

# absolute india

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## PM HAS NO TIME TO VISIT MANIPUR, GOVT TOO KEEN ON ISRAEL, SAYS RAHUL IN MIZORAM



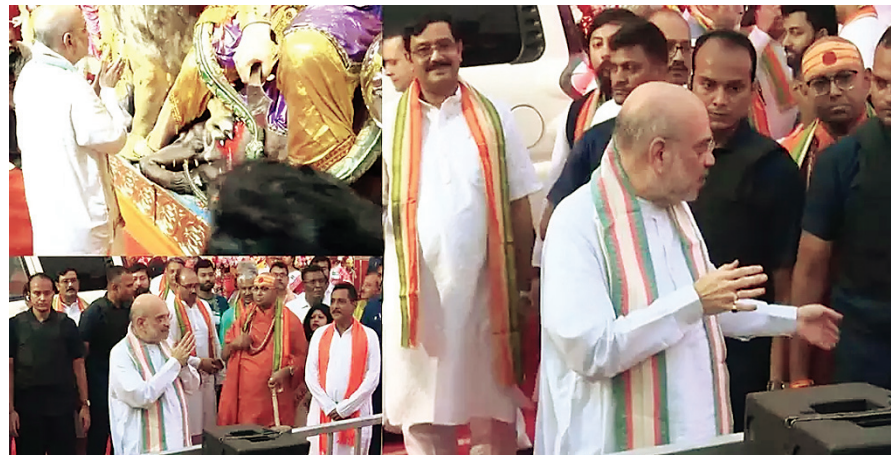
Aizawl | Agencies

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday said that people have been killed for over five months in Manipur but Prime Minister does not find time to come to the state and it is amazing to see our government is so interested in what is going on in Israel. Gandhi while addressing an election rally in Aizawl said, "I really do not understand why PM did not travel in Manipur. It's a shame for a leader of the country." Referring to his visit to Manipur a few months back, he said that the national media has stories after stories on the Middle East but no more on the ethnic crisis ridden state. "Manipur is a symptom, you can see what happened in Manipur also reflecting other parts of India. Tribals, minorities, Dalits are feeling uncomfortable under BJP rule and this is an attack on the idea of India. "It is the duty of every single Indian to protect every single religion, every single culture and every single Indian

irrespective of religion," the Lok Sabha member from Kerala's Wayanad said adding that the BJP attacks "your culture, religion, your thoughts and the ruling MNF (Mizo National Front) supports BJP." Expressing his discontent over the drugs menaces, Rahul Gandhi said that the drugs are spreading rampantly in Mizoram and 259 young lives have been taken away by drug abuse in the state. He said that the young people of Mizoram are not getting jobs so they are getting frustrated, turning to drugs. In the last five years the MNF government has given only 2000 jobs, the Congress leader claimed. Noting that the Congress has worked for the development of Mizoram for the last many years, Rahul Gandhi said that with the signing of the Mizo peace accord in 1986 transition of violent Mizoram to peaceful Mizoram had started. Highlighting the Congress led government's performance in Karnataka, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, the former Congress President said that these

governments have been implementing many beneficial schemes from health sector to women welfare to education. Be it the social safety infrastructure in Karnataka, Rs 25L health insurance cover in Rajasthan, or the welfare of farmers and MSMEs in Chhattisgarh, our leadership in the states works with a vision, he stated. "Congress and the party ruled government have been protecting farmers, small businessmen, workers, poor wage-earners but BJP has been depriving and attacking them. GST has been designed to harm India's farmers and small traders." Urging the people to vote for the Congress, Rahul Gandhi said that the party (Congress) respects every single person irrespective of their caste, religion and creed and the party has an ambitious vision for the state of Mizoram. "We would protect your culture, tradition, language and religion. We love your diversity, perspective and your way of life and it is our most valuable asset and much more important than the buildings etc. "Some months ago I walked

around 4000 km from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. Today (Monday) we walked two km, but the message I had to give was the same. I come here with the idea of Bharat Jodo, one India, that respects each other's culture and religion, that is tolerant and that loves itself as a whole." The Congress leader claimed that the BJP has been attacking this holistic idea and they attack different communities, languages and spread hatred despite this is against the idea of India. Referring to his visit to Mizoram 37 years ago, Rahul Gandhi said, "I was 16 years old when I came here with my father Late Rajiv Gandhi in 1986." "For long time our family has been very close to people with Mizoram. The people of Mizoram are gentle, kind and affectionate. People have a strong sense of community; they respect each other and also people with different ideas. It is something to be very proud of... you have a spirit of altruism. These are powerful values in the 21st century," Rahul Gandhi said.



## I will frequently visit Bengal to bring change: Amit Shah

Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that he will be visiting West Bengal frequently in the coming days to ensure change in the political power situation in the state.

Kolkata | Agencies

He was in Kolkata to inaugurate the community Puja of Santosh Mitra Square at Lebutala Park in central Kolkata, whose principal organiser is BJP councillor in Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) Sajal Ghosh. "This is not the occasion for making political statements. So, I will not do that now. But I will be frequenting the state more, making political statements and ensuring that there is change in the state," the Shah said. He also referred to the theme of the Puja committee this year which is Ram Madir

in Ayodhya. "The Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be inaugurating the Ram Mandir at Ayodhya in January next year. But before that there is inauguration of another Ram Mandir in Kolkata by the people," the Home Minister said. Besides Shah and Ghosh, also present on the occasion was BJP's state president in West Bengal and party Lok Sabha member Sukanta Majumdar and the leader of the opposition in West Bengal assembly Suvendu Adhikari. The inauguration of the Puja pandal was the only scheduled programme of Home Minister in Kolkata on Monday. He will fly back to New Delhi in evening.

Santosh Mitra Square, this year too, has maintained its tradition of not accepting the donation and other financial benefits offered by the state government to the community Durga Puja committees every year. "We have not been accepting donations for the last two years. Pujas have been organised with lots of pomp and grandeur even before. So, it will happen this year as well. But we do not want to be a party to waste money of the state exchequer and that too at a time when the state government is unable to meet essential expenditure for development or go for recruitment for the vacant posts," Ghosh said.

## Manish Sisodia bail plea: ED may name AAP as accused in Delhi liquor policy case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday resumed hearing former Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia's bail plea in alleged Delhi liquor policy scam and was told that the ED is considering making the AAP an accused in the case. Making his submission before a bench of Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice S.V.N. Bhatti, ASG S.V. Raju, appearing for the Enforcement Directorate (ED), said that he had been instructed to say that the ED is considering making the Aam Admi Party an accused in the ongoing investigation in the PMLA case. On October 4, while hearing the submissions from senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi representing Sisodia, the bench had asked the ED why the AAP was not made an accused when the whole ED case was about the party being a beneficiary. On the next day, the bench clarified that it had only raised a legal query. "...We want to clarify that our question yesterday was not to implicate anyone. Suppose if as per the prose-



cution if A is not being prosecuted can B or C be prosecuted?" the bench said. The court will again resume hearing the bail plea on Tuesday.

## Candidates selected on seat's caste and social structure, will convince disappointed workers to work for party: Kamal Nath

**A DAY AFTER THE CONGRESS RELEASED ITS FIRST LIST OF 144 CANDIDATES FOR THE NOVEMBER 17 MADHYA PRADESH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, STATE PARTY CHIEF KAMAL NATH ON MONDAY SAID THE ASPIRANTS HAVE BEEN SELECTED KEEPING THE CASTE EQUATION TO ENSURE SOCIAL JUSTICE.**

Team Absolute | Bhopal

During an interaction with media persons at party headquarters here, the veteran Congress leader said: "Around 4,000 people have applied for the tickets and they all claimed they will win the elections, but all of them can't get the ticket. We announced candidates

after taking opinions from others. There is hardly any unanimity on such things as all those who applied claimed that they would be victorious." Responding to the resentment of some party workers after they were denied tickets, he said he will talk to all them. Kamal Nath, who is the chief ministerial face of the Congress in Madhya Pradesh said: "The party's aim during ticket distribution was to do social justice and this process should fit into the caste equation." Meanwhile, he also informed that the party will declare candidates for the remaining seats in two-three days. Out of 144 candidates announced so far, 65 are below the age of 50 years and 19 are women. Asked about tickets given to leaders who recently switched over to the

Congress from the BJP and other parties, Kamal Nath said such leaders joined his party only after the consent of local party organisation. Several party workers from different parts of the state on Monday assembled at Kamal Nath's residence in Bhopal to express their disappointment for denial of tickets. Former Congress MLA Yadendra Singh, who was running for ticket from Nagod constituency of Satna, broke down in front of the party workers on Sunday and resigned from the party. He accused Kamal Nath of dictatorship in selection of candidates and joined the BSP on Monday. "I was the right hand of the Congress party, I am not saying anything right now as to how many I will dent but I will definitely teach Kamal Nath a lesson in the district," he said.



## RBI fines Mumbai housing finance firm, Gujarat co-op bank

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The RBI on Monday announced that it has slapped fines on Gujarat Mercantile Co-operative Bank and Mumbai-based West End Housing Finance for violating norms. Gujarat Mercantile Co-operative Bank was penalised as the bank had breached the prudential inter-bank gross exposure limit, breached the prudential inter-bank counterparty exposure limit, and not maintained the minimum Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) for certain days, the RBI explained. A monetary penalty of Rs 1.7 lakh was imposed West End Housing Finance as it failed to obtain prior written permission of NHB/RBI for change in its shareholding due to progressive increases over time, resulting in the transfer of shareholding beyond the permitted limit,



the RBI said. "This action is based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the company with its customers," the RBI said. Smaller fines were also imposed by the RBI on three other co-operative banks. These include Nagarik Sahakari Bank, The Sevalia Urban Co-operative Bank, Makarpura Industrial Estate Co-operative Bank.

## Rs 94 cr cash, jewellery worth Rs 8 cr seized in I-T raids in four states

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Income Tax (I-T) Department has seized unaccounted cash to the tune of Rs 94 crore as well as gold and diamond jewellery worth Rs 8 crore in search and seizure operations against some government contractors, real estate developers and their associates during raids carried out on October 12 at 55 premises across Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Delhi, according to an official statement issued on Monday. Further, a cache of about 30 luxury watches of foreign make were unearthed from the premises of a private salaried employee, not engaged in the business of wrist watches, the statement issued by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said.



Large scale unaccounted cash transactions, which are not found recorded in the books of account, have also been found during the search on the premises of assesses, sub-contractors, and associates including certain cash handlers. A large amount of incriminating evidence in the form of loose sheets, hard copy of documents and digital data have been seized. The modus-operandi of tax evasion detected indicates that these contractors were involved in reducing their income by inflating expenses by booking bogus purchases, non-genuine claim of expenses with sub-contractors and claiming ineligible expenses.

The irregularities detected in utilisation of contract receipts, has resulted in generation of huge unaccounted cash and creation of undisclosed assets. Evidence indicating inflation of expenses in the form of discrepancies in Goods Receipt Note (GRN) validation has been unearthed during the search. Evidence of huge discrepancies in documentation related to purchases booked and actual physical transport of goods have also been unearthed, with regard to bogus transactions with sub-contractors, some of whom were also covered during the search. Further, these contractors were also involved in booking expenses for non-business purposes. Evidences of claim of liaison expenses have also been found and seized.

## Corruption by KCR's family being talked about in Delhi too: Rajnath

Hyderabad | Agencies

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday alleged that corruption by Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu's family is being talked about in Delhi too. He slammed KCR for what he called abuse of power and growing corruption in Telangana. "The talk of corruption by your family is not limited to Telangana alone but it has reached Delhi. I want to tell Mr KCR that there is no smoke without fire," he said in an apparent reference



to the Delhi liquor policy case allegedly involving KCR's daughter K. Kavitha. Rajnath Singh was addressing an election rally at Jammikunta in Hyderabad constituency represented by BJP MLA and former minister Eatala Rajender. The BJP leader remarked that KCR's objective is family first while the people of Telangana want to see the state first. "There is nothing wrong in having a family but handing over the entire state to the family is not acceptable to the people and to the BJP," he said.





## KTAKA JD(S) PRESIDENT DECLARES SUPPORT FOR CONG, SAYS PARTY NOT PROPERTY OF DEVE GOWDA'S FAMILY

Bengaluru | Agencies

In a big setback to the BJP and JD(S) alliance in Karnataka, JD(S) State President C.M. Ibrahim has declared support for the ruling Congress party. He also claimed that the JD(S) party is not the property of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's family.

