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People will teach a lesson to those who termed Modi 'useless..



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Rita Ora shows off her toned midriff in her raciest looks...



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RCB defend 126, beat LSG by 18 runs...



- Heavy rain and hailstorms will prevail over Tamil Nadu, Kerala, South Karnataka, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Western Himalayan Region and Madhya Pradesh till May 3, said the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- India logged its hottest February this year since record-keeping began in 1901, according to the IMD. However, above-normal rainfall due to seven western disturbances, including five strong ones, kept temperatures in check in March.
- The prolonged spell of pre-monsoon rain, thunderstorms, hailstorms and lightning strikes damaged crops in many parts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and other states.
- Climate change is increasing global temperatures and worsening the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events.

IMD predicts rain, hailstorms in India over next few days

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The weather office has predicted heavy rain and hailstorms in most parts of the country over the next few days. Rain has brought temperature down in various states by several notches below normal, officials said, adding that no heatwave conditions are likely to develop anywhere for the next four days. The wet spell across the country will continue over the next couple of days before it gradually starts subsiding from May 5, it added. The IMD has also predicted thunderstorms and strong winds in several states till



Wednesday after which it will witness a reduction. "The thunderstorm activity over most parts of the country is likely to continue till May 3 and reduce significantly thereafter from May 4," the IMD said. "Since we are seeing an active western disturbance, northwest India will be affected," said Nareish Kumar, scientist at IMD. Last month, the weather office in its annual forecast had predicted a normal rainfall pattern during the monsoon season. There is a 67-per cent probability of normal to above-normal rainfall, the IMD had said.

CARE & CAUTION NEEDED

SUPREME COURT ON GRANTING DIVORCE ON IRRETRIEVABLE BREAKDOWN

The Supreme Court on Monday ruled that it can use its extraordinary powers under Article 142 (1) of the Constitution to dissolve a marriage, which is irretrievably broken down by doing away with procedure and a waiting period under the Hindu Marriage Act. It, however, stressed that grant of divorce on the ground of irretrievable breakdown of marriage by it is not a matter of right, "but a discretion which is to be exercised with great care and caution", and elaborated on factors which are worthy of consideration to dissolve the marriage.

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A five-judge bench comprising Justices S.K. Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, Abhay S. Oka, Vikram Nath, and J. K. Maheshwari said: "We wish to clearly state that grant of divorce on the ground of irretrievable breakdown of marriage by this court is not a matter of right, but a discretion which is to be exercised with great care and caution, keeping in mind several factors ensuring that 'complete justice' is done to both parties".

It noted that the apex court should be fully convinced and satisfied that the marriage is totally unworkable, emotionally dead and beyond salvation and, therefore, dissolution of marriage is the right solution and the only way forward and the marriage has irretrievably broken down is to be factually determined and firmly established.

It said the period of separation should be sufficiently long, and anything above six years or more will be a relevant factor, but these facts have to be evaluated keeping in view the eco-



nomic and social status of the parties, including their educational qualifications, whether the parties have any children, their age, educational qualification, and so on.

"And whether the other spouse and children are dependent, in which event how and in what manner the party seeking divorce intends to take care and provide for the spouse or the children. Question of custody and

welfare of minor children, provision for fair and adequate alimony for the wife, and economic rights of the children... We would not like to codify the factors so as to curtail exercise of jurisdiction under Article 142(1) of the Constitution, which is situation specific. Some of the factors mentioned can be taken as illustrative, and worthy of consideration", it said. The bench said public interest

demands that the marriage status should, as far as possible, be maintained, but where the marriage has been wrecked beyond the hope of salvage, public interest lies in recognising the real fact. No spouse can be compelled to resume life with a consort, and as such, nothing is gained by keeping the parties tied forever to a marriage which has, in fact, ceased to exist, it said.

Concluding the 62-page judgment, Justice Khanna said: "This Court, in exercise of power under Article 142(1) of the Constitution of India, has the discretion to dissolve the marriage on the ground of its irretrievable breakdown. This discretionary power is to be exercised to do 'complete justice' to the parties, wherein this court is satisfied that the facts established show that the marriage has completely failed and there is no possibility that the parties will cohabit together, and continuation of the formal legal relationship is unjustified. The court, as a court of equity, is required to also balance the circumstances and the background in which the party opposing the dissolution is placed."

'The elections are not about you', Rahul tells Modi

Tumakuru (Karnataka)
| Agencies

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday launched a scathing attack against Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his high-voltage campaign in poll-bound Karnataka, saying that "Modi ji, these elections are not about you".

Addressing a large gathering in Turuvekere, Rahul Gandhi said, "Modi ji, you don't talk about Karnataka's issues when you come here to campaign for the elections. You only talk about yourself. You should tell the people what you did for Karnataka in the last three years.

"You should also tell what you are going to do in the next five years for the state's youth, education, health, and for eradicating corruption." "Modi ji, the elections



are not about you, they are about Karnataka's people and its future. You say that Congress attacked you 91 times, but you never speak about what you did for Karnataka. In your next speech, do tell the people of Karnataka what you did for the state in the last three years and what you intend to do in the next five years," the Congress leader said.

The Congress leader also said it is not that the Prime Minister is not aware of the corruption in Karnataka.

The Congress leader also said that a BJP MLA told the media that Karnataka CM's post is up for sale for Rs 2,500 crore.

GOVT BLOCKS 14 MOBILE APPS BEING USED BY TERROR GROUPS

New Delhi: The Indian government has blocked 14 mobile messaging applications, which were allegedly being used by terrorist organisations, mainly based in Jammu and Kashmir. The banned apps include Cryptviser, Enigma, Safeswiss, Wickrme, Mediafire, Briar, BChat, Nandbox, Conion, IMO, Element, Second Line, Zangi and Threema, as per reports. The decision is learnt to have been taken as per the inputs of intelligence agencies, the reports said. These apps were blocked as per the provisions of Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, reports said.

Afzal Ansari disqualified as Lok Sabha MP



New Delhi: Bahujan Samaj Party MP Afzal Ansari, brother of gangster-politician Mukhtar Ansari, was disqualified from Lok Sabha on Monday following his conviction in a 2007 Gangsters Act case.

According to a Lok Sabha Secretariat notification issued on Monday, Ansari stands disqualified as MP from Lok Sabha from Ghazipur, with effect from April 29, the date of his conviction.

The Ghazipur MP-MLA court had last week sentenced Ansari to four years of prison and also imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh on him.

The court had also convicted Mukhtar Ansari in the same case and sentenced him to 10 years of imprisonment, while imposing a penalty of Rs 5 lakh on him.

Chhattisgarh: Jolt to BJP as Nand Kumar Sai joins Congress

Raipur: A day after resigning from the BJP, senior Chhattisgarh tribal leader and former MP, Nand Kumar Sai, joined the Congress on Monday, in a major setback to the saffron party. Sai took the membership of Congress in the presence of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, State President Mohan Markam during a programme organised at the state office of Congress, Rajiv Bhawan. On the occasion, Sai filled the Congress membership form and the Chief Minister garlanded him with cotton. Other prominent leaders of the Congress were also present. Sai was elected to Lok Sabha in 1989 and 1996 from Raigarh when it was in Madhya Pradesh. In 2004, he was elected MP from Surguja constituency of Chhattisgarh.

'Grave truth': Viral picture of padlock on grave from Hyderabad, not Pakistan

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Photographs of a grave with padlock, going viral on social media during the last two days, is from the Indian city of Hyderabad and not from Pakistan, as was reported, a local man claimed.

A section of media ran the story on Saturday that parents in Pakistan are securing their daughters' graves with padlocks to "safeguard them from being raped".

However, the truth came out on Sunday when the person who had seen the grave with padlock at the graveyard in Madannapet area of the old city of Hyderabad last year visited the same place to post pictures and photographs on social

media.

The person in the video revealed that it was the grave of his friend's mother. The old lady had passed away last year and after she was buried there, her family members had put the padlock to prevent burial of any other deceased at the same place.

