

# absolute india

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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM MUMBAI, BHOPAL AND NEW DELHI

**NATION** > 02  
PM Modi cites Nehru's letter to then CMs, takes 'non-starter'...



**HOLYWOOD** > 06  
SZA 'was scared' to speak with Beyonce at 2024 Grammys...



**SPORTS** > 07  
Bumrah becomes first India pacer to claim pole position in ICC...



## SPACE CAN BE USED AS FORCE MULTIPLIER TO ENHANCE COMBAT CAPABILITIES: CDS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Space can be used as a force multiplier to enhance combat capabilities in traditional domains of land, air, sea and even cyber space, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Anil Chauhan, said on Wednesday.

He called upon all the stakeholders of the defence space ecosystem to work on bolstering the counter-space capabilities as deterrent for safeguarding the country's space assets.

Inaugurating 'DEFSAT', a three-day space seminar and exhibition, here on Wednesday, General Chauhan also highlighted the vitality of space for the mankind and also for the armed forces engaged in combat.

Detailing the major initiatives of the government to capitalise space to strengthen armed forces' capabilities, the CDS mentioned the 75 space-related challenges as part of Mission DefSpace 2022 under the iDEX initiative. "Under this initiative, a total of five contracts have been signed and an additional four contracts are at various stages of documentation. In the similar timelines, a feasibility study of 12 Make-1 challenges is also in progress," Gen Chauhan added.

The CDS emphasised that the government is encouraging all the stakeholders, including startups, for the development of a dependable space ecosystem within the nation.



"We probably had one startup in the space sector in 2014 which has grown to 204 with 54 additions in 2023 itself. In 2023, we as a nation invested \$123 million in the sector, bringing the total funding to \$380.25 million," General Chauhan added. Underscoring that the Indian space economy is currently estimated to be around \$8.4 billion, the CDS said the indigenous space economy is expected to grow to \$44 billion by the year 2033. "The government initiatives like Seed Fund Scheme, 0 per cent GST regime, sharing of testing facilities, and technology transfer have provided the rightful support to the private industry. This framework along with alignment of demands and funding support provide the right environment for the private sector to grow," General Chauhan added. The CDS also inaugurated an exhibition showcasing various technological advances made by private space industry partners

through an exposition and product presentation at the venue. The seminar organised by CENJOWS, a think-tank for promoting Jointness, Integration and Transformation in the Indian Armed Forces, along with Satcom Industry Association-India (SIA), aims at nurturing coordination and synergy between civil, commercial and defence space programmes, which is considered crucial to leverage the dual-use nature of the space sector.

The Uttarakhanda Assembly on Wednesday passed the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) by a voice vote, the first such move by any state after Independence that could be replicated by similar legislations in other BJP-ruled states.

Dehradun | Agencies

The Uttarakhanda Assembly on Wednesday passed the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) by a voice vote, the first such move by any state after Independence that could be replicated by similar legislations in other BJP-ruled states.

After the Bill was passed, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said, "The UCC will give the right to equality to everyone without any discrimination on matters like marriage, maintenance, inheritance, divorce etc. There will be no discrimination against women now. This will eradicate the injustice against them."

With this, he said, the BJP has fulfilled a key manifesto promise it made before the 2022 Assembly elections.

The Bill was introduced in the Assembly on Tuesday, two days after the state Cabinet approved the final draft of the UCC. Retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, who headed the government-appointed panel, had drafted



the 749-page report which contains several recommendations. The panel collected 2.33 lakh pieces of written feedback online and organised more than 70 public fora to discuss the Bill. The panel members engaged with nearly 60,000 people to help develop the draft.

The UCC Bill recommends complete ban on polygamy and child marriage, a standardised marriageable age for girls across all faiths, and a uniform process for divorce. These recommendations are aimed at fostering gender equality and social cohesion. However, this law will not apply to tribal communities.

