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concrete plan to resolve...

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India women's team play out a 1-1 draw against England in...



Attackers burn 30 abandoned houses, shops in Manipur's border Moreh town

# MANIPUR: VIOLENCE CONTINUES

A group of armed attackers on Wednesday set on fire at least 30 abandoned houses and shops in Manipur's Moreh town, along Myanmar border, and the security forces immediately rushed to the areas and dispersed them, officials said. Officials said that when the security forces reached in the areas under Tengnoupal district, the armed attackers opened fire on the paramilitary troopers, who retaliated, forcing them to flee. Search operation was on to nab the attackers.



Imphal | Agencies

n view of the ethnic violence, most people abandoned their houses and shops in Moreh, a border town, 110 km south of Manipur capital Imphal and just four km west of Myanmar's biggest border town Tamu in Sagaing region. The arson incident occurred a

day after two empty buses used by security forces to transport personnel were burnt by a mob in Kangpokpi district when the buses were coming from Dimapur (Nagaland) on Tuesday evening. No casualty was reported.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister N Biren Singh said construction of temporary houses at Sajiwa in Imphal and Yaithibi Loukol in Thoubal district is

#### INDIA alliance brought No confidence motion against govt in LS

New Delhi: Congress on Wednesday said that the no confidence motion against the Narendra Modi government has not been filed alone by the Congress but by all the alliance partners of INDIA (Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance). Congress also demanded that a detailed discussion should take place on the motion on Thursday. Addressing a press conference here, Congress leader Manish Tewari said: "We have brought no confidence motion against the government today under Rule 198. No confidence motion has not been brought by Congress alone, it is a collective motion of all the constituent

party of INDIA alliance."He said the need to bring the no confidence motion against the government was felt because Manipur has been facing complete lawlessness for the last 84 days. "The state is witnessing ethnic divide among the communities and there is no such thing as government in the state. Even Governor is not using the Constitutional instruments available to her," the Congress Lok Sabha MP said. Tewari said that tradition of the House is that once the no confidence motion is accepted by the Lok Sabha Speaker, it is taken up on priori-

"In our concerted effort towards rehabilitating the people displaced by the recent violence, the construction of temporary houses at Sajiwa and Yaithibi Loukol are nearing completion. Very soon, families from the relief camps will be able to move into these homes. The State Government is taking up all possible measures to rehabilitate the people affected by the recent violence, both in the hills and the valley," he

#### **Oppn stages walkout from RS over Manipur issue**

New Delhi: Opposition parties on Wednesday staged a walkout from the Rajya Sabha for not allowing a detailed discussion over Manipur and a statement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the House.

The Opposition MPs staged the walkout after the Rajya Sabha assembled again after an earlier adjournment. In a tweet, Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "The Modi government continues to refuse the perfectly legitimate demands of INDIA parties for a comprehensive statement from the Prime Minister on the post-May 3 situation in Manipur to be followed by a discussion in both Houses."In the face of this continued and obstinate refusal, INDIA parties staged a walkout from the Rajya Sabha for the entire afternoon," he said. The Opposition parties have been demanding a detailed discussion on Manipur violence in the House and also a statement by the Prime Minister on the

tweeted. Singh earlier said that his government would construct around 4,000 pre-fabricated houses to accommodate people who had been displaced from their houses due to the ethnic violence in Manipur since May 3. Over 160 people of different communities were killed, over 600 injured and a large-scale destruction of properties and houses have been done in the ethnic strife between the non-tribal Meitei and the tribals Kuki community people. The violence erupted on May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

#### **Congress issues whip to RS MPs to be present in House** on Thursday

New Delhi: Congress on Wednesday issued a whip to all the Rajya Sabha MPs to be present in the Upper House on Thursday as some important matter will be taken up. In a three line whip to all the party MPs, Congress chief whip in the House Jairam Ramesh said, "Very important issues will be

taken up for discussion in on July 27." "All members of the Congress in Rajya Sabha are requested to kindly remain present in the House from 11 a.m. onwards till the adjournment of the House on Thursday, July 27, without fail and support the party stand," Ramesh, who is also the party's general secretary communication incharge said.

He also said that this may be treated as most important.

#### Two killed, one injured in police firing in Bihar's Katihar



Patna | Agencies

wo persons were killed and another injured as police opened fire when a protest demonstration turned violent in Bihar's Katihar district on

Wednesday. The incident occurred at Barsoi block when local villagers were staging a dharna at the block office with a demand to provide uninterrupted power supply in the region.The area is facing electricity scarcity for the last few weeks and this is badly affecting their farming and irrigation. The villagers have claimed that the absence of rain led to a drought-like situation and they may face heavy loss if plantation of paddy does not take place at

time. ith this in view, a large number of farmers assembled at the block development office in Barsoi demanding uninterrupted power supply in the region.

This had led to a verbal argument between them and the officers and the situation turned ugly when farmers attacked the officers and vandalised the office properties.

Police present at the spot first fired several rounds in the air to disperse them but failed and then they opened fire. Three persons sustained gunshot injuries and two of

them died on the spot. However, the DSP, Barsoi range confirmed one death so far. The situation is tense in the region. The district police have deployed a large number of personnel in the area.

#### Pune man 'rapes' woman in front of husband who defaulted on loan

Pune | Agencies

n a shocking case, a Pune man allegedly raped a 34vear-old woman at knifepoint in front of her husband who had defaulted on a small personal loan, filmed the incident, and posted the video on social media where it went vital, police said here on Wednesday.

The incident happened in February this year in Hadapsar when the accused, Imtiaz H.

Shaikh, 47, had reportedly given a friendly (interest-free) loan of Rs 40,000 to the victim's husband. However, the couple was unable to return the loan amount after which Shaikh started abusing and threatening them. In February, he summoned them to an isolated spot in the Hadapsar government colony and again demanded the outstanding money from them, but they had no money

### Allahabad HC stays ASI survey of Gyanvapi mosque till Thursday

Prayagraj | Agencies

he Allahabad High Court on Wednesday stayed the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) survey of Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi till Thursday.

ty, keeping in abeyance all other legislative business.

The matter will now be heard at 3.30 p.m. on Thursday

A bench of Chief Justice Pritinker Diwaker passed the order while hearing the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee's challenge to the Varanasi district judge's July 21 order for an ASI survey of the Gyanvapi Mosque.

The Anjuman Mosque Committee moved the High Court on Tuesday challenging the order of the Varanasi court directing the ASI to survey the mosque premises (except for wuzukhana).This order was passed on an application filed by 4 Hindu women who are party to a suit filed before the districtcCourt



seeking year-round access to worship inside mosque premises. The Supreme Court on July 24 had stayed the ASI survey till July 26 so as to allow some "breathing time" to the Masjid committee to approach the High Court.

Hearing the case on Wednesday, the Allahabad High Court expressed its "strong doubts" regarding the work to be carried out

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi court on Wednesday summoned Congress leader Jagdish Tytler on August 5 in connection with the anti-sikh riots in 1984 in the national capital's Pul Bangash area.

Gurdwara Pul Bangash at Azad Market was set on fire by a mob on November 1, 1984 and three persons, namely Sardar Thakur Singh, Badal Singh and Gurcharan Singh,

were burnt to death. The incident took place a day after then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh body-

guards. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Vidhi Anand Gupta of a special MP-MLA court passed the order after taking cogni-



sance of a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) chargesheet in the case. In its chargesheet filed

before the court, the CBI has said that Tytler incited, instigated and provoked the mob that had assembled at gurdwara on November 1, that resulted in the burning down of the gurdwara and killing of three persons of the Sikh community.

Charges under Sections 147 (rioting), 109 (abetment) read with 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), among others, have been invoked against Tytler by the probe agency.On June 2, the Rouse Avenue Courts had approved a supplementary charge sheet filed by the CBI against Tytler in the riots case and also transferred the case to the special MP-MLA court for trial.

The court had earlier also instructed the CBI to expedite the process of obtaining the forensic report of Tytler's voice sample.

### **MUMBAI ON RED ALERT**

to repay them.

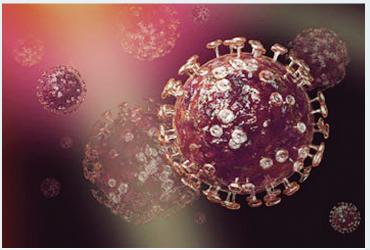
Mumbai: The IMD has issued a 'red alert' for Mumbai with extremely heavy rains forecast on Thursday. Consequently, the BMC has ordered a closure of all schools and colleges on July 27, to ensure safety of the students, said BMC Commissioner I.S. Chahal late on Wednesday. Mumbai continued to be lashed with incessant torrential rains for most of the day, leading to waterlogging in many areas, though the roads and rail traffic was largely unaffected. The rainfall recorded till 10 p.m. was: south Mumbai - 101.35 mm, eastern suburbs - 87.54 mm, and Western suburbs 102.55 mm. The BMC has appealed to all citizens to stay alert, stay indoors, and follow instructions from the administration. The State Disaster Management Authority has also issued an alert of extremely heavy rains from tonight and urged all people to exercise caution.

MERS is a viral respiratory infection that is caused by a coronavirus called Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV). Humans are infected with MERS-CoV from direct or indirect contact with dromedary camels who are the natural host and zoonotic source of the MERS-CoV infection.

- ▶ The first case of MERS-CoV was detected in the UAE in 2013. So far the country has 94 confirmed cases (including the new case) and 12 deaths have been reported.
- Globally, the total number of confirmed MERS-CoV cases is 2,605, including 936 associated deaths, the WHO
- No vaccine or specific treatment is currently available, although several MERS-CoV-specific vaccines and treatments are in develop-

Team Absolute | New Delhi

he World Health Organisation has confirmed a case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in a 28-



year-old man in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and expects more such cases.The UAE notified the global health body of the first virus case in the country this year on July

The last MERS-CoV infection reported from the UAE was in

November 2021.

The infected man visited a private medical centre multiple times between June 3 and 7, complaining of vomiting, right flank pain, and

dysuria (pain when passing urine). On June 8, he came to a government hospital with vomiting, and

gastrointestinal symptoms including diarrhoea, and was given an initial diagnosis of acute pancreatitis, acute kidney injury, and sepsis.

On June 13, he was in critical condition and referred to an intensive care unit (ICU) at a specialised government tertiary hospital where he was put on mechanical ventilation.

His condition deteriorated and a nasopharyngeal swab collected on June 21 tested positive for MERS-CoV by PCR on June 23.

However, what's surprising is that the infected man from Al Ain city in Abu Dhabi has had no history of direct or indirect contact with dromedaries, goats, or sheep, a nonhealthcare worker and did not recently travel outside the UAE.

So far, the observed non-sustained human-to-human transmission has occurred among close contacts and in healthcare settings. Outside of the healthcare setting, there has been limited human-to-human transmis-

# Any transition in leadership at ED would adversely impact India's national interests: Govt. to SC

he government has informed the Supreme Court that any transition in leadership at the **Enforcement Directorate** (ED) would adversely impact India's national interests in view of the ongoing FATF Review which is at a critical stage as it sought an extension in the present ED chief's

"In view of the ongoing FATF Review which is at a critical stage... any transition in leadership at the Directorate of Enforcement at this stage, would significantly impair the ability of the agency to provide necessary assistance to and co-operation with the assessment team and thereby adversely impact India's national interests," said the Centre's application filed before the Supreme Court. The FATF is an inter-governmental body



which has developed its recommendations to prevent and combat money laundering and terror financing. Around 200 countries, including India, have committed to implement these standards. The FATF conducts peer reviews of all its member countries on a regular basis to assess levels of implementation of the FATF recommendations and provide an in-depth description and analysis of each country's system for preventing criminal abuse of the financial system. In its plea, the Union government has requested the top court to extend ED chief Sanjay Mishra's tenure upto October 15, when his term is set to expire on July 31 in accordance with a recent SC judgement.