Speaking at the Chitana-Manthana programme called to discuss future steps in the backdrop of the decision taken on the JD(S) and BJP alliance without keeping him in the loop, Ibrahim proclaimed that he is the president of the party. "I can't be sacked. The JD(S) is not a family's property," he maintained.

"I request Deve Gowda not to give the wrong message. You went on to become the Prime Minister because of secular ideology," he stated.

The JD(S) party has a secular ideology. BJP's ideology is different. The NDA should be defeated in the Lok Sabha elections. "We will support the Congress. The original JD(S) party belongs to us. You can't snatch the post of party president from me. How did former chief minister H.D. Kumaraswamy win from



the Channapatna seat? After Kumaraswamy became MLA, he was called by Union Home Minister Amit Shah," he charged. Ibrahim further stated, "If Muslims had not voted for him, he was supposed to sit at home as he would have been defeated. I won't target Kumaraswamy personally. There is still time. We are not going with the

BJP. We will form a core committee. I will contact all JD(S) MLAs. The party does not belong to a family. I will discuss the matter with all the representatives. The opinion of all party workers is important." He maintained that there is no personal enmity for him against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah. The ideologies are different

and he is opposed to this background. "I will take a call on how to go about in future. You have been betrayed by your own people. We are in our house. What will happen in future will be shown on the silver screen. I am not scared and I will also not issue threats," Ibrahim stated. He was indirectly referring to the shifting of Vokkaliga community votes to Congress. Deve Gowda's family hails from the Vokkaliga community. "During my tenure as the party president in 1995, I ensured the win of 16 JD(S) MPs and Deve Gowda went on to become the PM. Today a big message has to go to the nation. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wrote the Constitution for India. The same message was given by Basaveshwara (Basava) 800 years ago. Now, photos are taken with Amit Shah and an announcement on the alliance is made," Ibrahim maintained. "The party is not the property of a family. The opinion of all concerned is important. The MLAs are in touch with me. The pros and cons will be discussed in the core committee meeting. I will also take up a state-wide tour," he underlined.

## Bihar caste census: SC dismisses plea challenging classification of transgenders

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea challenging the decision of the Bihar government to classify transgender community as "caste" and not under the category of "gender" in the state caste survey process.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and S.V.N. Bhatti dismissed the petition as withdrawn and granted liberty to the petitioners to approach the state government.

The bench orally remarked that social benefits could be extended to transgenders as a "third gender" and not as a "caste" after noting that there exist three columns in the survey form viz male, female and transgender.

The plea contended that the state government categorized hijra, kinnar, kothi, transgender (third gender) as a separate caste code at serial no 22 under the Caste Code List and did not classify them under the category of gender.

The special leave petition, filed through advocate Tanya Shree, said that the Patna High Court earlier disposed of the writ petition without taking into account the fact that classification of transgender under the category of caste and not under the category of gender in Bihar Caste Census, 2022 is violative of Article 14, 15, 16 and 21 of the Constitution, as well as Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. The petition stated that the "erroneous" classification of the transgender



community as caste in the Bihar Caste Census, 2022 has resulted in discrimination against the community as it has taken away the right of self classification of their gender.

"Such classification of transgenders is erroneous and against the Constitutional mandate as well as judgments of the Supreme Court," it said, adding that such action of the state government is void ab initio (null and void from the very beginning).

It said that the caste survey is ultra vires the Section 8 of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, which obligates the appropriate government to take steps for the welfare of the persons from the transgender community. A batch of pleas questioning the state government's authority to notify the conduct of caste-based survey in Bihar has been adjourned by the Supreme Court till January next year.

## Sahney requests MEA to resume visas services in Canada

Chandigarh, | Agencies

Rajya Sabha MP from Punjab, Vikramjit Singh Sahney, on Monday said he has requested External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to resume visa service for Canadian citizens of Indian origin who don't have Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards.

Sahney said he has been receiving numerous requests every day from the Indian diaspora, especially Punjabis, regarding their inability to get visas even for emergency visits to India necessitated by serious illness of parents, family weddings or other family exigencies.

Sahney said he spoke to Sanjay Kumar Verma, Indian High Commissioner to Canada, who said they could consider emergency visas only in cases where there has been a death.

"For all other cases or emergencies, he awaits policy guidelines from the Ministry of External Affairs," Sahney said.

The MP appealed to the External Affairs Minister saying that denial or delay in issuance of visas would cause a lot of hardship to the Indian diaspora in Canada and there was a fear of alienating them.

He hoped that good sense would prevail



and the MEA would issue instructions to Indian High Commissions and Consulates in Canada to issue visas.

He suggested that in case of staff shortage in Indian missions, granting of e-visas could be considered. "But we can't penalise our own brothers and sisters for no fault of theirs," he added.

## Mizoram polls: Parties reiterate demand for rescheduling vote counting date; EC yet to decide

Aizawl | Agencies

The Election Commission is yet to take any decision on political parties' demand for rescheduling the vote counting day in Mizoram, where the Assembly elections are scheduled to be held on November 7 and the counting of votes will take place on December 3 (Sunday), officials said on Monday.

Parties, including the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF), Congress, BJP, Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), and the state's largest NGO Young Mizo Association (YMA) have urged the poll panel to change the date of vote counting (December 3) as Sunday is a sacred day for Christians, and the entire day is devoted to church services across the state.

According to the 2011 Census, around 87 per cent of Mizoram population are Christian.

Additional Chief Electoral Officer H. Lianzela told IANS on Monday that though all the political parties have sent their representations to the Election Commission requesting to change the counting date, no feedback has been received in this regard yet.

People's Conference former Vice-President Lalrinmawii Fanai in a letter to Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said that considering auspicious days of the Christian community like



Christmas, Good Friday and Sundays scheduling of government functions has become a "recurring trend and consistent practice in recent years". "If the Election Commission does not change the counting date, this would be a detrimental impact on the sentiments of the Christian community who have already been facing challenges in the practice of their faith in India. Many are questioning whether this is a deliberate disregard for Christians not only in Mizoram but in India on the whole," the letter said.

Fanai told IANS that if the Election Commission

did not change the counting date, all the political parties and the NGOs would finalise a united strategy. The conglomerate of major churches in the state, Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (MKHC), has also written to the Election Commission requesting it to change the date of counting.

"Sundays are sacred for Christians and worship services are held in all towns and villages on that day," the MKHC said in a letter.

After considering the representations from various political parties and social organisations for changing the polling date in Rajasthan in view of large scale wedding and social engagements on that day (November 23), the Election Commission last week changed the date of polling to November 25.

The EC on October 9 announced the election schedule for five states -- Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Chhattisgarh.

With the issuance of the statutory notification on October 13 for the November 7 elections, the filling of nominations have already started though important candidates are yet to file their candidatures.

The last date of filing nominations is October 20, scrutiny of candidatures will take place on the next day, while the last date for withdrawal of nominations is October 23.

## PUNJAB CM HANDS OVER CHEQUE FOR RS 1 CRORE TO FAMILY OF AGNIVEER

Chandigarh | Agencies

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Monday handed over a cheque for Rs 1 crore to family of Agniveer Amritpal Singh as mark of respect to the brave warrior who made the ultimate sacrifice, while serving the country in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister said the state would accord the status of a martyr to Amritpal Singh in recognition of his immense contribution to the nation.

Mann paid tribute to the martyred soldier who sacrificed his life for the nation at the age of 19. He said the government stood firmly with the family during this time of grief.

The Chief Minister said a statue in the memory of the martyr will also be installed in the village. Mann said Punjabis have ever inspired the countrymen to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the country. Miffed over the army for not giving a guard of honor



to Amritpal Singh, the Chief Minister said this act of discrimination will hurt the morale of the defence personnel. He said this step-motherly treatment towards a martyred Agniveer is despicable and highly condemnable. "Amritpal's parents had sent their son

to selflessly serve the nation, and it is truly unfortunate that his sacrifice, in the line of duty, hasn't been recognised as that of a martyr, setting a concerning precedent." The Chief Minister said it was shameful that for the first time the body of a martyred soldier

was brought in a private ambulance, an insult to a martyr soldier. Mann said 60 per cent of the country's budget "is for the defence sector, but it is unfortunate that the army has not even provided an ambulance to carry the body of martyr Amritpal Singh".

## Akhilesh Yadav visits Deoria, meets family of the deceased

Deoria | Agencies

Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav on Monday visited the Fatehpur village in Deoria district where six persons, including five of one family, had been killed over a property dispute on October 2.

The SP chief paid tributes to the deceased Prem Chand Yadav.

Akhilesh Yadav first went to the house of Satya Prakash Dubey where five members of the family had been killed but could not meet anyone since his son Devesh was not present.

Devesh has been demanding that the house of Yadav should be bulldozed. He had said that he would not perform the post-death rituals of his family members unless justice was given to him.

Akhilesh Yadav then went to the house of Prem Yadav and met his daughters. A 'Narain puja' was held at the house on Monday and his daughter Archana said that the decision to bulldoze their house was unfair and would



leave them without a roof over their head.

She said that she had asked Akhilesh Yadav to help in preventing demolition of the house. Akhilesh Yadav was accompanied by a large number of party leaders in Deoria. A heavy deployment of police was also seen and unidentified persons were prevented from entering the village where tension continues to prevail.

## RBI slaps fines on Union Bank of India, RBL Bank for breach of rules

Mumbai | Agencies

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday said it has imposed monetary penalties on Union Bank of India and RBL Bank for the violation of norms.

The RBI has imposed a Rs 1 crore penalty on the Union Bank of India as it did not comply with certain directions and sanctioned a term loan to a corporation in lieu of or to substitute budgetary resources envisaged for certain projects, without undertaking due diligence on the viability and bankability of the projects to ensure that revenue streams from the projects were sufficient to take care of the debt servicing obligations, the statement explained.

RBL Bank was fined Rs 64 lakh because it failed to



obtain an annual declaration in Form B from one of its major shareholders, within one month of the close of the three financial years ending on March 31, 2018, March 31, 2019 and March 31, 2020, and furnish certificates to RBI regarding continuance of the 'fit and proper' status of one of its major sharehold-

ers, by the end of September of the said three financial years, the press statement said. "This action is based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers," RBI added.

## Land-for-job scam: Delhi court allows Tejashwi Yadav to make official trip to Japan

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi court, hearing the land-for-job scam case, on Monday granted permission to Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav, a case accused, to travel abroad on an official visit.

Tejashwi Yadav, who is Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad Yadav's son, had sought permission to travel to Japan from October 24 to November 1.

Special Judge Geetanjali Goel of Rouse Avenue Court granted approval for Tejashwi Yadav to travel abroad and while she released his passport, she asked him to provide a Fixed Deposit Receipt (FDR) bond of Rs 25 lakh and a travel itinerary.

Goel also granted one-day exemption from appearance to Lalu Prasad, his wife Rabri Devi, and Tejashwi Yadav for Monday and postponed the matter for next hearing on November 2.

On October 4, the court had granted bail to all three in the case. On September 22, the court took cognisance of a fresh charge sheet by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against Lalu Prasad and others. Since the probey agency did not oppose the bail, Goel granted bail to Yadavs.

Earlier, CBI had informed Goel that sanctions against three accused -- Maheep Kapur, Manoj



Pande and P.L. Bankar -- in the case have been obtained. On September 12, the court was informed that sanction against Lalu Prasad has been obtained from the Home Ministry in a fresh charge sheet in the case. Goel had then issued summons to all the accused. The CBI had registered the case on May 18, 2022 against Lalu Prasad and 15 others, including his wife, two daughters and unidentified public servants and private persons. The CBI had, on July 3, filed a charge sheet against Lalu Prasad, Rabri Devi and Tejashwi Yadav.

"During the period 2004-2009, Lalu Prasad (then Railway Minister) had obtained pecuniary advantages in the form of transfer of landed property in the name of his family members in lieu of appointment of substitutes in Group 'D' posts in different Zones of Railways," a CBI official had earlier said.

