

# absolute india

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Amid killer heat wave in India, big warning about melting ice in Himalayas

Patna Opposition meet

## ON THE VERGE OF DISASTER!

► These mountain ranges, which stretch over 3,500 kilometers (2,175 miles) in length from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east, are also seeing a shrinking permafrost that can trigger more landslides, the study said. The Nepal-based ICIMOD has eight member nations across Asia including China and India.

► The planet is already 1.2C hotter than during pre-industrial times, melting Arctic and Antarctic ice at a record pace.

► Meanwhile, The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Tuesday predicted heavy rainfall over 10 states which include Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Gangetic West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and coastal Andhra Pradesh.

► The IMD said that on Wednesday, heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places is very likely over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim while heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places over Assam and Meghalaya.

► It also predicted that on June 22, heavy rainfall is very likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Gangetic West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, East Madhya Pradesh and Coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rapidly melting glaciers in Asia's Hindu Kush Himalayan region - home to the world's highest mountains - are threatening the lives and livelihoods of as many as two billion people downstream, according to a new study.

The glaciers thawed 65% faster in the 2011 to 2020 period compared with the preceding decade and may lose 80% of their current volume by the end of this century on current emissions trajectories, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, or ICIMOD, found in its latest study. This may over time drastically reduce freshwater supplies in 12 rivers that flow across 16 nations in the region, it said.

Besides the risk of flash floods and landslides, the region is at a high risk of glacial lake outburst floods with 200 glacier lakes across



Hindu Kush Himalaya "deemed dangerous," the report said. The cascading effects threaten to upend agriculture, food security, fresh water availability and energy sources. It can also endanger some plant and animal species in the biodiversity hotspots to the point of extinction.

The changing cryosphere is also expected to put infrastructure in these mountainous regions at risk

or economically unviable.

The report also spoke about the need to urgently scale up adaptation of the affected local communities to climate change.

### MANDAVIYA REVIEWS PREPAREDNESS FOR HEAT WAVE

New Delhi: As several states continue to reel under intense heatwave, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday said that five-member team, comprising senior officials from the health ministry, NDMA, IMD will visit the states worst-affected by the heatwave conditions.

Several states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana are facing heat wave like conditions.

In the past few days, several people died due to heat stroke including Bihar and Odisha. Many states have extended summer vacations in view of the heat wave condition.

### FROM CHINA TO MEXICO, EL NINO THREAT BEGINS TO LOOM

New Delhi: China on Tuesday ramped up its flood control and disaster relief efforts to safeguard people's lives and properties amid the growing El Nino threat.

China's State Flood Control and Drought Relief headquarters scaled up its level-IV emergency response to flooding to include eight provincial-level regions. The emergence of the El Nino event marks the return of the traditional way of "wet in the south and dry in the north" in China, according to Zhou Bing, chief expert on climate services at the China Meteorological Administration. The American Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has announced that El Nino arrived as the atmospheric response to the warmer-than-average tropical Pacific sea surface kicked in over the past month.



Odisha train tragedy

## Rly says none of its staff is missing/absconding

Bhubaneswar | Agencies

The South Eastern Railway (SER) on Tuesday clarified that none of its staff is missing or absconding and all are cooperating the CBI in its probe into triple-train mishap in Odisha.

"There are some media reports that one of the staff is missing/absconding. However, it is to be clarified that all the staff are part of CBI and CRS enquiry. None of the staff are missing/absconding," the SER said in a statement.

The CBI had sealed the rented house of the junior engineer (signal) on Monday as no one was there at the house.

According to reports, a CBI



team reached the rented house of JE Amir Khan near Annapurna Rice Mill in Soro on Monday, and found that the house was locked.

A source said that two CBI personnel are also keeping a watch on the house. The CBI had earlier questioned him during the course of their investigation at an undis-

closed location.

At least 292 people were killed in the triple train crash that took place on June 2 evening.

Meanwhile, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw is scheduled to meet the Bahanaga locals, who initially carried out the rescue operation and saved many lives.

## Tragedy strikes Rath Yatra in Ahmedabad: One dead, several injured as balcony collapses

Ahmedabad | Agencies

The Rath Yatra in Ahmedabad took a tragic turn as an unfortunate incident occurred during the procession in the Dariyapur area, resulting in the loss of one life and leaving several injured.

The incident unfolded when the balcony on the third floor of a three-story building suddenly collapsed.

The 146th Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath, a major religious event in Ahmedabad, attracted thousands of devotees who eagerly embarked on the 18 km route, hoping to catch a glimpse of the revered deity.

However, the jubilant atmosphere was marred by the unfortunate balcony collapse that occurred during the procession.

The Gujarat police took significant measures to ensure the safety and security of the procession. For the first time, they deployed cutting-edge 3D mapping technology and anti-drone systems to prevent the use of



unauthorised drones and to closely monitor the entire route.

However, despite the meticulous arrangements, the tragic incident took place, leaving the authorities and devotees in shock.

Earlier on Tuesday morning, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel performed

the symbolic ritual known as 'Pahind Vidhi'. Using a golden broom, he cleared the path for the chariots, marking the commencement of the Rath Yatra.

Lord Jagannath, accompanied by Balabhadra and Subhadra, began their divine journey in their splendidly adorned chariots from the

historic Jagannath Temple in the Jamalpur area. Amid the grand procession, Union Home Minister Amit Shah participated in the auspicious 'Mangala Aarti', paying homage to the deity at the temple during the early hours of the day. He described the Yatra as a convergence of faith and devotion, and emphasised the divine and unforgettable experience of Lord Jagannath's darshan.

The procession featured dozens of elephants, camel-drawn carts, and trucks adorned with devotional tableaux.

The crowd cheered as they witnessed acrobatic performances by talented young performers from various 'Akharas'. To add to the fervor, truckers tossed toffees, sparking excitement among the devotees who eagerly scrambled to collect them.

The air resounded with chants of 'Jai Jagannath' as the chariots slowly made their way through the bustling streets, evoking a sense of spiritual connection among the onlookers.

## "We Are Not Neutral...": What PM Modi said on Russia-Ukraine conflict

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India stands on the side of peace in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported.

In an interview with WSJ ahead of his departure for a historic State visit to the US, PM Modi said that when it comes to the Ukraine conflict, "Some people say that we are neutral. But we are not neutral. We are on the side of peace."

Asked about criticism in the US of his government for not taking a more forceful stance against Russia in the conflict with Ukraine, PM Modi told the publication, "I don't think this type of perception is widespread in the US."

"I think India's position is well known and well understood in the entire world. The



world has full confidence that India's topmost priority is peace," he told the Wall Street Journal in an interview that was conducted at the Prime Minister's residence in New Delhi. The Prime Minister said all countries should respect international law and the sovereignty of countries, disputes should be resolved with diplomacy and dialogue, not war.

India has abstained from UN votes condemning the invasion. The PM during his interview with WSJ said he has spoken several times to Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

## Shah to launch BJP's 'mega yatras' in MP from June 22

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Ruling BJP in Madhya Pradesh has planned to launch five mega yatras in different parts on different intervals ahead of the assembly polls in the state. The yatras will be kick-started in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on June 22.

According to the Madhya Pradesh BJP leaders, the first part of yatra, to be flagged off by Amit Shah, will start on June 22 in Maoist-affected Balaghat district, similar yatras will be started from four other places the same day.

The other four yatras will be launched from Kamal Nath's pocket-borough Chhindwara, another will be started by BJP's powerful tribal politician and current MP forest minister Kunwar Vijay Shah from Jabera in Damoh district.

On June 22 only, another Yatra will be launched jointly by first-time Rajya Sabha MP Sumer Singh Solanki and former member of the same upper house Sampatiya Uike (both



tribal leaders) from Kalinjar Fort in Uttar Pradesh's Banda district, which is the birthplace of the brave-heart Queen Durgavati.

While, the fifth yatra will be launched from Dhauhani assembly constituency of Sidhi district of MP's Vindhya region. First-time BJP Lok Sabha member from Shahdol seat, Himadri Singh, (a young tribal politician, whose parents were Congress MPs) will start the yatra from Dhauhani.

## SURAT EYES GUINNESS RECORD AS 1.25L PEOPLE SET TO JOIN SESSION

Surat: As the world gears up to celebrate International Day of Yoga on Wednesday, Surat is set to make history with an attempt to break the Guinness World Record for the largest gathering of people for a yoga session.

A team from the Guinness World Records has arrived in Surat to verify the record-breaking feat, with an estimated 1.25 lakh people expected to join the yoga session on Wednesday. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel will also be present at the event. The vibrant city of Surat will be the focal point of the state-level celebrations to mark International Day of Yoga. The grand event will take place at Y Junction in Surat, where approximately 1.25 lakh individuals are expected to actively engage in the yoga session, demonstrating their commitment to health and well-being.

## 'Compromise settlement' provides ways to lenders to recover lost money: RBI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Tuesday that a "compromise settlement" with borrowers aims to enable multiple avenues to lenders to recover the money in default without much delay.

The RBI made the remarks while issuing a set issued a set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on Framework for Compromise Settlements and Technical Write-offs.

"The primary regulatory objective is to enable multiple avenues for lenders to recover the money in default without much delay," the RBI noted.

It further said that the provision enabling banks to enter into a compromise settlement in respect of borrowers categorised as fraud or



willful defaulter, is not a new regulatory instruction and has been the settled regulatory stance for more than 15 years.

On June 8, the RBI has issued a circular on Framework for Compromise Settlements and Technical Write-offs.





## AMID INTERMITTENT VIOLENCE, MANIPUR EXTENDS INTERNET SUSPENSION FOR 10TH TIME

Imphal | Agencies

As sporadic incidents of violence continued, the Manipur government on Tuesday extended the suspension of internet services for the 10th time till June 25, to prevent the spread of rumours and videos, photos, and messages, which might affect the law and order situation.

Manipur Home Department Commissioner T. Ranjit Singh, in a notification said that to thwart the designs and activities of anti-national and anti-social elements and to maintain peace and communal harmony, it has become necessary to take adequate measures to maintain law and order. An official of the Manipur High Court on Tuesday said that in an interim order, the High Court directed the state authorities to provide limited internet services to the public in some designated places under the control of the state authorities.

The High Court's observation came on a Public Interest Litigation filed by different individuals. It will now hear the case again on June 23.

The High Court division bench comprising Justice Ahanthem Bimol Singh and Justice A. Guneshwar Sharma, directed the service providers of Vodafone, Idea, Jio, BSNL and Airtel



to file a short affidavit explaining whether there is any possibility of providing limited internet services to the public by blocking social media, websites and by assuaging the concern of the state government to maintain law and order.

Taking into consideration the hardship faced by the public specially with regard to the ongoing admission process of the students in the state and to enable the people to carry out urgent and essential tasks, the high

court directed the state authorities to provide limited internet service in some designated places under the control of the state authorities.