The muezzin at Masjid-e-Salar Mulk, where the graveyard is located, said that they noticed some people burying their dead in old graves. To prevent any such thing, the relatives of the deceased installed the iron grill and locked it. He said the grill was also installed over the grave as it is very close to the entrance and the family members of the deceased wanted to make sure that visitors don't step on it.

Why is Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh not being arrested despite POCSO Act charges: Sidhu

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Coming out in support of protesting wrestlers and saying the fight is for honour and dignity of every women, senior Congress leader Navjot Sidhu on Monday questioned that why accused Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) President Brij Sharan Singh wasn't arrested despite a case was registered against him under the "non-bailable POCSO Act".

Also he sought the BJP MP's custodial interrogation. Two first information reports (FIRs) were registered against him after the intervention of

the Supreme Court.

"To know what is right and not to do it is the worst cowardice. Why was the FIR delayed? Not making the FIR public reflects that the FIR is mild and not corroborative to the complainant's complaint," he told the media after meeting the protesting wrestlers at Jantar Mantar here.

Sidhu also questioned the "motive" behind protecting Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

"Intent is questionable and motive is to protect the accused. Are things being swept under the carpet? Why is the officer who delayed the FIR not being tried under Section 166 of the

IPC as he was duty bound to register an FIR which is mandatory in case of a cognizable offence?"

The first FIR against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh pertains to allegations levelled by a minor, which has been registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act along with relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code concerning outraging modesty.

The second FIR has been registered for carrying out comprehensive investigations into the complaints by adult complainants under relevant IPC sections pertaining to outraging of modesty.

Southern Western Ghats, a museum and cradle for diversity

Researchers find that the evolutionary diversity is unevenly distributed across the Western Ghats, driven by past climatic and geographic processes and also by current climate. In addition, they have also seen the effects of niche conservatism for wet sites, wherein lineages tend to remain in the niche where they have evolved and continue to persist and even form a new species.

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The Western Ghats of India is a global biodiversity hotspot with many woody plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, fishes and insects, among other life forms. Many of them are endemic, meaning they occur only in this area and nowhere else.

Studying what factors influence the species diversity and distribution patterns in a given area fascinates and has kept ecologists and evolutionary biologists busy over the last two centuries. Tools using information on how species are related to one another based on their DNA, have become important in examining the role of past climate on the community or species diversity patterns in the last two decades.

A new study in Dr Jahnvi Joshi's group at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, in collab-



oration with national and international institutions, sheds light on the evolution of plants in the Western Ghats region of India. The recent study has been published in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

"This study complements several taxonomic studies in the region, which show the Western Ghats have a high diversity of woody plants,

with over 60 per cent being endemic. Examination of the evolutionary diversity shows that southern Western Ghats serves as a "museum" and "cradle" of evolutionary diversity, which means it has both old and young (on evolutionary timescales in millions of years) species. These species also have restricted distribution in the southern Western Ghats, and interest-

ingly this region has six times higher number of species than the northern Western Ghats," said Abhishek Gopal, the first author of the study.

"Large scale studies like this which span a huge geographic area, looking at timescales in millions of years and includes hundreds of species are helpful as they help us understand if there are any generalities in how diversity is generated and maintained. We show that the Western Ghats hold tremendous evolutionary diversity. We highlight the global value of the Western Ghats, demonstrating, in particular, the importance of protecting the southern Western Ghats - an engine of plant diversification and persistence. The results of this study can also be used to augment the existing protected areas in the landscape, which are facing severe anthropogenic stress," said Jahnvi Joshi, the senior author of this study.



EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHEMES AND PROGRAMS SHOULD BE STUDIED: CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN

NITI Aayog has appreciated the works done in the aspirational districts of the state

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that a center should be developed to study the effectiveness of schemes and programs being implemented in the state. Experts from universities and development institutes should be associated for practical assessment of effectiveness. In the light of Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman Yojana, a road map should be prepared for the upgradation and skill development of artisans in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister was addressing the fourth meeting of the State Policy Commission.

Chief Minister Chouhan has said that the system of supervision and quality control should be strengthened for operation and maintenance of water supply schemes of Madhya Pradesh Jal Nigam. Involve local public representatives in the implementation and monitoring of the scheme. The Jan Abhiyan Parishad should also be involved in encouraging the participation of villagers in the implementation of Jal Nigam projects.



mentation of Jal Nigam projects. In the meeting, consent was given to share the construction cost of Talwada barrage on Mahi river with the water resources department for construction of dam for intake well on Gond Devar group water supply scheme in Singrauli district, source of water supply scheme for Ratlam and Dhar districts. Chief Minister Chouhan said that it should be ensured that the employees engaged in outsourced system are not exploited. In the meeting, approval was given to the proposal of 90 days maternity leave for women employees appointed on contract in the corporation. The proposal regarding training of interns of universities, colleges and institutions was also approved by the corporation.

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May 1 will be a holiday if the Congress gets power: Kamal Nath

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On Labor Day, Madhya Pradesh Congress President Kamal Nath has announced that May 1 will be a government holiday in the state when the Congress government comes to power. Kamal Nath was addressing the meeting in Govindpura assembly constituency of Bhopal. During this, he also fiercely targeted CM Shivraj Singh Chauhan.

Kamal Nath said- I proudly say, I am a Hindu, but I am not stupid. Regarding the Ladli Bahna Yojana, he said that CM Shivraj Singh has now started remembering his sisters, but most of the atrocities on women are happening in Madhya Pradesh. They say that I am the son of a farmer, but talk about how much rain fell, the losses suffered by the



farmers. There is a difference between running the mouth and running the government. There is no doubt that our government will come.

Kamal Nath said that will our youth get employment in temples and mosques? Employment is available when the intention of the government is right.

Kamal Nath said- Youth, farmers, laborers, women all have to think whether to save themselves or to save BJP. How much debt has been

incurred in the state, but what has been done with this debt, have the demands of any of the Asha sisters and out-sourced employees been fulfilled? 8 months before the election, I remembered my sisters, the farmer's son says to himself, it rained in the last 2-3 months, there was hail, give them compensation. He is busy in running his mouth and running the state, at this time the biggest challenge is to provide employment to the youth of the state.

Former minister Deepak Joshi to join Congress

Team Absolute | Bhopal

BJP may face a big blow in Madhya Pradesh. Deepak Joshi, son of former CM Kailash Joshi and a minister in the Shivraj government, may soon leave the BJP and join the Congress. He has also had talks with PCC Chief Kamal Nath. BJP leader and former minister Deepak Joshi himself has confirmed this. Deepak Joshi said that whoever gives me respect, I will be with him. On this, Kamal Nath said that this is just a trailer, let's see what happens in the future.

Joshi said that I will carry forward the political legacy of my father. The cooperation that father has been getting from the public. I am joining Congress. May 5 is my wife's first anniversary. The program will run for seven days, after that I will join the Congress.

Two months ago in February, former minister Deepak Joshi openly expressed his pain on social media. He had written - The fruits of deceit and sin have to be suffered on earth.



In the 2018 assembly elections, former minister Deepak Joshi had to face defeat from Hatpipalya assembly on a BJP ticket. Sitting MLA Manoj Chowdhary won on Congress ticket. Deepak Joshi won the election from Bagli seat in 2003, but after delimitation in 2008, as Bagli was reserved, he contested from Hatpipalya and became MLA twice.

Unity in diversity is the basis of nation, identity of Indianness: Governor Mangubhai Patel

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Under the chairmanship of Governor Mangubhai Patel and chief guest of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the festival of integrity was celebrated today at Sandipani Auditorium of Raj Bhavan on the foundation day of Gujarat and Maharashtra states. Cultural programs focused on the cultural heritage of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh were presented in the festival. Bhopal resident members of Bhopal, Gujarat and Maharashtra societies were present in the programme. In the beginning, the Governor and the Chief Minister garlanded and offered flowers on the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel located at Sandipani Auditorium.