### 'LAW HAS CLEAR GUIDELINES FOR LIVE-IN COUPLES'

New Delhi/Dehradun: Uttarakhanda Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Wednesday welcomed the passage of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) by the state Assembly, saying this will set the stage for 'equitable treatment' of all residents in the state. The Chief Minister said that the UCC will give equal rights to everyone and rule out any scope for discrimination against any resident, in terms of marriage, property, inheritance and divorce. Addressing the media after the Assembly gave its nod to the UCC Bill, Dhami called it a "special day for Devbhoomi. A live-in couple will just have to register their relationship with the concerned authority to avoid its misuse. This will help security agencies rein in criminals, who use this to cheat and deceive female partners. The live-in couple need not go intimidating the neighbourhood about their relationship status," Dhami said. Rubbishing charges that the UCC will foment differences among communities, Dhami said the new law will go a long way in "eliminating injustice and ending discrimination especially among women. The UCC will eradicate bias and discrimination against women. It will mark an end to patriarchal practices that categorised women to suit their ulterior motives," Dhami said.

## EC allots interim name 'Nationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Pawar' to Sharad Pawar's group

Team Absolute | Mumbai/New Delhi

The Election Commission on Wednesday allotted veteran leader Sharad Pawar's faction the new one-time name of "Nationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Pawar", an official announcement said.

However, this name would be valid for a single-use for the purpose of the upcoming biennial elections to six seats of Rajya Sabha this month.

In a tweet, the NCP-SP acknowledged the EC move on the interim arrangement, adding: "We shall be approaching the relevant forum to seek complete justice nevertheless."

The development came a day after the EC allotted the original undivided NCP name and its famous 'Clock' symbol to the break-away faction led by Sharad Pawar's nephew and Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra Ajit Pawar, even as it sparked a political furore



in the state, with the Sharad Pawar announcing it would challenge the move.

The EC had directed the Sharad Pawar group to submit three names by Wednesday afternoon of which the first option was approved for a one-time use this evening.

It has dispatched the letter of confirmation to Sharad Pawar, plus copies to Ajit Pawar, the Chief Electoral Officer of Maharashtra and others.

## NON-LOCAL SHOT DEAD, ANOTHER INJURED BY TERRORISTS IN SRINAGAR

Srinagar: A non-local was shot dead and another injured in a terrorist attack in Srinagar on Wednesday, officials said.

Official sources said that the terrorists fired on Amritpal Singh, 31, killing him while another non-local, identified as Rohit, was injured in Shal Kadal area of the city. "Amritpal Singh died on the spot while the injured Rohit has been shifted to SMHS hospital," a source said, adding that the area has been cordoned off by the security forces to nab the assailants.

## Delhi court summons Kejriwal on February 17 on ED's plaint of non-compliance

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A Delhi court on Wednesday issued summons to Arvind Kejriwal to appear on February 17. The Delhi Chief Minister was summoned on the ED's complaint of non-compliance against him.

The ED has accused the AAP leader of not complying with its summons to him in connection with its probe in the money laundering case related to the now-scrapped excise policy.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Divya Malhotra, who presided over the case, said that she had taken cognisance of the complaint. "...summons are being issued to him



to appear on February 17," the judge said. Earlier in the day, the judge had reserved her order on the ED's complaint. The ED had submitted that it had concluded the arguments in the matter. "I am posting the matter for order at 4 PM," the court had said.

The ED, on January 31, issued fresh summons to Kejriwal, and he was told to appear before it on February 2. That was the fifth summons issued to the AAP Convenor. On February 3, Additional Solicitor General (ASG), SV Raju made submissions on behalf of the ED before the court. The ED had issued a fourth summons to Kejriwal on January 13, asking him to appear before it on January 18.

## SEAT-SHARING CAUSES STRAIN IN SP-RLD RELATIONSHIP, BJP REACHES OUT TO RLD

Lucknow | Agencies

The INDIA bloc is in more trouble in Uttar Pradesh with the Samajwadi Party again insisting on the 'your symbol, our candidate' policy with the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD).

The policy had worked well in the 2022 Assembly elections when the RLD had agreed to field candidates of SP choice on its party symbol.

In the 2022 elections, SP leaders Gulam Mohammad, Anil, and Chandan Chauhan had contested in the Siwalkhas, Purkaji, and Meerapur constituencies respectively on the RLD symbol and emerged victorious.

The policy, according to RLD sources, is unacceptable now.