# CENTRE, STATE GOVT SHOULD HAVE CONCRETE PLAN TO RESOLVE MANIPUR CRISIS AT EARLIEST: COCOMI

Team Absolute New Delhi

The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), a conglomerate of several civil society organisation of Manipur, on Tuesday expressed serious concern over the current situation in the northeastern state, saying the Centre and state government should have a concrete plan or policy to resolve the the crisis at the earliest.

"We feel that is high time now, because already 80 days have passed, the state government and the Central government should have a very concrete plan or policy to resolve this crisis as soon as possible. Otherwise, things are going to get out of hands because people are already fed up by the way they are handling the situation in Manipur," COCOMI spokesperson Khuraijam Athouba told reporter here.

Expressing his disappointment over handling of the situation by the Central government, he said: "It is not up to satisfaction. It seems like the Central government also has their own interest, in handling the



situation. "Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) has never spoken on the issues. He cannot speak once in the context of one of the stray incidents. He didn't mention about the core

issues of the problem (in Manipur). Last week, the Prime Minister had expressed his pain and anger after the gruesome incident with the two women in the strife-torne Manipur

and termed it very shameful, which can never be forgiven.

Earlier, the COCOMI spokesperson, addressing a press conference, said: "The handling by the state and Central governments is not upto the expectation of the people (of Manipur). Despite the heavy deployment of forces, how could they not control the situation. This is very shocking.""Government of India is not taking concrete action despite several evidences of violating of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) ground rules by Kuki terrorist groups," he said.

Ethnic clashes erupted in Manipur on May 3 and since then, over 150 people have lost their lives whereas thousands have been forced to take refuge in the relief camps. The Congress and other Opposition parties have been blaming Chief Minister N. Biren Singh for the current crisis in the Northeastern state and demanded his dismissal. On Monday, the Manipur CM told IANS that his government is taking measures to restore peace at the earliest in the

# Govt working holistically thinking of future: PM Modi

Team Absolute New Delt

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday dedicated the redeveloped India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) complex at Pragati Maidan to the nation which he termed as 'Bharat Mandapam'.

He said that his government is working holistically thinking of future.

The new International Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre (IECC) -- spread across 123 acres -- which revamped the old and outdated facilities at Pragati Maidan, was developed as a national project at a cost of around Rs 2,700 crore. "This convention centre, Bharat Mandapam is a proof that our government is working holistically thinking of the future. Today, the whole world is looking at India. Today, India is achieving what was unimaginable earlier," Modi said in his address after inaugurating the 'Bharat Mandapam'.

Citing that Bharat Mandapam will become a reflection of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-reliant India) and 'Vocal for Local' campaign, the Prime Minister said: "It will become a huge stage for every event. It will become a huge medium for displaying the power of our startups." "Think big, dream big, act big. By adopting this principle India is moving for-

ward at pace," Modi said as he highlighted the works done by the government in last nine years. He said, "From East to West, North to South, the infrastructure of India is changing."

"The faith of the country has become firm. India's journey of development is not going to stop. At the beginning of our first term, India was ranked 10th in the global economies. In the second tenure, today India is the fifth largest economy in the world."

"I assure the country that on the basis of the track record, in the third term, India's name will be among the top three economies of the world. This is Modi's guarantee," Modi said, in an apparent reference that his government will return to power again in 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

## **Buying in heavyweights boosts Nifty**

Team Absolute New Delhi

ifty closed in positive territory led by buying in select heavyweights, Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, has said.

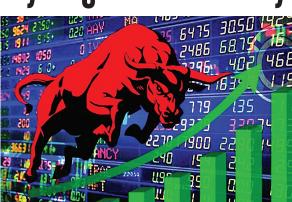
The index closed with gains of 93 points at 19774 levels. Broader markets too followed suit and witnessed buying interest.

All sectors ended in the green, except for consumer durables. FMCG, PSU bank, realty, and oil and gas were top gainers, he said.

After three days of consolidation, the market is witnessing buying at lower levels. Further, a lower VIX is also supporting the bullish sentiments, he added.

Now all eyes will be on the US FOMC meeting, where another rate increase is expected.

Fed's commentary will also be important, as this would provide some cues



towards the Fed's stance going forward.

Domestically, monthly FNO expiry along with a slew of corporate earnings, could keep the market a bit volatile, he said.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said optimism has inched back today after the last three trading days of consolidation ahead of the FOMC meeting.

FOMC meeting.
As the market's ambiguity

d's stance against the monetary policy is likely to reverse henceforth, going forward we are unlikely to see another Fed

rate hike in 2023.

This is because inflation has rapidly come down and is forecast to settle down further

However, the interest rate is expected to stay high in the short-term since the rigidity of core inflation remains above the long-term average, he said.

# Hyderabad woman who went to US for Masters found starving in Chicago

**Hyderabad** Agencies

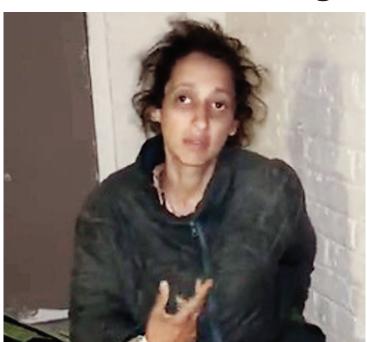
A woman from Hyderabad, who went to the US two years ago to pursue a masters' degree, has been found starving on the roads of Chicago.

Syeda Lulu Minhaj Zaidi, who was doing Masters in Information Science from TRINE University, Detroit, is said to be in depression.

Her mother Syeda Wahaj Fatima has appealed to Minister for External Affairs S. Jaishankar to intervene to bring her daughter back to India as soon as possible.

Minhaj Zaidi, 37, a resident of Moula Ali in Medchal district on the outskirts of Hyderabad, went to the US in August 2021. Wahaj Fatima wrote to the minister that she was not in touch with the family for the last two months.

"Recently through two Hyderabadi youths we came to know that my daughter is under deep depression and her entire belonging have been stolen due to



which she is on verge of starvation and being spotted on roads of Chicago," reads a letter by Wahaj Fatima which was posted on Twitter by Majlis Bachao Tehreek (MBT) leader Amjedullah Khan.

The MBT leader also posted a video of Minjaj Zaidi. A man is heard assuring her help and promising to arrange food. He also advised her to return to India.

The woman, who looks malnourished, was having difficulty in expressing herself.

Reacting to the video, a Twitter user commented that he was shocked to see her condition. He said that they lived as neighbours for many years.

I know her from my childhood, she was an incredibly studious child," wrote Fahad Maqsusi appealing for help for her return to Hyderabad.

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader Khaleequr Rahman has also requested the External Affairs Minister to look into the issue

## Filming in K'taka college restroom row: FIR lodged against 3 Muslim girls

Udupi (Karnataka) Agencies

The police in Karnataka have lodged an FIR against three Muslim girls of a college here for allegedly filming Hindu female students while they were using the restrooms.

Minister for Women and Child Welfare Laxmi Hebbalkar, who is also in-charge minister of Udupi district, said on Wednesday that the police have registered an FIR in connection with the case.

"I have instructed the district Superintendent of Police to initiate action as per the provisions of law,"she said.

Hebbalkar further stated that strict action would be initiated against the accused individuals. "No one is above the law,"



she said.

The Minister, meanwhile, said that as far she knows, no video in connection with the case has gone viral on social

media.
The police said that two

cases have been filed in connection with the incident on a suo moto basis.

A case for attempting to bring communal hatred has also been lodged.

The FIR has been lodged at Malpe police station in Udupi district against Alimatul Shaifa, Shabanaz and Aliya.

The college administration was also named in the FIR. The police have filed cases under the provisions of IPC sections 509 (use of words, gestures or acts intended to insult the modesty of woman), 204 (destroying electronic evidence), 175 (omission to produce document to public servant), 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) and 66 (E) of the IT Act.

## K'TAKA: BJP MP GETS OBSCENE VIDEO CALL; LODGES COMPLAINT

**Bengaluru:** Former Union Minister and BJP MP from Karnataka's Davanagere constituency, G.M. Siddeshwara, has filed a complaint after receiving multiple calls including an obscene video call from an unknown woman, the police said on Wednesday.

Police said that the calls were received from an unknown number. The 71-year-old MP initially got repeated calls from the unknown woman which he did not answer.

She sent a message on WhatsApp on July 20 at 10.16 p.m. which read: "Hi, how are you?" Later, at around 10.22 p.m., he got a video call. The MP had then answered the call and asked her "what does she want?" She spoke in Hindi, and after a while, Siddeshwara disconnected the call. The woman, however, made repeated phone calls even as the calls were rejected.

At around 10.27 p.m., the woman again made a video call on WhatsApp and as soon as Siddeshwara

answered it, she appeared nude.

Later, another call was made to the MP. The caller tried to blackmail the BJP leader, saying "a video call screenshot" was obtained, and the picture would be uploaded. A police officer said that they are looking into the matter.

#### RICH TRIBUTES PAID TO MARTYRS ON KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS

Team Absolute New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday paid tributes to the soldiers who fought the 1999 war with Pakistan on the occasion of Kargil Vijay Diwas.

In a tweet, the President said, "Today, on the glorious occasion of Kargil Vijay Diwas, all the countrymen remember the victory achieved by the extraordinary valor of our armed forces. On behalf of a grateful nation, I pay tribute and bow to the memory of the fighters who paved the way for victory by sacrificing their lives to protect the country. Their heroic stories will always inspire generations to come. Jai Hind."

The Prime Minister in a tweet said, "Kargil Vijay Diwas brings to the fore the heroic saga of those wonderful bravehearts of India, who will always remain an inspiration for the countrymen. On this special day, I bow down and salute him from the bottom of my heart. Iai Hind."

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and leader Rahul Gandhi also paid tributes to the



soldiers who fought the 1999 war with Pakistan, on the occasion of 24th Kargil Vijay Diwas. Several programmes are being held across the country to mark the Kargil Vijay Diwas. Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated every year on July 26 to commemorate the war that was fought between May 1999, and July 26, 1999, against Pakistan intruders, who in the winters of 1998 had entered the Indian territory across the Line of Control and occupied fortified defences overlooking the NH 1A in Kargil's Drass and Batalik Sectors of Ladakh region with an aim of dominating all military and civil movements.

## 'Yet to decide on pulling out from NDA despite pressure': Mizoram CM

Aizawl Agencies

izoram Chief
Minister and president of the ruling
Mizo National Front (MNF)
Zoramthanga on Wednesday
said that his party is yet to
decide on pulling out of the
BJP-led National Democratic
Alliance (NDA).

Many MNF leaders and the party's two parliamentarians from Mizoram -- C. Lalrosanga of Lok Sabha and K. Vanlalvena of Rajya Sabha -- have expressed their desire to withdraw the party's support from the NDA on the Manipur unrest and Uniform Civil Code (UCC) issues.

Zoramthanga, who along with his ministers and MNF MLAs, took part in the Tuesday's 'Solidarity March', organised by the NGOs Coordination Committee in the Mizoram to express solidarity with the violence Kuki Zo tribals in Manipur, said



that so far the party has not decided withdrawal of support from NDA and it depends upon political necessity.

"We are an ally of NDA but we totally oppose UCC. We also want immediate restoration of peace and normalcy in Manipur," the MNF supremo told the media in Aizawl.

Zoramthanga on Monday, while addressing the party workers said that the state government and the MNF party are not afraid of the NDA government at the

## IMD warns of heavy rain across India

Team Absolute New Delhi

he India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Wednesday issued warnings of extremely heavy rainfall in areas such as Konkan, Goa, Madhya Maharashtra, Coastal Karnataka, Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana over the next two days.