Governor Mangubhai Patel said that the residents of Hind Desh, all people are one. Be it color, form, dress, language, there are many. The development of Indian culture has



been done by meeting various local cultures. We are all Indians, this feeling gives India the shape of a nation. The spirit of unity in diversity is the basis of our nation. To have love for the land of India and the people of India is the form of national unity. National integrity means the security of every part of the nation's territory and the maintenance of internal unity by defeating the efforts of disruptive forces. Our identity as an Indian is

influenced by various traditions, ethos, Have a sense of respect and reverence for languages and cultures. This festival of integrity organized at the Raj Bhavan is a reflection of the feelings and emotions typical of Indian culture of celebrating unity in diversity and happiness together. The contribution of the people of different states in the development of Madhya Pradesh is felicitated. It is a symbol of the participation of the residents of

Madhya Pradesh in the enthusiasm and excitement of the foundation day of the state of Gujarat and Maharashtra.

The Governor mentioned the Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the creator of India's unbroken form. He said that Sardar Patel's greatest contribution is the merger of 562 small and big princely states into the Indian Union. Probably there has not been a single person in the history of the world, who has done such a courageous act of integration of such a large number of states. He said that Madhya Pradesh is the heart of India, here people of different forms, colors and languages live together. He called upon everyone to contribute in the making of golden Madhya Pradesh. He said that let's resolve that while preserving and promoting our cultural specialties, we will contribute our best in the achievement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" resolution.

Chief Minister Chouhan planted saplings of Guava,Neem and Gulmohar

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Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of guava, neem and gulmohar in the garden at Shyamala hills. Sandeep Meena along with Chief Minister Chouhan planted saplings on his birthday. Nanda Dubey, Nirmala Dubey, Babita Tripathi, Sarvshri Supyar Singh and Anand Kushwaha, members of Shatakshi Shakti Sansthan participated in the plantation. The organization conducts activities for women's economic independence and health awareness. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, Aditya Aggarwal, Dilip Oswal, Ishan Upadhyay, Kishore Chaurasia, Akhilesh Mohre and Vikas Sharma also planted saplings.



HEAVY RAIN ALERT IN BHOPAL; MERCURY BELOW 20 DEGREES IN MANY CITIES

Heavy rain is expected in Bhopal for the next 4 days. The Meteorological Department has issued its alert. Of these, there will be heavy rains on May 2 and 4, while there is a possibility of light rain on May 1 and 3.

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Due to continuous rains in Madhya Pradesh, the nights have turned cold. There was a feeling of cold on Sunday-Monday night. The mercury has reached below 20 degrees in 24 cities of the state including Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior-Jabalpur. There has been a drop in temperature from one degree to four degrees here. In Bhopal, the temperature dropped by 2.4 degrees in a single night. The temperature here was recorded at 17.6 degrees. The temperature was 18.9 in Indore,



19.1 in Gwalior, 18.4 degrees in Jabalpur. Pachmarhi recorded the lowest temperature of 14.6 degrees. The highest night temperature was recorded in Sidhi at 21.6 degrees. In Narsinghpur, Naugaon, Satna, Tikamgarh, the mercury remained above 20 degrees.

Not only is it raining heavily in

Madhya Pradesh due to inclement weather, but hail is also falling in many districts. At the same time, the speed of the storm has reached 70 km per hour. It rained heavily across the state on Sunday. It rained like a monsoon in Vaishakh. Lightning also fell at many places. The weather pattern is expected to remain the same on the

first day of May as well. The Meteorological Department has also issued an alert for heavy rains in Jabalpur, Mandla, Dindori, Balaghat and Katni for the first time in summer. Meteorologist HS Pandey told that the activity of Western Disturbance is spread across the state and it is very strong. Because of this, there is rain, thunderstorm and hailstorm in the state. The weather pattern is likely to remain the same for the next few days.

There is a possibility of rain in most of the districts of Bhopal, Jabalpur, Shahdol, Gwalior, Chambal, Sagar and Rewa divisions. It may rain at some places in Indore, Ujjain and Narmadapuram divisions.

Alert of strong thunderstorm with heavy rain has been issued for Jabalpur, Mandla, Dindori, Balaghat and Katni districts.

Along with Narmadapuram-Chambal division, hailstorm is expected in Guna, Bhopal, Datia, Dhar, Indore, Gwalior, Shivpuri, Ujjain, Sagar and Shajapur.

LADLI LAKSHMI FESTIVAL WILL BE CELEBRATED IN THE STATE TODAY

Bhopal : Ladli Lakshmi festival will be celebrated in the state on Tuesday, May 2. The state level program will be held at the Chief Minister's residence. Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan will communicate with the Ladli Lakshmis of the entire state through the state level programme. Various activities will also take place in Ladli Laxmi Utsav up to all districts, urban body and gram panchayat level. Ladli Betis and Ladli Lakshmi Friendly Panchayats who have made excellent achievements will also be felicitated. Another attraction of the festival will be the display of their talents by the beloved Lakshmis.

Chief Minister Shri Chouhan will inaugurate the state level program at 12 noon. In this, 1100 dear girls of Bhopal city, 500 parents along with Ladli Lakshmi daughters of Sehore, Vidisha, Rajgarh and Raisen districts will also be included. People's representatives will also participate in district, urban bodies and gram panchayats. There will be various activities in the festival. The program will be conducted by dear girls. Ladli Laxmi Path will be equipped in the district. Ladli Vatika will be decorated at each level and saplings will be planted by Ladli girls and public representatives under the name of "One tree in the name of Ladli Lakshmi". Her parents will also join the beloved girl child. Pictures, posters, banners, slogans etc related to Mukhya Mantri Ladli Laxmi Yojana will be put up on Ladli Laxmi Path.

Vande Bharat Express to run on weekends also



Team Absolute | Bhopal

There is good news for the passengers going from Bhopal to Hazrat Nizamuddin. Bhopal Railway Division is now preparing to run Vande Bharat Express on weekends as well. For this,

the Railways is also conducting a survey for public opinion. According to the officials of Bhopal Railway Division, public opinion is being taken these days regarding train number 20171 Vande Bharat Express going from Rani Kamla Kamlapati to

Hazrat Nizamuddin. Only after this the Bhopal Railway Division will take a decision.

Railway officials doing the survey told that they were continuously getting feedback from many passengers that they go to New Delhi on weekends. But he could not get the Vande Bharat train that day. Officials said that already we are getting trends that people want to travel by this train on weekends, if this happens then the revenue of Railways will also increase.

Currently, Vande Bharat train is running from Rani Kamlapati to Hazrat Nizamuddin 6 days a week (except Saturday). Along with this, in the return direction also, this train is being run 6 days a week except Saturdays. Let us inform that the facility of Vande Bharat Express has started from Hazrat Nizamuddin on 2nd April.

Chief Minister Chouhan was emotional after seeing his primary class teachers



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan got emotional after seeing the teachers of his primary school at the celebration of integrity at Raj Bhavan. On the foundation day of Gujarat and Maharashtra, dignitaries of Gujarati and Marathi community residing in Bhopal were present in the cultural program held at Sandipani

Auditorium of Raj Bhavan. As soon as Chief Minister Chouhan saw Kokila Sheth and Rohini Phadnis in the auditorium, he immediately reached out to seek their blessings, greeted them by touching their feet and received blessings. Kokila Sheth and Phadnis told that she was Chauhan's teacher in the then Shree Gujarati Samaj Primary School on Marwari Road in Old Bhopal area.

MAN TRIES TO EXTORT RS 1 CRORE FROM TRADER, ARRESTED

Indore: A middleman working with a vegetable trader in Madhya Pradesh's Indore was arrested today for allegedly threatening to abduct the latter's family members and attempting to extort Rs 1 crore from him, police said.

The accused worked as a middleman for trader Kallu Bagri at Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Fruit-Vegetable Market in the city, deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Aditya Mishra told reporters.

The accused allegedly sent anonymous letters to Bagri in April demanding Rs 25 lakh, then Rs 40 lakh and later Rs 1 crore, he said.

The letters also contained threats that if the amount was not paid, the trader's children, son-in-law and grandson would be kidnapped, the official said. Based on statements of about 100 people and details of phone calls, the police zeroed in on the accused, he said. During interrogation, the accused informed that he had been in debt and had to repay Rs 15 lakh, the official said.

