my character and believe in it more."

Recently, the actor celebrated the success of his film 'Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva', and these days he is busy promoting his film 'Tu Jhoothi Main Makkar' opposite Shraddha Kapoor.

Ranbir appeared on Kapil Sharma's comedy-based reality show to promote his film along with Shraddha and Anubhav Singh Bassi. He talked about his film and the host also asked him about his preference for staying away from social media while most of the actors are so active on it.

He said that being on social media is a big responsibility where one needs to entertain people by making reels or posting pictures and it is not easy for him to do all this as he finds himself "boring". Although, he mentioned that he has a fake account on social media where he does follow his favourite people.

"I find being on social media a big responsibility and my personality is very boring and on social media, you must entertain people. I don't want this extra work in my life and I am happy not being a part of it. Plus on social media, you have to wish everyone every year on birthdays and if you don't do it then trolling would follow. And, I have a fake account on social media where I follow my favourite people. I don't have an official account, but I do have one anonymous profile," he wrapped up.



**INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY**



Nitibha Kaul