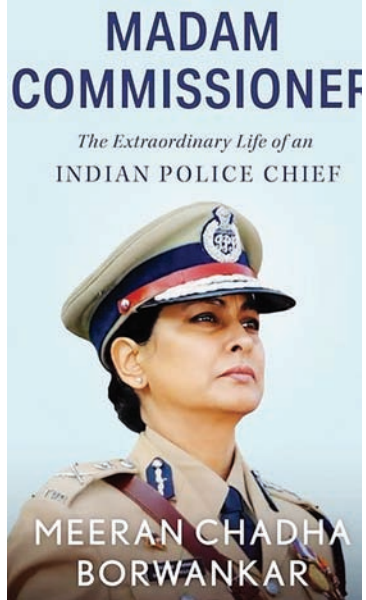
A number of residents of Patna themselves or through their family members sold and gifted their land in favour of the family members of Lalu Prasad and a private company controlled by him and his family. "No advertisement or any public notice was issued for such appointment of substitutes in Zonal Railways, yet the appointees, who were residents of Patna, were appointed as substitutes in different Zonal Railways located in Mumbai, Jabalpur, Kolkata, Jaipur and Hajipur.

"In continuation of this modus operandi, about 1,05,292 sq ft land and immovable properties located in Patna were acquired by Lalu Prasad and his family members through five sales deeds and two gift deeds, showing the payment made to the seller in cash in most of the land transfer," the CBI had said. The CBI had filed the charge sheet in the case on October 10, 2022 against 16 persons, including Rabri Devi and her daughter, and sanction was then obtained to prosecute them.





PROBE EX-PUNE POLICE CHIEF MEERAN BORWANKAR'S HINTS AT 'DADA' IN BOOK, DEMANDS MAHA CONGRESS



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Congress' Maharashtra unit on Monday demanded a probe into certain hints referring to a

senior politician known as 'Dada' in a book penned by former Mumbai Joint Commissioner of Police and ex-Pune Commissioner of Police, Meeran Chadha-Borwankar.

Her book, "Madam Commissioner: The Extraordinary Life of an Indian Police Chief", released on Sunday, sparked off a storm in political circles over certain references to a political personality pertaining to an alleged land-scam at Yerawada in Pune almost 14 years ago.

Congress state President Nana Patole and Leader of Opposition Vijay Wadettiwar have demanded a probe into the matter, saying that the people have a right to know who is the 'Dada' mentioned in the book.

"What is happening in the state... There's strong resentment in the police administration against the present government. Some people from the Bharatiya Janata Party are conspiring to make the controversial IPS officer Rashmi Shukla as the new DGP," said Patole.

Wadettiwar said that there are references to certain incidents in the retired IPS officer's book which need to be probed to get to the truth. In her book, Chadha-Borwankar - the Pune police chief from 2010-2012 - has recounted how she was pressurised by a 'Dada' and the then Guardian Minister of Pune district has pressurised her to release a prime three-acre plot belonging to the police in Yerawada to a private builder. She mentioned her meeting with the Minister who had a huge paper map of the plot area, and he informed her that the auction on the land was over and she should proceed to hand over the plot to the top bidder. Resisting, Chadha-Borwankar said it was police land which was needed for future expansion for offices/residential quarters for the police personnel and they could never get such a good property in future. The Minister overruled her and asked her to complete the (land handover) process, but she refused, pointed out flaws in the auction process and asked why her predecessor had not done it if the land was already auctioned, and it would be contrary to the police department's interests. The Minister had lost his cool and threw the map on the glass

table, he also made certain unsavoury references to the then Home Minister, the late R. R. Patil, which are not spelt out by her, but after that cold encounter, Chadha-Borwankar saluted the Minister and left the spot. While present Deputy CM and newly appointed Pune Guardian Minister Ajit Pawar has denied any involvement in that episode, Chadha-Borwankar has chosen not to comment on the row, at least for now. Incidentally, prior to Chadha-Borwankar, two other former CoPs of Pune had also objected to the property deal with a Mumbai builder, and following strong opposition from the police departments, the state government had examined it afresh in 2011. Despite several attempts by reporter, Chadha-Borwankar remained unavailable for comments in the row kicked up by her book. Though she has not mentioned any names, Ajit Pawar is respectfully referred to as 'Dada' (elder brother) in political circles, was the Guardian Minister at the time in question, and the Mumbai-based builder was later arrested in the 2G Spectrum scam.

Bhim Army man throws ink at Maha BJP Minister; 2nd instance in 2 months

Team Absolute | Solapur



Vikhe-Patil had been targeted with a turmeric attack by some Dhargar activists demanding reservations for the community.

At that time the Dhargar Reservation Action Committee Coordinator Shekhar Bangale was caught and later detained by the police. This time, the police had deployed tight security at the guest house yet Mendergikar managed to get inside carrying a large bou-

quet, breached the security and threw the ink at Patil, even as some of his supporters waved black flags and shouted anti-BJP slogans. Incidentally, Patil had suffered an ink attack in Pune in December 2022 for his comments on icons in the state after which several police officials were suspended for the security lapses. Bhim Army man throws ink at Maha BJP Minister; 2nd instance in 2 months.

In a second incident of its kind in two months, a Bhim Army activist threw ink at a Maharashtra Bharatiya Janata Party senior leader, this time, Minister Chandrakant Patil in protest against the government's policy of privatisation of public sector jobs.

The incident occurred late on Sunday evening at the Solapur government guest house when the Bhim Army activist Ajay Mendergikar sneaked in under the pretense of presenting him a bouquet of flowers, and targeted the Minister by throwing ink on him.

A police posse posted there immediately rushed towards Mendergikar, caught him and took him away from the place. Patil had arrived on his maiden visit to the district of which he was appointed the new Guardian Minister last week.

On September 8, another BJP Minister Radhakrishna

PM to virtually inaugurate Global Maritime India Summit in Mumbai today

Team Absolute | New Delhi | Mumbai

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Tuesday inaugurate the Global Maritime India Summit 2023 in Mumbai via video conferencing.

The summit will continue until Thursday at the city's MMRDA Grounds.

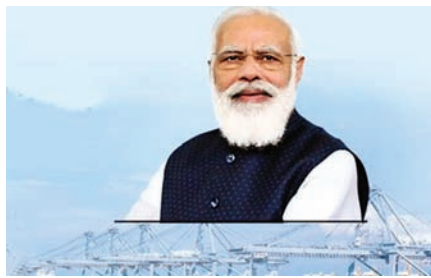
On the occasion, Modi will unveil a long term blueprint for the Indian maritime blue economy till 2047.

The blueprint outlines strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing port facilities, promoting sustainable practices, and facilitating international collaboration.

In line with this futuristic plan, the Prime Minister will also inaugurate, dedicate to nation and lay the foundation stone of projects worth more than Rs 23,000 crore, that are aligned with the blueprint for the Indian maritime blue economy.

On the occasion, he will lay the foundation stone of Tuna Tekra all-weather deep draft terminal, to be built at a cost of more than Rs 4,500 crore at Deendayal Port Authority in Gujarat. This state-of-the-art greenfield terminal will be developed in PPP mode.

He will also dedicate more than 300



Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) worth more than Rs 7 lakh crore for global and national partnership in the maritime sector, during the programme.

The Summit is the biggest maritime event in the country. It will witness participation of ministers from across the globe representing countries from Europe, Africa, South America, Asia (including central Asia, Middle East and BIMSTEC region).

The Summit will also be attended by global CEOs, business leaders, investors, officials, and other stakeholders from across the world.

Further, several Indian states will also be represented in the summit by the ministers and other dignitaries.

Mumbai cops bust Rs 30L fake Navratri ticket scam 'inspired by TV show'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The MHB Nagar Police Station here has busted a fake Navratri programme ticket scam worth over Rs 30 lakh ostensibly inspired by a television show, and arrested four persons from Mumbai and Virar, an official said here on Monday.

The matter came to light after a Borivali businessman Neerav G. Mehta lodged a complaint alleging that some unknown persons had cheated the organisers of Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Sunil Rane's 'Rangratri Dandiya with Kinjal Dave' and the 'Durgavadi Navaratri Utsav Samiti'.

Given the sensitive matter, MHB Police Station Senior Inspector of Police Sudhir Kudalkar set up a special probe squad of Sachin Shinde, Deepak Hinde, Mangesh Kirpekar, Mukesh Kharat, Pradeep Ghodke, Anant Shirsat, and Rupali Daingade.



Their investigations revealed that a gang led by a web designer had allegedly duped over 1,000 people by selling them fake 'season passes'

worth Rs 3,000 each for the above Navratri shows.

The team got cracking and arrested four accused, zeroing in on the mas-

termind -- Karan A. Shah, 29, a web-designer based in Virar town of Palghar, who said that he was inspired by a tele-serial 'Farzi' for this crime. The police also swooped on his three other associates Darshan P. Gohil, 24; Paresch S. Nevrekar, 35; and Kavish B. Patil, from different places in suburban north-west Mumbai.

Senior PI Kudalkar said that the police have seized 1,000 fake passes from the accused, 1,000 hologram stickers worth Rs 10,000, laptop, printers and other equipment, all totally valued at Rs 35.10 lakh.

Using tech-intel, the team also verified the involvement of the accused foursome, which was confirmed by around two dozen witnesses who had been duped in the scam.

The police teams are also on the lookout for at least two other associates on the run, whose full details are not available, and further probe is underway.

13,500 TAKE PART IN NDA'S FIRST-EVER MARATHON WITHIN ITS PREMISES

Team Absolute | Pune

The National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla organised the first-ever marathon on its premises as part of its year-long diamond jubilee celebrations.

The oldest participant in the marathon was 96 and the youngest was five-years-old.

The initiative was with a vision to motivate and inspire, and the 'NDA Marathon' provided a blend of fortitude and endurance to over 13,500 people, who took part from across the country, a Ministry of Defence official said on Monday.

The ministry said that the marathon featured multiple race categories, including a 42-km 'Full Marathon', a 21-km 'Half-Marathon' and 10-km, 5-km and 3-km runs, all happening concurrently.

The NDA is located in Khadakwasla, Pune, Maharashtra and situated at the foothills of the Sahyadri mountain ranges. The NDA campus is spread over 7,015 acres and is surrounded by picturesque hills and a large lake.



The running track inside the NDA campus is a 21-km loop that takes the runners through the scenic beauty of the campus.

The NDA will complete 75 glorious years of its existence on January 16, 2024. As part of the year-long celebrations, which commenced on January

16, 2023, various academic, sports and adventure activities have been planned and organised, the official added.

Samruddhi away crash: Police nab 2 RTO officers for halting truck

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The district police have booked and arrested two Regional Transport Office (RTO) officials for allegedly halting a truck on the Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Expressway which led a fatal crash which killed 12, officials said here on Monday.

The action against the RTA officers - Nitinkumar Ghanorkar and Pradeep Rathod, both Assistant Inspectors - came after a video emerged showing them halting the truck around 1 am on Sunday morning. The ill-fated Buldhana-Nashik minibus with 33 passengers rammed into the truck in which 12 persons were killed and 23 more injured, making it the second biggest accident on



the "killer" Samruddhi Expressway after the July 1 crash in Buldhana that claimed 37 lives.

Following the videos in which the Ghanorkar-Rathod are clearly visible, the Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar Police have booked and suspended them pending the probe. Around 1.15 a.m. on Sunday, a minibus bound for Nashik rammed into the stationary trailer truck halted by the RTO officers for as yet

unclear reasons in which 12 passengers were killed and another 23 hurt.

The Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi allies Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT), Nationalist Congress Party, and others parties like All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen, plus social activists have slammed the state government for the series of accidents that continue on the Samruddhi Eway since its inauguration 101 months ago.

FIRE BREAKS OUT IN 5 COACHES OF TRAIN IN AHMEDNAGAR, ALL PASSENGERS SAFE

Mumbai: Five coaches of a diesel-electric multiple unit (DEMU) passenger train were engulfed in a fire that broke out near Narayandoh station in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district on Monday afternoon, but no casualties were reported, Railway officials said.

The incident took place when the train was heading to Ahmednagar in western Maharashtra from Ashti station in Beed district, they said.

Shivraj Manaspure, Chief Public Relations Officer, Central Railway, told PTI that no passenger was injured in the blaze which started at around 3 pm.

He said fire engines from Ahmednagar were called to douse the flames. The cause of the fire was not immediately known.

DEEPAK KESARKAR SLAMS UDDHAV THACKERAY FOR REACHING OUT TO SOCIALISTS

Team Absolute | Pune

Maharashtra minister Deepak Kesarkar on Monday took a swipe at Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray for reaching out to 21 socialist parties and said the latter now has the right to join hands with the Samajwadi Party as well since he had given up Hindutva, reported news agency.