While the official announcement has been made regarding the number of seats for the RLD, the parties have not yet named the seats. RLD leaders claimed that the SP wanted to continue a similar experiment in Muzaffarnagar, Kairana, and Bijnor seats. "RLD has been allocated seven seats in the seat-sharing arrangement with the Samajwadi Party,



and now they want their candidates to contest on three seats using the RLD symbol," said an RLD

leader, adding that this would reduce the number of party candidates to merely four, which they perceive as unjust. Sources within the RLD have revealed that the Samajwadi Party intends to field former MP Harendra Malik from Muzaffarnagar, Iqra Hasan from Kairana, and Ruchi Veera from Bijnor on RLD symbol. This decision has sparked unrest among the RLD leaders, some of whom even opposed the candidature of Iqra and Harendra Malik during a recent district-level meeting in Shamli.

Former minister and party leader Ameer Alam, along with former minister Yograj Malik, who recently settled a two-decade-old rivalry with the Tikait family, are among the names keen to contest these seats. The Samajwadi Party's insistence on fielding its candidates on these seats with the RLD's symbol has upset RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary. Sources said that the BJP has reached out to Jayant Chaudhary for an alliance in the upcoming elections and this could lead to a further crack in the INDIA bloc.

RLD state vice president, Narendra Khazoori, however, denied that there were any issues in seat-sharing.

## 5.5 TONS OF RADIOACTIVE WATER LEAKED FROM FUKUSHIMA NUCLEAR PLANT

Tokyo: Approximately 5.5 tons of water containing radioactive materials have leaked from equipment at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, local media reported.

Workers discovered water leaking from the outlet of a device used to purify nuclear-contaminated water, Fukushima Central Television reported, citing the plant's operator Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO). TEPCO estimates that the amount of water that leaked was approximately 5.5 tons, which may contain 22 billion becquerels of radioactive materials such as cesium and strontium. Xinhua news agency reported quoting local media.

## Supreme Court: Those who gained from quota should make way for more backward

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court said Tuesday that those among the backward castes who were entitled to reservation and had benefited from it should now move out of the reserved category and make way for the more backward among them to avail the benefit of the affirmative action. As a 7-judge Constitution Bench began hearing a reference on whether the Supreme Court's judgement in E V Chinnaiyah vs State of Andhra Pradesh & Others needs a relook - the 2004 ruling had said that Scheduled Castes (SCs) form homogenous classes and there cannot be any sub-division among them - Justice Vikram Nath, summarising the arguments of Punjab Advocate General Gurminder Singh, remarked: "Why should not be



there an exclusion? According to you, amongst a particular category, some of the sub-castes have done better. They are the forward in that category. They should come out of that and compete with the general. Why stay there? And let the remaining who are still backward within the backward, let them get the reservation. Once you achieve the concept of reservation, you should pull out of that reservation."

The Advocate General said, "That's the aim, and if that aim is achieved, then the purpose for which the exercise was undertaken should come to an end."

The bench, presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, comprises Justices B R Gavai, Vikram Nath, Bela M Trivedi, Pankaj Mithal, Manoj Misra and Satish Chandra Sharma. It is also examining the validity of the Punjab Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes (Reservation in Services) Act, 2006 which provided 50 per cent quota and first preference to Valmikis and Mazhabi Sikhs in public jobs within the quota meant for the Scheduled Castes. In 2010, the Punjab and Haryana High Court struck down Section 4(5) of the Punjab law as unconstitutional, one of the grounds being that it violated the judgement in the Chinnaiyah case.

## WHAT IS MONKEY FEVER THAT CLAIMED 2 LIVES IN KARNATAKA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After outdoor activities, promptly remove ticks using tweezers and consider vaccination for high-risk areas, with booster shots recommended every few years.

Treatment focuses on managing symptoms due to the absence of a specific cure. Dr. Mohan called for maintaining the hydration (intravenous fluid therapy) to replace the lost fluids and other necessary protective measures are taken to prevent and control hemorrhagic bleeding.

Vaccination offers 60-65 per cent protection with two doses and 80-85 per cent with an additional third dose, effectively reducing complications, said Dr Das.

Monkey fever is an emerging tick-borne haemorrhagic disease that has claimed lives of 2 people in Karnataka. Also known as Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD) it is caused by the Kyasanur Forest Disease Virus (KFDV), a member of the Flavivirus genus.

It spreads to humans through tick bites, primarily in forested regions. Nearly 49 suspected KFD cases have been reported in Karnataka since January 1.