Meanwhile, regions like Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, north Haryana, Chandigarh, and West Uttar Pradesh are likely to witness isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall over the next three days. The IMD predicted that in Northwest India light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall is expected.

"Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana-Chandigarh-Delhi, and West Uttar Pradesh are likely to see this rainfall from Wednesday to Saturday. East Uttar Pradesh will likely experience this rainfall from Friday to Sunday, while Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir will see it from Wednesday to Friday," said the IMD.

Additionally, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand may experience isolated very heavy rainfall from Wednesday to Friday, and Haryana, Chandigarh, and West Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday and Thursday.

Central India is expected to receive light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall during the period from Wednesday to Saturday. Vidarbha may experience isolated extremely heavy rainfall on Wednesday and Thursday, and Chhattisgarh may see isolated very heavy rainfall from Wednesday to Friday.



The weather man further said that West India is likely to have light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall, with isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall in some areas. "Konkan, Goa and ghat areas of Madhya Maharashtra may experience this rainfall from Wednesday to Saturday. Gujarat Region and Marathwada may see isolated heavy rainfall on Wednesday and Thursday. Moreover, Konkan, Goa and ghat areas of Madhya Maharashtra may face isolated extremely heavy rainfall on Wednesday and Thursday," it said.

Besides, South India is expected to receive light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall. "Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Telangana, and Coastal Karnataka are likely to see this rainfall from Wednesday to Friday. Isolated very heavy rainfall may occur in Rayalaseema and Interior Karnataka on Wednesday, while isolated extremely heavy rainfall is likely in Telangana and Coastal Andhra Pradesh & Yanam on Wednesday and Thursday, and in Coastal Karnataka on Wednesday," it said.

In East India, light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall is expected over Odisha till July 30. "Sub-Himalaya West Bengal and Sikkim will likely experience this rainfall from July 26-28, and Jharkhand & Bihar on Saturday and Sunday. Additionally, isolated very heavy rainfall is possible in Odisha on Wednesday," said the IMD.

Northeast India is forecasted to experience light to moderate fairly widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall till July 30. "Isolated very heavy rainfall is likely in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya on Friday," it added.

## WHY SHOULD A SISTER WALK BAREFOOT WHEN HER BROTHER IS A CM: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute Bhopal

hief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that I used to ache when my sisters used to go barefoot in the forests to pluck tendu leaves and a thorn pricked their feet. If the Chief Minister is their brother, why should his sisters walk barefoot. Keeping this in mind, we have prepared the Mukhyamantri Charan Paduka Yojana. Under the scheme, slippers, saris and water bottles

are given to 15 lakh tendu leaf collectors of the state. Now it has been decided that umbrellas will also be given to the tendu leaf collectors. For this, an amount of Rs 200 each is being sent to their accounts. Chief Minister Chouhan today supplied charan padukas, water flasks and saris to the tendu leaf collectors under Mukhyamantri Charan Paduka Yojana during Vikas Parv at Sarai in Singrauli district. The Chief Minister made some tendupatta collectors wear slippers with his own hands. He dedicated/performed bhoomi-pujan of development works worth more than Rs 693 crores and also distributed benefits to the beneficiaries of various schemes. Chief Minister Chouhan also made several announcements for the development of the

Chief Minister Chouhan said that both the Central and State Governments are constantly working for the service and welfare of the poor. For me public is God. Service to the poor is greater than service to God. My life is for the service of the poor. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is providing free food grains, housing, health and all necessary services to



the poor. Poor people who are landless are being given pattas under the Mukhyamantri Awasiya Bhu-Adhikar Yojana in the state.

The Chief Minister said that Ladli Bahna Yojana is a revolution not just a scheme but. It has transformed the life of the women. The amount received from this scheme has increased the self-confidence and respect of women. Now their respects in the family have increased. Ladli Bahna Sena has been formed in every village for the empowerment of women. This army will monitor the implementation of all the schemes of the government including Ladli Bahna.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the government is making continous efforts to empower women and make them independent. Our target is to increase the income of the women in self-help groups to at least Rs 10 thousand per month. Women have been given the benefit of 50 percent reservation in elections to Panchayat-Raj institutions and urban bodies. Today thousands of women are leading the society. Women are being given the benefit of 33 percent reservation in police recruitment along with other recruitment. There is a law for capital punishment for rapists. All liquor vends have been closed in

At the ceremony, Chief Minister Chouhan presented Charan Paduka to tendupatta pluckers including Ramkali Saket, Bhaiyalal, Dharmaraj and other beneficiaries. The Chief Minister distributed benefits to the benefici-

- Science and commerce classes will start in Government College Parka
- Baigas will be included in the most
- backward tribe in Singrauli region. Sub Tehsil office and college will be opened in the residence.
- CM Rise Schools will be opened in Mada Rajmilan, Khutar and Sarai vil-
- Foundation laying/ bhoomi-pujan of construction works
- Foundation laying of Rihand Micro Irrigation Project costing Rs 672 crore
- Dedication of the boundary wall of the auditorium of Government College Devsar and the playground of Utkrisht Vidyalaya Devsar costing Rs 9 crore 90 lakhs.
- Dedication of additional room and laboratory building of Government Polytechnic College costing Rs 5 crore
- Dedication of road from Amhra Malgiya Dand to Karami costing Rs 5 crore 36 lakh.

aries of Ladli Lakshmi, Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme, Self-Help Group Credit Linkage, Chief Minister's Rural Street Vendor Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Matra Vandana Yojana and Mukhya Mantri Bal Ashirwad Yojana.



#### **Union Home Minister Shahs arrival** in Bhopal, CM Chouhan welcomes

Team Absolute Bhopal

nion Minister for Home and Co-operation Amit Shah was accorded with a warm welcome by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan with flowers on his arrival in Bhopal this evening at the State Hangar. Union Civil

Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, Member of Parliament and State President of Bharatiya Janata Party V.D. Sharma also welcomed Union Home Minister Shah.

The members of the State Cabinet also welcomed the Union Home Minister Shah

#### 'She died for us': Father of Anju, now went to Pakistan and married Facebook friend

Team Absolute Bhopal

he father of Anju, who left her family in Rajasthan to go over to Pakistan and married her Facebook friend there, expressed his anger at her action, saying she has "died" for the family.

The eldest of six siblings, Anju was married off to Arvind Kumar, a resident of Bhiwadi (Rajasthan) more than 15 years back and the couple have two children.

Her father Gayaprasad Thomas, a resident of Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, said Anju had visited them in 2020 along with her husband

He said that her husband, who works with a private company in Bhiwadi, was also clueless as to what led to her going to Pakistan.

"She was my eldest child and her marriage was solemnised with Arvind around 15-16 years back... but, what she did, she has defamed family and the country. She has also ruined the future of her two children,' Thomas, who works as a tailor, said while talking to reporters at his residence on Wednesday. Asked if she had converted to Islam, he said he had no information in this regard."What will happen to her children, her Pakistani friend Nasrullah's home in Pakistan.

woman was staying at her 29-year-old points in Barwani-Alirajpur districts. This will perhaps be the first time in the



husband? Who will take care of her children a 13-year-old girl and a five-year-old boy," he

Asked whether he will appeal to the Indian government to bring her back, Thomas said: "No. Instead, I would pray to let her die there." Thomas claimed he has no idea how she

got the passport or visa for Pakistan.On Monday, Thomas had described his daughter as "mentally disturbed and eccentric".

Earlier in the day, a report said that Anju married her Facebook friend in Pakistan after converting to Islam and is now known as Fatima. As per the reports, the 34-year-old

## CONGRESS TO SET UP NON-POLITICAL 'NARMADA SEVA SENA' IN MP

Team Absolute Bhopal

round four months before the assembly polls in Madhya Pradesh, the opposition Congress is set to embark on a massive campaign for conserving the Narmada, river which is considered the lifeline of the central Indian

For this purpose, the Congress has

decided to form a 'Narmada Seva Sena'. During an interaction with reporters at the party headquarters in Bhopal on Wednesday, former Chief Minister and Madhya Pradesh Congress president Kamal Nath said the 'Narmada Seva Sena' would be a non-political organisation and any one can join it. "Even Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan can become a Narmada Seva Sena member," Kamal Nath said in a sarcastic tone. Under the state level apex 'Narmada Seva Sena' committee, a large number of local committees will be formed across the river's 1077-km stretch in Madhya Pradesh. The Narmada originates from Amarkantak (Anuppur district) and last



country that any political party will embark on a campaign to purge and conserve a major river ahead of elec-

Political observers believe that the issue of the Narmada is a matter of faith for the people of Madhya Pradesh, and the Congress has played a master stroke ahead of the assembly polls. Former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh's 192-day long 'Narmada Yatra' that was concluded around four months before the assembly elections in 2018, had made a huge impact and the Congress had won 36 out of 65 assembly seats scattered along the

#### KAMAL NATH'S FIVE PROMISES TO FARMERS

**Bhopal:** Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Kamal Nath on Wednesday made five promises to farmers ahead of the Assembly polls slated for the end of this year. He said the scheme of waiving off the bank loans of farmers will be re-introduced once the Congress comes back into

Kamal Nath said the farmers of Madhya Pradesh have suffered a lot and to help them, the Congress has come up with a policy to reduce the input cost of the farming process. He announced that farmers using motor pumps up to five horse power (5HP) will not have to pay any bill and the remaining electricity bill of the farmer will also be waived off. He further mentioned that the farmers will get electricity for 12 hours in a day for irrigation and all the cases imposed against farmers during the protests will also be taken back, if the Congress formed government in Madhya Pradesh."I am making these announcements with an idea to reduce the input cost of farming and this can happen only if we have a proper scheme. Electricity bill is a huge burden on farmers and therefore, I am promising that the motor pumps up to 5 hp and all remaining electricity bills from the farmers will be waived off soon after the Congress comes back into power," Kamal Nath said on Wednesday. He said that the ruling BJP had promised to make the farmers' income double in five years, but the farmers continued to suffer. "Waiving off the interest will not help the farmers. They will get relief only when the principal amount is waived off. It is the matter of concern that why farmers loans are increasing every year? We have framed a policy that can resolve this issue." Kamal Nath added

#### Minerals Minister Singh to hold road show in Mumbai for auction of 51 major mineral blocks

Absolute Bhopal

ineral Resources Minister Brijendra Pratap Singh will participate in a road show on July 27 in Mumbai for the auction of 51 major mineral blocks of different districts of the state. To attract investors, the Department of Minerals is conducting a road show for the auction of minerals in Mumbai. With the auction of these mineral blocks, the state

will get additional mineral revenue creation along with creation of new employment opportuni-

Minister Singh said that the state has abundant mineral wealth, and the work is being done continuously for their balanced utilisation scientifically. Minerals Minister Singh said that tender invitation has been issued for 51 mineral blocks of different districts of the state marked as mining lease/consolidated license. These include 13

mineral blocks of mining lease, 2 bauxite, 2 iron, 8 limestone, 1 manganese and 38 mineral blocks of consolidated license 3 base metal, 1 copper, 4 diamond, 2 gold and base metal, 6 graphite, 1 graphite and vanadium, 1 iron, 1 iron and manganese, 5 limestone, 10 manganese, 3 phosphorite

These mineral blocks are mainly located in the districts of Satna, Dhar, Katni, Balaghat, Rewa. Damoh, Dindori,

and 1 PGE.