"The accused has claimed that he had approached the trader for a loan, but the latter flatly refused to lend to him at the behest of one of his employees," Mishra said.

The police had deployed armed personnel in plain clothes around the trader's house and shop for security considering the threatening letters, he said.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Stray dogs raise their heads in Lucknow municipal polls

The ongoing municipal elections in Lucknow have thrown up unexpected issues, catching the contestants unaware. While the contestants go around campaigning and promising voters of better civic amenities, cleaner streets and well-lit roads, they are being questioned about the increasing stray dog menace in the state capital. Party candidates admit that at various places, people have been reminding them about the issue, some even announcing a poll boycott in protest against the alleged indifferent approach of the local administration and municipal corporation on the matter. The residents of Shrishti Apartments in Jankipuram have announced boycott of the civic polls following several cases of dog bites in their area and inaction of the authorities to solve the problem. In Shri Guru Govind Singh ward in Alambagh, the residents of Patel Nagar and Adarsh Nagar too cited 'dog bite' incidents before candidates of various parties. They told the candidates that they will only vote for the party which will solve the problem. "It may seem trivial to many but for us, it is a serious problem. Elderly citizens and children are being attacked by stray dogs, and the municipal officials are completely unconcerned about it. We do not care about BJP, SP, BSP, or Congress - we will vote for the candidate who comes up with a solution to the problem," said Raj Narain Jauhari, a resident of Jankipuram. BJP MLA Yogesh Shukla along with local candidates met the residents and assured them that the problem will be taken care of. BJP candidate Deepak Lodhi said, "It is true that along with roads, sewer, drains and street lights, this time people are also asking us to address the problem of street dogs and stray animals. The issue is bigger than what we thought it to be."

INDIA TALKS TOUGH AT SCO MEET

Asad Mirza

Last week at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting, India adopted a very tough stand to deal with its immediate neighbour China, which has been the founding father of the bloc. Relations between two Asian neighbours have not been very cordial in the recent past, on the issue of border transgressions by China in the Indian territory.

India's Tough Posture

China's Defence Minister, Li Shangfu, in his first visit to India by a Chinese defence minister since 2020, when 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers died in clashes along the Himalayan border in Ladakh and the two sides came the closest to war for almost 70 years, was indeed not expecting such a dressing down by the Indians. In his meeting with Li Shangfu, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh accused China of border aggressions that have "eroded the entire basis" of bilateral relationship, as negotiations over the line of actual control (LAC) remain deadlocked. Border transgressions from China have continued despite strong condemnation from India. In December last year, more than 20 Indian soldiers were injured in a clash with Chinese troops in the eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, in what India described as a Chinese attempt to "transgress the border". In March, China announced plans to "rename" 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh, which it claims as part of Tibet. When the Indian home minister visited the border region that same week to assert the Indian territorial claim, Beijing hit back, calling the visit a violation of its territorial sovereignty.

Border Issue

While in the recent past, there has been disengagement in some areas, Indian army officers and defence experts say about 1,500 sq. km. in Ladakh taken over by the PLA in 2020 remains under Chinese control. Two main areas of contention in Ladakh are Demchok and Depsang, which were previously patrolled by Indian troops but are now occupied by PLA soldiers. Both areas remain tactically important for India, but in spite of many round of talks, there is no move forward and there also does not seem any inclination from China to resolve the issue.



People living near the border in Ladakh allege that in the disengagement negotiations, New Delhi has ceded land to Beijing by agreeing to the creation of buffer zones -- where neither side can patrol -- in land that was previously claimed by India, specifically in the disputed Pangong Tso and Chushul areas. Thus, the real loser in the case has been India. In reality, this happened due to the fact that India couldn't see the hegemonic Chinese designs for the area. China has been building new highways, railway lines, bridges, air strips and sophisticated military bases, modern housing and 5G towers in the disputed area, while India -- which historically avoided developing areas near the Chinese border in order to prevent any provocation - has been left behind, with many of its border areas still impoverished. In the recent past India has doubled its focus on infrastructure near the border with China, to correct its earlier miscalculations. January 2023 saw the Indian Defence Minister inaugurating 27 infrastructure projects aimed at strengthening the border infrastructure, in addition India is speeding up the construction of 37,500 miles of roads, 350 miles of bridges, 19 airfields and a few tunnels in border areas or nearby. The scale and speed of this Indian infrastructure push is evident in the construction

of ambitious 8-mile tunnel in the Himalayan range, at an altitude of about 3,000 metres, to provide all-weather connectivity to Ladakh. India is trying hard to get the \$1.4 billion Zojila tunnel completed at the earliest.

SCO Summit

Though the SCO is not a platform for bilateral issues, the Defence Ministers' meeting highlighted policy priorities, while India focussed on terrorism. Russia reiterated its criticism of the West's Indo-Pacific concept and creation of regional groups like the Quad. Addressing the summit, Rajnath Singh underlined that any form of terrorist act or support towards it was a heinous crime against humanity. Though the issue of terrorism may have been pointed towards Pakistan, India also reiterated that a "robust" framework of regional cooperation should respect the "the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all member states by taking care of their legitimate interests". Meanwhile, the Chinese Defence Minister harped on President Xi Jinping's 'Global Security Initiative', and said that Beijing was willing to work with other SCO members to implement the Global Security Initiative. On his part, the Russian

Defence Minister General Sergei Shoigu took a blunt aim at the West for attempting to integrate the emerging security architecture in the Indian Ocean with NATO. Russia has always opposed the Indo-Pacific policy, advocated by the West and supported by India, describing it as an attempt to encircle China. The Russian minister expressed his belief that the SCO's "independent policies" towards global and regional security challenges could serve as a blueprint for the international community. He emphasised the need to strengthen SCO's role as a key pillar of the emerging multipolar international system, one that promotes inter-state relations based on principles of equality, mutual respect, and compliance with international law. Additionally, the General stated that NATO countries should bear the primary responsibility for post-war reconstruction in Afghanistan and Taliban should not be blamed for the current situation in the country. Besides a virtual participation by Pakistan, defence ministers of eight SCO member states attended the meeting in New Delhi.

international

Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs feature on Royal Mail stamp marking King's coronation

London | Agencies

A stamp depicting Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and their places of worship feature on one of the four stamps issued by the Royal Mail to mark the coronation of King Charles III on May 6. Captioned "Diversity and Community", the stamp reflects a multi-faith community and the cultural diversity of contemporary British society, a news release stated. The stamp features figures representing the Jewish, Islamic, Christian, Sikh, Hindu and Buddhist religions and is representative of all faiths and none. "The background shows aspects of both rural and urban Britain and includes some of the many different places of worship that are found around the United Kingdom," the release noted. Presented in a miniature sheet, the stamps illustrate the Coronation ceremony and the traditional street party, as well as some of the causes His Majesty has dedicated his years of public service to. This includes cultural diversity and community, the global ties of the



Commonwealth, which he now leads, and sustainability and biodiversity. This is only the third time in history that Royal Mail has issued stamps to mark a Coronation. The previous two occasions were for King George VI in 1937 and Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. "Royal Mail is proud to issue this set of commemorative stamps which celebrate the Coronation, and some of the causes which His Majesty has championed throughout his many years of public service," Simon Thompson, Chief

Executive of Royal Mail, said. "This is only the third time we have issued Coronation stamps and I am delighted that they mark the start of a new reign and a new chapter in our history," Thompson added. The stamps were designed by Atelier Works and feature newly commissioned wood engravings by British artist Andrew Davidson. Royal Mail will also be applying a special postmark to stamped mail to mark the event. The postmark will run from April 28 until May 10.