An 18-year-old girl and a 79 old man died due to the disease. Dr Nidhin Mohan, Consultant, Internal Medicine, Narayana Health City, Bengaluru said: KFD is a tick-borne viral disease from a family of Flaviviridae a member of

the tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) complex. "It's a rare disease and there is no human-to-human spread. It is first discovered in the Kysanur forest in Karnataka state," he told reporter.

The common symptoms include fever, vision deficit, headache, mental imbalance, body aches, vomiting, diarrhea, and a decrease in platelet count, leading to bleeding gums.

The disease is endemic to Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Goa. The virus primarily affects monkeys, particularly langurs.

The doctors advised to wear protective clothing and use EPA-approved repellents when entering wooded areas to prevent bites, and to stay on trails to avoid areas infested with ticks.





# PM MODI CITES NEHRU'S LETTER TO THEN CMS, TAKES 'NON-STARTER' DIG AT CONG'S 'YUVRAJ'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

If Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reply to Motion of Thanks to President's address in Lok Sabha was directed at frontal attack on Congress, his address in Upper House centered around laying out NDA's roadmap for growth while also littered with jibes at grand old party and the Gandhi family.

Doubling down on his attacks on the Congress leadership, PM Modi again cited party's stalwart leader and India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and claimed that the latter was against reservation for the poor and marginalised class as this would have led to 'inefficiency and incompetence in the system'.

Taking Congress head-on over its criticism of NDA's policies, PM Modi invoked Pt Nehru's model of governance and explained how the party's priorities left the country in shambles.

He said that he remembered Pt Nehru a lot, nowadays, and then went



to quote a letter written to the then Chief Ministers by Jawaharlal Nehru.

"Nehru once wrote a letter to the CMs, in which he said that he doesn't like any kind of reservations especially in jobs and employment," PM Modi said.

"Nehruji had written to CMs that

he was against any step that promotes unskilled employment. If SCs and STs get jobs and employment, the quality of government work will degrade," PM Modi said, quoting from Nehru's letter to then CMs.

He said that Congress stuck with this policy all these years and this is

why the backward classes have remained on the fringes, unless the BJP government 'brought them into mainstream'.

During his marathon address, PM Modi also mocked the Congress and its 'Yuvraj' for 'repeated misfiring and failed launches'.

Without naming Rahul Gandhi, PM Modi said that the Congress party made its Yuvraj a 'start-up' but the sad part is that he has remained a 'non-starter'.

"Congress has been trying to launch and re-launch its Yuvraj but it is neither getting lifted nor launched," he said amid cheers from the treasury benches.

The Prime Minister also enumerated a couple of path-breaking programs in 10 years of NDA governance including Digital India, drone production etc and said that their resounding success, once seen as dud and non-starter, is a testament of government's resolve for nation's development.

# Manipur dam closed following discovery of black oily substance in Irlir river

Imphal | Agencies

Concern and fear gripped the residents of a large part of Manipur's Imphal East district after the Irlir river, which passes through the area, showed the presence of black substances near the upstream of the Dolaitabi dam on Wednesday, officials said.

The officials said that the detection of huge black substances prompted the closure of the dam, which regulates the water volume, to prevent the polluted water from spreading downstream, particularly in most parts of Imphal East district.

Reacting to the situation, Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) Minister Susindro Meitei, along with state officials, including Deputy Commissioner Kh Diana, Superintendent of Police S. Ibomcha Singh, engineers and experts from the Directorate of Environment and Climate Change, visited the site on Wednesday for a thorough evaluation. Officials said that water samples were collected from multiple locations which have been sent for initial testing to the concerned laboratories. A senior official said the blackish-coloured substance appeared concentrated along a specific bank portion due to wave and wind currents. Initial testing showed that all parameters were within permissible limits for untreated water, yet further testing in



advanced labs is deemed necessary.

Authorities have urged the villagers residing near the dam to stay vigilant and report any suspicious incident. Residents of Leitankpoki Awang Leikai, who noticed the presence of black substances in the river, have ceased using the water out of fear of potential toxic effects from charcoal-like pollutants. Given that the Irlir river's catchment area is the hill ranges of Saikul in the neighboring Kangpokpi district, residents suspect intentional pollution by miscreants in Saikul to spoil the river water.

This incident follows a previous oil spill on January 10, originating from a defunct power station, which affected streams in Kanto Sabal and Sekmai villages in Imphal West district.