The Manipur Human Rights Commission (MHRC) earlier asked the state government to consider restoration of internet services which had been suspended since the ethnic violence broke out on May 3.

MHRC chairperson Justice Utpalendu Bikash Saha and member K.K. Singh, in an order asked the

Home Commissioner to consider restoration of internet services in Manipur.

The rights panel issued the order following a complaint by Kammingthang Hangshingam, an Aizawl resident, about the suspension of internet services in Churachandpur district of Manipur last month. The complaint called it a "human rights violation".

Various organisations, including the opposition Congress, have been demanding immediate restoration of internet services in Manipur.

Chongtham Victor Singh, an advocate with the Manipur High Court, recently filed a petition in the Supreme Court against the mechanical and repeated shutdown of the internet in Manipur.

The petition said the government claimed that the state was returning to normal, but continued to suspend the internet services.

As people have been facing shortage of various essentials, transport fuel, cooking gas and life-saving drugs, disruption in banking and online facilities affecting normal life for the past many weeks, the internet suspension for around 50 days across the mountainous state further added to the misery of the people.

## If voted to power, Cong will set up separate ministry for backward classes

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Congress will set up a separate ministry at the Centre to tackle the problems of the backward classes, SC/ST and others when it comes to power, AICC General Secretary Mukul Wasnik said here on Tuesday.

Addressing the executive meeting of Maharashtra Congress' SC Cell, Wasnik said that the BJP government is continuously reducing the welfare funds for OBCs, SC, ST, and other schemes for backward classes are not being implemented.

"After the Congress comes to power at the Centre, we shall form a separate ministry specifically to address the problems of all the backward classes. We will also make budgetary provisions in proportion to the population of the backward classes for their welfare schemes," Wasnik declared.

He warned that the biggest challenge facing the nation today is the BJP government, which does not even allow the Parliament to function properly.

The Constitution was framed with the idea of taking together all the communities together, but in the past few years, the BJP regime has worked to disrespect the Constitution, he said.

"If the Constitution has to be protected and democracy be saved, there is no other option except the Congress," said Wasnik, flanked by top state leaders, including Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole, Varsha Gaikwad, Siddharth Hattiangre, Suresh



Shetty, Anis Ahmed, Devanand Pawar and others.

Addressing the meeting, Patole said that post 2014, 'Hindutva-wadi' forces have raised their heads in the country and spoiled the atmosphere of amity in the lands of great icons like B.R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and others. "We are continually raising the problems of the masses with the BJP government, which is engaged in spoiling the peaceful atmosphere in the society. People should not fall prey to its conspiracies. The citizens have realised their mistake of 2014, which will not be repeated next year," Patole said. Gaikwad explained how the backward classes are being attacked in Maharashtra, but the state government of Shiv Sena-BJP is doing nothing to stop these atrocities. "We shall need a bigger struggle in the coming days, with the participation of all the people from different sections of the society, to defeat the forces which are attempting to create strife in the country," said Gaikwad.

## Dozen inmates hurt in Pune's Yerawada Central Jail brawl



Pune | Agencies

At least a dozen inmates were hurt in a rioting that suddenly broke out on Monday in the historic Yerawada Central Jail (YCJ), official sources said here on Tuesday.

The scuffle started over some minor unknown issue and soon erupted into a huge free-for-all involving more

than a dozen inmates housed at the YCJ - one the most famed prisons in the country.

The jail security and other inmates together managed to bring the situation under control and peace seemed to have returned.

After the fracas, more than a dozen inmates were injured, some reported minor hurt, a few others sus-

tained trauma injuries, and they are under treatment.

The YCJ authorities registered a complaint with the Yerawada Police Station nearby which has booked around 15 accused in the violence.

Most of the inmates are hardened criminals convicted for various types of crimes and live together in the sprawling YCJ, which last shot to fame when Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt spent time there as a celeb-convict till his release in February 2016.

Independent social activists claim that the jail capacity is around 2,500, but it currently is crammed with over 6,000 inmates and such incidents are common with fights breaking out even over trivial matters.

Despite repeated attempts, the YCJ authorities were not available for comments in the matter.

## PRESIDENT MURMU THANKS PEOPLE FOR WISHES ON HER BIRTHDAY



New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday thanked the people for extending their wishes on her birthday.

In a tweet in Hindi, the President said that she felt happy on receiving congratulatory messages from people from all over the country.

She added that the love she has received today has given her strength to serve the country with greater vigour.

The President expressed her thanks to all those who wished her on her birthday.

## Hubby presents coins worth Rs 55K as maintenance in court; wife calls it harassment

Jaipur | Agencies

A man reached a court with coins worth Rs 55,000 to pay the amount of maintenance to his wife.

Everyone present in the court was shocked to see the coins. When this was opposed by the wife, the husband said that it is Indian legal currency and hence should be accepted.

On this, the court ordered the husband to get the coins counted on the next date. It directed the husband to make bags of Rs 1,000 each and give them to the wife. The court has given June 26 as the next date in the matter. Husband Dashrath Kumawat's lawyer, Raman Gupta meanwhile said, "This whole matter is related to family dispute. Dashrath Kumawat was married to Seema Kumawat about 10 years ago. The dispute started between the two after 3 to 4 years of marriage. After this, the husband filed an application for divorce in the court. During the hearing of the case, the family court directed the husband to pay Rs 5,000 as maintenance to the wife every month.



The husband was not giving this amount to the wife for the last 11 months. The court issued recovery warrant against the husband. The notice was then converted into an arrest warrant on non-payment of the amount.

Eventually, the man was arrested and produced in the court. However, after paying the amount, the court released the husband on bail. This case is going on in Family Court-1 in Jaipur. Due to the holidays of the court, this time the case was heard in Link Court ADJ-8 Jaipur Mahanagar I. The police arrested the husband on June 17

and produced him in the court. On the same day, the relatives reached the court with coins of one and two rupees in seven bags. The weight of these bags were around 280 kg.

On this Seema Kumawat's advocate, Ramprakash Kumawat said - this is not humane. The husband is not paying the amount of maintenance for 11 months. Now he has brought coins of Rs 55,000 to harass his wife. It will take 10 days just to count them. On this, the court directed the husband to get the coins counted in the court itself and make bags of coins worth Rs 1,000 each.

## CYCLONE BIPARJOY: ORANGE ALERT IN PARTS OF RAJASTHAN

Jaipur | Agencies

After cyclone Biparjoy triggered floods in many districts of Rajasthan, the Met department has now sounded orange alert in Sawai Madhopur, Bundi and Tonk and yellow alert in places like Jaipur, Dholpur, Karauli, Bharatpur, Dausa, Kota, Baran, Jhalawad and Sikar.

As per Met department, it rained heavily in Dholpur and the data collected till 8:30 on Tuesday morning said that it rained 184 mm here while it rained 166.5 mm in Karauli, 149 mm in Ajmer, 55 mm in Bhilwara, 52 mm in Chittaurgarh.

With the heavy rains in different parts of the state, the temperature in almost all districts is under 40 degree Celsius except Shri Ganganagar where 41 degree Celsius was recorded. Also, the minimum temperature in almost all districts has gone under 30 degree Celsius.

The IMD officials said, "The Low Pressure Area (Remnant of Cyclonic Storm 'Biparjoy') now lies over south-west Uttar Pradesh and adjoining areas of north-west Madhya Pradesh & north-east Rajasthan. The associat-



ed cyclonic circulation extends up to middle tropospheric levels."

Rains, thunderstorms and winds shall be recorded in places like Jaipur,

Bharatpur, Ajmer, Kota, Udaipur and other places till June 24, they added.

## Punjab Assembly passes Bill to replace Governor from Chancellor's post

Chandigarh | Agencies

Amid a conflict between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab and Governor Banwarilal Purohit, the Punjab Assembly on Tuesday unanimously passed the Punjab Universities Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2023, aiming to replace the Governor from the post of chancellor in all 11 state universities.

If the Bill gets the Governor's consent, the Chief Minister would replace the Governor as the Chancellor of state-run universities.

Earlier, the Bill was tabled in the Vidhan Sabha that was supported by the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). The Congress was absent from the House.

Justifying the need to bring the Bill, Chief Minister



Bhagwant Mann said "if they could not appoint V-Cs they would be letting down the mandate given by the people."

The issue is likely to create a fresh tussle between the government and the gover-

nor. Earlier, the Chief Minister said the Bill is a replica of West Bengal government's Bill.

The cabinet on Monday gave its nod to the Bill to be tabled in Vidhan Sabha on Tuesday.

## Bihar: Man 'cremates' statue of his sister for eloping with boyfriend

Patna | Agencies

A man in Bihar's Purnea district made a statue of his younger sister, put it on a bier and carried it around the village before burning it as she had eloped with her boyfriend, an official said.

Bihari Gupta claimed that his sister Sweetie Gupta had eloped with her boyfriend on June 10, one day before her marriage to another person scheduled on June 11. Sweetie married her boyfriend on June 11 in a temple. The incident

occurred in Tikapatti village in the district.

Bihari Gupta had lodged an FIR of kidnapping against the boyfriend of Sweetie but she herself reached the Tikapatti police station and claimed that she was not kidnapped but eloped with her boyfriend. She also said that she was a major and got married willingly.

Following this, Bihari said that he was facing embarrassment and feeling humiliated due to his sister's elopement. Even the groom's family insulted him.

"Keeping in view the humiliation, we discussed it within our family and decided that for us she is dead. We made a statue of subtle and put it on the bier with a photograph of Sweetie and took it around the village. We then went to the cremation ground and cremated the statue following all the rituals on Tuesday," Bihari said.

"After the death of my father, I looked after my two younger sisters and got one of them married. I also fixed the marriage of Sweetie but she has humiliated me," Bihari stated.

## Panchayat's ultimatum to remove Shivaji statue draws protest in Goa

Tension prevailed at Calangute in North Goa on Tuesday after the local panchayat issued a notice to remove a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj installed recently in its jurisdiction.

Panaji | Agencies

Sarpanch Joseph Sequeira was restrained nearly for six hours by hundreds of protesters from leaving office and

was asked to withdraw the notice. Heavy police force was deployed at the Panchayat office and the protection was given to Sequeira and other staff of the office by pulling down the shutter of the office.

Speaking to reporter, Sequeira said that the notice was issued by following procedure and discussing it in the office meeting.

"I am not against Shivaji Maharaj. I have studied chapters of Shivaji in Marathi school. But as per Supreme Court order statues can't be installed on major district roads. But they installed it

on June 3, 2023, so we were forced to issue a notice for its removal," Sequeira said.

He said that the protesters had come to the panchayat office at 11.30 a.m. and left at around 5.45 p.m. only after he apologised to them for the notice.

"My intention was not to hurt anybody's religious sentiments, but if anyone has been hurt, then I apologise. I have withdrawn the notice," he said while coming out of the office in police protection.

Sources said that two vehicles were damaged in stone-pelting by agitators.