Dam collapse kills 4 in Yemen

Sanaa: Four people were killed in Yemen after the collapse of a water dam in the Al Mahwit governorate, about 111 km west of the capital Sanaa. Local authorities on Sunday confirmed that the Al-Aqabi Dam in the Hafash district of Al Mahwit governorate had collapsed, causing a flood that swept away a mosque with four people inside, killing all of them. The flood also damaged nearby houses. The governorate has been under the control of the Houthis group since 2014, Xinhua news agency reported. Adel Issa, an official appointed by the Houthis in the governorate, attributed the dam's collapse to heavy rains and torrential flows. Two rescue and ambulance vehicles were dispatched to the scene by authorities in Sanaa, he added. Yemen's National Centre of Meteorology issued a warning to citizens in several governorates, including Al Mahwit, about heavy rains and advised them to avoid travelling through torrential passages, valleys, and reefs during and after the rainfall.

EVACUATION ORDERS LIFTED FOR PARTS OF VILLAGE NEAR JAPAN'S FUKUSHIMA NUKE PLANT

Tokyo | Agencies

The Japanese government on Monday lifted an evacuation order for parts of Iitate village near the disaster-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. The move means there are no entry restrictions currently in place for any designated reconstruction base in the area comprising six municipalities, reports Xinhua news agency. Similar orders have already been issued by the government for five other municipalities, namely Futaba, Namie, Tomioka, Okuma and Katsurao. In the wake of the March 2011 disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, the government imposed a "difficult-to-return" zone spanning a 337 sq.km area of Fukushima, comprising seven municipalities. A "difficult-to-return" zone was deemed by the government inaccessible to humans due to dangerously high levels of radiation. Iitate village's southern district of Nagadoro remained a "difficult-to-return" zone and 17 per cent was designated as a "reconstruction and revitalisation" base. At these inner bases, government-funded



work was carried out to decontaminate the area and rebuild infrastructure and, reportedly, pave the way for evacuees to return. The village of Iitate had been listed as one of the bases, with the lifting of the evacuation order on Monday also being applied to a neighbouring park, owing largely to the fact that nobody lived there. As of April 1, 62 households with 197 people were listed as residents of Nagadoro, according to local statistics, but a mere three households comprising just seven people in total had applied for overnight stays. Such applications beginning in September were supposed to be the first step toward households returning to the disaster-hit area permanently.

SEVERAL FLIGHTS CANCELLED AS POWER OUTAGE HITS MANILA AIRPORT

Manila | Agencies

A power outage at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila on Monday resulted in the cancellation of several domestic flights, Filipino authorities said. The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) said the power outage at Terminal 3 struck shortly after 1 a.m., reports Xinhua news agency. "Standby power is now supplying electricity to critical facilities enabling computer systems of airlines and immigration to function partially and enable processing of both inbound and outbound passengers," the MIAA said in a statement. "As a result, delayed flights shall be expected," it added.

The MIAA said that operations personnel are now continuing to do the rounds of Terminal 3 to assist passengers. Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista said the Terminal 3 generator system is used to supply power while the MIAA engineering team is looking into the cause of the power failure. Bautista said the outage caused slight congestion at check-in counters inside the terminal. President Ferdinand Marcos, now on an official visit to the US, has instructed Bautista to restore power "as soon as possible". A power outage also hit the Manila airport in January, triggering a technical glitch that delayed and caused cancellations of domestic and international flights.

BRITISH-INDIAN MEERA SYAL TO BE AWARDED BAFTA TV FELLOWSHIP

London | Agencies

Award-winning British-Indian playwright and actor Meera Syal will be presented with a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) fellowship, the highest accolade bestowed upon an individual in recognition of an outstanding and exceptional contribution to film, games or television. Syal, who starred in hit BBC comedies, 'Goodness Gracious Me' and 'The Kumars at No 42', will be honoured at the BAFTA Television Awards, which will take place on May 14 at the Royal Festival Hall. "I am thrilled and honoured to be the recipient of the BAFTA Fellowship. I am particularly delighted that this year's award is twinned with opportunities to mentor and support participants in BAFTA's learning programme -- where I hope to engage with many talented practitioners and continue working to make BAFTA a truly representative and celebratory place for all our creatives," Syal said. As part of the fellowship, she will work directly with the arts charity over the coming year to inspire and nurture aspir-



ing creatives through BAFTA's year-round learning, inclusion and talent programmes. She will be seen in two new major series this autumn -- 'The Wheel of Time' and 'Mrs Siddhu Investigates'. Alongside her MBE and CBE awards, Syal has brought her distinctive voice to the UK's creative arts across multiple artistic genres over four decades, with more than 140 credits and counting. Born to Punjabi parents from New Delhi, Syal's cross-cultural stories and performances have played an instrumental force in showcasing the positive representation of British-Asian stories and talent on screen, a BAFTA statement said. Her work has scored multiple BAFTA nominations and wins, features on school and university syllabuses, and was said to be among Her Majesty the Queen's favourite TV programmes. Syal has also received the Women In Film and TV Award for Creative Innovation, honorary doctorates from SOAS, Manchester and Birmingham Universities and was the Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of

Contemporary Theatre at the Oxford University in 2012. Born in Wolverhampton in the West Midlands and educated at Manchester University, Syal read English and Drama, gaining a Double First. Her career began at the Royal Court, and alongside her many and continuing theatre roles, her talent saw her quickly graduate to screenwriting -- scripting 'Bhaji on the Beach' in 1993 and 'My Sister Wife' in 1994 -- as well as writing and performing in the pioneering comedy sketch-show 'The Real McCoy' (1991-1994). Two of her novels have also been adapted for the screen -- 'Anita and Me' (2002) and 'Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee' (2005). Syal has also since taken on roles in popular television series and programmes such as 'Beautiful People' (2008-2009), 'Dr Who' (2009), 'Horrible Histories' (2009), 'Broadchurch' (2015), 'The Split' (2018-2022), among others. The BAFTA Television Awards with P&O Cruises will be hosted by comedians Rob Beckett and Romesh Ranganathan and will be broadcast on BBC One and iPlayer.



MAHA CM KICKSTARTS CHHATRAPATI CORONATION CELEBRATIONS WITH WOMEN BIKE RALLY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde flagged off an all-women motorcycle rally ahead of the 350th anniversary celebrations of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, coinciding with the 63rd Maharashtra Day festivities, here on Monday.

The rally comprised 350 women, who sped off from the August Kranti Maidan in Grant Road to the Swatantryaveer Savarkar Memorial in Dadar.

It was organised by the Maharashtra Tourism Department along with Amazing Namaste Foundation and women bikers, as many sporting the traditional Maharashtrian style saris joined the event.

The event marks the curtain-raiser for the 350th year of the coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj held in Raigad, which will be celebrated in a grand manner with a series of major events in the state and other places across India linked with the Maratha warrior king.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (February 19, 1630-April 3, 1680), was crowned at the Raigad Fort on June 6, 1674, from where he laid the foundations of the 'Hindavi Swaraj'.

On June 1 & 2, several major events will be held at the Raigad Fort besides social-cultural programmes across all districts, with other celebrations lined



up all through the year. Shinde said that the state government would also set up a Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Centre in Agra -- from where he and his son made the 'great escape' from the clutches of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb on August 17, 1666.

Previously known as Rairi, Shivaji Maharaj had seized it from the Jawli King Chandrarao More, a descendant of Chandragupta Maurya, in 1656.

Considered as impregnable by military standards, the Raigad Fort is one of the strongest, tallest and imposing forts in the Deccan Plateau, rising 1,356 metres above sea-level, often referred as the 'King of Forts' and now a major tourism attraction accessible by a rope-car and the traditional gruelling climb of several hours.

Flanked by two villages at its base, Pachad and Raigadwadi, it was renovated, repaired and enhanced for over

a decade before Shivaji Maharaj finally moved in, declared it as his capital, expanded and ruled the Maratha kingdom from here, and even his coronation ceremonies were held here. After the death of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and the killing of his son Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj in 1689, the Raigad Fort was captured by the Mughals under Aurangzeb, before it was targeted by the British East India Company in 1818.

RRPL project only with locals' nod, says Maha Minister; protestors unimpressed

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Education Minister Uday Samant on Monday reiterated that the proposed Ratnagiri Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd project with Arab help will not go ahead without the consent of the local population.