On Sunday, Uddhav Thackeray, while addressing leaders of 21 socialist parties in the state, had claimed differences with them were mainly ideological which can be settled for the cause of democracy. Thackeray had also said "many of them may be Muslims but they are nationalists who want to protect the country's democracy".

Claiming that Thackeray had no right to talk about Pakistan or Hindutva, Kesarkar said, "If he Uddhav Thackeray) cannot say anything when Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin's son Udhayanidhi speaks against Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma), he (Thackeray) has all the right to join hands with any party. He can even join hands with the Samajwadi Party (with a predominant Muslim support base in Maharashtra) because he has already given up Hindutva."

"When Rahul Gandhi spoke against (Hindutva ideologue late VD) Savarkar, it could be understood

you (Thackeray) did not saying anything since you were scared. But what is the reason for being scared of Stalin's son? When terrorists stopped the Vaishno Devi pilgrimage (in Jammu and Kashmir), it was Balasaheb Thackeray who stopped flights going to Haj," Kesarkar added.

Bal Thackeray did not oppose any religion but was clear that if Hindu pilgrimages are stopped then those of others would also be halted.

"The very next day, the Vaishno Devi yatra resumed. That was Balasaheb. That was Hindutva," Kesarkar asserted.

On Uddhav Thackeray's statement on Sunday that "if the BJP can shower flowers on Pakistani cricketers at the Narendra Modi stadium, I can also talk to socialist parties", Kesarkar said, "When Khalistanis attacked the Indian Embassy in Canada, Modi snapped ties with that country. If Pakistani players are being welcomed, they are being welcomed as players and not as Pakistanis."

Kesarkar claimed Uddhav Thackeray was supposed to rejoin the alliance led by the Bharatiya Janata Party after coming back from Delhi in 2021. The two parties had snapped ties after the 219 Assembly polls over a dispute on sharing the chief minister's post.

"(Nationalist Congress Party leader now with Ajit Pawar faction) Sunil Tatkare also stated the same. I

also did mediation then. I can say 100 per cent that after he (Uddhav Thackeray) returned to Mumbai from Delhi, the alliance was to be formed again in 15 days. But time was sought," Kesarkar claimed.

"At that time, we did not know who played the villain (for the BJP-Sena alliance not getting back on track). But it was Tatkare who revealed that (Shiv Sena Rajya Sabha MP) Sanjay Raut, without consulting Uddhav Thackeray, leaked the information to NCP. The alliance could not restart and Raut had the main role in it," Kesarkar alleged.

Queried on a timeline, Kesarkar claimed these developments took place when (NCP leader) Ajit Pawar, (Congress leader and former chief minister) Ashok Chavan and Uddhav Thackeray had gone to Delhi in 2021.

"The decision to rejoin the alliance was taken in a closed door meeting between Narendra Modi and Uddhav Thackeray. This episode should reach the common Shiv Sainiks. Do not make us (Eknath Shinde supporters who rebelled in June last year) the villain," he claimed.

Kesarkar claimed there was "pressure" on Uddhav Thackeray to go with Hindutva, to go with an alliance partner and "Modiji gave a very positive response because he had great love for Balasaheb Thackeray". Uddhav Thackeray should have had some respect for Bal Thackeray's ideology, Kesarkar



said, adding all the developments that took place later (like the rebellion) could have been avoided if the alliance between the Sena and BJP had restarted at the time (in 2021).





## EDITOR'S SPECS

## MAYAWATI IS EJECTING PEOPLE AS THE LOCAL ELECTIONS APPROACH

At a time when most political parties are busy welcoming leaders from other parties to strengthen their base ahead of the general elections, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in Uttar Pradesh has thrown its exit doors wide open for its own leaders. The party has been expelling leaders at an alarming pace, creating an unexplained vacuum in leadership. The BSP recently expelled three of its leaders -- Prashant Gautam, Imran Masood and Dharamveer Chaudhary -- for indiscipline and anti-party activities. Chaudhary, a Jat leader from Ghaziabad, who had been in the party for 27 long years, was expelled for participating in media and TV debates on behalf of the party. Imran Masood, an influential Muslim leader from Saharanpur, who was inducted in the party with much fanfare by Mayawati herself in October last year, was expelled after he heaped praise on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. Gautam, a senior leader from Meerut, on the other hand, had written an open letter to Mayawati, after the party's rout in the municipal polls in UP, saying that she should have campaigned for the party leaders. A former MLA said that the BSP had expelled leaders from various caste groups which led to a depletion of its vote bank. The party could manage to win only one seat in the 2022 assembly polls. According to sources, one of the several reasons for the cadres' disillusionment with the leadership is Mayawati's refusal to meet her party workers. According to them, Mayawati has a coterie of "consultants" - most of them non-political - whom she trusts for running the party organisation, and she is not the leader who has her own ears to the ground. This keeps her away from the first-hand feedback on the party on many occasions.

# BY SCUPPERING SAUDI-ISRAELI ACCORD FOR NOW, HAMAS DOES IRAN A FAVOUR

Sanjeev Sharma

The shocking Hamas assault on Israel has precipitated a beginning and an end for the Middle East. What has begun, almost inexorably, is the next war - one that will be bloody, costly, and agonizingly unpredictable in its course and outcome, writes Suzanne Maloney, Vice President of the Brookings Institution and Director of its Foreign Policy program, in Foreign Affairs.

What has ended, for anyone who cares to admit it, is the illusion that the US can extricate itself from a region that has dominated the American national security agenda for the past half century, the article said.

The White House devised a creative exit strategy, attempting to broker a new balance of power in the Middle East that would allow Washington to downsize its presence and attention while also ensuring that Beijing did not fill the void.

A historic bid to normalize relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia promised to formally align Washington's two most important regional partners against their common foe, Iran, and anchor the Saudis beyond the perimeter of China's strategic orbit, it added.

It was never plausible that informal understandings and a dribble of sanctions relief would be sufficient to pacify the Islamic Republic and its proxies, who have a keen and time-tested appreciation for the utility of escalation in advancing their strategic and economic interests.

Iranian leaders had every incentive to try to block an Israeli-Saudi breakthrough, particularly one that would have extended American security guarantees to Riyadh and allowed the Saudis to develop a civilian nuclear energy program, Maloney wrote.

At this time, it is not known whether Iran had any specific role in the carnage in Israel.

Earlier this week, The Wall Street Journal reported that Tehran was directly involved in planning the assault, citing unnamed senior members of Hamas and Hezbollah, the Lebanese militant group.

That report has not been confirmed by Israeli or US officials, who have only gone so far as to suggest that Iran was "broadly complicit," in the words of Jon Finer, the deputy national security adviser.

At the very least, the operation "bore hall-



marks of Iranian support," as a report in The Washington Post put it, citing former and current senior Israeli and US officials, Maloney said.

"And even if the Islamic Republic did not pull the trigger, its hands are hardly clean. Iran has funded, trained, and equipped Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups and has coordinated closely on strategy, as well as operations, especially during the past decade.

It is inconceivable that Hamas undertook an attack of this magnitude and complexity without some foreknowledge and affirmative support from Iran's leadership", the article said. And now Iranian officials and media are exulting in the brutality unleashed on Israeli civilians and embracing the expectation that the Hamas offensive will bring about Israel's demise, it added.

Since the Iranian Revolution in 1979, however, the Islamic Republic has used escalation as a policy tool of choice. When the regime is under pressure, the revolutionary playbook calls for a counterattack to unnerve its adversaries and achieve a tactical advantage.

And the war in Gaza advances the long-cherished goal of the Islamic Republic's lead-

ership to cripple its most formidable regional foe. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has never wavered in his feverish antagonism toward Israel and the US, the article said.

"He and those around him are profoundly convinced of American immorality, greed, and wickedness; they revile Israel and clamor for its destruction, as part of the ultimate triumph of the Islamic world over what they see as a declining West and an illegitimate "Zionist entity", Maloney said.

Closer bonds among China, Iran, and Russia have encouraged a more aggressive Iranian posture, since a crisis in the Middle East that distracts Washington and European capitals will produce some strategic and economic benefits for Moscow and Beijing, the article said.

Finally, the prospect of a public Israeli-Saudi entente surely provided an additional accelerant to Iran, as it would have shifted the regional balance firmly back in Washington's favor. In a speech he delivered just days before the Hamas

attack, Khamenei warned that "the firm view of the Islamic Republic is that the govern-

ments that are gambling on normalising relations with the Zionist regime will suffer losses.

Defeat awaits them. They are making a mistake", Maloney wrote.

For now, therefore, although the threat of a wider war remains real, that outcome is hardly inevitable. The Iranian government has made an art of avoiding direct conflict with Israel, and it suits Tehran's purposes, as well as those of its regional proxies and patrons in Moscow, to light the fire but stand back from the flames, the article said.

Some in Israel may advocate for hitting Iranian targets, if only to send a signal, but the country's security forces have their hands full now, and senior officials seem determined to stay focused on the fight at hand.

Most likely, as the conflict evolves, Israel will at some point hit Iranian assets in Syria, but not in Iran itself. To date, Tehran has absorbed such strikes in Syria without feeling the need to retaliate directly, it added.

international

## US ACTIVELY WORKING TO GET ASSISTANCE INTO GAZA: BLINKEN

Washington | Agencies

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Monday said Washington is "actively working" to ensure that humanitarian assistance can get into Gaza as the Hamas-Israel conflict continued for the 10th consecutive day.

In a post on X, Blinken said: "We stand with Israel as it defends itself. The United States is also actively working to ensure the people of Gaza can get out of harm's way and the assistance they need - food, water, medicine - can get in.

"Hamas does not care if Palestinians suffer."

Gaza is facing a critical humanitarian crisis, with shortages of water, electricity, food, fuel and medicine.

The Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, the only remaining outlet for supplies, has been closed for much of the past week.

On Monday however, Israel denied reports that it had agreed to a ceasefire in southern Gaza to allow the Rafah border crossing to open to let



aid into the Hamas-controlled enclave.

"At the moment there is no ceasefire for humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip and the exit of foreigners," The Times of Israel quoted a statement issued by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office.

Earlier, reports said that Israel had agreed to halt fire from 9 a.m. in a deal agreed on with Egypt and the US. Several Likud ministers are vehe-

mently opposing a reported US-brokered temporary truce to allow aid into the Gaza Strip through the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, The Times of Israel reported.

Energy Minister Israel Katz said that he "bitterly opposes the opening of the blockade and the introduction of goods into Gaza on humanitarian grounds".

"Our commitment is to the families of the murdered and kidnapped

hostages - not to the Hamas murderers and those who helped them," he said. Also objecting the move, Culture Minister Miki Zohar said: "Those who massacre children, rape women and kidnap babies do not deserve any mercy."

Meanwhile, the Hamas has also said that it did not have any information about the proposed humanitarian truce at the Rafah border crossing. Meanwhile, tonnes of vital humanitarian supplies for people in Gaza have been piling up on the Egyptian side of the border, CNN reported.

On Sunday, Philippe Lazzarini, commissioner general of the UN Relief and Works Agency, said that Gaza is rapidly running out of water and electricity, and the population faces severe shortages of food and medicine.

"Gaza is being strangled and it seems that the world right now has lost its humanity. If we look at the issue of water - we all know water is life - Gaza is running out of water, and Gaza is running out of life," Lazzarini said.

Jerusalem | Gaza | Agencies

The death toll in the raging conflict between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip is nearing 4,000, as violence continued for the 10th consecutive day on Monday.

According to official Israeli sources, more than 1,300 people have been killed since the conflict first erupted on October 7.

The raging violence has also injured 3,621 Israelis so far, the sources added.

In Gaza, deaths have risen to 2,670, with more than 9,600 injuries reported, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry based in the Hamas-controlled enclave.

In the past 24 hours, 455 fatalities and 856 injuries were reported in Gaza, the Ministry added.

Ashraf Al-Qudra, a spokesman of the Ministry, said that rescue operations



"are facing great difficulties" as a result of the massive destruction in residential neighbourhoods and the roads leading to hospitals as a result of the unabated Israeli airstrikes.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the current death toll in Gaza has already surpassed the total number of fatalities (2,251) during the 2014 escalation, which lasted for over seven weeks.

According to the

Palestinian Civil Defence, the number of missing people, presumably trapped beneath the rubble may exceed 1,000.

As of Monday morning, an estimated 600,000 people were displaced in the densely-populated enclave, of which some 300,000 are currently taking refuge at UN Relief Works Agency designated emergency shelters.