Sidhi, Alirajpur, Betul, Panna, Chhatarpur, Khargone and Sheopur districts. In the year 2022-23, a total of 105 mineral blocks were successfully auctioned in India, in which Madhya Pradesh has been the first in the country with maximum 29 mineral blocks auctioned. For this, Union Minister of Mines Pralhad Joshi has hailed Madhya Pradesh in the field of minerals. The auctioned mineral blocks mainly include iron ore, manganese ore, rock

phosphate, bauxite, lime-

#### Team Absolute Bhopal

hief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid tribute to the martyred soldiers by laying wreath at the Shaurya Stambh at Shaurya Smarak on Kargil Vijay Diwas. Recalling the bravery, indomitable courage and sacrifice of the soldiers, the Chief Minister paid homage on behalf of the people of

In a message to the media at the Shaurya Smarak, Chief Minister Chouhan said. "They were the ones who sacrificed everything to free every inch of our country



from enemies, we are proud of them. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister at that time. Our forces have shown that if anyone raises his eyes towards Mother India, he will not be spared. Today, under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, a glorious-prosperous-flourishing and powerful India has been built, India is now a superpower.'

Chief Minister Chouhan said that we salute the brave soldiers of the Army, Navy and Air Force engaged in the security of the country's borders. We are proud of our forces and soldiers of the

#### Madhya Pradesh Spends Rs 12 Lakh A Year To Maintain "VVIP Tree"

Team Absolute Bhopal

here is a tree like no other on a hillock in Salmatpur in Madhya Pradesh (eight kilometres from popular Buddhis site Sanchi) - it costs the state government Rs 12 lakh a year to maintain the tree. The Peepal tree, which the locals say is India's first "VVIP tree", is located five kilometres away from the Sanchi Buddhist complex, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, between Madhya Pradesh's capital Bhopal and Vidisha town. Four security guards are deployed for the security of the tree for 24 hours.

The high-profile tree is kept in pristine condition, with local officials ensuring that even a single leaf doesn't dry up.

The Peepal tree was planted in 2012 by then Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa from a sapling taken from the island nation. It belongs to the same Bodhi tree under which Gautam Buddha said to have achieved enlightenment. The hillock where the tree is situated has been allotted for Sanchi Buddhist University. This entire area is being developed as a Buddhist circuit. This is the reason why this tree has been planted here because it has special significance for the



followers of Buddhism. According to the Buddhist religious teacher Chandraratan, Buddha attained enlightenment under this tree in Bodh Gaya. It was taken from India to Sri Lanka by Emperor Ashoka's daughter Sanghamitra and planted in Anuradhapuram Part of the same tree has been planted on the land of Sanchi Buddhist University. Authorities said one security guard is paid a salary of Rs 26,000 a month for protecting the tree. Since four security guards are part of the tree's security apparatus, the monthly security expense comes to Rs 1,04,000. For an entire year, authorities spend Rs 12.48 lakh to maintain the health of the tree. For its irrigation,

the Sanchi municipality has arranged a sepa-

### After Gold Coins, Cops Accused Of Stealing Silver Team Absolute Alirajpur

ven as a special investigation team (SIT) probes the alleged theft of British-era gold coins by four cops in Madhya Pradesh's Alirajpur district, a complaint accusing the police of stealing silver has emerged, an official said on Wednesday.

The complainants have alleged that the cops at Nanpur police station in the tribal-dominated district have not only handed them over less quantity of silver than that was stolen but also of inferior quality.

The complaint comes amid an SIT probe against four cops from Sondwa police station for allegedly stealing 240 British-era gold coins from a tribal family that had stumbled upon the antique items while digging at a site in Gujarat and hidden them at their home in Alirajpur district.

In the latest incident, Tainsingh and Kailas Tomar approached the Nanpur police on January 21 last year complaining about the theft of silver



from their homes. The police recovered the white metal on April 24, 2022, after arresting a gang of four, a

police source said. The complainants then approached the police station

through their lawyer and later submitted a court order for getting their valuables back, the source said.

The Nanpur police on July 18 this year handed over 2 kg of silver to Tainsingh and 1.5 kg to Tomar, but the two were not happy. "We got suspicious after seeing the silver as it looked new and did not resemble the one that was stolen. We took the silver to a jeweller to check its authenticity and were shocked to know that it was impure," the complainant told reporters.

The two approached the office of the superintendent of police (SP) and demanded that they be given their original silver.

Acting on the complaint, SP Hansraj Singh directed Jobat subdivisional officer of police Neeraj Namdeo to probe the matter, said an official.Namdeo said, "We have recorded initial statements and will soon complete the probe. Whoever is found guilty in the matter, action will be taken against them."

#### EDITOR'S SPECS

#### More than 40 countries willing to join BRICS

ore than 40 countries have shown an interest in joining BRICS, Anil Sooklal, South Africa's ambassador-at-large responsible for ties with the economic alliance and Asian countries, has said. The diplomat said in Johannesburg that 22 countries have formally applied to join the group, while "an equal number" of states "have been informally asking about becoming BRICS members", RT reported. Sooklal described BRICS as an "inclusive" organisation that has always been open to dialogue with the larger global community. The group currently comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, and accounts for over 40 per cent of the global population and nearly a quarter of the world's GDP, RT reported.
Sooklal said that BRICS does not distinguish between the Global North and Global South and is ready to talk to any country that "has the same vision for a more inclusive and equitable global order where we do not marginalise large parts of the world", including many developing nations. The diplomat went on to point out that while the UN has yet to embark on comprehensive reforms that would give emerging countries a greater voice, BRICS has charted its own path to remedy the situation, RT reported. However, he stressed that the bloc "does not seek to become a dominant economic force", but rather wants to have "a major influence in an inclusive manner to work for change". Sooklal had earlier said in comments to journalists that Argentina, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates were among those countries looking to join the bloc, RT reported. South Africa will host the BRICS annual summit this year, which will take place in Johannesburg from August 22-24, with President Cyril Ramaphosa having sent invitations to nearly 70 global leaders.

# VLADIMIR PUTIN FACING **TOUGH TIMES AHEAD**

#### **Asad Mirza**

ussian President Vladimir Putin has been forced to cancel plans to attend BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, next month, due to fears over war crimes arrest. Moscow feared that Putin might be arrested in South Africa for war crimes if he attends the annual event in Johannesburg.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) earlier in 2023 had issued an arrest warrant for Putin over his alleged role in the mass abduction of Ukrainian children. As an ICC signatory nation, South Africa would have been expected to arrest Putin if he entered the country.

Putin's travel plans had put South Africa in a tough spot, as though it remains an ally of Russia, the relations between the two have gone cold since the start of the Ukraine War. Also South Africa didn't want the relations to deteriorate further.

For months, South African diplomats tried to prevent a potential diplomatic confrontation with the Kremlin over the issue. The issued weighed so much on South African politicians that to avoid any unnecessary controversy, the South African President Cyril Ramaphosa even reportedly requested permission from the ICC for an exemption in order to avoid arresting Putin during the

With tensions mounting ahead of the summit, South Africa Deputy President Paul Mashatile admitted in a 14th Jul interview that the best option would be for Putin to stay

"The Russians are not happy, though. They want him to come," he commented.

The Russian strong man under whose rule Russia's relationship with the Western bloc has reached it lowest point since after the Cold war, wanted his attendance at the BRICS Summit to show his internal audience that still Russia carries weight at the global level, in addition to showing to the western nations that Russia can survive their indifference by engaging with emerging non-west-



ern powers.

To achieve these two objectives the Russian diplomats continued to pressurise their South African counterparts. To counter this, in a court affidavit made public earlier this week, President Ramaphosa had claimed any attempt to detain Putin could lead to war between Russia and South Africa.

"I must highlight, for the sake of transparency, that South Africa has obvious problems with executing a request to arrest and surrender President Putin," he said, as "Russia has made it clear that arresting its sit-

ting president would be a declaration of war". Though South Africa might have saved its relations with Russia, but in reality for the Russian government this has ended in a negative perception around Putin and the Russian might. Now the common Russian is aware that Putin is a declared war criminal, and though he might justify him not being so, using the state media machinery, the result is clear that Putin has not been able to achieve

what he urgently wanted to prove to the western world. In the end, Russia was forced to end the speculation and declare that Putin would not be travelling to Johannesburg for the summit. Though salvage efforts are still on and Putin may address the summit lead-

The year 2023 has not been kind to Putin so far. First came the ICC decision in March to charge him with war crimes, resulting is severely damaging his reputation, then weeks later he was forced to announce cancellation of the traditional May Day parades in Moscow and around Russia, without giving any reason, but obviously it was done due to the shortage of troops and other military hardware being lost in the Ukraine war, as the rumour mills propounded. This also showed him faulting to maintain his authority and control of his country, in question.

Later in June, units of Russian military-funded private paramilitary group,

Wagner added to his woes, as reports of a mutiny and control of the county's military control by Wagner troops emerged in the western media. Though the so-called 'mutiny' was suppressed but not before the world saw the mutinous troops controlling major Russian cities and marching within 200 kms distance of Moscow, perplexing both the western world, Russian citizens and pushing Putin to a tough spot, as various images showed Russian masses cheering-up the mutineers meaning lack of popular support for the iron man.

At the moment Putin looks his weakest during his 23-years as the Russian strongman. But these incidents might have forced him to reconsider plans to travel to South Africa, as his gamble to restore his international prestige might have cost him his country. As history tells us, most mutinies or coups happen when the dictators leave their country's shores.

The whole episode has left Kremlin facing harsh realities and rather harsher measures needed to restore Putin and Russia's image at the global level, which has certainly waned during 2023.

The Russian disquiet is evident in the wordings of spokesman Dmitry Peskov, who commenting on Putin's decision not to travel to South Africa used very severe wording: "In this world, it is absolutely clear to everyone what an attempt to encroach on the head of the Russian state means. Therefore, there is no need to explain anything to anyone here."

Brave words indeed, but to restore his personal and his country's image as a global power, Putin might have to resort to some quick and tough measures, the only concern is that this may not result in him committing a blitzkrieg against the Ukrainians.

The coming days indeed might be tough for Putin, even putting his survival at stake.

## international

### **INDIAN-AMERICANS HOLD PROTESTS AGAINST MANIPUR VIOLENCE IN 3 US STATES**

Washington Agencies

Indian-Americans and allies California, New Jersey, and Massachusetts throughout the weekend to condemn the ongoing ethnic violence in Manipur, which has left hundreds of people dead and thousands displaced.

The protests were in part a response to a horrific video last week, showing two young tribal women being paraded naked while being molested by a group of men in the violence-

In California, Indian-Americans and allies gathered on the steps of Oakland City Hall for a protest organised by several advocacy groups,

Manipur Tribal Association (NAMTA), Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), and "They chased us out of our

homes. They burned our homes, our properties. They looted, they killed, they raped, they immolated, they beheaded, they've left us broken and everything we own reduced to ashes," said Niang Hangzo, founding member of NAMTA.

"This is the butchery being done to the Kuki-Zomi... How long will the world stay silent? We want the House to bring this issue and discuss it like the EU (Parliament) has done."

The European Parliament had adopted a resolution earlier this month, calling on Indian authorities to take "all necesincluding the North American sary" measures to stop the vio-

lence in Manipur and protect religious minorities, especially Christians. India condemned "interference" in its internal

> In Iselin, New Jersey, IAMC organized a protest and candlelight vigil attended by people from diverse faith and ethnic backgrounds, including members of local churches, NAMTA, and the National Association of Asian Indian Christians.

"If those two women could be dragged and paraded, it could happen to any other woman, no matter what religion," said Pastor Prem Kankanala, representing the

United Telugu Christ Church. "Let us be united and raise our voices to protect women and to protect minorities," he

several Indian-Americans and solidarity with the victims and urging President Joe Biden's administration to intervene and call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to halt the escalating violence in Manipur.

In Boston, Massachusetts.

Following the protests, a senior Biden administration official said on Tuesday that the US is "shocked and horrified by the video of an extreme attack on two women in Manipur".

"We convey our profound sympathies to the survivors of this act of gender-based violence and support the Indian Government's efforts to seek justice for them," Vedant Patel, Deputy Spokesperson of the State Department, said.