Though the notice was withdrawn after protesters turned down the request of police to disperse from the site, they (protesters) demanded that the Sarpanch should come out of the office and tender a public apology.

They dispersed from the area only after Sequeira apologised in front of them.

Protesters condemned issuance of the notice to remove the statue.

"We will not allow the authorities to remove the statue of Shivaji Maharaj. He is our inspiration," they said.





SHAKEN BY INTERNAL SURVEYS, MP BJP BANKS ENTIRELY ON 'MODI MAGIC'

Sundeep Pouranik | Bhopal

The BJP, which has been in power in Madhya Pradesh for almost two decades, is leaving no stone unturned to counter the impact of anti-incumbency in the upcoming state Assembly elections.

In the last two decades, the Congress has ruled the state barely for 15 months. This is the reason why the saffron party is facing a strong anti-incumbency in the state and is mulling to contest the elections by keeping Prime Minister Narendra Modi's face in the front.

Even the recent internal surveys were not encouraging for the party, and thus it is entirely banking on the 'Modi magic' to diminish the impact of anti-incumbency.

The interference of BJP's national team is continuously increasing in the state. National leaders are touring the state to interact with various sections to assess the ground situation.

The visits of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, party President J.P. Nadda along with other prominent national leaders will see a rise in the coming days.

Prime Minister Modi will visit Bhopal on June 27 and is likely to have a day halt in tribal-dominated Shahdol.



The BJP is trying to woo the tribal voters through the Prime Minister's visit.

Decisions such as the Prime Minister's visit to Madhya Pradesh on Tribal Pride Day, naming a railway station in Bhopal after Rani Kamlapati belonging to the tribal community, and now Modi's visit to Shahdol show that the saffron party giving prominence to tribal voters.

In the 2018 Assembly elections, the BJP suffered a major loss in the tribal belt as out of 47 seats, the BJP could

win only 16 seats while the Congress bagged 30 seats. Overall, the tribal vote played an important role in keeping the BJP away from power.

The BJP is trying to strengthen its hold among tribals.

In 2018, out of 230 assembly seats in the state, Congress won 114 seats while the BJP bagged 109 seats.

With elections drawing near, Congress leaders have intensified their attacks on Prime Minister Modi.

Abbas Hafeez, Vice President of Congress' media wing, says that in

whichever state elections are held, the Prime Minister is seen in the role of the Publicity Minister. The same happened in Karnataka, but the public had made up its mind and thrown the BJP out of power. The same is going to happen in Madhya Pradesh as well. No matter how many visits Prime Minister Modi makes, the people of the state have made up their minds to oust the BJP from power".

On the other hand, BJP spokesperson Pankaj Chaturvedi says, "Narendra Modi is a matter of pride for the BJP organisation, a politician like him is leading us. As far as the face is concerned, the face of the BJP is the symbol of a lotus. The election will be fought on the same symbol, the leadership is of the Prime Minister and the issue of the election will be development".

Political analysts believe that the Assembly elections are very important for both the political parties.

The BJP is not getting good feedback from the party regarding the state government, so the party is trying to keep the face of the Prime Minister forward and contest on the issue of Hindutva, which can benefit the party in the state. This is the reason that along with the national leadership, visits of Prime Minister Modi are continuously increasing in the state.

GRAND WELCOME TO VICE PRESIDENT DHANKHAR AT DUMNA AIRPORT IN JABALPUR



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar arrived at Dumna airport in Jabalpur at 4 pm by Indian Airforce aircraft. Governor Mangubhai Patel, Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Jal

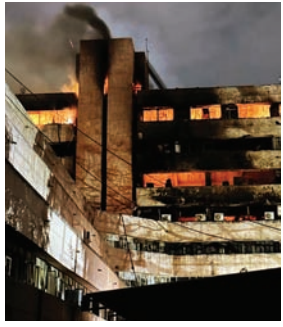
Shakti Prahlad Singh Patel and State's Minister of State for AYUSH and Water Resources Minister in Waiting Ram Kishore "Nano" Kavre welcomed as well. Member of Parliament Rakesh Singh, Member of Rajya Sabha Sumitra Balmik, MLA Ashok Rohani, Commissioner Abhay

Verma, Additional Director General of Police Umesh Joga, senior army officers and officers of administration and police accorded warm welcome. Vice President Dhankhar was given Gaurd of Honour by the jawans with the tune of National Anthem at Airport Dumna.

Satpura Bhawan fire due to 'short circuit', says probe panel

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The fire incident in Madhya Pradesh government's office -- Satpura Bhawan -- was due to a 'short circuit', the probe committee formed to investigate the matter said in its report.



panel was based on the statements of 32 persons (employees of Satpura Bhawan) and the samples collected from the spot. According to the State's Home Minister Narottam Mishra, the samples collected from the spot were tested from the forensic science laboratory in Sagar

district. "Fire broke due to short circuit in the closed office of Deputy Director of Tribal Welfare Department, Veerendra Singh, on the third floor of the building," Mishra, who is also the spokesperson of the Madhya Pradesh government, said in a statement.

According to the Minister, probe committee has collected eight samples of flammable hydrocarbon (petrol, diesel and kerosene) from the spot. "All these samples are under safe protection for any further investigation in the future. The report suggested that fire occurred due to short circuit and no suspicious person is involved in it," Mishra added.

YOGA PROVIDES POSITIVITY AND NEW ENERGY TO A PERSON: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan participated in the ongoing National Yoga Olympiad-2023 at Regional Institute of Education (NCERT) located in Shyamla Hills. He planted 5 Champa saplings there. School Education Minister (Independent Charge) Inder Singh Parmar, Director of NCERT Prof. Dinesh Prasad Saklani were with him.

Chief Minister Chouhan also addressed the students participating in the National Yoga Olympiad being held on the theme of Yoga for 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. He said that yoga is necessary for the development of personality and for the welfare of the world. Yoga provides positivity and new energy to a person. The ability to do what we think with body, mind, intellect and soul is achieved through yoga. Principal of Regional



Institute of Education Prof. Jaideep Mandal and subject experts were present in the programme. It is notable that the National Yoga Olympiad was organised by the Union Ministry of Education and NCERT from June 18 to 20. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, daughter Mohini Sharma also planted saplings. It is noteworthy that Mohini met with an accident in November 2015 while going to school, in which there was only 5 percent chance that her right leg could be saved. On the initiative of Chief Minister Chouhan, the state government made complete arrangements for her treatment. She is now healthy after treatment at Narmada Trauma Centre Bhopal. It has been 8 years since this incident, daughter Mohini is now 13 years old. While thanking Chief Minister Chouhan, daughter Mohini planted saplings. Dr. Rajesh Sharma of Narmada Trauma Centre also participated in plantation.

CAUGHT ON CCTV: HERD SCARES TIGER AWAY AFTER IT ATTACKS COW ON BHOPAL FARM

Bhopal: CCTV cameras at a bull farm in Madhya Pradesh have captured a stunning scene -- a herd of cows scaring away a tiger.

The visuals were captured late on Sunday night at the farm in Bhopal's Kerwa. A tiger is seen attacking a cow. The others in the herd then closed in on the tiger, forcing it to move away from its prey.

The tiger then waited on the prowl for about three hours, but could not attack again as the herd stood guard around the injured cow. The injured cow is under treatment and its condition is reportedly critical. The 76-acre farm has as many as 50 CCTV cameras. This is the fifth incident of a tiger entering the bull farm in the past six months.

Why Congress silent on religious conversions: Home Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Senior BJP leader and Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra hit out at the Congress, accusing it of doing 'politics of appeasement' and questioned its silence on cases of forced religious conversions.

He made this accusation while briefing about the incident in Bhopal in which a young man was forced to act like a dog.

Mishra said Congress Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh and former CM Kamal Nath did not utter a single word on the incident. "A Hindu youth was forced to act like a dog. When it is about religious conversion, the Congress leaders would not utter a single word, but when the administration takes action, they would raise questions."

The minister, while briefing the press on Tuesday, informed that one more accused involved in the case was arrested late on Monday. So far, four persons have been arrested and the search operation for the remaining two more was under way, the Minister told the media on Tuesday. On



Monday, the Bhopal district administration along with Municipal officials carried out the demolition of houses of the accused. Notably, the Madhya Pradesh Police have booked six persons under the National Security Act (NSA) for traumatising the youth. On Sunday night, a video went viral on social media wherein a youth could be seen tied with a chain and forced to act like a dog. The victim, who was later identified as Vijay Ramchandani, was seen pleading for mercy, while the accused kept abusing him and asking him to bark like a dog.

Cong leader makes fun of Scindia, says BJP has made him 'Bhai Saheb' from 'Maharaja'

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Congress vice president Damodar Yadav has made controversial remarks on Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and state Home Minister Narottam Mishra.

Addressing a gathering of party workers in the Mungaoli Assembly constituency in Ashoknagar district, Yadav said he can make 'Scindia a rooster whenever he wishes to'. He took jibe at Scindia, saying he would



thank the BJP for making Scindia a 'bhai saheb' who was 'maharaja' in the

Congress. "Gone are the days, no maharaja is there now. I will make him (Scindia) a rooster whenever I wish to," Yadav said, adding that "jab Scindia ka ye hal hai to unke mantranon ka kya hal hoga (when Scindia is in this situation, then one can imagine about his loyalists). Notably, the state Congress has kicked-started a rally called 'Kamal Nath Sandesh Yatra' from Bhopal to Datia. Yadav, who is leading the first phase of the yatra, also made controversial remarks on state Home Minister Narottam Mishra.

Quashing of FIR in 'unnatural sex' case might help poll prospects of Raghavji's daughter

Bhopal: Veteran BJP leader and former minister Raghavji got a big relief after the Madhya Pradesh High court quashed a decade-old FIR against him lodged on charges of sodomising a youth, observing that the case was a "politically-oriented animosity, which makes the petitioner's prosecution malicious".

The former Finance Minister was arrested on charges under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in July 2013 for allegedly sodomising a youth. He was arrested following a complaint lodged by his domestic help in which he claimed that he was sexually assaulted by Raghavji. Raghavji was also expelled from the BJP



following his arrest. Delivering the 22-page judgement last Friday, the high court ordered quashing of the FIR registered at Bhopal's Habibganj police station. The court also said that all subsequent proceed-

ings pursuant to the said FIR will automatically come to an end.

Further, the court also mentioned about the complainant youth's father (through affidavit) telling the police about his son not

being in a stable mental condition, being a habitual intoxicant, habitual of making fallacious allegations against highly-placed persons of the society and trying to blackmail Raghavji at the behest of the veteran leader's political rivals.

For Raghavji, who is in his 80s now, the relief comes as too little too late for reviving his political career. However, it might help his daughter's poll prospects in the run-up to the Assembly elections scheduled this year-end.

Jyoti, who is seen as Raghavji's political heir, has already served as Vidisha Janpad panchayat chairperson and head of the Vidisha Nagar Palika. She is known to be popular among the BJP cadres in Vidisha district.