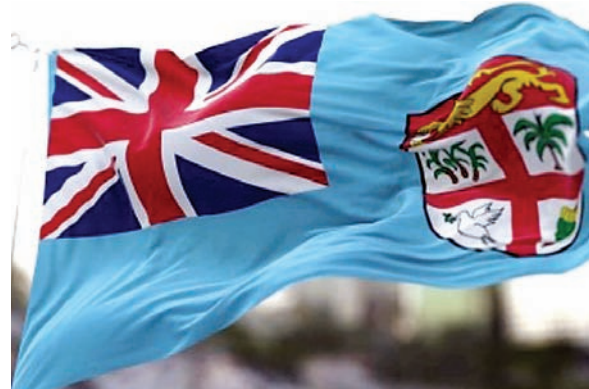
As a result of the war, the UN said the Middle East "is on the verge of the abyss" and has asked Israel to let humanitarian aid into Gaza.

## Fiji to bring back overseas skilled workers to tackle shortage

Suva | Agencies

The Fijian government is now focusing on improving the work of the immigration department by easing the work permit process, as well as assisting the private sector, to bring back more workers for needy areas.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Biman Prasad said this while participating in the 2023 Human Capital Ministerial Conclave's plenary session during the margins of the 2023 Annual meeting for the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) held in Marrakesh, Morocco, the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation



reported on Monday.

Prasad said that migration is a significant issue for Fiji.

In the last 18 months, around 10 per cent of Fiji's formal workforce has left for greener pastures in neighbouring developed countries,

reports Xinhua news agency.

Prasad said there is significant value in technical, vocational, and enterprise education and training (TVET) programs in schools and tertiary institutions in Fiji.

## Landlord stabs 6-year-old Palestinian-American boy to death in anti-Muslim hate crime

Chicago | Agencies

A landlord in Chicago, who had been agitated due to the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict, was charged and arrested after he stabbed his six-year-old Palestinian-American tenant 26 times because the child and his mother were Muslims, according to law enforcement officials.

In a statement on Sunday, the Will County Sheriff's Office said that on October 14 at 11.38 a.m., deputies were sent to a residence located near the 16200 block of S. Lincoln Highway regarding a stabbing that occurred involving a landlord and the tenant. The deputies found two victims with multiple stab wounds inside the residence, while the suspect -- identified as Joseph M. Czuba (71) was sitting on the ground near the driveway of the house.

The victims were identified as Hanaan Shahin (32) and her son Wade Al-Fayoume (six).

The Will County Sheriff's Office said that Shain has been transported to a nearby hospital in serious condition "and had over a dozen stab wounds



to her body".

She is currently recovering and is expected to survive this brutal attack, it added.

However, the victim was also transported to the hospital in critical condition, where he later succumbed to his injuries. The child had been stabbed 26 times throughout his body and the "forensic pathologist conducting the autopsy removed the knife from the abdomen of the boy", the Sheriff's Office said in the statement. The knife used in the

crime was a 12-inch serrated military style knife that had a seven-inch blade.

Although the suspect did not make any statements to detectives regarding his involvement in this heinous attack, personnel were able to gather enough information through interviews and evidence to formally charge him with first degree murder, attempted first degree murder, hate crime (two counts), and aggravated battery with a deadly weapon, the statement added.

"Detectives were able to determine that both victims in this brutal attack were targeted by the suspect due to them being Muslim and the ongoing Middle conflict involving Hamas and the Israelis," the Will County Sheriff's Office noted.

Meanwhile, the Chicago office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-Chicago), the country's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organisation, on Sunday called the brutal attack "our worst nightmare". According to CAIR, Hanaan and her son Wade had lived on the ground floor of the house for two years with no previous notable issues with the landlord.





## WILL STAY WITH CONG TILL MY LAST BREATH: DIGVIJAYA SINGH

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Days after a fake letter of senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh announcing his resignation from the party went viral, the former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister said on Monday that he will stay with the party till his last breath and that the BJP-RSS keep on targeting him.



remain in Congress till my last breath."

Speaking to the media here, Digvijaya Singh said, "BJP and RSS keep targeting Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and some of our party leaders, including me. They run fake videos, write fake letters and edit our statements, so this was as a part of that."

Commenting on the fake letter, which announced his resignation from the party, he said, "I joined the Congress party in 1971 and I shall

His remarks came a day after a fake letter went viral on social media platforms claiming to be of Singh, in which he announced his res-

ignation.

However, Singh took to X on Sunday to clarify the situation and said that the BJP was expert in lying. "I took membership of Congress in 1971. I joined the Congress not for the post but because I was influenced by the ideology and I will remain in Congress till the last breath of my life. I am filing a police complaint against this lie," he added.

The voting for the 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly is scheduled on November 17 and counting of votes will take place on December 3.

On Sunday, the first day of Navratri, the Congress announced its first list of 144 candidates for the state, including Singh's son Jaivardhan Singh fielded from Raghogarh Assembly constituency.

## Situation clear on 90 seats...Candidates weaker than Shivraj, Kamal Nath, Prahlad?

▶ BJP HAS SO FAR DECLARED 136 CANDIDATES FOR THE MADHYA PRADESH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, WHILE CONGRESS HAS RELEASED THE LIST OF 144 CANDIDATES YESTERDAY.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Till now, according to the lists released by both the parties, the status of total 90 seats has been cleared. A comparative study of which candidates of BJP and Congress are facing each other in these seats has also started.

State Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan is contesting elections from Budhni, while Congress has fielded



Vikram Mastal, who played Hanuman in the serial, against him. The contest here is being considered one-sided. On the other hand, State Congress President and former Chief Minister Kamal Nath will contest elections from his seat Chhindwara.

In front of him is Vivek Bunty Sahu of BJP. Here too it is believed that Kamal Nath will have the upper hand.

BJP has fielded Union Minister Prahlad Singh Patel from Narsinghpur in place of his brother Jalam Singh Patel. In front of him,

Congress has given ticket to Lakan Singh Patel. Even here the competition does not seem equal. Prahlad Patel's upper hand is said to be very heavy. BJP General Secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya is contesting from Indore seat number one, from here Congress has given ticket to sitting MLA Sanjay Shukla. The competition here is said to be close. Leader of Opposition Dr. Govind Singh will be the Congress candidate from Lahar, where BJP has fielded Ambrish Sharma against him. Here Govind Singh is said to have the upper hand. Congress MLA Laxman Singh from Chachoda is contesting against BJP's Priyanka Meena, here former BJP MLA Mamta Meena has left the party and joined AAP.

Another hot seat of Bhopal is Central, where current MLA Arif Masood of Congress will face former MLA Dhruv Narayan Singh of BJP. It is being claimed that this contest will be very interesting and tough.

## Cong to corner rival Narottam Mishra through RSS old guard Avdhesh Nayak

Team Absolute | Bhopal

While the Congress has executed a well planned ideological stroke by fielding Vikram Mastal -- onscreen 'Hanuman' -- against the BJP's one of strongest and the longest serving Chief Minister, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, it has attempted to corner the state home Minister, Narottam Mishra also through an the RSS old guard, Avdhesh Nayak.

With fielding rebel Avdhesh Nayak, a strong Brahmin face with RSS background, against Narottam Mishra, who has established himself as firebrand Hindutva leader in Madhya Pradesh, the Congress has made the Datia Assembly seat's electoral fight the most interesting.

Nayak joined the Congress in August this year in style when his convoy of around 100 vehicles reached Bhopal. He joined the Congress in the presence of Kamal Nath and Digvijaya Singh.

Nayak contested the 2003 Assembly election from Datia on BJP's ticket but lost to Congress' Ghanshyam Singh by 2,904 votes. The former RSS leader was then accused of fanning communal ten-



sion to consolidate majority votes. But the trick did not pay off.

Importantly, the rift between the two BJP leaders -- Nayak and Mishra -- started in 2008 when Mishra moved to Datia after Gwalior's Dabra seat was reserved for the Scheduled Caste (SC). The rift between these two leaders continued to get larger behind the political curtain as Mishra's supporters looked at Nayak with suspicious eyes and accused him of hatching a conspiracy to weaken the leader of his own party. The internal rift between these

two leaders was visible in the public domain after Mishra managed to win a breathtaking contest in 2018 against Congress' Rajendra Bhat with a margin of 2,600 votes. Later during a pomp and show after the election in 2018, Avdhesh Nayak, approached Mishra in the crowd and garlanded him. Mishra, on the contrary, humiliated Nayak, pulled the garland apart and moved away.

Four and half years later, the two have become arch-rivals now. Both leaders belong to the Brahmin community and have established themselves on the same hard-Hindutva path.

Sources told IANS that Mishra has been facing the resentment of the people because of his controversial statements, growing crime against women across the state, and huge corruption. Notably, in the past three and half years, whenever, CM Chouhan government faced wrath from the opposition in and outside the Assembly, Mishra stood as a shield. Sources said that Mishra was among those BJP leaders who were found performing very poorly in the party's survey before the ticket distribution; however, he is trying to convince people by highlighting developments of Datia in the past few years, especially medical college and airport.

## Booking full for rituals at Maa Pitambara Peeth during election season

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Baglamukhi, the mother of Pitambara Peeth in Datia, Madhya Pradesh, is considered the goddess of power along with Shatruhanta. Actually, there is a queue of politicians here throughout the year.

Chanting and rituals keep happening, but after the announcement of assembly elections, the queue of leaders has increased in the mother's court. The process of chanting and performing havan for ticket and victory has started. The booking for rituals in Pitambara Peeth is full till February. Not only Madhya Pradesh, leaders from election states Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh are also present here. There are so many rituals taking place in the temple that there is a shortage of space in the peetha. Priests associated



with the temple management say that in view of Navratri and elections, pujas are being conducted in nearby hotels.

About 100 Pandits are engaged in this. Due to Navratri, each Pandit is responsible for four to five rituals daily. People associated with the temple say that about 15 ministers and 60 MLAs of Madhya Pradesh have booked for the rituals during Navratri. Some have made the booking by applying to the Trust and some

have entrusted the responsibility of performing puja and havan most of it to their known pundits.

In the event of not being able to get a place for the rituals on the Peeth, the priests have now made arrangements for the rituals of their host politicians in the hotels built around the Peeth. Apart from this, the priests and seekers associated with the Peeth in Datia have also made places of worship at their residences.

## Congress to release next list in two-three days, says Kamal Nath

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Congress will release its second list of candidates for the November 17 Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections in the next two-three days, former chief minister and state unit head Kamal Nath said here on Monday.



take tough decisions.

The party released the first list of 144 candidates on Sunday.

The remaining 86 candidates are likely to be declared in two phases.

"Most of the candidates for remaining seats have been finalised, only a few are being discussed. All the candidates will be announced in the next two-three days," he said. Asked about those disappointed after being denied tickets, the Congress leader said he has spoken to all of them, but the party has to

"Candidates have been selected keeping the social structure of each district and the Assembly seat. There were 4,000 applications for 230 seats and all of them claimed they will win the election, but we have to see different parameters to select the candidates," Kamal Nath added. Responding to a query on his candidature from his home town Chhindwara, the veteran

leader said neither was he interested in contesting the election nor was he worried about it.

He stated that Lok Sabha MP Nakul Nath, along with him, will announce the name of Chhindwar's candidates.

"The name of Chhindwar candidates would be announced first of all in Chhindwara by Nakul Nath and then finalised by the central leadership in Delhi," he said, indicating that the candidates have been finalised. Meanwhile, he took jibe at Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan saying the Congress has fielded an actor against actor (Chouhan). "It would be interesting to see who will be a better actor. Shivraj is a seasoned actor, which is why we have fielded an actor against him," Kamal Nath added.

## SEAT SHARING BETWEEN CONGRESS-SP FACES ROUGH WEATHER IN MP

Team Absolute | Lucknow/Bhopal

The strain between the Congress and Samajwadi Party (SP) is finally showing through and the seat-sharing formula for the upcoming Madhya Pradesh Assembly polls has reportedly fallen through.

The two parties are now face-to-face on at least five seats so far as per the list of candidates released from the two sides.

It now remains to be seen if this development has any impact on the seat-sharing talks between the two for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, in the politically crucial state of Uttar Pradesh.

Trouble began when the Congress released a list of 144 candidates for the elections to 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly.