#### 51 stranded whales die in Western Australia

Perth: Western Australia's Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) confirmed on Wednesday that 51 stranded whales died overnight at Cheynes Beach in the state's southwest. "Parks and Wildlife Service personnel are working in partnership with registered volunteers and other tions to try to return the remaining 46 wh: to deeper water during the course of the day," said the

It also urged members of the public to stay away from the beach for safety concerns, reports Xinhua news agency.

Cheynes Beach Caravan Park noted that an incident management team has been established by DBCA.

"Experienced staff from DBCA are currently being deployed, including Perth Zoo veterinarians and marine fauna experts, along with specialized equipment, including vessels and slings," the park updated on its social media.

On Tuesday morning, DBCA received reports that a large pod of long-finned pilot whales clustered about 150 metres off Cheynes Beach.

The mass whale stranding incident triggered a shark alert issued by the state government of Western Australia, as the possible dead and injured animals may attract sharks to come closer to the shore

## 18 aid workers killed in Sudan conflict: UN



**United Nations** Agencies

he UN humanitarian coordinator in Sudan has reported that 18 aid workers were killed in the ongoing violent conflict in the country since it erupt-

Citing the figures provided by the coordinator Clementine Nkweta-Salami, Farhan Haq, the deputy spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said that more than two dozen humanitarian personnel were detained, and some remain unaccounted for, reports Xinhua news agency.

ed on April 15.

At least 50 humanitarian warehouses were looted, 82 offices were ransacked and over 200 vehicles were stolen.

'The humanitarian coordinator strongly condemned these attacks, which strike at the heart of our ongoing efforts to deliver essential aid to those in need," he said. "She reminded all of the

parties to the conflict in Sudan of their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights

In a statement, Nkweta-Salami said the conflict is "a

crisis that turned a dire humanitarian situation into a full-blown catastrophe"

"The humanitarian community remains steadfast in its commitment to support the people of Sudan, making tremendous and brave efforts to provide assistance amid very difficult circumstances.

"Yet relief workers are not spared from the horrendous acts of violence and abuse,' she was quoted as saying.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization has warned of increasing reports of attacks on healthcare in Sudan, with more than 80 per cent of the country's hospitals out of service because of the con-

Sudan has been witnessing deadly clashes between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces in Khartoum and other areas, resulting in over 3,000 deaths and more than 6,000 injuries, according to figures released by the

Sudanese Health Ministry. In the latest attack on Tuesday, 16 civilians were killed in air and artillery strikes at a neighbourhood in the city of Omdurman, west of the capital

Khartoum.

## Italy hit by wildfires, heat and hail



Rome Agencies

he southern Italian island of Sicily was ravaged by fires while storms and hail have battered the northern part of Italy.

The airport in the Sicilian capital of Palermo was closed to air traffic on Monday and early Tuesday, as smoke from a nearby blaze had limited visibility in the area. Officials said the airport reopened later on Tuesday, although the number of flights was severely

reduced, Xinhua news agency reported. Catania Airport, Sicily's other main air hub, was closed last week due to a

fire in one of the terminals. As of Tuesday, it is also operating at a fraction of full capacity.

In total, there were over 50 major wildfires across Sicily, with Italian news sites showing images of grasslands and hillsides on

fire. The 2,500-year-old Greek-built Segesta Temple in northwest Sicily, one of the world's best-preserved Doric temples, has also been threatened by fires.On Tuesday, Palermo's Cervello hospital was evacuated, and at least 1,500 residents of the city were forced to leave their homes. The widespread nature of the fires is making it difficult for authorities to know where to evacu-

ate people, according to media reports. The partial closure of the island's two main airports has limited access to the Italian mainland for tourists, as well as the island's population of 5 million resi-

# China issues top alert for typhoon Doksuri

**Beijing** Agencies

hina's National Meteorological Centre (NMC) on Wednesday issued a red alert for typhoon Doksuri, the most severe warning in its four-tier warning system, as the fifth typhoon of this year is expected to bring gales and heavy rain to the eastern and southern parts of the country.

The typhoon, observed over the ocean about 350 km south of Taiwan at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, is expected to move northwest at a speed of 10 to 15 km per hour, the Centre said in a statement.

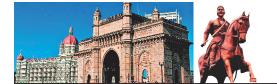
It will enter the northeastern part of the South China Sea between Wednesday evening and Thursday morning and then move to the coastal areas of Fujian and Guangdong, Xinhua news agency quoted the statement as saying.

The severe typhoon will most likely make landfall in the coastal areas of Jinjiang city in Fujian province and the bordering areas



of Fujian and Guangdong, the NMC said. Some coastal areas around the Bashi Channel, the South China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, as well as coastal regions of Taiwan and Fujian, will experience gales from 2 p.m. Wednesday to 2 p.m. Thursday.The maximum wind force in some of the aforementioned regions will reach 20.8 to 36.9 meters per second, according to the Center. During this peri-

od, parts of the east Zhejiang province will experience downpours of 100 to 150 mm and parts of Taiwan will experience heavy downpours of 250 to 400 mm, it added. The meteorological centre has issued an advisory suspending both indoor and outdoor gatherings, as well as dangerous outdoor operations, and recommended the timely transfer of people living in vulnerable housing.



## maharashtra



# MY GOVT PULLED DOWN BY CRABS: THACKERAY ATTACKS SHINDE GROUP

Targetting the Centre, Shiv Sena (UBT) President and former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Wednesday asked 'why does the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) need a 38-party National Democratic Alliance' since it has the ED, I-T and CBI. He claimed that many parties in the NDA do not have even a single MP, the 'real Shiv Sena' (led by Thackeray) is not a part of the NDA, but the Shiv Sena (of CM Eknath Shinde) only comprises traitors.

Team Absolute Mumbai

n a stinging attack, Shiv Sena (UBT) President and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said that his government was brought down in June 2022 by crabs who were hiding in the dam and broke it.

"My government was not washed away in the heavy rains last year... The crabs broke the dam, they were hiding there in the mud. We could do nothing as a crab is a crab, whatever effort you make to straighten them, they keep going sideways," said Thackeray.

He pointed out that crabs have a certain mindset, there's no need to cover a basket containing crabs, as when one goes up the others will put it down -- referring to the rebellion in the erstwhile Shiv Sena, and Eknath Shinde becoming Chief Minister after toppling the Maha Vikas Aghadi government headed by Thackeray.

He also slammed Shinde for going to perform a 'mujra dance' before the Delhi Darbar when the state was reel-



ing under the huge hillslide tragedy in Irshalwadi, Raigad on July 19, which killed 27 people.

Thackeray's sharp comments came in his annual marathon multi-media interview on the eve of his 62nd birthday on Thursday, given to Saamana Group Executive Editor Sanjay Raut the first instalment of which was published on Wednesday.

Expressing serious concerns over the ongoing violence and atrocities against women in Manipur, former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray raised questions addressing the President of India, Droupadi Murmu and the state Governor, Anasuiya

Uikey, here on Wednesday.
"Another incident of a woman being stripped naked and paraded has just come to light... Such incidents had happened even earlier. Unfortunately, it was not taken seriously then. These matters were taken cognizance only after the videos came to light and there may have been

"The country has a President who is a lady, and Manipur has a woman Governor, but how does it help," he wondered.

many more such instances," said

Thackeray.

"I request Madam President, that you are a woman, so what role will you play on the goings-on in the country? We call our country Bharatmata. If that mother is being insulted and such a spectacle is being made, then what are you doing as a woman, Madam President?" the Shiv Sena (UBT) President urged.

Thackeray posed the same questions to Manipur Governor Uikey who had herself admitted that she had never witnessed such violent incidents in her entire life, even as the issue is currently hotting up before Parliament.

## What about BJP's 'toll-free Maharashtra' promise, asks Raj Thackeray

Team Absolute Pune

day after a slanging match with ruling ally Bharatiya Janata Party, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena President Raj Thackeray questioned the BJP on its poll promise of a 'toll-free Maharashtra', here on Wednesday.

"What happened to your announcement of making the state 'toll-free'? When the roads are so bad, full of potholes and traffic jams then why should you collect toll and road taxes," demand Raj Thackeray, upping the ante against the government.

He rued that though a Marathi is the Union Minister for Highways (Nitin Gadkari), the situation of roads in his home state is pathetic, yet people have to start paying whenever a new road comes up, but "where's all the money collected in tolls going?"

"What about the huge

delays in implementing projects... The Mumbai sea-link took 10 years to build, the Mumbai-Goa highway has been incomplete for 17 years... The Mumbai-Nagpur SuperExpressway (Samruddhi Mahamarg) has no amenities, no safety and over 400 people have been killed in accidents since its inauguration..." Raj Thackeray, adding the BJP



His sharp comments came a day after the BJP-MNS bitterly pounced on each other on social media after the latter's activists allegedly vandalised a toll-post in Sinnar, Nashik late on Saturday.

The incident, which was used by the BJP to target the MNS, took place hours after the MNS scion Amit Raj Thackeray was reportedly delayed and harassed at the toll-booth venue a few hours earlier. "Now, Amit

Thackeray is in politics, so there are bound to be accusations... But what about the sufferings of the people who pay up the toll without getting the promised amenities, demanded Raj Thackeray, in Pnne for some party meetings. The issue of traffic snarls on highways had figured in the Maharashtra Legislative on Tuesday with heated exchanges between the Opposition and the gov-

## IIT-Bombay names its main building after Alumnus Nandan Nilekani

Team Absolute Mumbai

IT Bombay has named its iconic main building after alumnus and Infosys cofounder Nandan Nilekani in recognition of his philanthropic support to the Institute.

The main building of the institute will be named "Nandan Nilekani Main Building", said Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay in an official release.

Last month, Mr Nilekani donated Rs 315 crore to his alma mater to mark 50 years of his association with the institute, following which the IIT-Bombay students had highlighted the poor state of some of the infrastructure at the premier institute."In recognition of his esteemed service and philanthropic support to the Institute, IIT Bombay's Board of Governors deliberated and decided to dedicate its iconic Main Building to him," the release said."I am deeply grateful to the Board of Governors of IIT Bombay for this incredible honour. IIT Bombay has immeasurably shaped my life, and L the contributions of the team at IIT Bombay, alums and everyone else who have enabled



me to give forward to the Institute," said Nilekani, who had joined the institute in 1973 for his graduation in electrical engi-

"I dedicate this honour to every student who walks by the iconic building - I hope it inspires them to imagine and forge a better tomorrow," the Infosys co-founder added.

Nilekani had tweeted on June 20 his decision to donate Rs 315 crore to IIT-Bombay to mark 50 years of his association with the institute. Following this, the students there had said they want a part of his donation to be used for improving the institute's infrastructure.

# Bombay High Court stays proceedings against NCP MLA Rohit Pawar's sugar factory

Team Absolute Mumbai

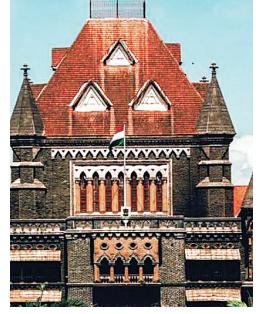
The Bombay High Court has stayed any further proceedings to be initiated on an FIR filed against Baramati Agro Ltd, a firm controlled by NCP MLA Rohit Pawar, on charges of alleged disobedience of order passed by a public servant. Rohit Pawar is the grandnephew of NCP chief Sharad Pawar and nephew of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

The company sexecutive director, Subhash Gulave, had filed a petition in the High Court, seeking to quash the FIR registered pursuant to a complaint lodged by BJP legislator Ram Shinde, who lost to Rohit Pawar in the 2019 assembly elections from Kariat-Jamkhed constituency.

from Karjat-Jamkhed constituency.
A division bench of Justices N W Sambre and R N Laddha in its order passed on July 21 said it would hear the plea on September 11.

"Till then further proceedings shall remain stayed," the court said.