# Udhagamandalam building collapse: 6 women labourers trapped inside debris dead, two critical

Chennai | Agencies

At least six women labourers were killed after being buried under the debris when an abandoned building in Tamil Nadu's Udhagamandalam collapsed, leading to a landslide, on Wednesday, police said.

The incident occurred on at Gandhi Nagar, Love Dale, in Udhagamandalam, trapping 15 labourers, including women.

Local people and fire and rescue services initially rescued seven people from the debris but eight people remained trapped inside, out of which six women died.

Police sources told IANS that two of the injured are critical and admitted in a local hospital.

The deceased women are



identified as Sakila, 30, Bhagya, 36, Sangeeta, 35, Radha, 38, Muthulakshmi, 36, and Uma, 35.

Construction workers at the site told media persons said they were building a retaining wall below an overhanging cliff which towered

around 25 feet above the construction site.

According to rescuers, an abandoned public toilet on the cliff is said to have collapsed on top of the workers, along with a portion of the cliff.

# DRONE PORT TO COME UP IN HYDERABAD FOR TRAINING DRONE PILOTS

Hyderabad | Agencies

A Drone Port will be established in Hyderabad to provide training for drone pilots, it was announced on Wednesday.

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday asked the officials to identify 20 acres of land required for the establishment of a Drone Port at the Pharma City.

The facility will be useful for pilot training as well as conduct the trials by the drone manufacturing companies. The decision came on request of the Telangana State Aviation Academy, whose officials brought to the notice of the Chief Minister the inconvenience of providing training at the Hyderabad Airport due to increasing air traffic.

The Telangana State Aviation Academy signed a MoU with the ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to provide advanced training for drone pilots.

Telangana Aviation Academy CEO S.N. Reddy and NRSC Director



Prakash Chauhan signed the agreement in the presence of Revanth Reddy, Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and ISRO Chairman S. Somanath in the Secretariat.

As part of the agreement, training on drone piloting, drone data management, and data analysis will be provided. A 15 days training course on data analysis, data processing and mapping will be conducted for NRSC scientists and drone pilots at the Academy. Officials noted that the use of drones increased in all sectors

including agriculture. Farmers are using drones to spray fertilisers and pesticides in the farms and the Self-Help Groups also chose the drones as a means of employment.

The Chief Minister suggested that training should also be given to the government officials from the rank of Tehsildars to higher authorities to create awareness about drones.

Somnath appreciated the Chief Minister for providing training courses on drones innovatively by providing adequate assistance. The ISRO

chief said that the NRSC, which is one of the primary centres of the ISRO and plays a key role in satellite, remote sensing and space technology, will provide training by using advanced drone technology.

Somanath praised the Telangana Aviation Academy, which has received the best aviation award 12 times in the country, for extending quality services. The Chief Minister also ordered the officials to take appropriate measures for the renovation of Warangal Airport.

The officials are suggested to look into the feasibility of constructing the damaged old runways and launching the commercial operations from there.

The officials have also been asked to resolve the other obstacles, if any. The CM also suggested to the officials to consult the airports authority to establish an airport in the surroundings of Kothagudem and Bhadrachalam area which is considered as feasible to develop an airfield.

# 15 former MLAs, 1 ex-MP from Tamil Nadu join BJP

Chennai | Agencies

In a major boost for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, 15 former MLAs and an ex-Member of Parliament from Tamil Nadu on Wednesday joined the saffron party at its headquarters in Delhi.

BJP leader and Union Minister, Rajeev Chandrasekhar welcomed the new members to the party fold during a programme in which another Union Minister L. Murugan and Tamil Nadu unit BJP president K. Annamalai were also present. Most of the leaders who joined the BJP are from the AIADMK.

The former MP who joined the BJP is D. Kulanthai Velu. He had represented Cuddalore constituency and served in various capacities as DMK district-level office bearer.

Chandrasekhar said the former legislators and an ex-MP joining the BJP was an indicator of the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a state like Tamil Nadu where the BJP was not traditionally strong.

He also said that everyone wants to be part of the transformation that has been happen-



ing in the country for the last 10 years and wanted this to continue. Welcoming the new entrants, Tamil Nadu BJP president K. Annamalai said these newly joined leaders want to strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he is looking all set to retain power for the third consecutive time. KP Ramalingam, a former MP who had joined the BJP two years ago, and is now the Tamil Nadu unit vice-president of the BJP also welcomed the new entrants to the saffron party.