The list included the name of Charan Singh Yadav as party candidate for Bijawar seat (constituency number 52). In the 2018 Assembly polls, SP's Rajesh Kumar had won the seat by a margin of over 67,000 votes.

The move left the SP cadres in Madhya Pradesh restless.



Feeling the pulse of the party leaders and cadres, the SP leadership convened a meeting of office-bearers from MP at the party headquarters in Lucknow. Chaired by SP president Akhilesh Yadav, the meeting was attended by party national general secretary Shivpal Yadav among oth-

ers. After a hectic discussion that went beyond a couple of hours, the party decided to formally announce the names of candidates on nine seats.

The list included at least five seats where the Congress has already fielded a candidate. Senior SP members

said the party leadership has decided to contest the MP Assembly polls alone. "The party leadership will soon declare more names as well," he said.

Sources have blamed "lack of communication from the Congress end" as the main cause of the two parties contesting MP polls independently.

## Many leaders including Mahendra Boudh, Gautam Patel, Umesh Yadav left BJP-BSP and joined Congress

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In a grand ceremony organized in the auditorium of the State Congress Headquarters, in the presence of State Congress President and former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, prominent leaders of BJP, BSP and other parties from various districts of the state, influenced by the ideology of the Congress Party, accepted the membership of the Congress Party and Pledged to form Congress Party government in the state under the leadership of Kamal Nath and make Kamal Nath the Chief Minister.

Former Minister Mahendra Boudh, former President Nagar Panchayat Sevda, Mrs. Kamala Diwakar Yadav, Shivraman Singh Rathore, Shri Ram Prakash Sharma, Ramesh Parsediya, Harish Yadav, Dashrath Singh Yadav, Kuldeep Itauria, Narendra Srivastava Sevda, Prahlad Aggarwal, Parvati Singh Yadav, Ramkumar Ahirwar. And returned home to Congress with hundreds of colleagues. Meanwhile, Niwari's senior BSP leader Umesh Yadav along with hundreds of his supporters joined the Congress Party.



## Veterans in the shelter of the RSS

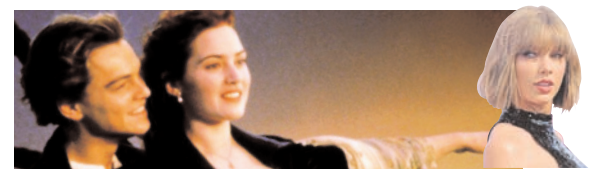
Team Absolute | Bhopal

A big news is coming out quoting sources. Many stalwarts of BJP reached out to the Sangh over the possibility of tickets being cut for the assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh. Where the leaders have met the Sangh officials. It was told that all these leaders are trying to persuade by imposing veto to get ticket in the elections.

According to information received from sources, Bharatiya Janata Party can make many major changes in the fifth list of candidates. It is being told that tickets of 5 ministers and more than 30 MLAs can be cut. Meanwhile, senior BJP leaders took refuge in the Sangh regarding the possibility of their names being dropped. 2 ministers and 8 MLAs have secretly met Sangh officials. All these leaders are busy in

convincing the officials to get tickets in the assembly elections. The bugle for assembly elections 2023 has been sounded in the state. All political parties have geared up regarding this. Bharatiya Janata Party has released a total of 4 lists of candidates so far. In which candidates have been announced for 136 seats. It was told that the names for the remaining 94 seats will be finalized this week. Churning is going on in BJP regarding this. The fifth list will be released after the meeting of the Central Election Committee. Let us tell you that notification for the assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh will be issued on October 21. Nominations will be submitted till 30th October. Nominations will be scrutinized till October 31. November 2 is the last date for withdrawal of nominations.





Los Angeles | Agencies

# Mistaken for Britney Spears by autograph seeker: Jessica Simpson

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-songwriter Jessica Simpson recently spoke about an awkward encounter with a fan. She took to her Instagram, and shared that she had just been approached by an autograph seeker during an outing to the mall.

However, as it turned out, it was a case of mistaken identity. "The face when someone in the parking lot at the mall asks you for your autograph, but expects you to sign it, 'Britney Spears'?" Simpson quipped, alongside a photo of her and daughter Maxwell Drew, 11, making exaggerated shocked faces for the camera, reports 'People' magazine.

It's not all that surprising that a fan might get the two pop stars mixed up. They both rose to fame on the music scene around the same time in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and share a few other notable things in common, including their bright blonde hair, dark brown eyes, Southern roots and childhood stints on the 'Mickey Mouse Club'.

As per 'People', they also both starred in reality shows with their former significant others - Simpson in MTV's 'Newlyweds' with ex-husband Nick Lachey, and Spears, 41, in UPN's 'Britney and Kevin: Chaotic' with ex Kevin Federline.

Spears even made her own nod to the duo's resemblance in a December 2022 Instagram post. "Why do I look EXACTLY like Jessica Simpson? Also my face looks so pale", she wrote alongside a throwback photo of herself sucking in her cheeks, making her look more like the 'I Wanna Love You



Forever'

singer.

Though the pair was often pitted against each other and portrayed by the media as rivals during their pop heyday, Simpson has openly supported Spears in recent years.



Aaron Taylor-Johnson tipped to play next James Bond

Actor Aaron Taylor-Johnson is a hot favourite to take on the role of the M16 spy, James Bond. It has already been over two years since the last 'James Bond' film was released.

Aaron broke into the mainstream with the rom-com film 'Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging' before going on to play action roles in violent comic book flick 'Kick Ass' and later played Quicksilver in the Marvel film 'Avengers: Age of Ultron', reports Mirror.co.uk.

This year he was due to play adventurer Sergei Kravynoff in the Marvel film 'Kraven the Hunter', but the film release has been delayed until August 2024.

Reports have suggested Aaron will soon be announced as the next Bond - while 'Oppenheimer' and 'Batman Begins' director Christopher Nolan is hotly tipped to direct the next film in the series. An insider told the MailOnline: "Aaron Taylor-Johnson is currently the hot favourite to step into the iconic role, he's the first choice for (Bond chief producer) Barbara Broccoli - he is the one to beat." As per Mirror.co.uk, addressing the possibility of Christopher being the director, the source added: "He is extremely interested in doing something very different with the franchise. If he can get his way with producers, then he is all for it".

But the source also hinted that Christopher being director could impact Aaron's chances of being cast in the role. The movie source told the publication: "Whether Nolan coming on board will affect the casting of Aaron Taylor-Johnson is currently a grey area - as he's very particular about who he works with".

Aaron himself has, however, expressed a keen interest to be directed by Christopher - so the pairing could be a match made in heaven.

# Mischa Barton hasn't fully recovered from teenage 'trauma'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Mischa Barton thinks she is still suffering from "trauma" after shooting to fame as a teenager.

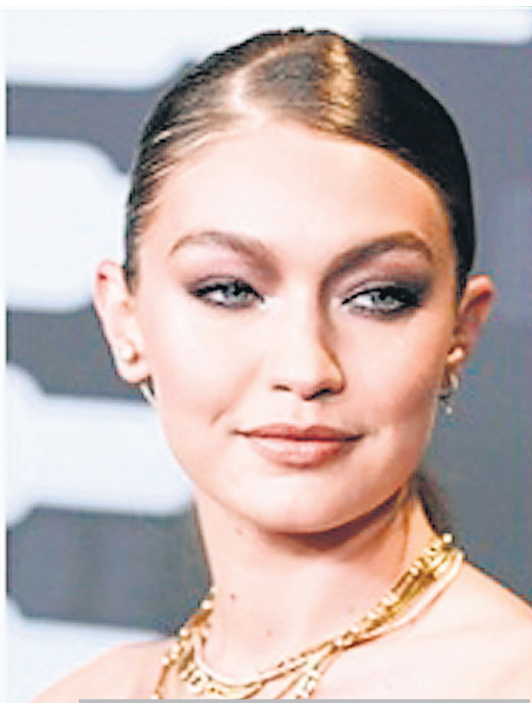
The 37-year-old actress got her big break on the hit TV show 'The O.C.' when she was just 17 and she rose to international stardom during her early 20s, but the actress believes she's still scarred from the experience of becoming famous at a young age, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"You can go to therapy every day for the rest of your life, but there's just a certain amount of trauma (from) all that I went through, particularly in my early 20s, that just doesn't go away overnight," she told The Times newspaper.

Mischa went on to insist she would rather have stayed out of the spotlight, adding: "I don't think I was fully prepared for that level of fame. Because it has never been something that I have sought out. I really would much rather be anonymous."

She also said her dating life at that time was "weird" because she was dating men much older than her when she was just a teenager. She explained: "You do look back, and you were 18 dating 34-year-olds. With hindsight, you're like, 'Yeah, that was weird.'"

Mischa compared her experiences with the paparazzi to brutal movie series 'The Hunger Games' and revealed she suffered issues with stalkers and online trolls during the rise of the internet. She added: "Nothing I did was good enough. It was the peak of cruelty about young women's bodies. It was wild. People feel so entitled to you and your body and your image. It's a strange feeling. It's strange."



# GIGI HADID, BRADLEY COOPER USE TAYLOR SWIFT'S HOME FOR SECRET RENDEZVOUS

Los Angeles | Agencies

Supermodel Gigi Hadid and Hollywood star Bradley Cooper reportedly have been using singer Taylor Swift's home for their secret rendezvous.

Amid their alleged romance, the model and the actor might have attempted to keep their phase of getting to know each other away from the public's eyes with her friend's help.

Speaking to The Mirror UK, on October 14, a source said that the 28-year-old blonde beauty and the 48-year-old actor chose not to meet at their respective homes. Instead, the two allegedly have been using Taylor's mansion in Rhode Island, New York City as their 'secret love nest'.

On the reason why, the source explained, "Even though Gigi and Bradley have their own properties in New York, they wanted somewhere more private to spend time getting to know each other and Taylor was only too happy to help."

"She said the door to her home is always open for them to use."

The source went on to spill, "Taylor is a total romantic and loves playing cupid for her friends."

Gigi and Bradley sparked romance rumours after the two had a dinner date at Via Carota in New York City on October 5.

The actor was later pictured dropping Gigi, who shares Khai with singer Zayn Malik, outside her apartment on October 9. The rumoured couple

seemed to have come back from an overnight getaway at that time.

A few days later, it was reported that Bradley's former partner Irina Shayk played a significant role in his and Gigi's alleged romance.

"Gigi was introduced to Bradley through Irina and their mutual friends in the industry," a source told The Messenger on October 12.

"Gigi and Irina have been close over the years while working together, and Gigi and Bradley have hung out before, but it has always been friendly in social settings."

The source further shared about the two's current stance.

"Gigi and Bradley were in touch recently, and were bonding over their daughters, when Bradley asked her out," the source stated.

"He pursued her and she was definitely interested and excited. They have been casually seeing each other but it is extremely new."

# Chris Hemsworth's private chef shares his 'very clean' diet

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Chris Hemsworth's private chef Sergio Perera has explained how the actor adjusts his meals to suit each project that he works on.

Speaking to news.com.au, Perera said: "Obviously the guy is a big boy, requires a lot of protein for the body he has."

The chef, who has appeared on the TV show 'MasterChef Australia', added, "When it comes to building muscle, he just keeps it very clean with a lot of barbecuing - like meats and vegetables - and keeping it Mediterranean, which involves a lot of olive oil."

Perera explained how Hemsworth never snacks on anything "boxed or canned" and eats a "hearty salad" on a daily basis, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The cook recalled: "One thing I did religiously with him, was every single day he would have one very large, hearty salad that consisted of raw and cooked vegetables, fermented products, nuts, seeds, and a lot of good fats with a piece of steak or a big piece of fish."

Perera has been working with the 'Extraction' actor for more than a decade after he was contacted by the star's wife Elsa Pataky, who felt that Chris needed assistance to cope with the physical demands of his Hollywood career.

The chef said: "He had just finished the first 'Thor' movie, and he needed someone to help match his meal plan to his physical demands. And that's how I came on board. I would sit with his trainer, who is one of his closest friends, and we would all work together on figuring out Chris' goals."

Perera enjoyed working with the actor so much that he even moved to Hemsworth's native Australia. He said: "I went there thinking I was only going to be there for a few months, but I ended up staying."



# ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Alex Jones





## IOC SESSION GIVES FINAL NOD TO 6-NATION CRICKET COMPETITION IN LOS ANGELES OLYMPIC GAMES IN 2028

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Cricket in the Twenty20 format will return to the Olympic Games for the first time since 1900 when Los Angeles hosts the mega event in 2028.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Monday gave its final approval for the inclusion of T20 cricket as an additional sport in the Los Angeles Olympic Games.