As per the plea, in September 2022, a decision was taken in the state cabinet meeting that the



crushing season for 2022-23 would start on October 15 and appropriate criminal action would be initiated against erring factories.

Shinde in his complaint to the sugar commissioner alleged the Baramati Agro started sugarcane crushing on October 10, 2022 itself. The sugar commissioner appointed a special auditor to probe the charges.

Gulave in his plea claimed the auditor appointed had given a factual report stating there was no irregularity. However, he was suspended and a new inquiry officer was appointed to conduct a probe into Shinde's allegations, the petition said.

In December 2022, the second auditor submitted a report confirming the allegations made by Shinde. Gulave in the plea said the company was not given the auditor's report and that it came to know of the contents after a show cause notice was issued to the firm in March 2023.

After that, an FIR was registered by the police under section 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the Indian Pena Code, the plea said.

## BABY CROCODILE RESCUED FROM RESIDENTIAL AREA NEAR MUMBAI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A baby marsh crocodile was rescued from a 'chawl' in the eastern Mumbai suburb of Mulund, an honorary wildlife warden said on Tuesday.

Two local snake catchers rescued the reptile from a 'chawl' (old row tenement) in the Ghati Pada area of Mulund (west) on Saturday and handed it over to the Mumbai range of the Thane Forest Department, said honorary wildlife warden Pawan Sharma.

The reptile was subsequently given to the Resqink Association for Wildlife Welfare (RAWW) for medical examination and further rehabilitation, he said.

The baby crocodile was in trauma and had been starving since many



days, he said, adding it might have been displaced due to heavy rains. The reptile will be medically examined, stabilized and then released

back to its natural habitat, he said.
The Maharashtra forest department is trying to find out how the

reptile was found so far from its natu-

ral habitats at Tulsi, Vihar and Powai lakes, the official added.

This is a season for crocodile eggs to hatch and young ones are born and found near water habitats so finding such a small crocodile is quite strange, said Pawan Sharma.

"There can be few reasons, natural or man made, behind this occurrence. Natural reason can be displacement from its natural habitat where as man made reasons can be illegal fishing or illegal wildlife trade," he said.

However, this is not the first time that a crocodile has been found or rescued from suburbs, he said.

"Mumbai and surrounding areas are rich biodiversity hotspots for wildlife and there are regular interactions between humans and wildlife," said Pawan Sharma.

## Guardian minister's office in BMC will play important role in 'looting' Mumbai: Aaditya

Team Absolute Mumbai

Slamming the Maharashtra government over Mumbai guardian minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha's decision to set up his office in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation headquarters, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray on Tuesday said the move will play an important role in "looting" the metropolis.

Talking to reporters here, Thackeray said never in the past civic body buildings have housed offices of ministers in the state.

housed offices of ministers in the state.

Last week, Lodha, the guardian minister of Mumbai (suburbs), set up his office in the BMC headquarters in south Mumbai, a move

that invited criticism.

The BJP leader is a cabinet minister handling skill development, employment and

entrepreneurship portfolios.
"It has become the office of builders, con-



tractors, and former BJP corporators. They have planned to loot Mumbai and this (office) will play an important role in doing that," Thackeray said, hitting out at the BJP minister.

Thackeray said, intung out at the byt infiniser.

Thackeray said when he was the guardian minister of Mumbai suburbs, he used to hold meetings in the mayor or BMC commission-

## Police personnel won't be taken on contract: Fadnavis

Team Absolute | Mumbai

aharashtra Deputy Chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday said in the state assembly that police personnel will not be taken on contract. Fadnavis, who is also the state home minister, said he will give a detailed statement on the matter.

Raising the issue in the House, state Congress chief Nana Patole said, "You (the government) are recruiting police personnel on a contract basis. Your ministers are also on contract. When they take a briefing (from officials), they twist answers which is why questions take time to be answered. Give



pointed replies."

Responding to this,
Fadnavis said no ministers
are on contract.

"If you want to come on contract then we will think about it. Nowhere are police personnel taken on contract and it will not be done. I will give a detailed statement on it," the deputy CM said.

In a bid to overcome the shortage of constables in the Mumbai Police force, the state government has given the nod to outsource 3,000

personnel from the Maharashtra State Security Corporation (MSSC).

Corporation (MSSC).

The state home department issued an order to this effect on Monday.

The opposition in Maharashtra, in the meanwhile, on Tuesday raised concerns over the plan to rope in "contractual personnel" by the Mumbai police and said the "risky" move will be detrimental to the

force as well as to the public.
Raising the issue in the
legislative council, Leader of
Opposition Ambadas Danve
said the control of police
should be under the state

government.
"It is dangerous and risky," he said in the state legislative council.

# India Couture Week has a grand opening; Kiara turns showstopper

Tanya Banon | Mumbai

umbai-based designers Falguni Shane Peacock opened India Couture Week with a presentation of dazzling bridal couture. Not only did they show present heavily embellished ensembles perfect for the upcoming wedding season, but also featured newly wed Kiara Advani as their show stopper, to drive home the message.

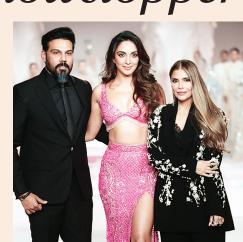
The collection titled 'Renaissance Reverie' is a reflection the designer duo's love for art and the treasures, encountered during their travels. Drawing inspiration from the renaissance era, the silhouettes were grand and rich with intricate embroidery. The ensembles showcased the techniques and and meticulous workmanship of India's skilled artisans, who have brought the designer duo's vision to life by marrying Western ethos with the richness of Indian heritage.

The designers believe "Each garment in the collection is a testament to cultural exchange and celebrates the invaluable lessons they have learned from the past." The colour palette feature pink in its soft and brighter hues, pastel blues and a series of whites and ivories.

Bollywood beauty Kiara walked the runway in a hot pink lehenga with sequin details, looking every bit the belle off the ball. The Couture Week is India premier fashion event and one is expected to see a number of Bollywood stars make an appearance for this year's fashion extravaganza.

The runway too was a unique fusion of Ease and West, The colour was muted sandstone and feature life sized elephants to showcase the artistic mastery of Indian influences and inspirations.
Falguni and Shane Peacock are well known in the Indian and Global fashion platform having

Falguni and Shane Peacock are well known in the Indian and Global fashion platform having created red carpet ensembles for leading movie and music icons like Jennifer Lopez, Beyonce,



Katy Perry, and Lady Gaga. The duo are celebrated for their statement fashion creations.

## hollywood



Kanye West

# Helen Flanagan

Hits Barbados beach in tiny bikini embraces her body after surgery

Los Angeles | Agencies

ctress Helen Flanagan looked sensational sporting a sizzling white bikini while on holiday in Barbados recently. The 'Coronation Street' star, 32, has jetted off to the Caribbean with her kids, Matilda, Delilah and Charlie, reports 'The Mirror'.

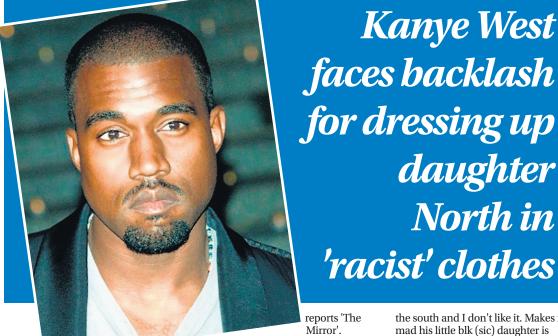
The actress looked happy and relaxed as she strolled along the sand in Bridgetown with her eldest daughter, who she shares with footballer Scott Sinclair.

Wearing a striking white two-piece with bejewelled tassels, Helen swept her blonde locks off her face in a top knot while keeping the sun's glare out of her eyes with a pair of designer sunglasses. Speaking about life as a working mum, she said: "It's important

to be yourself and with the summer and everyone being in bikinis, I've had three children, I'm really proud of my body and it's really important to embrace being you. The older you get, I'm going to be 33 this summer, I do think you (embrace) yourself and your body more. When you're in a bikini you should embrace being yourself and be comfortable in your own skin."

The 'I'm A Celebrity' star recently won the praise of fellow mumof-three Christine McGuinness after her 'relatable' post on Instagram. Sharing a snap of her three kids, Helen wrote: "Don't know what I'd do without them (tired, hungover mum doing her

Helen co-parents her three children with her former fiance Scott, 34. She recently revealed the footballer made the decision to move in with his mum following their split, which she reckons she's fine with because she gets on with his family.



Los Angeles

apper Kanye West continues to

swirl controversies. After his

anti-Semitic views were con-

demned, he has now been blasted by

daughter in clothes that appear to be

dressed North up in unreleased Yeezy

clothes from his Season 9 drop

including a white zip-up

hoodie with a pointed

hood that covers

New photos reveal that Kanye

fans for dressing his 10-year-old

Fans immediately point-

ed out that the clothing actually looks like a white Ku Klux Klan hood. The pointed shape of the hood and the focus on covering the wearer's face to offer anonymity are close parallels to white supremacist group. The Season 9 drop happened in

October 2022 and included hooded jumpers as well as a full body covering morphsuit.

This "KKK aesthetic" piece, as one fan dubbed it, didn't make the cut for that particular drop. Kanye is facing intense backlash, especially, for including his daughter in the clothes. As per 'The

the south and I don't like it. Makes me mad his little blk (sic) daughter is wearing it and she doesn't understand the disdain for this look. Maybe if it was purple or blue I wouldn't feel the

daughter

North in

Many fans agreed that at minimum a colour change was necessary to make the jumper less offensive. After all, the white hood is a signature look of a KKK member.

> Other fans pointed out that the Internet is for ever and a photo like this could follow North for the rest of her life



**London** | Agencies

nglish actor Idris Elba, who is well known for his roles in films such as 'The Suicide Squad', 'Pacific Rim', 'Mandela: Walk to Freedom' and the detective series 'Luther', has revealed that he once nearly lost his life in the US as he was held nearly at gunpoint while trying to protect a woman.

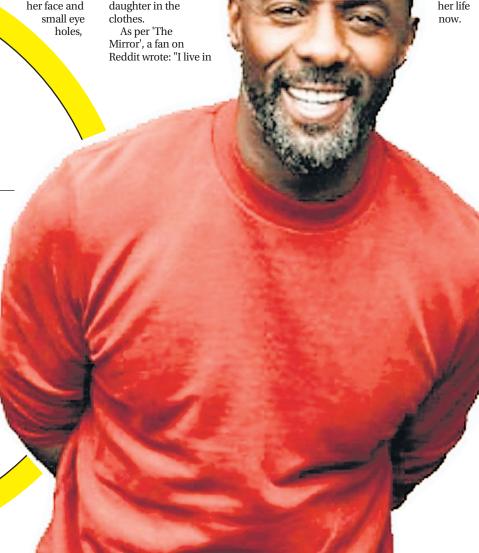
According to 'The Mirror', the actor recalling the terrifying incident said: "I nearly lost my f\*\*\*ing life. A guy (was) whaling on his missus, screaming in her face, "I'll f\*\*\*ing kill you," and so on. I come round and I go 'Look how beautiful she is. Why would you talk to this beautiful princess like that?'

"He pulled out a gun, stuck it right in my face, and goes, 'You talkin 'bout my girl?' He thought I was trying to hit on her. I remember thinking, 'Don't play negotiations like that... Consequences, man'.'

While it is unknown how the rest of the situation played out, it would seem that Elba was able to talk his way out of the situation, and resolve it without many hiccups, leaving without any harm to himself, his girlfriend or even the gun-

The 50-year old actor, who is married to the Canadian model Sabrina Dhowre (33) in an interview with Smartless podcast, revealed that he and Prince Harry first met at a nightclub and quite instantly became friends. "I was DJ-ing in all these clubs where Harry would show up and he was like 'Yo!' and I'm like 'Yo'. And then at one point he was like, 'Listen man, I'm getting married'. I was like, 'Yo! That's amazing'. He goes, 'I

> Harry went on to make a request. "I was like, 'I don't do requests'," Elba recalled.