# Suspected bomb found on bus in Nagpur, neutralised

Nagpur | Agencies

Panic gripped the Ganeshpeth locality here after a suspected 'live bomb' was detected on a stationary bus of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) on Wednesday, officials said.

The explosive was found 'planted' in the bus which had arrived here from Gadchiroli two days ago and the vehicle was parked in the depot premises.

On learning of the unknown object, the bus terminus officials immediately summoned the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS), which rushed a team of experts to the spot, even as the people in and around the depot were vacated to a safe distance.

The BDDS expert was seen holding the suspected explo-



sive device and taking it away for inspection and further investigations in the police van.

A video of the BDDS operation has surfaced on social media and the suspected bomb was reportedly neutralised later.

# Palace on Wheels to conduct tours to Ayodhya, Mathura and Kashi

Jaipur | Agencies

Luxury train Palace on Wheels will now take passengers to Ayodhya. The route of Palace on Wheels, which has won the title of the world's second most luxurious train, is going to change after 42 years, as it embarks on a journey to the holy city of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh.

The train will now also organise religious tours, said officials, adding the new operation will start from May. The six-day religious tour will start from Delhi and take the passengers to Ayodhya, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Mathura and Vrindavan.

Palace on Wheels officials said that during normal journey, non-veg food and liquor are served in the train because many foreign as well as domestic tourists travel in it. The company will now remove non-veg food from



the menu during the religious trips. Also, onion and garlic will not be used in the food to be served to the passengers.

The religious tour will be conducted twice a month.

This time, the focus is also on local tourists which means if a traveller wants to travel only to Ayodhya or Prayagraj, he will be able to do so and special discount will also be on offer for such trips.

# World falls short of meeting most Sustainable Development Goals: Experts

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The world has crossed the midpoint timeframe for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation, only to face a grim reality that it is falling short of meeting most of the SDGs by 2030.

Recognising that SDGs are not isolated objectives but a cohesive and interconnected framework designed to tackle the multifaceted challenges confronting the planet, the 23rd edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit, organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), hosted a series of sessions on sustainable development, energy transitions and climate justice here on Wednesday.

In this backdrop, the proceedings started with a session focused on climate action, peace and spirituality.

During the session on 'Integrating Sustainable Development for Collective Action', experts deliberated on the tools that can further vertical and horizontal integration of SDGs.

The panelists called for global solutions, collaborations and partnerships to advance SDGs and climate action at all levels, emphasising the need to translate policies into ground-level projects. Ban Ki-moon, the 8th Secretary-General of the United Nations, and President of Global Green Growth Institute, appealed through a video message, "Science has made it clear that political will is urgently needed.

"I encourage major economic powers to show leadership.



Industrialised countries have historical responsibilities in addressing climate change, thus they must equitably lead the charge in solving this deepening global crisis. "Without robust global action and elevated global will, the climate crisis will only worsen. No one nation can combat climate change or accomplish green growth alone, no matter however rich and powerful it may be." COP29 President designate Mukhtar Babayev, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources, Azerbaijan, reaffirmed his commitment to better global climate through a video message. "Our focus is on a clear and actionable roadmap outlining steps to triple energy capacity and double energy efficiency. I am dedicated to securing strong commitment from nations and stakeholders translat-

ing ambitious targets into tangible realities," he said. Hoesung Lee, former chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), warned, "The global stocktake of last year laid bare the stark reality of our insufficient progress in limiting warming to 1.5-degree Celsius. "While the prevalence of gaps in policy, ambition, implementation, finance, and technology is not new, what is truly surprising is the economic opportunity that lies in closing these gaps. Recent studies suggest that taking additional actions could yield a net economic benefit of up to 7 per cent of world GDP by 2015." Jennifer Morgan, State Secretary and Special Envoy for International Climate Action Federal Foreign Office of Germany, said, "To pave the way for a sustainable future, let us abandon the notion of a climate versus economic dynamic. Embrace the potential of climate-efficient and renewable-based energy systems, ushering in new industries, technologies, and ways of living." Prodipto Ghosh, distinguished fellow, TERI, emphasised, "The main point is realising that the SDGs must not be a peripheral activity for the collectives. They should be part of the main agenda." Complimenting India's development record, Martin Raiser, Vice President for South Asia Region, The World Bank, during a session on 'Financing Climate Action and Sustainable Development', said, "India's track record puts it on a much lower carbon emissions path than other major economies. Its climate vulnerability, deep domestic capital markets and its domestic innovation capacity may also position it as a leader in developing and funding smart climate adaptation."