The 141st Session of IOC in Mumbai gave unanimous approval for the inclusion of five additional sports -- cricket, squash, baseball and softball, flag football and lacrosse -- in the sports programme of the Los Angeles Olympic Games.

Los Angeles will host cricket as a six-team competition for each gender with the host nation confirmed as one of the teams. As of now, the other five teams will be picked based on the ICC T20 Rankings at a pre-decided cut-off date.

On Monday only two of



the 99 members in Mumbai for the IOC Session opposed the move while two more abstained from the vote, making it a near-unanimous approval for the package to be included in the 2028 Olympic Games.

The members did express concern over the limited exposure to these sports by the majority of the IOC members and also the impact of these additional sports on the overall quota of participating sportspersons. The IOC session was

informed that the inclusion of these five sports will take the total number of participants to 11,092 as against the 10,500 that the IOC would like to limit to. The Session was informed that the IOC's Sports Programme Commission will sit down with the International Federation related to the additional sports and the traditional sports to bring down the number. Casey Wasserman, the LA28 chairperson, said LA 28 was on its way to being the "most com-

peting" Olympics. "We are excited to embark on game-changing collaborations with major professional leagues that will unlock massive opportunities to amplify the Olympic and Paralympic story, and captivate new audiences," Wasserman said during his presentation in the 141st IOC Session.

He said cricket would be a catalyst for the Olympics programme in the United States and felt that it sets well with their philosophy for the Los Angeles Olympic Games, which wants to promote the American system of team sports. Niccolò Campriani, the sports director of the LA 2028 Organising Committee, said they were influenced by the fact that cricket in the T20 format is the second-fastest growing sport in the country and was an opportunity for the Olympics movement to spread to new markets. "We are thrilled to welcome the world's second-most popular sport with an estimated 2.5 billion fans worldwide," Campriani said.

## Australia issue World Cup warning with emphatic Sri Lanka victory

Lucknow | Agencies

Australia have brought to life to their stuttering ICC Men's Cricket World Cup campaign with an impressive five-wicket victory over Sri Lanka, here on Monday.

Winless over the first two matches, the five-time World Cup champions showed major signs of improvement as they successfully chased down Sri Lanka's modest total of 209 with over 14 overs remaining, reports ICC.

It looked like Sri Lanka were headed for a big score when openers Kusal Perera (78) and Pathum Nissanka (61) put on 125 for the opening wicket, but some inspired bowling from Adam Zampa (4/25), Mitchell Starc (2/43) and Pat Cummins (2/32) backed up with some good catching in the field meant the Asian side were restricted late in their innings.

Pacer Dilshan Madushanka (3/38) threatened to disrupt Australia's chase as he removed experienced duo David Warner and Steve Smith with a superb double-wicket maiden early in the chase, but half-centuries to Josh Inglis (58) and Mitchell Marsh (52) some lofty late blows from Glenn Maxwell



(31\*) ensured the Aussies picked up their first win of the tournament.

The victory sees Australia improve to eighth on the World Cup standings, while Sri Lanka remain winless and with a mountain of work to do to stay in contention for a semi-final berth.

A chaotic start ensued for Australia in Lucknow. While Mitchell Marsh and David Warner took off in a brisk fashion, Dilshan Madushanka struck twice in the third over to give Sri Lanka hope.

He had both David Warner (11) and Steve Smith trapped lbw.

However, Mitchell Marsh continued attacking from his end. He hit nine boundaries in the first 12 overs. He brought up his fifty off merely 39 balls, and ensured that Australia batted at a healthy strike-rate.

Sri Lanka struck back in the 15th over, when they had Marsh run out for 52.

A positive Josh Inglis, who began with back-to-back fours, and Marnus Labuschagne held the fort for Australia. Their 77-run stand helped stabilize the Australia chase. After Labuschagne's dismissal for 40 in the 29th over, Inglis was joined by Maxwell.

The innings picked up pace at the back of Maxwell's belligerence, and Australia closed in on a big win.

Sri Lanka lost three crucial wickets after the mid-innings mark. Cummins got one to jag back in the 27th over, and crashed into Kusal Perera's stumps. In the very next over, Kusal Mendis (9) fell while trying to take on Zampa on the leg-side. David Warner came running in once more and held on to a brilliant take.

## Thrilled to witness this momentous occasion, which marks a significant milestone for the sport, says Jay Shah on cricket's inclusion in Olympics

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Cricket secretary Jay Shah said he was thrilled to witness the momentous occasion of cricket being included in the Olympics bandwagon, calling it a 'significant milestone' for the sport.

Cricket's inclusion into the Olympics fold was formally ratified by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Monday at the 141st IOC Session in Mumbai, following a recommendation made by the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics committee last week. Cricket was one of six sports approved for inclusion in the Los Angeles Olympics by the IOC in Mumbai alongside Baseball/Softball, Flag Football, Lacrosse and Squash. This will be the first time cricket will be at the Olympics since the 1900 Paris Olympics where Great



Britain defeated France in a one-off match. "The BCCI has been a staunch supporter of the ICC's efforts to include cricket as an Olympic sport. We are thrilled to witness this momentous occasion, which marks a significant milestone for the sport. Our active participation has been instrumental in promoting the case for cricket's inclusion in the Olympics. This initiative aligns with the idea of India hosting the 2036 Olympics, as envisioned by our Hon'ble Prime Minister." The Indian Cricket Team boasts an

unparalleled global fanbase, and their participation in this prestigious quadrennial event will undoubtedly enhance the sport's global stature. Our contributions were pivotal in securing cricket's presence at the Commonwealth Games 2022 in Birmingham and the Asian Games 2022 in Guangzhou, China," said Shah in an official statement. Shah was a member of the ICC Olympics Working Group and has played a critical role in securing cricket's participation in the upcoming Los Angeles Olympics in 2028. Notably, Shah has been a strong proponent of cricket's inclusion in various multi-sport events, notably advocating for its presence in the Commonwealth Games and the recent Asian Games in China, where India won gold medals in both men's and women's T20 categories.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Afghanistan's star leg-spinner Rashid Khan believes that winning their 2023 Men's ODI World Cup match against England to send shockwaves in the tournament is a huge one for the side and hoped that the result also made their supporters back at home proud of the team.

Coming into Sunday's match, Afghanistan had won just once - back in 2015 - in their ODI World Cup participation history. But at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi, that turned into two as Afghanistan brought the tournament to life with a 69-run win over England.

While Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ikram Alikhil made crucial half-centuries, Rashid chipped in with a cameo of 23-ball 22 to take Afghanistan to 284 in 49.5 overs. He then took three wickets alongside Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who also took the same number of scalps, to bowl



out England for 215 and cause an incredible result in the competition.

"It will be a big celebration back home. We don't have that kind of wins and that kind of situation back home in Afghanistan where people could celebrate. I think cricket is the only source which gives them lots of happiness and lots of good memories and people back home just wait. We have lost so many games but still the

kind of support we got from them...and they are so excited for us to be playing in that stage."

"Winning the game against England was a big one for us, back home they will be so proud. Lately, we've had an earthquake back home in Afghanistan in Herat where lots of people lost their lives, more than 3000. Around 2000 people's houses were destroyed. This victory will give

them a little bit of smile on their faces and they could little bit forget those tough days," said Rashid to broadcasters Star Sports after the game ended.

At the stadium, Rashid's name got the loudest cheers from the Sunday crowd of 26,440, majority of which also had supporters of Afghan diaspora based in India's national capital, when the playing elevens were being announced at the PA system. Just after national anthems were done, few young mascot boys took Rashid's autograph on some collectibles they had carried along. When he came out to bat, the crowd, including some kids, began to chant his name vociferously and it hit a crescendo when Rashid was off the mark with a superb drive through extra-cover for four off Mark Wood in the 37th over.

Moreover, there were some chants of 'Rashid Khan Meri Jaan' during the game, which added to the heart-warming sight of support for Afghanistan, many of whom consider India as their second home.

## KOREA'S TOM KIM SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDS TITLE AT SHRINERS CHILDREN'S OPEN

Las Vegas, Nevada | Agencies

Korean star Tom Kim became the first golfer to successfully defend the Shriners Children's Open in 24 years after he closed with a 5-under 66 on Sunday, clinching a one-stroke win over Canada's Adam Hadwin.

The 21-year-old Kim, who shot a remarkable 62 on Saturday to earn the co-third round lead alongside Hadwin and Lanto Griffin, carded seven birdies against two bogeys to successfully defend his title at TPC Summerlin in Las Vegas, finishing with a winning total of 20-under 264.

The last player to win the Shriners Children's Open in successive editions was Jim Furyk in (1998-99) and in achieving this, Kim also became the fourth youngest player in PGA TOUR history to secure three wins at the age 21 years, 2 months, and 13 days, following Gene Sarazen (20 years, 5 months, 23 days), Horton Smith (20 years, 8 months, 19 days), and Tiger Woods (21 years, 13 days).

"It's very sweet. I feel like the first two wins came at me really quick. It took a lot longer than my first two



wins to get my third one. But it's very sweet," said Kim. "This is really for the team. I've worked really hard personally, but without their help, I would not even be close to getting my third win. This is really sweet for us."

Hadwin, who was chasing his first win since the Valspar Championship in 2017, posted a closing 67, while Korea's K.H. Lee, with a commendable 68, bolstered the Asian representation on the leaderboard, finishing

tied seventh.

Kim's successful defence was memorable given the fact that he was forced to miss his Wyndham Championship defence in August due to an ankle injury. "It was so hard for me to be - the week of Wyndham, to just be at home. It was so hard for me to just sit on my couch and not really be able to do anything," he recalled. "It was very frustrating personally as a player because it was my first win, and

I was so determined to come back to Shriners at least being healthy and at least have a chance to win as a defending champion.

A pivotal moment in Kim's victory came on the 15th hole following a 12-foot birdie putt, his seventh of the day. Hadwin's hopes were dashed following a costly bogey on the par-5 16th, but he ensured a solo second finish a closing birdie.

Hadwin settled for his second runner-up finish since the Rocket Mortgage Classic and paid tribute to Kim. "Tom is just so steady. I mean, it's kind of shocking actually there to see him bogey 5 and 6. He's just so steady. Fairways and greens, he never gets out of rhythm, out of pace," said the world No. 56. Despite coming up short in his bid for a third PGA Tour win, Lee was delighted with how the week unfolded. Lee resiliently rebounded from early bogeys on the first and third holes, carding five birdies to secure his fourth top-10 finish of the season. While he remains 76th in the FedExCup Fall Series standings, he's determined to perform well for the rest of the season, aiming for a better playing status in 2024.

## ITF Dharwad Men's World Tennis Tour 2023 to begin on Tuesday, Ramanathan seeded fourth

Dharwad | Agencies

Dharwad will host the ITF Men's World Tennis Tour event, the main rounds of which, at the Dharwad District Lawn Tennis Association courts from Tuesday.

The US \$ 25,000 prize money event features a talented pool of players who are ready to battle it out for glory.

The event also marks the first of four international tennis events in Karnataka played under the aegis of Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association, with the subsequent stop being the Men's tournament in Davanagere. The Dharwad event also signifies a significant milestone in KSLTA's journey to promote and grow tennis in smaller towns.

The draw ceremony was held where Gurudutta Hegde, Dharwad District Commissioner and President DDLTA was the chief guest along with Santosh Biradar, Chairman Hubli-Dharwad Urban Development Authority, Sandeep Banavi, secretary DDLTA, Tournament Director GR Amarnath, ITF supervisor Puneet Gupta, India's leading players Ramkumar Ramanathan, Purav Raja and Digvijay Singh were also present. Speaking on the occasion, Hegde said: "We are delighted to be hosting



an ITF 25K event in Dharwad, and it's an honour to be the starting point for this series of international tennis tournaments in Karnataka. We have not left any stone unturned to ensure that all our facilities are in place. We can't wait to see the players both the Indian and International players in action and fans from all over to experience the thrill of professional tennis."

"In addition to the sporting spectacle, these tournaments will provide a fantastic opportunity for young and aspiring tennis players in the region to witness top-class tennis, learn from the best, and be inspired to follow their dreams." Nick Chappell of the USA has been given the top billing while India's Digvijay Singh and Asian Games 2022 Silver medallist and Indian Davis Cup team member Ramkumar Ramanathan are seeded third and fourth respectively. Bogdan Bobrov is seeded second.