Samant called on Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar, state chief Jayant Patil and senior leader Dr. Jitendra Awhad under directions from Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

"Yesterday, (April 30), representatives of the locals who are agitating against the RRPL met Pawar, and later CM Shinde also held discussions with him... I conveyed a clear message that the project will not be taken up without the cooperation of the local people," declared Samant.

However, one of the anti-RRPL activists, Sachin Chavan pointed out that already half a dozen villages in the affected region have passed resolutions that they don't want this project in that area.

"When the people of Barsu and other villages are strongly opposed to the project, then why is the government conducting the soil testing survey?" Chavan demanded, warning that if the testing work doesn't stop, the agitation will be revived.

The planned Rs 3 lakh crore project with collaboration from Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi got mired in a fresh controversy with an agitation launched from April 24, which resulted in police caning and teargas shelling on the protestors last weekend.

The protestors later suspended the agita-



tion for three days setting certain preconditions and seeking assurances from the state government on their apprehensions.

Samant said that presently only the soil-testing work has been taken up after which the RRPL promoters will decide whether the site in Barsu is suited for the mega-project or not.

"We shall clarify all the doubts and fears of the local people, especially the farmers, their lands, etc, and only thereafter the project shall be implemented," he said.

Maha building crash toll climbs to 8

Team Absolute | Thane

The death toll in the Bhiwandi building crash in Maharashtra's Thane district rose to eight with two more bodies recovered from the debris, officials said here on Monday.

The two bodies were retrieved nearly 48 hours after the tragedy struck. The work of clearing the debris continued for the third day, the officials said.

The ground plus three storied residential-commercial building housed several godowns on the ground and first floors and at least four families on the two upper floors.

Constructed in 2014, it suddenly collapsed around 1.45 p.m. on Saturday at Wardhaman Compound of the Mankoli area on the outskirts of the powerloom town. The officials also said that now nobody is missing in the tragedy in which another six were injured



and over a dozen rescued in the first major pre-monsoon building disaster in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region area.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has announced an ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakhs to the kin of each deceased and full free treatment for all the injured victims.

NOW, A 'HEREDITARY CANCER CLINIC' AT MUMBAI'S AMBANI HOSPITAL

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital (KDAH) has launched a pioneering 'Hereditary Cancer Clinic' to provide personalised cancer care to patients with the latest precision oncology care, an official said here on Monday.

This will enable hereditary testing samples to identify gene mutations in an individual and his family, provide insight into the likelihood of developing cancer before symptoms show up and harness the power of precision medicine to deliver innovative therapies that address the individual patient's needs.

India reports an estimated 1.40 million new cancer cases annually and with such a high incidence, "precision oncology" has the potential to significantly reduce the burden of the disease by improving the effectiveness of cancer treatment.

Speaking at the launch late on Sunday, KDAH Chairperson Tina Anil



Ambani said that "precision oncology" and personalised medicine is the new frontier in cancer care and the

new clinic will focus on precision oncology-personalised medicines that can predict familial risk for can-

cers and take remedial measures.

Precision Oncology profiles tumours at the molecular level and identifies alterations so that personalised treatment can be specifically designed and targeted to tackle the patient's unique form of cancer, and deliver the precision medicine to the right patient at the right time with the right dose.

KDAH CEO and Executive Director Dr. Santosh Shetty said that with this new facility, the hospital remains ahead and in line with the best global practices in cancer care with cutting-edge technology and research.

A spokesperson said that the KDAH's Hereditary Cancer Clinic is the first in a private hospital in Mumbai with a similar facility available in Tata Memorial Centre, Parel.

The KDAH also has cancer care centres in Akola, Gondia and Solapur and has introduced EDGE radio-surgery system, a True Beam equipment and other latest facilities to manage cancers and patients.

"Cops pointed finger, asked to stop": AR Rahman's aide on Pune concert

Team Absolute | Pune

Police stopped a concert of Oscar-winning musician A R Rahman in Maharashtra's Pune city as it went on after the 10 pm deadline, an official said on Monday.

After the concert was held here on Sunday, a video went viral on social media platforms in which a police officer was seen walking on the stage and asking Rahman, other artists and organisers to stop the music show as it was already past 10 o'clock.

A huge crowd had gathered to attend music maestro Rahman's live concert held at Raja Bahadur Mills in Pune.

"As the deadline of 10 pm had passed, we asked him (Rahman) and other artists to stop the show. They followed the instructions and stopped the show," said Bundgarden police station's inspector



Santosh Patil, who was seen in the video asking Rahman and other artists playing music to stop by indicating at his watch. No case has been registered in this connection, a senior police official said.

In a Twitter on Monday, Rahman, 56, thanked Pune for "all the love and euphoria" during "a roller coaster concert" but did not address the incident. "Pune! Thank you for all the love and euphoria last night! Was such a roller coaster concert! No wonder Pune is home to so much classical music! We shall be back soon to sing with you all again!", the Oscar-winner said in a tweet.

An aide close to Rahman, however, said the police could have talked to the organisers instead of pointing fingers at Rahman, a Padma Bhushan awardee known world over for his music.

"10pm was the curfew time but they've said it's the last song and only a minute left. The police official went to stage and asked ARR directly to stop, pointing finger at him. Police should have talked to the organisers or other control booth," the aide said.

How 4 AM breakfast orders helped Mumbai cops bust fake call centre

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai police said Monday that they managed to bust a fake call centre because of what the workers were having for breakfast.

The centre, located in a house along Rajodi Beach, housed dozens of employees who were not allowed to leave the building to prevent them from interacting with outsiders.

But police got a tip-off that someone was repeatedly ordering dozens of breakfasts from a nearby eatery -- and at 4:00 am.

"The beach resort is full of tourists on weekends and

almost deserted on other days. So the 50 to 60 tea and breakfast orders so early every morning for many days raised our suspicion and we started secretly monitoring the place," police officer Suhas Bavche told AFP.

Police finally raided the house, which had a floor with 60 workstations, on the night of April 11 and arrested the owner and 47 employees.

They have been charged with impersonation, cheating and fraud under Information Technology Act. Authorities had also commenced a forensic examination of the computers.

The investigation so far

has revealed that young employees were trained to receive calls from unsuspecting bank customers from Australia, Bavche said.

They allegedly extracted sensitive personal details and security information -- including one-time passwords -- from them and passed the information on to managers over email, the officer said.

"This could be the tip of the iceberg. We are investigating international connections for the racket," he added. "Such fake call centres operating from one place for a couple of months at a time are regularly busted across India."

SHIRT TAG HELPS POLICE IDENTIFY MAN'S BODY, FIND FAMILY

Thane: A tag of a tailoring shop helped the Government Railway Police (GRP) trace the family of a 57-year-old man who died of natural causes on a local train in Maharashtra's Thane district last month, an official said on Monday.

A passenger, who had boarded a local train in Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, died during the journey on April 23, senior inspector Archana Dusana of Dombivili GRP said.

A case of accidental death was registered and the body was sent for post-mortem, she said. While trying to ascertain the dead man's identity, the police came across a tag of a tailoring shop on his shirt and traced it to an establishment in Vangani, she said.

The dead was identified as Mehboob Nasir Shaikh, the official said, adding that his family was traced and his last rites were conducted on Sunday.



It is a matter of the heart: Kangana on same-sex marriage

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On her recent visit to Haridwar, actress Kangana Ranaut shared that a marriage is between two hearts and if two individuals have bonded, then their sexual preference should not matter.

After the Supreme Court heard pleas for legal sanction for same-sex marriages in India, Kangana was questioned about it. Kangana said "Jo shaadi hoti hai, woh dil ke rishte hote hai, ye sab hi jante hai. Jab logo ke dil mil gaye hai, baaki kuch logo ki jo preference hai, usme hum kya bol sakte

hai (Marriage is a matter of the heart. Everyone knows it. When hearts have met, what can we say about people's preferences)?"