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EDITOR'S SPECS

## AAP may play spoilsport in MP

Madhya Pradesh is all set to become the centre of attention of the nation's politics with its Assembly elections slated for later this year. As always, the polls will see a direct contest between the BJP and Congress. But with the absence of a strong regional political outfit, some other parties will attempt to expand their areas. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which made a stunning entry by winning the Mayoral post in the 'coal city' Singrauli last year, will be contesting the Assembly polls in Madhya Pradesh for the first time this year. In January, the AAP dissolved the state's working committee and two months later, Rani Agrawal won the Singrauli Mayoral. The party also promoted her as the state president. The decision to contest in all the 230 Assembly seats was announced by Kejriwal when he visited the state in March. In his announcement, he cited the 'Delhi model' concept for free electricity, education and healthcare if his party is voted to power in Madhya Pradesh. The AAP is yet to announce a Chief Ministerial face, but sources have claimed that it is in talks with some big leaders from both the BJP and Congress. Also the fact that several politicians have sidelined from BJP and Congress and the youth aspiring to test their luck in politics have been racing to find a place within the AAP. Political observers believe that the AAP may not have much impact in Madhya Pradesh due to various reasons, but it can play spoilsport for candidates of the BJP and Congress. Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh-based Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Samajwadi Party (SP) will also contest the polls despite losing a lot of ground.

# PARTYGATE CRASHES BORIS JOHNSON'S POLITICAL CAREER

Asad Mirza

Boris Johnson's sudden resignation as an MP has resulted in a crisis both for the UK's Conservative Party and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, but the ultimate winner from the resulting chaos might be the former Prime Minister himself.

Johnson stepped down on June 9 as a Conservative MP after claiming he was "forced out of Parliament" over Partygate.

In an explosive and lengthy statement, he called the Commons Privileges Committee investigating if he misled the Commons over Downing Street lockdown parties, a "kangaroo court" whose purpose "has been to find me guilty, regardless of the facts". In its defence the committee said it had "followed the procedures and the mandate".

Apparently Johnson had an inkling of what was to come as evident by the Committees report, which said that he "committed a serious contempt" of parliament when he told Parliament that rules were followed at all times.

The findings amount to a historic admonishment of a former prime minister, who won a landslide electoral victory less than four years ago but saw his political career collapse amid a series of scandals.

"The contempt was all the more serious because it was committed by the Prime Minister, the most senior member of the government," the Privileges Committee wrote in its report. "There is no precedent for a Prime Minister having been found to have deliberately misled the House."

"He misled the House on an issue of the greatest importance to the House and to the public, and did so repeatedly," the members wrote, adding that Johnson also misled the committee when he presented evidence in his defence. The report added a further, damning recommendation in light of his resignation: that Johnson is denied a former member's pass to enter parliament, a long-standing convention for former MPs.

Two other Conservative MPs Nadine Dorries and Nigel Adams followed Johnson's resignation -- meaning the Conservatives are now facing three by-elections immediately.



Apart from these by-elections, the bigger discussion in the Westminster is what will Johnson do now. Apparently known as a maverick, he is also known for his ability to bounce back from oblivion.

The BBC's Laura Kuenssberg in an interview on Sunday said clues from his track record tell us there is little chance he would have fought if he hadn't been sure he could win. Four times in the past Johnson has bounced back politically.

In 1987, Johnson was fired by The Times for falsifying a quote -- but was hired the following year by The Daily Telegraph, as the paper's Brussels correspondent.

In 2004, he was fired as the Conservatives' shadow arts minister for lying about an affair -- but was back on the front benches a year later. In 2016, he pulled out of his first bid to be the Conservative leader and Prime Minister after his close friend Michael Gove launched a rival bid - but he made a surprise comeback as Foreign Secretary under eventual winner Theresa May.

In 2018, he quit May's cabinet in protest at

her Brexit deal, only to return as leader of the party the following year, going on to win a huge majority at a general election.

There are varying reactions to his sudden departure, Labour deputy leader Angela Rayner called Johnson a "coward" who "doesn't accept responsibility for his own actions" But his former advisor, Will Walden, says he doesn't think this is the end for Johnson -- "he is preparing himself for what might be next". Former Conservative chairman Jake Berry, a friend of Johnson's, told reporters: "The establishment has seen Boris out the door." But Berry also said: "He appeals to the great British public more than I've seen an British politician do. There is something special about him. He's an extraordinary character." This means no one is sure of or even has a hint of his future plans, though most of them whether Conservative or Labour would like to write his political epitaph after his latest decision.

Johnson in his tirade against the government also targeted the Prime Minister

Sunak of "talking rubbish" after the prime minister said his predecessor asked him to overrule the vetting committee for appointments to the House of Lords.

The Conservative Party seems to be more in turmoil and chaos now than ever before, the chances of it winning the next general election seems slim.

The opposition Labour Party is baying for blood and asking for immediate elections, of which it is sure to win. In this scenario it would be practical for Sunak to take this as an opportunity to retrench and consolidate himself in the party, to expel the far-right fringe and anyone else who refuses to toe his pragmatic and sensible line.

The party would, of course, be smaller, but it would be more cohesive and manageable, and would gradually rebuild in strength by welcoming back those disillusioned by the David Cameron, Johnson, and Liz Truss years of lunacy. The big question is if Johnson will not run for Parliament again, and is happy to maintain the suspense of a return, what else might he do with his time?

There are reports that coincidentally, his old newspaper the Telegraph has just come up for sale and its former editor Will Lewis, who sometimes advised Johnson, when he was in No 10 besides working together at the Telegraph, and who has just been made a knight by Johnson in the latest Honours List, may team up with him. Further leading to speculation that the duo might be part of a bid to take it over the Telegraph?

Turning back to journalism once again might be one of the escape routes available to Johnson but in his reincarnation as an Editor, he would be the worst nightmare for the Conservatives and Sunak, both.

The raft of speculations shows that the man has not lost his nuisance value and the art of turning nuisance and resultant chaos in his favour. Both his friends and foes at the moment are in complete dark and this might not be the final chapter of his weird political career.

(Asad Mirza is a Delhi-based senior political commentator.)

## international

# OVER 35 MN PEOPLE IN SOUTHERN US EXPERIENCE BRUTAL HEAT WAVE

Washington | Agencies

More than 35 million people in multiple across southern US states, including Texas, Louisiana and Florida, are experiencing a brutal heat wave that is expected to last for days, according to the National Weather Service (NWS).

A blistering heat wave will persist all this week, NWS said in its latest forecast late Monday.

Thunderstorms, some severe, and heavy rainfall are possible in the next few days across the Southeast. Critical fire weather conditions persist in the Southwest, Xinhua news agency quoted the NWS as saying.

Amid the sweltering heat, over 49,000 people in Mississippi, nearly 187,000 in Oklahoma, almost 79,000 in Texas and some 69,000 in Louisiana were left without electricity as of Monday evening, according to utility tracker power-outage.us.

While in New Mexico firefighters are battling a large fire, Phoenix, the state



capital of Arizona, on June 18 recorded its hottest temperature of the year so far at 42 degrees Celsius.

Heat waves are occurring more often than they used to in major cities across the US.

Their frequency has increased steadily, from an average of two heat waves per year during the 1960s to six per year during the 2010s and 2020s, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency.

## Indonesia's Anak Krakatau volcano erupts

Jakarta: Indonesia's Anak Krakatau volcano has erupted, spewing ash as high as 1.5 km, according to the Centre for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation.

"The column of ash was white to gray, with thick intensity, moving to the southeast," said the Mount Anak Krakatau Monitoring Post Officer Jumono.

The eruption at 8.22a.m. on Monday was without a bang, with a maximum amplitude of 70 mm and a duration of 3 minutes and 2 seconds, reports Xinhua news agency.

Located between the islands of Java and Sumatra, Mount Anak Krakatau has been in the third level of danger since April 24, 2022, until now.

From June 6 to 11, this mountain turmoil increased, recording nine eruptions with volcanic ash throwing up to 3.5 km into the sky.

People have been advised not to move within a 5 km radius of the crater to avoid the impact of the eruption.

## Pak-China sign MoU for \$3.4 billion nuclear power project

Islamabad | Agencies

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Pakistan and China for a 1200MW Chashma-5 (C-5) nuclear power project worth \$3.48 billion, local media reported.

China National Nuclear Corporation Overseas Ltd (CNOS) President and Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) Member Power Muhammad Saeed Ur Rehman signed the MoU.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister said the nuclear power project was a significant step towards economic cooperation between the two countries, Geo News reported.

He said the decision to start this project had been taken, and the main conditions were agreed upon during his previous term as Prime Minister; however, the successive government put this project in cold storage. He said due to the higher global inflation, the project would have cost much more than that determined in 2017-18, but the Chinese government not only abstained from raising the cost but also gave a discount of around Rs 30 billion, Geo News reported.

Vowing to kick-start the project without



delay, the Pakistan prime minister said under the difficult economic situation, investment from China in this project to the tune of \$3.48 billion sent a clear message that Pakistan was a place where Chinese companies and investors continued to show their trust and faith.

"This reflects the famous quote that our friendship is higher than the Himalayas, deeper than the deepest ocean, sweeter than sugar and honey, and stronger than iron and steel. He said President Xi Jinping had called this friendship "iron brothers", Geo News reported.

Furthermore, he added that he had recently inaugurated a K-3 nuclear project in Karachi.

## CONGRESSMAN JIM HIMES BACKS BILL TO DECLARE DIWALI FEDERAL HOLIDAY IN US

New York | Agencies

Congressman Jim Himes has agreed to support a bill introduced in the US Congress to declare Diwali as a federal holiday.

The Diwali Day Act, introduced by New York Congresswoman Grace Meng last month, would make the 'Festival of Lights' the 12th federally recognised holiday in the US when it is passed by Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden.

Himes' support came after his meeting with prominent members of Global Organization of People of Indian Origin-Connecticut Chapter (GOPIO-CT) last week. Led by GOPIO Chairman Thomas Abraham, the delegation also discussed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming state visit from Wednesday to Friday.

The visit includes a state dinner as well as an address to the Joint Session of the Congress on Thursday.

Himes, who serves Connecticut's fourth Congressional district, also discussed shortage of workers in hospitality

and healthcare sectors, and delays faced by Indians in getting permanent resident cards, according to a GOPIO release. Recently, the New York State legislature passed a Bill, led by Indian-American assemblywoman Jennifer Rajkumar, to make Diwali a school holiday in the city. New York Governor Kathy Hochul is expected to sign the bill to make it a law, following which Mayor Eric Adams would be able to designate Diwali as a school holiday for an estimated two lakh students from these communities who celebrate it.

Earlier this year, Pennsylvania became the first US state to officially recognise Diwali as a public holiday.