## Inclusion of cricket in the Olympics will create deeper engagement for Olympic Movement: Nita Ambani

Team Absolute | Mumbai

International Olympic Committee (IOC) member and founder chairperson of the Reliance Foundation, Nita M. Ambani, said that the inclusion of cricket in the sports program for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games was a welcome addition that had the potential to attract a lot of new interest and opportunities for the Olympic movement across newer geographies in the world.

Cricket's inclusion into the Olympics fold was formally ratified by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Monday at the 141st IOC Session in Mumbai, follow-



ing LA28's recommendation last week. The IOC session is being held in India for only the 2nd time in history, returning to the country after 40 years. "As an IOC member, a proud Indian, and an ardent cricket fan, I am delighted that IOC members have voted to include Cricket as an Olympic Sport in the LA

Summer Olympics 2028! "Cricket is one of the most loved sports globally, and the second most watched. For 1.4 billion Indians, cricket is not just a sport, it's a religion!" Nita Ambani said.

The historic decision to include cricket in the Olympics came at one of the epicentres of the sport - India.

"I'm delighted that this historic resolution was passed at the one hundred and forty-first IOC Session taking place right here in our country in Mumbai," she added.

She hoped that the sport's appeal around the globe would increase significantly with this announcement.

## I want Rinku Singh to be a part 2024 T20 World Cup team: Aakash Chopra

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former cricketer Aakash Chopra expressed keen interest in seeing the young and talented batter Rinku Singh don the Indian jersey for next year's T20 World Cup.

Rinku has come into the limelight after smacking five sixes in an over of Gujarat Titans pacer Yash Dayal during the 2023 Indian Premier League and had a terrific tournament, scoring 474 runs in 14 matches for Kolkata Knight Riders.

After doing well in domestic cricket for many seasons and having a terrific IPL 2023, Rinku got his maiden India call-up in the series against Ireland in August and later he was named in India's squad for the Asian Games.

Speaking at JioCinema's show 'Aakashvani', Chopra picked five players whose performances he will be tracking closely during the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy and Rinku's name was on top



of the list.

"Everyone has seen Rinku Singh and knows what he's capable of. The T20 World Cup will be held in 2024 and I want to see him be a part of the Indian team there. He played a good knock at the Asian Games. Before that, he did well in the UP T20 League.

"He has done well for India whenever he's got a chance and has played exceptionally well for KKR

in the IPL. The best thing about him is that he's short in height, his build is not that muscular, but he hits cleanly and uses his wrists very well," Chopra said. He next picked Sai Sudharsan and said "He's an example of a batter whose technique liberates him and does not shackle him." "Sudharsan's is a beautiful story. The work he is doing is praiseworthy. We speak a lot about Tilak Varma but forget about Sai Sudharsan. He scored in the IPL, then he went to play county cricket. He scored in the Irani Cup and is not stopping at all when it comes to putting runs on the board," he said.

The wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma was third on the list. "He played at the Asian Games recently, but he wasn't that successful there. Jitesh is a good finisher. He plays very well in front of the wickets. This will be an important tournament where you would want to see him dominate," Chopra added.





## Urvashi Rautela loses '24 carat real gold' phone, seeks help from Internet

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Urvashi Rautela, who is known for 'Great Grand Masti' and was last seen in a special performance in the Telugu film 'Agent', recently lost her mobile phone during the high-voltage India-Pakistan match which was held in Ahmedabad as a part of the ongoing ICC World Cup.

The actress took to her official X account, and shared that she lost her "24 carat real gold iPhone" at the stadium.

The match concluded on Saturday with Team India comfortably beating its neighbours, but the actress spent after hours of the match in distress and registered an official complaint with the police at 1 a.m. on Sunday.

On Sunday afternoon, she finally took to her X and put up a tweet asking for help from the netizens. She also attached a picture of the official document about the complaint of her lost phone.

Explaining the unfortunate event, she wrote on X, "Lost my 24 carat real gold iPhone at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad! If anyone comes across it, please help. Contact me ASAP. #LostPhone #AhmedabadStadium #HelpNeeded #indvspak @modistadium@ahmedabadpolice Tag someone who can help."

A lot of netizens swarmed to the comments and put up a myriad of responses under the tweet. While some poked fun at the actress, others mainly were supportive of the actress in her loss of the asset.

## Samantha Ruth Prabhu does grilling Sunday workout despite pain

Team Absolute | Chennai

Popular Tamil-Telugu actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu does not compromise on her fitness routine, be it either sickness or pain. The actress did a heavy and grilling workout on Sunday, despite the pain she has undergone due to her Myositis diagnosis, stretching herself and showcasing her toned physique.

The 'Eega' actress has a reputation for being a bit of a fitness freak and she frequently does various forms of strenuous exercises which range from cardio, rope climbing, weight lifting, stretching, and more.

Taking to her Instagram Story, Samantha posted a picture of herself working through the pain. Stretching and pushing herself to her limit, the 'Shakuntalam' actress was sporting a pink, cropped sports wear which was completed with stretching pink trousers.

Tying her hair in a bun and sporting zero make-up, Samantha was holding on to pull up bars with a bunch of other gym equipment behind her.

Holding on with closed eyes and a great deal of effort, while clearly in pain, Samantha's workout has been bearing great fruits manifested in refined musculature, toned physique, and abs. Earlier, the 'Yashodha' alum had revealed that she is suffering from Myositis, a disease which causes severe pain and weakening of limbs and muscles, as well as a great deal of fatigue. While not lethal, if untreated Myositis is very difficult to deal with, as it causes muscle inflation which



apart from swelling causes a great deal of pain and tiredness. Currently, Samantha is undergoing treatment for her disease and was medically greenlit for full recovery over time.

## Kangana Ranaut is an impeccable fit for India's first aerial action film

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Kangana Ranaut's name stands out as a powerhouse of talent, fearlessness, and versatility. In 'Tejas', an upcoming Hindi film that promises to be a tribute to the indomitable spirit of Indian Air Force pilots, the actress headlining the project is nothing short of perfect casting.

Kangana is celebrated not only for her acting prowess but also for her incredible dedication to her craft. Her ability to embody diverse characters and breathe life into them is evident in her past performances.

From the feisty Rani in 'Queen' to the fierce Jhansi Ki Rani in 'Manikarnika', she has demonstrated her ability to immerse herself in roles that demand resilience, and grit. The role of a fighter pilot in 'Tejas' is no different, as it demands a unique combination of mental fortitude and physical agility.

The fighter pilot's spirit is one of unparalleled courage. It's a world where individuals are trained to face the most challenging situations head-on, where success is often the result of split-second decisions.

'Tejas' promises to be a movie that salutes the brave women who defy the odds and shatter glass ceilings. With Kangana at the helm, this tribute is in capable hands, doing justice to the women who have chosen to soar in the skies.

As the trailer of 'Tejas' was released, Kangana's transformation into the character was nothing short of astounding, reflecting the rigorous training and preparation she underwent. Her presence on screen and the dialogues showcased in the trailer set the stage for a riveting cinematic experience.

## Salman Khan's fight gets personal in high action trailer

Team Absolute | New Delhi

It's a fight between family and country in the trailer of Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif-starrer 'Tiger 3', which was released by the makers on Monday afternoon.

In the Yash Raj Films movie, Salman plays the original spy Tiger, who is torn between his family and the country.

The over two-minutes long trailer is full of punches, guns and high-octane action but this time it has a dollop of emotions too as the character of Salman torn between fighting to save the country and trying to protect his family - Katrina Kaif, who plays the Pakistani agent Zoya and son Kabir.

The impactful line said by Salman who will save both his nation and family at all cost, is: "This time, it's personal."

A surprise element of the trailer is actor Emraan Hashmi's character, who is the antagonist. He sports a salt and pepper look along with long hair and a beard. Keeping Tiger captive in Pakistan, he says: "Welcome to Pakistan."

It was also announced that the film will release on November 12. Directed by Maneesh Sharma, the film will also have a special appearance by Shah Rukh Khan.



## Rani Mukerji: 'I don't think anyone can do the romance like SRK'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Rani Mukerji, who celebrated 25 years of her cult movie 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai', shared that her co-star Shah Rukh Khan has taught her to romance. She also revealed that she was nervous about the audience accepting Rahul (SRK) falling in love with her character Tina.

Rani attended the special screening of the movie, along with director Karan Johar and SRK.

Talking about SRK, the 'Chalte Chalte' fame actress said: "SRK taught me how to romance. So when SRK says let the young people do the romance, I don't think anyone can do the romance like him."

She further said: "I started doing the films when I was 17 years old, and it just feels amazing that I have a daughter who is going to turn eight in December. So it's exactly like how my daughter was in this film." ani referred to Sana Saeed, who played Anjali Khanna in the romantic drama. Anjali Khanna is the daughter of Tina and Rahul.

The actress thanked fans for showering love on

her character. She said: "Thank you so much for loving Tina. I was a newcomer, SRK and Kajol had already done 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge' (DDLJ), they were the iconic pair."

"I was very nervous that the audience would not accept Rahul falling in love with Tina, when Anjali was around. But that was all Karan's writing, what he wrote, and made it happen. The magic of 'KKHH' is the writing of 'KKHH'," Rani concluded.

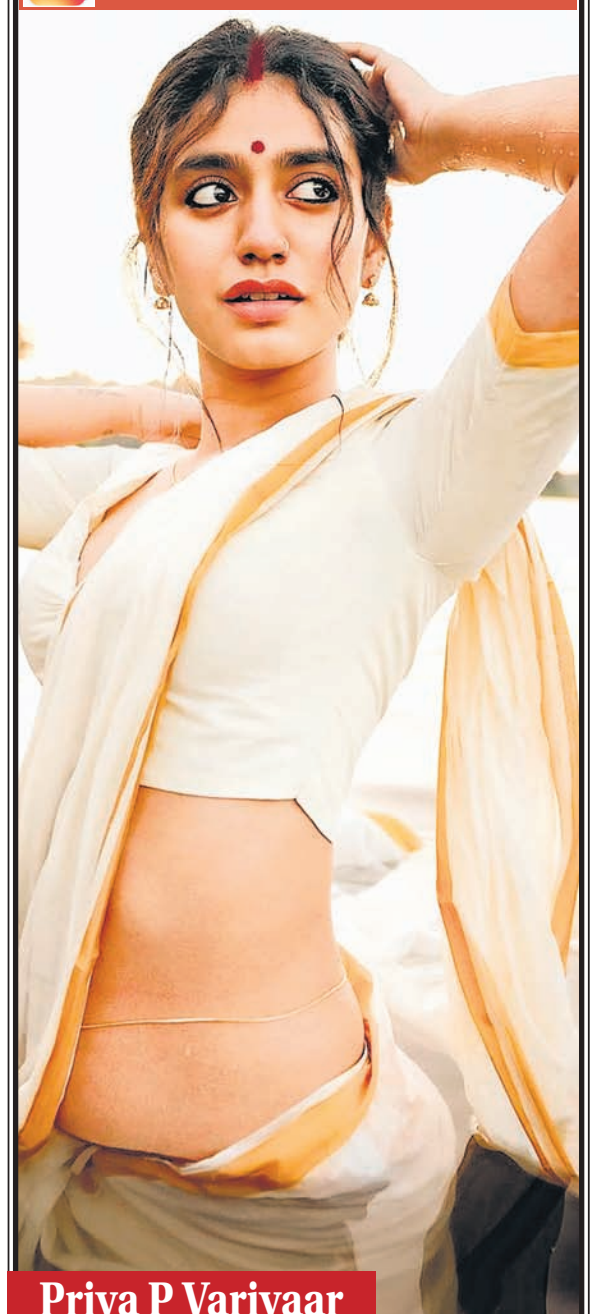
Written and directed by Karan, 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' is produced by Dharma Productions.

It stars SRK as Rahul Khanna, Kajol as Anjali Sharma, and Rani as Tina Malhotra in lead roles, along with Salman as Aman Mehra in a special appearance. It also features Sana Saeed as Anjali Khanna in a pivotal role.

The plot combines two love triangles set years apart. The first half covers friends on a college campus, while the second tells the story of a widower's young daughter who tries to reunite her dad with his old best friend.

Filed in India, Mauritius and Scotland, this was KJo's directorial debut.

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Priya P Variyaar