Kangana had earlier expressed her views on the ongoing same-sex marriage issue in the Supreme Court on Twitter. She had written: "Whether you are a man/woman/ anything else your gender is of no consequence to anyone but you, please understand. In modern world we don't even use words like actresses or female directors we call them actors and directors. What you do in the world is

your identity, not what you do in bed." She added: "Whatever your sexual preferences are they must remain in your bed only. Don't make them your identity card or medals and flaunt everywhere. Most importantly don't roam around with a knife to cut every throat who don't agree with your gender." "I am again saying your gender is not your identity don't make it that way. I am a woman from rural area life gave me no concession I had to make my own place in the world of actors, film makers, producers and writers."

Kartik Aaryan attends his spotboy's wedding, poses for pictures



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood's chocolate boy Kartik Aaryan attended his spotboy Sachin's wedding and made it even special by posing for pictures with the newlyweds.

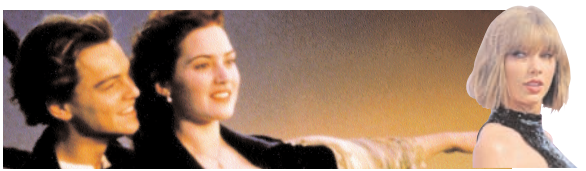
Kartik took to Instagram and posted a couple of pictures posing with the newlyweds. He penned a note for his spotboy. The actor chose to go in casuals as he was seen in a custard yellow shirt

paired with denims.

He wrote: "Congratulations Sachin aur Surekha. Happy Married life ahead."

On the work front, Kartik, who made a special appearance in 'Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar' starring Ranbir Kapoor and Shraddha Kapoor, was last seen in 'Shehzada'.

He will be next seen in 'Satyaprem Ki Katha' with Kiara Advani. He also has 'Aashiqui 3' and 'Captain India'.



Rita Ora shows off her toned midriff in her raciest looks

Caribbean | Agencies

Rita Ora never shies away from flaunting her gym-honed figure in revealing ensembles. She pulled off one of her wildest outfits to date on Sunday as she stepped out in New York City. The Hot Right Now singer showed off her tanned and toned body in a racy monochrome look. She went braless in a black trench coat which featured fringe sleeves and a white collar, teamed with matching denim shorts. Rita accessorised with chunky silver chains and earrings, while boosting her height in a pair of platform heels, reports [dailymail.co.uk](#).

The beauty sported a glam makeup look underneath a pair of stylish shades, while her locks were swept back into a ponytail. It comes after Rita rewore a custom Chanel mini corset dress while leaving her hotel in NYC on Sunday ahead of the Met Gala. The hitmaker said that the outfit was 'in memory of Karl' as she prepared for the event on Monday where the theme will honour the late German fashion designer.

The blonde beauty put on a very busty display in the corset top, while baby pink flowers made out of fabric hung on her ample assets. The bottom of her ensemble ended in a barely-there mini skirt, revealing her very toned and enviable legs.

Sharing snaps of the outfit on her Instagram she wrote in the caption: 'In memory of Karl I had to bring back this custom piece he made me for a Chanel show performance I did with him in Monaco back in 2016. See you tomorrow!'



Mila Kunis reportedly in talks for gender-flipped role in 'F-4' remake

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Mila Kunis is reportedly in talks to star in a 'Fantastic Four' reboot, but not as a character that many have seemingly deemed fit for her.

In a surprising twist, the 'Black Swan' actress is reportedly considered to play The Thing.

Spilling the beans was a movie insider who goes under the name MyTimeToShineH on Twitter.

The insider, who has been credited with getting scoops before trade publications, tweeted on April 28: "They are looking at Jewish actors, both male AND female for The Thing in Fantastic Four. Mila Kunis is one of them."

Kunis has been indeed rumoured

to be circling a role in the upcoming 'Fantastic Four' movie, which will exist within the Marvel Cinematic Universe, reports [aceshowbiz.com](#).

She was rumoured to play Susan Storm after she was spotted going to a deli with Matt Shakman, who has been attached to direct the new movie.

Appearing in a Wednesday, April 26 episode of 'The Late Late Show with James Corden', Kunis addressed the rumours.

"Apparently, if you go to lunch with somebody that is also in the industry, you then start working together, according to the internet," she said, "the next day I was somehow in 'Fantastic Four'."

While she will not be starring in the movie, the 'Bad Moms' star said

that she does "know who is." She, however, refused to share any more details, because "I don't want to get in trouble with The Mouse (Disney executives), so none of you will find out."

Following the actress' apparent denial, MyTimeToShineH claimed, "Mila Kunis is NOT in talks for Sue Storm. She's in talks for a different role."

Meanwhile, the reports that The Thing may be played by a female star have been met with strong opposition from fans.

"Listen, I love marvel. Sometimes gender swapping characters is for the better. However, if this does happen, I will not be watching," one person reacted to the news.

DAVID ARQUETTE SAYS HE FELT 'INFERIOR' WHILE MARRYING COURTNEY COX

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Scream' star David Arquette has admitted he felt "inferior" during his marriage to 'Friends' star Courtney Cox.

The actor said that her mammoth earnings during the height of her 'Friends' fame was a struggle for him; she earned up to \$1 million per episode for her portrayal of Monica Geller in the iconic sitcom, reports [Mirror.co.uk](#).

David, who was by no means failing in his career during their marriage, said her success was "difficult" to swallow as he desperately wanted to be the one to "pick up the check".

'Mirror.co.uk' further states that he thinks this stems from his "traditional male" values to "be the breadwinner."

David told 'Andy Cohen Live', "In the acting world in general, you're always going on this rollercoaster of popularity and, you know, not able to get a job... so, it's like this weird thing."

He further mentioned, "And then, when you're, you know, comparing yourself to someone who's at the, you know, top of the television, iconic world, it's kinda hard to put yourself there, so there was definitely, like, learning and dealing with that and a lot of pain and, you know, arguments or, you know, ego, early on."



Ashley Roberts

looks relaxed & carefree as she flaunts her toned figure

Los Angeles | Agencies

Ashley Roberts looked sensational as she shared racy Instagram snaps on Sunday while enjoying a sun-soaked getaway in Ibiza. According to [dailymail.co.uk](#), the media personality showcased her jaw-dropping figure as she slipped into a green string bikini and wore a matching two-piece co-ord on it. Her bombshell flashed her much toned midriff in a tiny triangle bikini top and wore a pair of cosy flared matching trousers of the same design. She toted the stunning look with a matching oversized shirt layered on her shoulders, which she wore opened.

"On the rocks no salt," she penned her post.

The American singer posed on the rocks, where she is appeared to be enjoying a sunshine break with a pal. The former Pussycat Dolls singer appeared relaxed and carefree as she barely donned any make up.

The radio presenter kept her blonde tresses in her typical up do bun,

with her fringe and some locks loose down to frame her stunning feature. She kept it comfortable for the beach in a pair of sandals featuring a golden strappy detail. The beauty accessorised her beach ensemble with her trademark pearl pendant necklace.

Ashley has been delighting fans with insights of her luxurious holiday in Ibiza - and shared a racy snap in a tiny black bikini on Saturday. The former singer looked nothing short of sensational in the skimpy two-piece as she lay by the pool of her luxury rented villa.

Ashley covered her face with her hand as she topped up her tan, before showcasing her pert posterior while sauntering towards a day bed in sizzling new Instagram snaps. The 'Don't Cha' hitmaker swept her blonde locks into a loose up 'do for the sunbathing session, while adding a pair of large, black sunglasses. Ashley didn't appear to have a care in the world as she soaked up the ambience of the stunning historical villa Ink House, set in sprawling private ground and with views of the sea.



Tom Hanks & Rita Wilson celebrates 35 years of happy marriage

Los Angeles | Agencies

While many people advise against sharing the journey with Hollywood star Tom Hanks given all his travel films have him at the receiving end of problems, his wife Rita Wilson would disagree.