The state introduced the Diwali holiday ahead of other states like California, Texas, Illinois, New York and New Jersey with a high concentration of Indian-Americans. Michigan's Indian-American state representative Ranjeev Puri, also introduced a bill last week to make Diwali, Vaishakhi, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha and Lunar New Year as state-recognised holidays in the state.

## Missing tourist sub might have only 70 hrs of oxygen left: Report

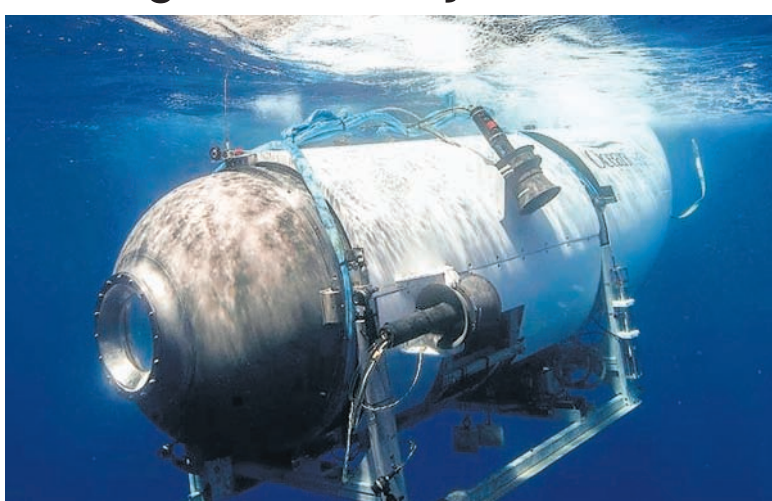
Washington | Agencies

A tourist submarine that went missing on June 18 during a dive to the Titanic's wreckage in the Atlantic with five people on board, has only about 70 hours of oxygen left, with a massive search and rescue operation currently underway, a media report said citing a top US Coast Guard official as saying.

Addressing the media on Monday, Rear Adm John Mauger of the US Coast Guard said: "We anticipate there is somewhere between 70 and the full 96 hours available at this point," reports the BBC.

He also said that two aircraft, a submarine and sonar buoys were involved in the search for the vessel but noted the area in which the search is taking place was "remote", making operations difficult.

Rear Adm Mauger said the rescue teams were "taking this personally" and were doing everything they could to bring those on board "home safe".



The missing vessel is believed to be tour firm OceanGate's Titan submersible, a truck-sized sub that holds five people and usually dives with a four-day emergency supply of oxygen.

Tickets cost \$250,000 for an eight-day trip including dives to the wreck at a

depth of 3,800m.

According to the US Coast Guard, contact with the submarine was lost about an hour and 45 minutes into its dive on June 18.

In a statement on Monday, OceanGate said its "entire focus (was)

on the crewmembers in the submersible and their families", the BBC reported.

"We are deeply thankful for the extensive assistance we have received from several government agencies and deep sea companies in our efforts to re-establish contact with the submersible," it added.

The Titanic's wreck lies some 700 km south of St John's, Newfoundland, though the rescue mission is being run from Boston, Massachusetts.

Hamish Harding, a 58-year-old British billionaire businessman and explorer, is among those on the missing submarine, his family said.

On social media over the weekend, Harding said he was "proud to finally announce" that he would be aboard the mission to the wreck of the Titanic -- but added that because of the "worst winter in Newfoundland in 40 years, this mission is likely to be the first and only manned mission to the Titanic in 2023".

He later wrote: "A weather window has just opened up and we are going to attempt a dive tomorrow (June 18)."





SHIV SENA (UBT) WILL MARCH TO BMC ON JULY 1 AGAINST 'FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Crying foul over the alleged financial irregularities being perpetrated in the civic body, the Opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) will take out a protest march to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on July 1, party president and ex-chief minister Uddhav Thackeray said here on Tuesday.

The march will be led by ex-minister and MLA Aditya Thackeray plus other senior party leaders, with thousands of people expected to join from Mumbai and other cities.

Incidentally, the Sena (UBT) move comes a day after Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announced a Mumbai Police's Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into an alleged fraud of Rs 12,000-crore in the BMC spendings during the MVA tenure.

The alleged scam was flagged off after a special audit report submitted to the state government by the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) in March.

Uddhav Thackeray said that like the monsoons, even the elections to



the civic bodies are getting delayed and now the BMC is squandering public monies, a purported Rs 650-crore has already been spent - from its deposits of Rs 92,000-crore on different grounds. He said that they would expose the ongoing corruption in the BMC and said that something like the police SIT is unprecedented in the city's history, and if the MVA

allies Congress-Nationalist Congress Party want to participate, they would be welcomed. Referring to his party's demand to the UNO for declaring June 20 as 'World Traitors Day', Thackeray pointed out that the government is trying to confuse the people with the police SIT to probe the BMC's financial scams in road and other projects. Thackeray questioned

why Shinde and his team kept rushing to New Delhi so many times and wondered whether they were getting notices from the central probe agencies. Earlier this morning, Thackeray held a preparatory meeting of former municipal corporators or councillors at the party headquarters for the much-anticipated polls to the BMC and other major civic bodies.

ED arrests Maha bizman in Rs 429 cr bank fraud case

Team Absolute | New Delhi | Mumbai

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday announced the arrest of Maharashtra-based businessman Sagar Maruti Suryawanshi, related to a Rs 429 crore bank fraud case.

The arrest was made in connection with the ongoing investigation into the Seva Vikas Co-operative Bank fraud case, in which the bank suffered a loss of Rs 429 crore across 124 non-performing asset (NPA) loan accounts.

This led to the bank going bankrupt, causing losses to thousands of small depositors. The ED initiated the PMLA investigation based on multiple FIRs registered in Pune against loan defaulters, including Amar Mulchandani (the former chairman of the bank), its directors, and officials.

"Investigation has revealed that the bank was being run



like a family proprietorship by Amar Mulchandani without following any prudent banking norms. Loans were sanctioned in return for massive kickbacks. More than 92 per cent of the loan accounts had turned into NPAs, which ultimately led to the collapse of the bank. The RBI has cancelled the bank's license," said an ED official.

The ED found that Suryawanshi and his rela-

tives had defrauded the bank for an amount of Rs 60.67 crore across 10 NPA loan accounts.

They obtained loans in connivance with Amar Mulchandani, without having sufficient creditworthiness or repaying capacity.

After the arrest, he was produced before a special PMLA Court in Mumbai, which has sent him to ED's custody until June 26.

CBI grills Sam D'Souza in alleged extortion demand linked to Aryan Khan drug case

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Mumbai

The CBI on Tuesday was questioning Sam D'Souza, a private individual involved in the alleged extortion demand of Rs 25 crore in the Aryan Khan drug case, in which former Mumbai zone NCB Director Sameer Wankhede is an accused.

D'Souza was summoned by the federal probe agency to join the investigation. On Tuesday, he arrived at the CBI headquarters here with his lawyers.

"Sam D'Souza arrived with his lawyers. The CBI had issued a notice today at 10:30 a.m. summoning him for questioning at the CBI headquarters in Delhi," said a source.

Previously, Wankhede was interrogated by the CBI in Mumbai.

The accessed FIR makes shocking revelations.

"Sameer Wankhede is accused of engaging in the buying and selling of expensive watches without disclosing this information. He also allegedly concealed details of his expenses during his foreign trips," stated the CBI source, quoting the FIR.

The CBI has mentioned that while some individuals caught on the cruise were released, Aryan Khan was arrested. It also mentioned that K.P. Goswami, who appeared as an NCB official, was responsible for Aryan



Khan's arrest. He was presented in such a way that he seemed like an officer of the NCB. Later, a demand of Rs 25 crore was made for a settlement, which was eventually negotiated down to Rs 8 crore. Initially, Rs 50 lakh was taken, but later some of the money was returned due to the case getting stuck.

"Mulayam Singh, Mayawati Also Tried, But...:" Ajit Pawar Jabs KCR

Team Absolute | Pune

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar on Monday said that though Telangana Chief Minister KCR trying to expand base in Maharashtra but he would not succeed to gain inroads in the state.

While speaking to reporters in Pune, Ajit Pawar said former chief ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Mayawati and Mulayam Singh Yadav had tried a similar move but did not succeed.

"When Mulayam Singh and Mayawati were the Chief Ministers of UP, they tried to do the same thing but he too did not receive much success... maybe K Chandrashekhar Rao wants to become a leader at the national level and that is why he is trying," said Ajit Pawar.

He said that KCR wants to become a national leader and is therefore trying to expand BRS (Bharat Rashtra Samithi) outside Telangana.

"He is the CM of Telangana, who is going to lead his party here in the state. Those who are joining that party know that they will not get the chance here...," said Pawar.

Referring to the hoardings of BRS in Maharashtra he said that when there is inflation and unemployment, the money is spent on banners and advertisements.



"The people of the state should think that when inflation and unemployment are there, how expenses on hoardings, advertisements, banners and on TVs are being made from where this money is coming from," said Ajit Pawar.

In March this year, Telangana CM held a gathering at Maharashtra's Nanded and slammed Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena over the

advertisement featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

"Farmers should be given ? 10,000 per acre for investment along with 24 hours free electricity. In case of any unfortunate death of a farmer, he should be given insurance of Rs 5 lakhs. Like Telangana, govt should buy the produce of farmers by opening centres here too," KCR had said.

In February, in a rally in Maharashtra's Nanded, KCR alleged that the Central government did everything possible to "forcefully" prevent the import of COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer, especially when people were ready to get the best vaccine. Rao claimed that he and several other Chief Ministers had lobbied for Pfizer in India, but the PM Modi Government stalled the entry of the US pharmaceutical giant into India.

Addressing a press conference in Maharashtra's Nanded, KCR had said that "Make in India" has become a "joke in India."

"Today many multinational companies are leaving China, but why are we not able to attract them? Why are those companies not turning towards us? If Make in India would have been right, ease of doing would have been right, if they were feasible, then why were not allowed to come to India?" he had said.

NANDAN NILEKANI DONATES RS 315 CRORE TO IIT BOMBAY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani has donated Rs 315 crore to his alma mater Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay to mark 50 years of his association with the institution. Nilekani had joined the institute in 1973 for a Bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.

A release said the donation is intended to foster world-class infrastructure, stimulate research in emerging areas of engineering and technology, and nurture a deep tech startup ecosystem at IIT Bombay. It said the contribution also stands as "one of the largest donations made by an alumnus in India".

"IIT-Bombay has been a cornerstone in my life, shaping my formative years and laying the foundation for my journey. As I celebrate 50 years of my association with this esteemed Institution, I am grateful to give forward and contribute to its future," the release quoted Nilekani as saying.



"This donation is more than just a financial contribution; it is a tribute to the place that has given me so much and a commitment to the students who will shape our world tomorrow," he added.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Nilekani and IIT Bombay Director Professor Subhasis Chaudhuri in Bengaluru. The release quoted Chaudhuri as saying that the historic donation will set IIT Bombay on a path of global leadership.