## **Matt Damon** reveals why he turned down 'Avatar' offer

Los Angeles | Agencies

ollywood A-lister Matt Damon was "desperate" to work with James Cameron on the 'Avatar' franchise, but he has no regrets about turning down the offer to continue with the 'Bourne' fran-

'The Bourne Identity' star, 52, is thought to have missed out on a \$250 million payday by turning down the role of Jake Sully, which went to Sam Worthington, in Cameron's 2009 sci-fi epic.

But Damon has insisted he couldn't have left his friends "in the lurch" by quitting the 'Bourne' movies.

"I desperately wanted to work with Cameron. I mean, because he worked so rarely", he added.

'Avatar' remains the highest-grossing movie of all time with \$2.9 billion world-

Asked if he would've "put off the 'Bourne' series" if he had known 'Avatar' was going to be the biggest grossing movie of all time, he



said: "This is like ... this is like that question. He said, "No it's less much less conse-

quential, that was just a joke. Dumb ... but no, I mean, I don'tknow how I could have left all my friends in the lurch. You know what I mean? It would have ... my favourite reaction to this was, I told John Krasinski, we were writing this little movie a long time ago called 'Promised Land' and we were in my kitchen and it was a Saturday morning and we were on a break".
"I said, 'Yeah,' I tell him about 'Avatar',

and he launches himself out of the chair. He starts pacing the kitchen, he goes, 'OK, OK, OK. OK, OK. Nothing in your life would be different today if you had done that movie, except you and I would be having this conversation in space'. I would have been the same guy, I just would have had a space sta-

In May, Damon said turning down a role in 'Avatar' was the "dumbest thing an actor ever did".

### The 1975 looking at potential legal action after Matty Healy's kiss with male bandmate



Los Angeles | Agencies

he English pop rock band, The 1975 could face legal action after singer Matty Healy's kiss with a male bandmate at Malaysia's Good Vibes festival led to the event being cancelled.

The English pop rock band, The 1975 could face legal action after Matty Healy's kiss with a male bandmate at Malaysia's Good Vibes festival led to the event being cancelled.

The singer spoke out in protest against the country's laws, where LGBTQ+ people can face up to 20 years in prison, reports 'Mirror.co.uk'.

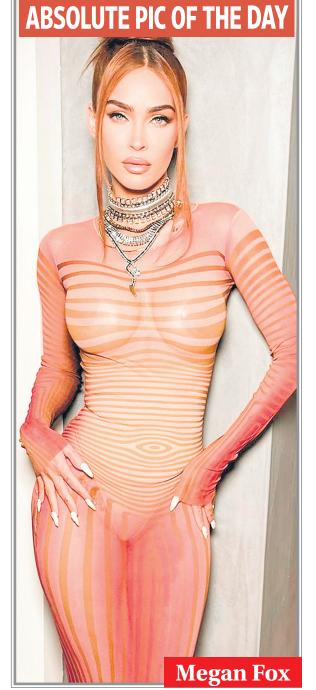
While on stage, he attacked the government and also said he was "furious" he had made "a mistake when we were booking shows". Some have claimed the kiss and speech has been successful in highlighting the human rights issue around the world. But others fear a backlash in Malaysia. Local artistes and firms were left out of pocket

after bosses were forced to pull the plug on the event.As per 'Mirror.co.uk', lawyers have since volunteered to work pro bono for those affected. The Malaysian lawyers are drafting a class action suit against the band, naming all four members.

It states that it seeks damages for local artists and vendors for losses resulting from the group's alleged "negligence". Lawyers are also appealing for more -potential claimants who have lost earnings.

Amid the furore, The 1975 cancelled their performances in Jakarta and Taipei, while Matty made light of the event, saying that he usually struggles not to kiss his good looking bandmate, bassist Ross MacDonald.

But he has also thanked Peter Tatchell for defending him against accusations that he behaved like a "white saviour". Police in Kuala Lumpur said "there is not much that can be done" personally against the band, after they left the country on Saturday morning but vowed to hold organisers "responsible for their actions".





## **INDIA WOMEN'S TEAM PLAY OUT A 1-1** DRAW AGAINST ENGLAND IN OPENER

Barcelona (Spain) | Agencies

ndian women's hockey team came from behind to record a thrilling 1-1 draw against England in their opening game of the 100th Anniversary Spanish Hockey Federation - International Tournament, here on Wednesday.

For India, Lalremsiami (41') scored a goal, while Holly Hunt (7') was the goal-scorer for England.

The game began with England quickly settling into a passing rhythm while controlling the majority of possession, and it paid off when Holly Hunt (7') scored a field goal with a powerful and well-placed shot from inside the D to give her team the lead.

Following that, India upped the ante in search of an equaliser, repeatedly testing England's defence and even coming close to scoring on multiple occasions, but were unable to find the back of the net as the first quarter ended with England leading

India increased the frequency of their attacks in an attempt to level the score in the second quarter, forcing England's midfielders to make



back passes and maintain possession. Interestingly, the strategy

assisted England in neutralising the Indian team's attack, allowing them

to maintain their 1-0 lead at the halftime break.

Sports

To capitalise on their lead, England launched a strong offensive push in the third quarter, earning the game's first penalty corner. They were, however, unable to capitalise on this opportunity. Meanwhile, India remained determined to equalise and switched to a counterattacking strategy.

The smart game plan paid off when Lalremsiami (41') converted a penalty corner to help India get back into the game. Both India and England won multiple penalty corners in the dying minutes of the third quarter but both teams were unable to make the most of the opportunities as the third quarter ended with the score tied at 1-1.

After scoring the equaliser, India came out all guns blazing in the fourth and final quarter and kept England under pressure by attacking rigorously. However, England kept their defence tight and also won a penalty corner in the closing minutes of the match but failed to take advantage of it. The final quarter didn't witness a single goal as the game ended in a 1-1 draw

**Asian Games 2023** 

## Indian football teams get exemption for participation

Team Absolute New Delhi

he Sports Ministry on Wednesday gave an exemption to Indian men's and women's football teams, allowing them to participate in the upcoming Asian Games, which will be held in Hangzhou, China from September 23.

The development comes weeks after it was reported that the football teams will not be taking part in the continental event as per the existing criterion of the sports ministry.

The sports ministry's rule states that in team sports, only those in the top eight will get the nod and Indian national football men's and women's teams are currently ranked 18th and 11th respectively.

However, an exemption has been made and Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur on Wednesday confirmed the participation of both Blue Tigers and Blue Tigress in the continental showpiece event.

Notably, the governipation. ment's criteria were relaxed

after support poured from fans on various social media nlatforms and men's national team head coach Igor Stimac had also Jakarta. appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene and allow the team's partic-

The Indian team will now

play in the Asian Games for the first time since 2014 as the same criteria had ruled it out of the 2018 Games in

Football in the Asian Games is a U-23 tournament with three players above that age are also per-

#### **FIFA Women's World Cup**

## Japan beat Costa Rica for consecutive wins

**Dunedin (New Zealand)** | Agencies

apan on Wednesday became the first team to win consecutive matches at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, as they beat Costa Rica 2-0 in Group C thanks to a quickfire double from Naomoto Hikaru and Fujino

Having registered an emphatic 5-0 rout of

Zambia in their opening match, Japan entered Wednesday's clash in high spirits, while Costa Rica had been defeated 3-0 by Spain in their first match.

The two sides had met previously only once in an official game, where Japan had emerged 3-0 victors, Xinhua reported.

Japan got the job done in the space of three minutes, as Naomoto broke into the box to finish with a left-footed strike in the 25th minute, before Fujino then beat the goalkeep-



er from a tight angle.

This is the third time Japan have begun their Women's World Cup campaign with two successive wins, having previously done so in 2011 and 2015. Japan will now take on Spain in Wellington next Monday.

### ROHIT SHARMA, SIRAJ, JADEJA RISE UP IN ICC MEN'S TEST RANKINGS

**Dubai** | Agencies

India captain Rohit Sharma, fast-bowler Mohammed Siraj and left-arm spin all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja have made gains in the latest ICC Men's Test Rankings, released on Wednesday.

Following India's draw in the second Test against the West Indies in Trinidad which propelled them to 1-0 series triumph, Rohit has risen up to ninth place in the batters' rankings after scores of 80 and 57.

On the other hand, Siraj, who picked five wickets in the first innings at Trinidad, has jumped six places to a career-best 33rd place overall on the list for bowlers, while Jadeja has moved to sixth place in the rankings.

Meanwhile, young opener Yashasyi Jaiswal has claimed a new career-high of 63 on the list for batters after he shot up 10 places courtesy of making 57 and

38 in just his second Test appearance in Trinidad.

For Pakistan, left-handed batter Saud Shakeel's heroics with the bat, including a brilliant double hundred which fetched him the Player of the Match award, has now propelled him to rise 12 spots to 15th place, in what is also a new career-best rating for him.

His team-mates, all-rounder Agha Salman shot up 17 places to 58th overall for batters, while seamer Naseem Shah (up one place to 44th) and spinner Abrar Ahmed (up 12 spots to equal 45th) found new highs on the list for bowlers after excellent performances with the ball against Sri Lanka. For Sri Lanka, who ended up on the losing side at Galle, Dhananjaya de Silva progressed 11 spots to reach 24th position with scores of 122 and 82.

Spinner Prabath Jayasuriya's seven-wicket haul has lifted him seven places to a career-best sev-

enth position, while his spin partner Ramesh Mendis is up one place to 21st after finishing with six wickets in the match.

In the Ashes, Australia's toporder batter Marnus Labuschagne's scores of 51 and 111 in the drawn fourth Test in Manchester have lifted him to 869 rating points and be at second place while Joe Root's knock of 84 takes him to 852 points, taking him to third place. New Zealand batter Kane Williamson remains at the top of the list with 883 rating points.

Player of the Match Zak Crawley is up 13 places to 35th after smashing a magnificent 189, while Harry Brook has risen to 11th position and Jonny Bairstow has advanced three places to joint-19th after his unbeaten 99. In bowling, Mark Wood (up three places to 23rd) and Chris Woakes (up five places to 31st) are the main gainers for England



### Sindhu crashes out in opener again, Lakshya, Satwik-Chirag advance to next round

Tokyo | Agencies

ce Indian shuttler PV Sindhu's poor run of form continued as she suffered a first round exit from the Japan Open 2023 badminton tournament at the Yoyogi National Gymnasium, here on Wednesday.

Two-time Olympic medallist Sindhu, 17th in the women's singles badminton rankings, lost 12-21, 13-21 to China's Zhang Yi Man to make her seventh opening round exit in 13 BWF World Tour 2023

This was also Sindhu's second straight opening round ouster after going down to Chinese Taipei's Pai Yu Po in the Korea Open opener last week.

Zhang Yi Man, who is ranked one place lower than Sindhu, looked in control throughout the contest and eventually ended the match in 32 minutes to pick up her third victory over the Indian shuttler in five meetings.



Before the Japan Open opener, the two badminton players had faced each other twice this

year. While Zhang got the better of Sindhu at the All England Open in March, it was the Indian who emerged the winner at the Malaysia Masters back

Meanwhile, the star Indian men's double pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, fresh off their Korea Open triumph last week, had to dig

deep to advance to the second round in Japan. Satwik-Chirag, who rose to a career-best world No. 2 recently, were stretched to three games by Indonesia's Leo Rolly Carnando and Daniel Marthin but eventually won the match 21-16, 11-

On the other hand, Commonwealth Games 2022 men's singles champion Lakshya Sen registered a thrilling 21-15, 12-21, 24-22 win against compatriot Priyanshu Rajawat. He will face Japan's Kanta Tsuneyama Lakshya Sen's pre-quarterfinal. The Japanese shuttler upset Indonesian world No. 2 Anthony Sinisuka Ginting in the opening round.