# Gurugram: Civic body demolishes illegal colony, 12 under-construction buildings

Gurugram | Agencies

In a major crackdown against illegal constructions, an enforcement team of the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) demolished an illegal colony, 12 under-construction structures and 22 DPC (Damp Proof Course) in different areas of Gurugram on Wednesday.

Assistant Engineer Yatender told reporter that the MCG had received information that an illegal colony is being developed on about 2 acres of land in the Ashok Vihar Phase-3 area despite restrictions imposed by the Punjab and Haryana High Court. On the instructions of Joint Commissioner-2 of MCG, an enforcement team led by Yatender and Junior Engineer Rahul Sharma reached the spot and razed two under-construction structures and 12 structures being built illegally in the colony. After this, the team reached the village of



Ullahawas, where tin shades and under-construction rooms were being constructed. The team razed all the construction with the help of JCB machines. They also razed 10 under-construction houses. "No illegal construction would be allowed without prior permission of the MCG. The civic body will take strict action against people involved in illegal construction. Such demolition drives will continue against illegal structures in the future," Narhari Singh Banger, MCG Commissioner, said.





# Sanjay Raut slams EC, calls it "Modi-Shah's Election Commission..."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Day after the Election Commission of India (ECI) granted the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) name and symbol to the faction led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut has voiced strong criticism against the ECI, accusing it of being swayed by Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Shah rather than upholding impartiality.



atives of the party constitution, test of party constitution and tests of a majority both organizational and legislative.

The hearings, which commenced on July 1 last year between factions led by Sharad Pawar and Ajit Pawar saw strong legal teams from both sides including Mukul Rohatgi, Neeraj Kishan Kaul and Maninder Singh for the petitioner and Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Devdatt Kamat from the respondent.

The test of majority in the legislative wing found favour in this circumstance of the case, where both groups have been found to be working outside the party constitution and the organizational elections, the poll panel said.

Meanwhile, Sharad Pawar faction spokesperson Clyde Crasto asserted that the real NCP rightfully belongs to the party supreme while adding that the ECI ruling was not a "surprise."

Crasto highlighted the party's founding in 1999 under Sharad Pawar's leadership.

"This is not a surprise. Ajit Pawar faction leaders had been continuously saying that they would get the name and the symbol, with date. In 1999, NCP was founded by Sharad Pawar. Everybody knows that the NCP belongs to Sharad Pawar. A few months they claimed the party and the EC gave it to them," Crasto said while speaking to a news wire.

He said that clarity on the matter must be sought from the Supreme Court. "Sharad Pawar is the chief of the NCP which is there in 28 states. 25 out of them backed Sharad Pawar. Now the Supreme Court has to tell what the truth behind all of this is," Crasto said.

# Western Railway collects Rs 141 crore as fines, 38 per cent collection rise in Mumbai AC local trains



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Western Railway on Wednesday said that it collected Rs 141 crore as fines during different ticket checking drives conducted between April 2023 and January 2024 and a 38 per cent fine collection rise has been witnessed in Mumbai AC local trains.

According to the Western Railway, in order to ensure hassle-free, comfortable travel and better services to all bonafide passengers over Western Railway, intensive ticket checking drives are being carried out continuously over Mumbai suburban local services, mail/express as well as passenger trains and holiday

special trains so as to curb the menace of ticketless/irregular passengers. The Western Railway said, the highly motivated ticket checking team under the supervision of senior commercial officers of Western Railway organised several ticket checking drives during the period from April 2023 to January, 2024, thereby recovering an amount to the tune of Rs. 141.50 crore, which also includes Rs. 37.55 Crore from Mumbai suburban section. According to a press release issued by Sumit Thakur - Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, during the month of January, 2024, an amount of Rs.13.07 crore was recovered

through detection of 2.28 lakh ticketless/irregular passengers, including unbooked luggage cases. Also in the month of January, Western Railway realised fines amounting to almost Rs. 4 crore through detection of about 94 thousand cases over Mumbai suburban section. To prevent unauthorised entry in Mumbai AC local trains, frequent surprise ticket checking drives were carried out. As a result of these drives more than 51,000 unauthorised passengers have been penalised during the period April, 2023 to January, 2024 and Rs. 170.74 lakh collected in fines, which is about 38 per cent higher than the same period of last year.