"We are extremely delighted to see our illustrious alumnus Nandan Nilekani continuing his foundational & pioneering contributions to the Institute. This historic donation will significantly accelerate the growth of IIT Bombay and will firmly set it on a path of global leadership," Chaudhuri said.

Nilekani had made grants of Rs 85 crore to the institute earlier, bringing his total contribution to Rs 400 crore.

After brawl, Mumbai man slits woman's throat in moving auto, nabbed

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a shocker, a man allegedly slit the throat of a 30-year-old woman after they had a brawl in a moving autorickshaw at Sakinaka, here on Monday, the police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Datta Nalawade said that the incident occurred when the accused, Deepak Borase and the victim, Panchashila A. Jamdar, were commuting along the Khairani Road in the busy Sakinaka.

The duo had a heated argument and in a fit of rage, Borase allegedly slit



Panchashila's throat in the moving three-wheeler. Bleeding profusely, she tried to jump off the autorickshaw and fell on the road near Datta Nagar while Borase attempted to cut his own throat with the same weapon, said DCP

Nalawade. Panchashila was rushed to a nearby hospital but declared dead on admission, while Borase sustained minor injuries in the self-inflicted injuries and has been detained pending investigations.

The duo knew each other and Panchashila was a resident of Sangharsh Nagar in Chandivali area of Sakinaka, said DCP Nalawade.

The chilling murder incident came four days after a 20-year-old college student was sexually assaulted by a porter on June 15, in a running suburban train of the Central Railway.

'Tarak Mehta' tele-serial bosses booked for alleged sexual harassment

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai Police have booked three top persons of the popular tele-serial 'Tarak Mehta Ka Uta Chashma' on charges of alleged sexual harassment, an official said here on Tuesday.

"The accused are the tele-serial producer Asit Modi, executive producer Jatin Bajaj and Operations Head Sohail Ramani. We have filed a FIR and invoked IPC Sec. 354A, 509, etc.," an officer of Powai Police Station told reporter. The move follows a complaint lodged by an actress of the tele-serial and no arrests have been made so far in the case, said the officer. Almost a week ago, one of the actresses had recorded her statement with the police alleging sexual harassment by Modi and others after which the probe started.

However, the accused trio of Modi, Bajaj and Ramani



have categorically denied the charges in their statements issued last week.

They also countered the actress' allegations by claiming that she was indulging in vendetta against them as her

work contract with the production house had been terminated. The police have said that the investigations are on in the matter from all angles before further steps are initiated.

NCP-SHIV SENA (UBT) NEEDLE CM SHINDE WITH 'TRAITOR DAY', BJP HITS BACK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) and Nationalist Congress Party organised 'Gaddar Day' (Traitor Day) in different parts of the state to mark the anniversary of the walkout by 40 Shiv Sena MLAs led by Eknath Shinde, now the Chief Minister on this day last year, here on Tuesday.

There were loud protests and demonstrations, burning of 'Khokhas' (slang for Crore rupees), raising slogans and condemning the ruling ally Shiv Sena for its actions that led to the collapse of the Maha Vikas Aghadi government headed by former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray in 2022.

Leading the protests in Mumbai, NCP Working President Supriya Sule said that she had the guts to call those who betrayed the government as 'traitors' and continued to fight oppression in any form.

"Is there democracy left in the state? If permission is not given to protest on the roads, then we are even prepared to go to jail for this," Sule declared. Accompanied by a



large number of activists, NCP General Secretary Jitendra Ahwad joined an aggressive demonstration in Thane, the hometown of Shinde.

They condemned the government for ignoring the burning problems confronting the country like unemployment, spiraling inflation, women's security, education, and others. They also slammed the gov-

ernment for targeting the Opposition leaders or parties.

Hitting back, ruling ally Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Nitesh Rane demanded that the United Nations Organisation (UNO) declared July 27 (birthday of Uddhav Thackeray) as the 'World Traitor Day'.

Justifying his plea, Rane said that it's the birthday of ex-CM Thackeray,

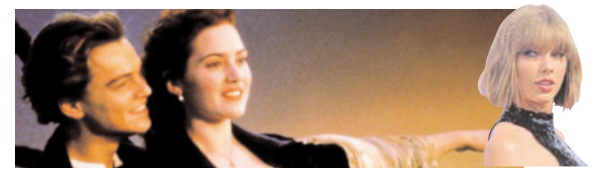
and claimed that the world's biggest 'traitor' was born on that day.

Rane's plea came soon after Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut shot off a letter to the UNO Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urging that June 20 should be marked as a 'World Traitors Day', enraging the ruling alliance.

"One of the biggest traitors ever seen or experienced was born on this (June 27) day. He backstabbed his own father (late Balasaheb Thackeray) who was one of the greatest in the history of Maharashtra as well as India. He backstabbed his own religion and a close friend like the BJP for his own dirty ambitions to become the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. He has backstabbed Marathi-manos and earned crores of money through corruption," said Rane.

"So, I am appealing to declare July 27 as 'World Traitors Day' as one of the biggest traitors history has ever seen was born on this day. So the world remembers him and curses him every single day," tweeted Rane, the son of Union MSME Minister Narayan Rane.





# TAYLOR SWIFT & GIGI HADID OUT FOR GIRLS' NIGHT IN NYC

New York | Agencies

Pop singer Taylor Swift enjoyed a girls' night out with supermodel pal Gigi Hadid in New York City. Swift, 33, is on a short break from her Eras Tour. As per People, after wrapping her Friday and Saturday shows in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the 'Anti-Hero' singer and her model friend Gigi Hadid were spotted together walking arm-in-arm outside Nobu Downtown in New York City on Sunday night.

The Grammy-winning singer wore a black turtleneck halter jumpsuit with black cutout heels and carried a cream-colored shoulder bag, while Hadid, 28, opted for colourful jewellery, a white crop top, and a black maxi skirt with a pair of black loafers and a matching handbag.

The two stars have been besties for nine years.

The two friends had stepped out for a girls' night in the city in April with close friends Blake Lively and Alana, Danielle and Este Haim.

Swift is currently in the middle of the US leg of her tour. She released her 10th album 'Midnights' in October, and is gearing up for the release of the re-recorded 'Speak Now (Taylor's Version)' on July 7.



## Aaron Taylor Johnson shows Kraven's killer passion in 'Kraven The Hunter' trailer

Los Angeles | Agencies

The first of the live action version of the iconic Spiderman villain 'Kraven the Hunter' shows Aaron Taylor Johnson donning the costume of the titular character, and bringing forth the hunter's murderous passion. The trailer follows Kraven's father played by Hollywood star Russell Crowe teaching him about the sport of hunting, and abandoning all weakness and telling him that they are the predators and everyone else is prey.

Nearly dying in his hunt of a lion, he ingests the blood of the animal which grants him superhuman strength, speed, senses and reflexes.

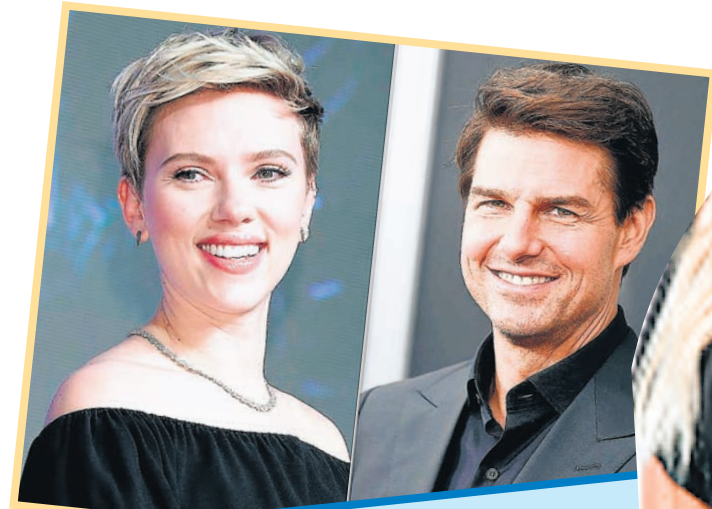
Later, he proceeds to brutally murder the many targets on his list as he embraces his animal side and fully becomes the hunter. At the end of the trailer, it is touted that he will have a face-off with another iconic spidey villain - The Rhino.

Best known for his role in movie such as 'Kick Ass', 'Anna Karenina', 'Avengers: Age of Ultron', 'Nocturnal Animals' and 'Tenet', the poster also does justice to Kraven's character which depicts him sitting on a throne made of various animal bones, as well as donning a very comic-accurate look, complete with his fur-lined vest.

One of the webslinger's most dangerous adversaries, Kraven views everyone as prey, and is constantly on the lookout for a worthwhile trophy to add to his collection, eventually finding his most desired trophy in Spiderman.

Kraven possesses superhuman strength, enhanced reflexes, speed, high intelligence and animal senses which make him an incredibly dangerous opponent, as he has also fought the likes of Black Panther, Daredevil and Captain America. Despite his lust for the hunt, Kraven is also a man of honour and cares little for killing innocents, making him straddle the line of a villain and anti-hero.

Directed by J.C. Chandor, apart from Johnson and Crowe, the film also stars Ariana DeBose, Fred Hechinger, Alessandro Nivola and Christopher Abbott. Part of Sony Spider-Man Universe is now made in association with the Marvel Cinematic Universe.



## TOM CRUISE IS KEEN TO WORK WITH 'ENORMOUSLY TALENTED' SCARLETT JOHANSSON

Los Angeles | Agencies

Star Tom Cruise is keen to work with 'Black Widow' actress Scarlett Johansson. "I'd love to work with Tom Cruise," Johansson had told The Hollywood Reporter (THR) at the New York City premiere of 'Asteroid City'. Johansson revealed that the one actor she hasn't got a chance to work with and would like to work with is Tom Cruise.

She added that someone should definitely pitch a story with the two of them starring alongside each other.

At the Rome premiere of 'Mission: Impossible-Dead Reckoning Part One', Cruise smiled and said that he was "absolutely" on board to star opposite Johansson in a project.

"She's amazing," Cruise said of Johansson. "There's a great actress and a movie star."

When asked by THR if he thinks they can star in something together, he immediately answered: "Yes. It's gonna happen."

He continued: "Look, I've watched her career her whole life. She's enormously talented, very charismatic. It'd be fun. She could do everything. She could do comedy, drama, action, suspense. She's someone that really draws you in on the screen, on camera. So absolutely, it's gonna happen."



Bebe Rexha rushed off stage after phone hits her on the face

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Bebe Rexha, who was hit by a mobile phone on stage, has uploaded a brief video on her TikTok page, that shows her face bruised and sporting a bandage. She's singing a line from her hit single 'I'm Good' and the caption reads, "I'm okay you guys," reports 'Variety'.

According to New York police, 27-year-old Nicolas Malvagna has been arrested and charged with assault for allegedly throwing the phone at Rexha.