#### Messi nets brace as Inter Miami breeze past Atlanta United

Washington (USA) | Agencies

ionel Messi scored two goals and set up another as Inter Miami secured their second straight Leagues Cup victory with a 4-0 home rout of Atlanta United, here.

The hosts went ahead in the eighth minute as Messi ran onto Sergio Busquets' lofted pass and hit the post with his first attempt before firing in the rebound on Tuesday night.

Messi then combined with Robert Taylor, whose cross allowed the 36-year-old forward to sweep home his second goal, a Xinhua report said.

The Major League Soccer (MLS) outfit were in inspired form. Taylor, who showed a neartelepathic understanding with Messi, made it 3-0 with a first-time effort from a tight angle, finishing off a move that started with the Argentine World Cup winner.

Finland international winger Taylor completed the rout by latching onto Messi's pass on the counterattack and angling a shot that bounced in off the far post.



Messi has now scored three times in his first two appearances for Inter Miami, whom he joined on a free transfer earlier this month.

Inter Miami have made a perfect start to the Leagues Cup, an international tournament between clubs in the MLS and Mexico's Liga MX. The David Beckham-owned outfit, nicknamed the Herons, sit atop the Group J standings with six points from two games so

#### 'No, not at all': David Warner brushes off Oval retirement rumours

**London** | Agencies

**T**eteran Australia opener David Warner has dismissed the rumours that he will retire from Test cricket after the fifth and final Ashes 2023 Test at the Oval.

Warner's retirement speculation was fuelled when Vaughan told Fox Cricket that he had heard "whispers" during the Old Trafford Test that the final Ashes encounter would be left-hander's last game in the red-ball format.

Notably, the 36-year-old batter last month announced his plans to retire following the three-match home series against Pakistan next summer, culminating in a home farewell for the New Year's Test in Sydney. He is now all set to play his final Test away



from home this week when the fifth and final Test of an enthralling Ashes series takes place at The Oval from Thursday

"No, not at all," Warner said when asked if he had considered altering his retirement plans. "As a player that doesn't go through your head. Going through your head is actually going out there and trying to score as many runs as you can and try and work hard on your game in the nets. If you get tapped on the shoulder (by selectors), you get tapped on

the shoulder," he added.

### Malaysia seamer Syazrul Idrus becomes the first man to take seven-for in T20Is

Kuala Lumpur | Agencies

alaysia seamer Syazrul Idrus on Wednesday became the first man to take seven wickets (7/8) in a T20I, achieving the feat against China during the opening game of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 Asia Regional Qualifier B tournament at Bayuemas Oval. here.

All seven wickets taken by Idrus were bowled as he consistently swung the ball into the batters. The pacer broke Peter Aho's record for the best bowling figures in a men's T20Is. Playing for Nigeria, Aho had picked up 6 for 5 against Sierra Leone in 2021.

Notably, a total of 12 bowlers had previously claimed six-wicket hauls in a Men's T20I -- including India duo Deepak Chahar and Yuzvendra Chahal, Australia spinner Ashton Agar and Sri Lanka tweaker Ajantha Mendis -- but an



elusive seven-wicket haul had never been recorded until Idrus' amazing

Riding on Idrus's sensational bowling performance, Malaysia recorded a commanding eight-wicket victory over China. The right-armer took a liking to the conditions in Pandamaran as he single-handedly ripped through the Chinese batting line-up, picking up all seven of his wickets bowled as the visitors were dismissed for just 23 in the 12th over

Malaysia lost two quick wickets in reply as they chased down the victory target in the fifth over, giving them the perfect start to the qualifying tournament they are hosting ahead of the T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies next year.

The winner of this tournament will progress to the Asia Regional Final in Nepal in November, with the two leading teams from that event then making it through to the 20-over showcase in

#### **Warsaw Open**

#### Swiatek begins her campaign with win over Abduraimova

Warsaw (Poland) | Agencies

↑ Torld No.1 Iga Swiatek Warsaw Open campaign with a straight-sets win over Uzbekistan's Nigina Abduraimova in the first round, here.

In her first match action since a quarterfinal loss to Elina Svitolina at Wimbledon, Swiatek on Tuesday night needed 1 hour and 35 minutes to get back to winning ways.

The 22-year old Polish tennis player is in pursuit of her fourth title of 2023 at this week's WTA 250 event in her home country, in her second appearance. Last year, she lost in the quarterfinals to eventual champion Caroline Garcia when the event was



"For sure, it's a pretty spe-

held on clay

cial tournament. It's not an easy one to play, a little bit different stress than usual, but I'm happy for the chance to play in front of Polish crowds," Swiatek said after the match. "First rounds, they aren't easy, and anybody who knows a little bit about tennis, they'll tell you that it's a little bit harder to play at home.



# 'Validation of effort to create impactful cinema,':Anshum an Jha

### 'Lakadbaggha' wins in Stuttgart

he vigilante action thriller 'Lakadbaggha' starring AnshumanJha and RidhiDogra, has achieved international acclaim by winning the German star of India 'Director's Vision' award at the 20th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart 2023. The categories in the 'German Star of India' Award 2023 are: Best Feature Film bagged by 'MAX, MIN & MEOWZAKI' by PadmakumarNarasimhamurthy; Best Documentary bagged by 'To Kill A Tiger' by NishaPahuja; Best Short Film went to 'Nocturnal Burger' by Reema Maya; Best TVC bagged by 'Mental Health' by BauddhayanMukherji; and the Audience Award bagged by 'The Storyteller' by Ananth Narayan Mahadevan.

Directed by Victor Mukherjee, 'Lakadbaggha' is a love letter to dogs and is the story of an animal lover vigilante against an animal abuser kingpin. The film deals with the underbelly of illegal animal trade and the inhuman treatment of the voiceless creatures. Expressing his excitement, actor and producer, Anshuman said:

"Portraying the character of Arjun in 'Lakadbaggha' has been an immensely gratifying journey for me as an actor and producer. This film holds a special place in my heart as it not only entertains but also leaves a lasting impact on the audience, championing the cause of animal welfare.

'I FEEL THE MOM GUILT

WHEN ON SHOOT, 'ANITA

ctress Anita Hassanandani, who made

'IdharUdhar', said being the mother is

her debut on television in 1998 with

the most challenging role to play, and she

feels the mom guilt when on the shoot. Anita and her husband Rohit welcomed

February, last year. With the shoot of the

shows, managing mommy duties, etc, Anita

said it does become challenging to play every

"But being a mother is the most challeng-

ing, I would say. I love being Aaravv's mom, and when I go to the shoot, I do feel the

mom's guilt to be honest, but a mother can

The 'Krishna Cottage' fame actress said it's

always going to be difficult, but she took that call, as she had the family support. "My

mother-in-law comes over and takes care of

Aaravv. So it kind of falls into place, with the

kind of family support I have. And when I go

wife, and entrepreneur, i

"You have to be happy with the decision you made, and once you are happy, every-

The 42-year-old actress called her journey

"But sometimes, I do feel that after being a mom, I mean people say that nothing changes, it's still easy to get back and all, but

wonderful, amazing, and welcoming, adding

out for work, 100 percentI miss Aaravv like

crazy." Anita said the only 'mantra' she fol-

lows while performing all the roles of an

all decisions that make you happy.

thing falls into place," she said.

that she has no regrets.

their first child, a baby boy Aaravv in

role, when you are an actor.

never leave a child," Anita said.

Winning the prestigious German Star Of India 'Vision' Award is a true honour and a validation of our team's collective effort to create impactful cinema. 'Lakadbaggha' aims to stir emotions, spark conversations, and inspire positive change, and I couldn't be prouder of the resounding recognition it has garnered on the global stage," he

HASSANANDANI

Team Absolute Mumbai

#### TREVOR NOAH SET FOR **INDIA DEBUT TOUR**

India is one of the most exciting countries in the world



Team Absolute | Mumbai

omic artiste Trevor Noah is all set to come to India with his 'Off The Record Tour' kicking off his Asia

Commenting on his India Tour, Noah said: "After a lifetime of loving India's culture, I'm so excited to finally have the privilege of bringing my current stand-up comedy tour to one of the most exciting countries in the world!"

With sold out-shows through US and Europe between 2022 and 2023, Trevor's 'Off The Record' Tour will travel to Asia, with its first pit stop in India, followed by Dubai.

Noah was the host of The Daily Show. He has won various awards, including a Primetime Emmy Award from 11 nominations. He was named one of "The 35 Most Powerful People in New York Media" by The Hollywood Reporter in

In 2018, Time magazine named him one of the hundred most influential people in the world In 2023, he won the Erasmus Prize.

Born in Johannesburg, Noah began his career in South Africa in 2002. He was the runner-up in the fourth season of South Africa's iteration of Strictly Come Dancing in 2008. From 2010 to 2011, he hosted the late-night talk show Tonight with Trevor Noah. He hosted the 63rd, the 64th and the 65th Annual Grammy Awards as well White House Correspondents Dinner.

## **Abish Mathew tells** Taapsee, 'Both eyes shut is best way to watch anything you do on screen'



Absolute | Mumbai

tand-up comedian nd chat show host Abish Mathew recently roasted actress TaapseePannu on his Instagram Story. Taapsee is inviting

people in her social circle for a roast session ahead of her birthday on August 1. The actress recently

took to the Instagram Stories and invited her close friends to roast her on her online platform. Calling Abish, the

'roast king', Taapsee, who has been on the comic's chat show 'Son of Abish' shares a good camaraderie with Abish and said that he already knows a lot about her which sets a good premise for a roast session.

Responding to the same, Abish took to the Stories section of his Instagram and shared a video of himself thanking Taapsee.

"Thank you so much, Taapsee. Thank you for inviting me, and of course we know so much about you. For instance, I know that you can't wink. Everytime you try, both eyes shut and both eyes shut is the best way to watch anything you do on screen," he said. Taapsee shared this primer of a roast on her Instagram Story appreciating

The actress appeared on the chat show along with another comic artiste

Zakir Khan. The second time she appeared on the show along with choreographer

Shakti Mohan, back in 2019. She recently appeared on the show for the third time with 'Mirzapur' actress ShriyaPilgaonkar and stand-up artiste SapanVerma.



'Heeriye' tells dreamy love story of HeerRanjha



Team Absolute | Mumbai

usic composer and singer Jasleen Royal has released her new song 'Heeriye', and it's a song which will have a calming effect on the audience especially in times when the world is overwhelmed by forces of nature and chaos all around.

The song has been crooned by India's superstar singer Arijit Singh, and the music video of the song features Malayalam star DulquerSalmaan and Jasleen. The music video begins with Jasleen picking the classic tale of HeerRanjha from a shelf with the character of Raniha.

As she gets engaged while reading the book, Dulquer's character of the Ranjha from the book transcends the boundaries of reality and illusion and makes a stunning entry riding a horse into the life of Jasleen's character in the video. The two then go about spending some quality

time as their dreamy love story soon fills the screen with warmth and a fuzzy feeling.

Jasleen has not only composed and sung the track but also produced the music video. 'Heeriye' marks Dulquer's first ever non-film project. Sonically, the track makes the use of both live instruments and minimal use of VSTs.

Jasleen and Arijit perform the duet as the song progresses forward. Visually, the song features several beautiful locations, particularly the beach. As Dulquer's character sets the race against the time to go back into his native world, Jasleen burns the page of the classic love story of HeerRanjha leading to Ranjha forever staying in Jasleen's world. The narrative loop closes as Jasleen rides the horse to the beach to get back her Ranjha.



Ridhi Dogra