The two recently celebrated a huge anniversary marking 35 years together since they tied the knot. The famous couple took to social media to share a sweet snap of them together to mark the occasion, reports [Mirror.co.uk](#). Tom and Rita first met on the set of ABC sitcom Bosom Buddies' back in 1981, where they were just friends. The Forrest Gump' actor was married to Samantha Lewis at the time but divorced in 1987, after having two children together. [Mirror.co.uk](#) further states that he reunited with Rita on the set of Volunteers' in 1985 and married in 1988. The couple shares two sons, Truman Theodore Hanks and Chester 'Chet' Hanks. After spending over 35 years together, the couple achieved a relationship milestone over the weekend as the actress and singer-songwriter posted a photo of Tom presenting her with a cake.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Lottie Moss

According to the original itinerary, Bangladesh were scheduled to play two Tests, three ODIs and as many T20Is at home but they have decided to scrap one Test because of their very tight schedule, a Cricbuzz report said on Monday. BCB cricket operation chairman Jalal Yunus said that their schedule was very tight and that they want to concentrate more on white-ball cricket in preparation for the 50-over World Cup to be held in India later this year. BCB was also planning to organise a 10-day long skill camp in Bengaluru or the UAE but they haven't been able to finalise yet, with the schedule for the World Cup not yet announced. If the board cannot hold any skill camp abroad, they will prepare for the showpiece event at home. Bangladesh is next scheduled to play a three-match ODI series in Ireland on May 9, 12 and 14. This series is part of the World Cup Super League.

'LIVE AS IF YOU WERE TO DIE TOMORROW'

Sara Ali Khan shares BTS pics from her upcoming movie



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan, who has been busy with the shoot of her upcoming film 'Ae Watan Mere Watan', recently shared a few BTS pictures from the sets of her two films 'Murder Mubarak' and 'Ae Watan Mere Watan'. On Monday, the actress took to the story section of her Instagram to share the pictures with her followers. She shared a set of three pictures in which she can be seen posing for the camera with the films' clapper boards in her hand which detail the shot taking process.

The first picture shows the actress donning a white saree holding the clapperboard of 'Ae Watan Mere Watan' as she gives an enchanting stare to the camera. The second picture has her in a casual avatar with the

same element of clapperboard in the frame followed by the third picture which is again from 'Ae Watan Mere Watan'.

The actress further jotted down the caption in which she thanked the director and her attachment to the character. She wrote, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." - Mahatma Gandhi. Thank you Kannan sir for choosing me to portray this powerful character; a true personification of strength, dignity and passion. Some parts stay etched in our souls, and I know I will carry this one with me forever. Jai Bhoolenath".

Other than 'Murder Mubarak' and 'Ae Watan Mere Watan', Sara will also feature in Laxman Utekar's next opposite Vicky Kaushal titled 'Zara Hatke Zara Bachke' and also Anurag Basu's 'Metro...In Dino' for which she will soon resume the shoot.



Mahima Makwana ticks one item off her bucket list with Maldives break

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Mahima Makwana of 'Balika Vadhu' and 'Antim: The Final Truth' fame was recently holidaying in Maldives. What's interesting was that the actress is not someone who loves being on an island but she took up the holiday as a means to try something new. She did many activities during her holiday and also treated her taste buds with different cuisines. The actress said, "Maldives has always been on my list because of the scenic beauty it has. I have never been an island person, so this was me exploring different places. Floating in the ocean and kayaking was one of the best things I experienced. Tried some Japanese cuisine." She further mentioned, "Although I was there for a limited period. But I'd love to try snorkelling the next I'm here. It's always very humbling to visit different countries, explore and try different cuisines. Maldives has always been a famous spot and I'm glad I ticked it off my list now. I also think it's a place one can visit any-time during the year so one does meet different people from all over the world."

SAIEE M MANJREKAR IS HAPPY BEING A BUSY ACTOR & DABBLING IN MANY PROJECTS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Saiee M Manjrekar is a busy bee. The actress, who has teamed up with Telugu star Ram Pothineni for her next film, has two films lined up for the release, 'Kuch Khattaa Ho Jaay' in which she will share the screen with Punjabi music star Guru Randhawa, and 'Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha' which is helmed by Neeraj Pandey of 'Special 26' fame. Talking about what appealed to her about 'Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha', the actress said: "The world of 'Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha' is something which is completely different to what I have seen in a while, both in the real world and on screen. It's so beautifully showcased in the movie. What appealed the most to the actor in me about the project was the fact that Neeraj Pandey sir was at the helm of affairs. It has been quite an enriching experience while working on this film."

Talking about how working in different industries shapes the actor in her, she shared: "Working in different film industries across India has been very culturally immersive both as a person and as an artiste. To explore so many cultures and to work in them expands your horizons as an artiste and you can use small nuances of one culture in the other."

She also shared that she is in a happy place being a busy actor and dabbling in many projects. "I'm so happy to do this much work in my life and career. I hope this continues and I get busier and meatier roles. A lot of hard work and effort went into making a film from actors to every single person. I hope it all pays off and the audience loves and relates more to the work that I do," she signed off.



'PS-2' CROSSED RS 150CR GROSS WORLDWIDE IN JUST 3 DAYS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mani Ratnam's magnum opus 'Ponniyin Selvan: 2', which released recently and also had a special screening attended by the whos who of the Indian film industry, is doing what its predecessor did back in September 2022 - working wonders at the box-office.

The film, which released on April 28, has so far minted Rs 150 crore at the global box office. Film trade analyst Ramesh Bala shared the update on the film's collection in a tweet. He tweeted: "Ponniyin Selvan 2 has crossed Rs 150 crore gross at the worldwide box office in 3 days (sic)". The film is having a great run at the North American box-office as it made over \$3 million, around Rs 24 crore in just three days, according to production house Lyca Productions.

Regarding the domestic box-office, the film is likely to cross the Rs 100 crore mark on Monday. It collected Rs 24 crore on its opening day, Rs 26.2 crore on its second day, and Rs 29.14 crore on its third day taking the collections close to Rs 79 crore.

In India, the film is drawing huge footfalls in Tamil Nadu theatres; it collected Rs 18.52



crore on its first day. The Salman Khan-starrer 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan' managed to cross the Rs 100 crore mark 10 days after its release as per box-office tracker Sacnilk Entertainment. Both the films star an ensemble cast with the latter riding mostly on Salman Khan's star power.

Interestingly, Salman and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, who plays dual roles in 'PS: 2' were together back in the 1990s. While Salman has ruled the box-office for long with his Eid releases ringing in deafening box-office noise, this time Aishwarya's work clearly has an edge over Salman's release.

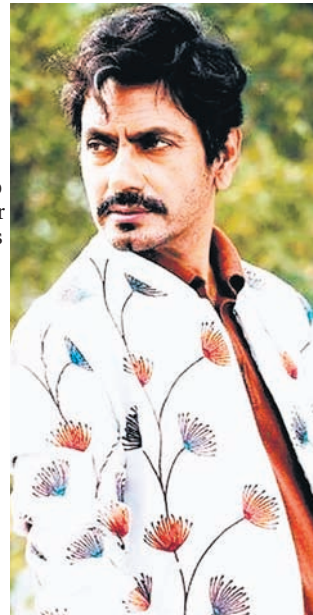
Nawaz would rather 'shoot' himself than being a superstar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui, who is gearing up for the release of his upcoming film 'Jogira Sara Ra Ra', has shared that doing different things is what fuels his passion and pursuit for excellence.

The actor attended the trailer launch of 'Jogira Sara Ra Ra' with his co-star Nikki Tamboli on Monday and spoke to the media about how he must constantly evolve as an actor to serve his audience and do complete justice to the stories that he is a part of. The actor told the media, "You learn every day, it's a new experience which helps enhance your craft. I can't act the way I used to 20 years ago because today I carry the experience of those many years. It's important to evolve constantly and with experience, your acting also changes." Over the years, Nawaz has starred in many ground-breaking films, the most memorable though still remains 'Gangs of Wasseypur' in which he played the role of a gangster and left everyone spellbound with what turned out to be his breakout role.

"I can't be stuck. If someone tells me that they'll make me a superstar but I'll have to do just one kind of role, I'll shoot myself. I'll quickly get bored, quit it and join some other field," he said.



Shirley Setia