She was rushed off stage after a phone hit her on the face at a concert in New York on Sunday night.

Disturbing footage shot by Alex Chavez from the concert reveals a phone emerging from the crowd and hitting Rexha on the face, who then collapses on her knees to the stage floor. Crew members are seen rushing out to help her. Rexha's performance was in New York as part of her 'Best F'n Night of My Life' tour. New York Police were notified of the assault and a preliminary investigation "determined that a 27-year-old male intentionally threw a cell phone" at Rexha.

He was taken into custody on scene and arrested while EMS removed Rexha to a hospital. She is in stable condition. "This is Bebe Rexha being rushed out of the concert venue here in NYC after someone threw a fucking phone and hit her face as she was leaving the stage. We were all having a hell of a good time and so was Bebe, we were all having a blast, I mean who would even do that??? We hope you're ok," Bernaud tweeted.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Sir Elton John is preparing to perform at the world famous festival at Worthy Farm, and has warned fans to expect the unexpected.

He has created an entirely new show for his Glastonbury performance, reports 'Female First UK'.

He told BBC Radio 1, "I'm starting with a song I haven't played for about ten years, so we'll see how it goes. I've got the setlist down, I've got rehearsal dates booked for the guest artists, so we just have to hope the weather

## Elton John has created a new show for Glastonbury festival

will still be nice".

Glastonbury marks the end of Elton's touring commitments in the UK, and the chart-topping icon believes it's the "perfect ending" for him.

Elton shared, quoted by 'Female First UK', "It's a different show to what people have been seeing. On Farewell Yellow Brick Road, there's quite a lot of deep cuts, it's not all hits, and you've got to keep people interested."

The singer's upcoming appearance will mark his first-ever visit to Glastonbury, and

Elton can't wait to perform at the festival.

He said: "I've watched Glastonbury on the TV, and the thing that I love about Glastonbury is not the headliners, per se, it's the people on the smaller stages that give the chance to shine. So if I was at Glastonbury, I would probably be in one of the smaller tents, looking at one of the newer acts playing, because that's what I want to see."

Elton is actually looking forward to watching some other artists perform at Glastonbury.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Devon Windsor





# SATWIK-CHIRAG RISE TO CAREER-BEST WORLD NO. 3 IN BWF DOUBLES RANKINGS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India's star men's doubles pair Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy achieved their new career-high ranking on Tuesday after their historic BWF Super 1000 title at the Indonesia Open.

The duo toppled the reigning world champions Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik in the final to win India's maiden BWF Super 1000 on Sunday.

Satwik and Chirag have enjoyed a remarkable 2023 thus far, emerging victorious in two world tour tournaments which include the Swiss Open, and Indonesia Open along with securing a gold medal at the Badminton Asia Championships.

In men's singles, Kidambi Srikanth climbed three places to enter the top 20 with world rank of 19 while Lakshya Sen jumped two places to be ranked 18.

HS Prannoy, the highest-ranked Indian men's singles player in the world, retained his position at num-



ber 9 in the world rankings following his semifinal run at the Indonesia Open. Additionally, emerging talent Priyanshu Rajawat achieved a career-best ranking of 30, making him the

fourth Indian player to enter the top 30 rankings.

In the women's singles, two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu climbed two places to secure the 12th

position in the world rankings. Despite her limited participation in tournaments, Saina Nehwal also managed to advance by one place, now occupying the esteemed position of world number 31.

Women's doubles pair Treena Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand maintained their position in 16th spot in the rankings. On the other hand, Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam experienced a slight decline, moving down two positions to settle at 41st place.

In mixed doubles, Rohan Kapoor and Sikki Reddy climbed two places to be world number 33. Tanisha Crasto and Ishan Bhatnagar slipped one place and are now world number 38.

Rohan Kapoor and Sikki Reddy made an ascent in the mixed doubles category, rising by two places to secure the 33rd spot in the global rankings. Conversely, Tanisha Crasto and Ishan Bhatnagar experienced a minor setback, slipping down one place to reach the world number 38 position.

## Special Olympics World Games

# T VISHAL BAGS SILVER MEDAL

Berlin | Agencies

Despite the first Monday of the World Games, ticking off all the cliches about dreariness, grayness and an overwhelmingly cloudy sky offering no sun, no rain or shine, the Indian contingent found their silver lining quite literally, with the first medals from this year's event, won by T Vishal in powerlifting.

The 16-year-old from Puducherry, won a silver in the Men's squat (122.50kg), deadlift (155 kg), bench press (85 kg) and the combined to put India on the board at the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin.

And now, with a silver medal around his neck, it's the world that needs adjustment - the first coming from his mother, who burst with glee and pride when informed of his achievement



via phone from Berlin.

With the tone set, several Indians also streaked into medal contention, qualifying for various finals across different sports. On the track, 800m runners Asheef Malanur (Level B), Soham Rajput (Level C) and Geetanjali Nagvekar (Level

D) reached the finals of their event, while Libin Mallika Rajakumar (Level B) reached finals in 200m. The Men's 4x400m team have also qualified for the finals.

In the pool, six of the 11 swimmers in the semi finals made it to the final of their events. In the male section Madhav Madan (25m breaststroke, Level A and the 25m freestyle, Level A), Dinesh Shanmugam (50m breaststroke, Level B, 25m freestyle, Level A), Abdul Rahman (50m breaststroke, Level B, 25m freestyle Level A) and Tinu Moncy (25m freestyle, Level A) made it to the finals of their events.

In the women's section, Prathna (25m freestyle, Level A), Aleena Anthony (50m freestyle Level B), have a chance to medal in the final of their events. Anthony, Shanmugam and Rahman's finals are scheduled for June 20.

## SAFF Championship

# Holdings India to open campaign with Pakistan clash

Bengaluru | Agencies

Just three days after winning the Intercontinental Cup, the Indian senior men's team will begin its campaign in the SAFF Championship 2023 against Pakistan in Group A at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Wednesday.

India are a dominant force in the SAFF Championship and the most successful team while Pakistan's best has been a third-place finish in 1997 and an appearance in the semifinals twice.

Despite this huge gap in their record in the competition, a sell-out crowd is expected to witness the battle between the arch-rivals.

The other two teams from Group A, Nepal and Kuwait will clash in the opening



match of the tournament earlier on Wednesday. Group B, consisting of Lebanon, Bangladesh, Maldives and Bhutan, is set to begin on Thursday. Record eight-time champions India are out to defend the title they won in the Maldives in 2021 after beating Nepal 3-0 in the final. The SAFF Championship is being held in India for the fourth time, and they have won the trophy on each of

the last three occasions as hosts (1999, 2011 and 2015).

With the inclusion of guest teams, Kuwait and Lebanon, the SAFF Championship is set to feature eight teams for the first time since 2013.

The Blue Tigers head coach Igor Stimac extended his warm welcome to both West Asian guests at the pre-tournament press conference and listed them among teams to watch out for.

## ISRAEL EDGE ANDORRA IN EURO 2024 QUALIFIER

Jerusalem: Israel achieved a second win in the Euro 2024 qualifiers, triumphing 2-1 at home against Andorra at Teddy Stadium here.

Israel rarely threatened the Andorran goal in the first half but scored in the 42nd minute with a shot from 25 meters by defender Raz Shlomo, after a pass by midfielder Neta Lavi, reports Xinhua. Fulham winger Manor Solomon missed good chances in the 45th and 48th minutes, before Andorra striker Berto Rosas stunned the stadium as he levelled the score in the 52nd minute, following a defensive error by Shlomo.

In the 61st minute, Solomon finally found the net, finishing after dribbling from the wing to the center of the penalty area. After four matchdays, Israel now sit third in Group I with seven points, one fewer than Romania, who drew 2-2 away against group leaders Switzerland. Andorra are bottom with one point, behind Belarus and Kosovo, who have three points each. Israel will now travel to Romania, while Andorra host Belarus and Kosovo face Switzerland, with all three matches scheduled for September 9.



# Swiatek plays down the pressure ahead of her grass swing

Team Absolute | New Delhi

World No. 1 Iga Swiatek admitted that she remains open-minded about her prospects at Wimbledon and still has to "learn a lot" before commencing her campaign on grass this summer.

Since the beginning of 2022, Swiatek has established herself as the dominant force on the WTA Tour, and she further solidified her position by clinching her fourth Grand Slam title at the French Open.

The 22-year-old, who won the Wimbledon junior title in 2018, has limited experience on grass, which is evident in her modest 6-5 win-loss record on the surface in main draw matches at the tour level. Her best Wimbledon result was a fourth-round showing in 2021.

As the Pole begins her 64th consecutive week as the world No. 1 on Monday, she can approach the grass season with a reduced burden of pressure on her shoulders.

Swiatek is scheduled to play in the WTA event in Bad Homburg, Germany, which begins on June 26, in a bid to get some extra time on the surface before heading to southwest London. The Pole became world No. 1 in April 2022 following Ashleigh Barty's retirement and this week she has equalled Simona Halep's



record, tying her for the 11th place on the WTA leaderboard for the most weeks spent at the top of the rankings.

In the previous season, Swiatek appeared to be unbeatable. However, she has not been as dominant this year as players like Australian Open winner Sabalenka and reigning Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina have raised the bar and made a strong case for the emergence of a "Big Three" in women's tennis.

# Czech Republic, Montenegro advance to FIBA Women's EuroBasket quarterfinals

Jerusalem | Agencies

The Czech Republic and Montenegro on Monday qualified for the 2023 FIBA Women's EuroBasket quarterfinals.

The Czech Republic, who finished second in Group B, beat Group A's third-placed team Greece 79-76 in the qualification stage at the Shlomo Group Arena in Tel Aviv, reports Xinhua.

With 5.4 seconds to the final buzzer, Petra Holesinska of the Czech Republic scored twice from the line, and then Pinelopi Pavlopoulou missed a three-pointer that would have sent the game to overtime.

Holesinska contributed 19 points and eight assists to the Czech win, while teammate Veronika Sipova added 15 points.



An impressive double-double of 26 points and 13 rebounds by Mariella Fasoula was not enough for Greece.

Later in the same arena, Group A runners-up Montenegro achieved a 63-49 win over Italy, who had finished third in Group B.

Milica Jovanovic scored 17 points for Montenegro, and Marija Lekovic added 15 more. Natasha Mack contributed to the win with a double-double of 13 points and 15 rebounds.

The Czech Republic and Montenegro thus joined Belgium and Spain to advance directly to the quarterfinals.

In the quarterfinals, which will be played in Slovenia's capital Ljubljana on Thursday, the Czech Republic will play against Hungary, while Montenegro face France.

# Golf: Tvesa leads the field in ninth leg of WPGA Tour

Bengaluru | Agencies

Tvesa Malik is looking at the Women's Pro Golf Tour at home to regain the form that made her India's top star two seasons ago and will lead the field of 39 players, including six amateurs who will tee off at the Prestige Golfshire, Bengaluru in the ninth leg of the Tour.

Tvesa will start as the favourite for the week as she tees off with Marshneil Prasad and Khushi Khanijaw.

The field also includes Seher Atwal, winner of the first event this season, and Sneha Singh, the only multiple-time winner in 2023. With Gaurika Bishnoi, winner of the eighth leg not in the field, both Seher and Sneha will be battling for the lead on the Hero Order of



Merit.

Currently, Seher leads with earnings of Rs.6,59,635 to Sneha's Rs. 6,54,667.

Gaurika is in third place with 5,99,000. The six amateurs in the field include Keerthana Rajeev, who finished runner-up last week to Gaurika Bishnoi at Clover Greens, and Lavanya Jadon, who

recently played in the Japan Open Amateur Championships but missed the cut. The experience would surely help the teenager, who shot rounds of 77-74.

The other amateurs in the fray are Vidhatri Urs, Mannat Brar, Aaradhya Shetty and Saanvi Somu.

## Jr men's hockey nationals

# CHANDIGARH, HARYANA, M.P QUALIFY FOR SEMIS

Rourkela | Agencies

Hockey Chandigarh, Hockey Haryana, Hockey Madhya Pradesh and Hockey Association of Odisha advanced to the semifinals stage of the 13th Hockey India Junior Men National Championship 2023, which will begin on Wednesday.

Hockey Chandigarh faced Hockey Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Hockey in Pool B and defeated both teams to advance to the quarterfinal stage of the tournament, where they faced Hockey Punjab and won 1-1 (3-2) in penalty shootouts to advance to the Semi-Final.

Hockey Haryana put on a good show in Pool C, defeating Hockey Uttarakhand and Hockey Himachal to finish the pool stage unbeaten. In the quarterfinals, they faced



Hockey Jharkhand and won in penalty shootouts 2-2 (3-2). Hockey Madhya Pradesh topped Pool A after defeating Uttar Pradesh Hockey and Kerala Hockey during the group stage of the tournament, and in the process earning a spot in the tournament's knockout round. Hockey Madhya Pradesh defeated Hockey aharashtra

9-2 in their quarterfinal match to advance to the last-four stage.

Hockey Association of Odisha defeated Manipur Hockey, Hockey Jammu & Kashmir, and Hockey Gujarat in Pool D. They then defeated Hockey Karnataka by a score of 4-2 in the Quarterfinal to advance to the semifinal stage of the tournament.

# ICC celebrates 50 years of the first-ever Cricket World Cup, the women's event of 1973

Dubai | Agencies

Cricket has a unique place in global sport as the sport that organised the women's World Cup before a men's world event.

The women's event was held in 1973 while the men's took place two years later. The factor common in both events is that they were held in England.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday initiated a five-week-long celebration to mark the anniversary of the start of the first-ever Cricket World Cup, the Women's World Cup that was staged in England on June 20, 1973.

The tribute to mark the anniversary of the tournament will end on July 28, the day the final match of the 1973 edition was played.

Over the next five weeks, the ICC will publish content that celebrates the event that began the global extravaganza for both the women's



and men's games, seeking to pay tribute to the heroes of that era.

The tournament opener between Jamaica and New Zealand was washed out without a ball being bowled. The tournament was won

by England, who beat Australia by 92 runs at Edgbaston on July 28, 1973, with the trophy presented to the winning captain, Rachel Heyhoe-Flint. The tournament featured seven teams -- Australia,

England, an International XI, Jamaica, New Zealand, Trinidad & Tobago, and Young England. British businessman Sir Jack Hayward's liberal sponsorship of GBP 40,000 brought to life the first-ever Cricket World Cup.

To begin celebrations, the ICC has shared several photos from the event on ICC's social media channels. The photos include a picture of Jamaica cricketer Paulette Lynch posing with ICC Hall of Famer Heyhoe-Flint, who features in many of the images.

Several former players were delighted to share their memories of the inaugural event and what it meant to them and the game.

Enid Bakewell MBE was the tournament's leading run scorer with 264 runs for England, scoring two centuries in four innings at an average of 88.00 and a high score of 118, the ICC informed in a release on Tuesday.





# ALI FAZAL UNDERWENT TRAINING FOR DIRT BIKING

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Ali Fazal, who plays the role of Kahil in 'Kandahar', spent time during the shoot learning a new skill set required for his character. Ali said: "So basically dirt biking has clearly become a very loved passion in my life. Also surprisingly dissipating me from regular biking on the busy roads of our cities. But you know you'll never be as good as you wanna be because when you're working with such an amazing stunt team on a film like Kandahar, where everything is totally measured and state-of-the-art, even though the bike was a very simple bike, deliberately chose a very non-pricey bike like a KTM."

He added why particularly this bike was chosen. "This was because we actually had to do these stunts. I had to do these stunts in the desert. And we couldn't fake a lot of this stuff. So I learned about dirt biking. I landed up 25 days before shoot and started learning these tricks. Of course, first learning how to just ride plainly on the sand and then, doing different kinds of skids and the breaks, different kinds of turns."

Ali shared: "And ultimately, no matter what stunts you pull off, you have to make the character come alive. There's body language and everything. So me and my stunt double, we had to work together all the time because there were some shots like riding on top of a very steep Cliff which has only rocks, those things I never did."

The film, which is a war thriller, has Ali star in his first ever high octane action film. The actor shot the film extensively in the Al Ula region of Saudi Arabia.

'Kandahar' stars top international actors like Gerard Butler, Travis Fimmel and Navid Negahban and released this past weekend in North America, with India release to follow soon. Ali plays the role of Kahil, who is one of the main antagonists of the movie.



## NAWAZUDDIN'S EX-WIFE AALIYA RECALLS HOW SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Nawazuddin Siddiqui's estranged wife Aaliya, who is a contestant on the controversial show 'Bigg Boss OTT 2', opened up about her relationship with the actor and talked about their love story to co-housemate Cyrus Broacha.

On the Monday episode of the show, hosted by Salman Khan, Aaliya said that she knew Nawazuddin's brother, who was then his assistant. She was staying somewhere as a paying guest and that was when the actor's brother asked her to stay with them till she found a new place. She shared that after thinking a lot,

she said yes. "I saw his photos first and I liked his eyes. His eyes are very sexy. Then we met and fell in love. Then we started living together. This has been our journey," she said. Cyrus then asked her about her new man. Talking about him, Aaliya said that he is Italian and a beautiful person. She said that the mystery man is a "software engineer" and makes her feel protected. "So he said he liked my eyes and then we started talking. He is a software engineer. He gives you respect and love. He makes you feel protected and chivalrous. That's why I came into this relationship openly after 19 years. I wasn't scared," Aaliya told Cyrus.

## Vardhan Puri was attacked by a 6.5 ft tall unclothed lady in his hotel room

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Vardhan Puri, who is awaiting the release of his horror film 'Aseq', has something to tell: his spine-chilling experience when he was attacked by a six and half feet tall unclothed lady in his hotel room.

Vardhan is the grandson of the late actor Amrish Puri, and will be soon seen in 'Aseq' which will drop on OTT.

Walking down the memory lane, Vardhan said: "I got attacked by a six and half feet tall unclothed lady in my hotel room early in the morning one day and I had to defend myself somehow before she tried to strangle me. After the experience, I could not be sure if the lady was a human being. It was extremely traumatic to say the least and a lot of people from the unit witnessed the madness. I still suffer from PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)."

Sharing his experience, he said: "The experience of shooting my first ever horror film was very gut-wrenching and a learning one. I forged many new friendships. I fell absolutely in love with the mind of writer and director Sarim Momin who ensured that the movie was made exactly the way it was written."

Talking about his fascination for the horror genre, Vardhan said: "I'm a huge fan of horror films and the man who brought me very close to this genre is the great, Ram Gopal Varma. One of my all time favourite horror films has to be 'Bhoot' which still stands the test of time. Also, 'Raat' made by him is also quite amazing."



## Ranveer, Alia's upcoming teaser has a mix of all KJo elements

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The makers of actor Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt-starrer 'Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani' unveiled the trailer of the film on Tuesday, which has a blend of all elements that filmmaker Karan Johar is popularly known for.

With a runtime of 1 minute and 19 seconds, the teaser features fragmented visuals from the film sans any dialogue, held together by the high pitched vocal prowess of Arijit Singh, who earlier made a mark with 'Channa Mereya' from Karan Johar's 'Ae Dil Hai Mushkil'.

The teaser shows beautiful imagery laced with grandeur which is the signature of all KJo movies.

The imagery also comes across as a collection of themes and elements that we have seen in the director's films like 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham...' (can't ignore the



monumental sets in family celebrations setting with a dash of song and dance), 'Student of the Year' ('Ishq Wala Love' visuals), 'Ae Dil Hai Mushkil' (a very out-there visual treatment from 'The Breakup Song') and the Durga puja sequence, the visual treatment which bears uncanny resemblance to that of the 'Deva Shree Ganesha' with regards to the colours and LUTS.

The teaser starts with a heady romance between the lead pair of Alia and Ranveer and culminates in a family drama.

The film stars an ensemble starcast of Dharmendra, Jaya Bachchan, Shabana Azmi, Alia Bhatt, Ranveer Singh and marks Karan Johar's return to direction seven years after his last outing 'Ae Dil Hai Mushkil'.

The teaser was launched on social media by Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, who is known to be a close friend of KJo, to mark 25 years of the latter in Bollywood.

## Tillotama Shome: 'People across the country can access my work, thanks to OTT'

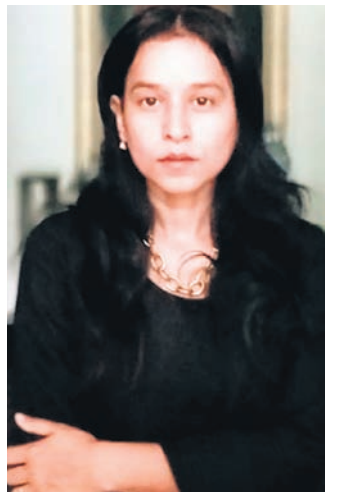
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Actress Tillotama Shome, who has carved a niche for herself in the industry with some great roles, feels that OTT has given a platform to artists like herself to make their work accessible to people of India, not just for international audiences.

Known for her work in several independent film productions, Tillotama's role in 'The Night Manager' Season 1 got great appreciation from the audience. The show is back with its season 2 which will premiere on June 30.

Talking about the revolution that OTT has brought, the actress said: "I started my career doing independent films. My films used to travel to film festivals all over the world and get limited theatrical release. After a while, I got used to it that my films will not be watched by people of my own country. But since the time OTT has come, it has made my work accessible to people in my country and not just international audience. I am very happy it has given a platform to artistes like me to showcase their work to the people of their country."

Talking about the second season of 'The Night Manager', she said: "In season 2, a big face off is going to happen between Shelly and Lipika. I have done an action sequence. My character is pregnant. There will be too much happening in season 2."



## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Aahna Kumra