# 'I quit Shiv Sena after telling Balasaheb': Raj Thackeray's jibes at turncoats

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Day after the Election Commission of India (ECI) awarded the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) founded by Sharad Pawar and its symbol 'Clock' to the breakaway faction of Ajit Pawar, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) reacted to the current era political scenario, here on Wednesday. The sharp bars were directed at Ajit Pawar and without mentioning any name, at Shiv Sena leader and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.



stab anybody or committed treason, I did not insult any senior leaders or grab any party. All the others who left went to join other parties for power. I quit the party after informing Balasaheb Thackeray face-to-face... And I did not join any party for power. Much later, (March 2006) I founded the MNS with your trust and blessings," said Raj Thackeray.

While Bhujbal had joined the Congress (1991) and later the NCP (1999) founded by Sharad Pawar, Rane went to the Congress (2005), then formed his own outfit before joining the Bharatiya Janata Party (2019), while Shinde split the Shiv Sena vertically, toppled the then CM Uddhav Thackeray and became the CM (June 2022).

"It is easy to take over a party established by an elderly uncle (Sharad Pawar), on the strength of someone else (ECI), but to found one's own party on one's own strength without disrespecting a senior leader, to get a symbol, it takes struggle and patience... Like Raj Thackeray, it takes courage," commented the MNS on its official X handle.

In another post, the MNS said that what Raj Thackeray had predicted in his May 6, 2023 meeting in Ratnagiri about Ajit Pawar finally came true today.

"Anyway... but we are rightly proud that we are working under the leadership of Raj Thackeray who has innovated his own political existence from zero without usurping anything from anyone and without insulting the elderly leaders," said the MNS tweets. The opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi allies Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT), MNS and NCP (SP), tore into the ECI ruling, and now the Sharad Pawar-led group has been asked to submit its options for a new name and party symbol by Wednesday evening.

# Indian Navy intercepts suspicious vessel from Kuwait

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian Navy has intercepted a small vessel reportedly originating from Kuwait after it entered into Indian territorial waters, officials said here on Tuesday. The vessel was noticed by a patrolling

unit, which escorted it to the Gateway of India where it's currently anchored. The vessel has been identified as 'Abdullah Sharafat'. There were at least three persons on board who are being questioned by a team of the Indian Navy and the Coastal Police.

# Customs seize 6.33kg gold worth Rs 3.49 crore at Mumbai airport

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Customs officials at Mumbai Airport have intercepted a significant amount of gold totalling 6.33 kilograms, valued at 3.49 crore rupees, in five separate cases involving Indian nationals.



The gold was concealed by the accused individuals, hidden within various items including their clothing, mobile chargers, purses, hair dryers, and even the corner piping of check-in bags, a newswire reported.

This seizure follows another notable interception by Mumbai Customs officials at Guwahati Railway Station, where 1997.96 grams of smuggled gold, comprising 12 bars and 5 coins, worth Rs 1.28 crore, were confiscated from a single individual. The seized items were concealed inside the waistline of the trousers worn by the accused, according to the customs officials.

Meanwhile, Mumbai police has found over 200 files and documents related to cases under investigation by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the possession of persons arrested last

month for their alleged involvement in attempting to extort Rs 164 crore from a real estate developer. According to officials as reported by newswire, the six accused apprehended in the extortion case had purportedly threatened the real estate developer with ED action or even death if he failed to comply with their demands. During the probe, the crime branch team found the accused persons had more than 200 files and papers pertaining to cases which are being examined by the ED, an official

told PTI. These details came to light during the interrogation of the accused, he said.

The police suspect the arrested persons might have extorted more than Rs 100 crore from businessmen and builders by threatening them with ED action against them, he said.

The papers found with the arrested persons also include those pertaining to the Mahadev betting app case in which more than 30 people have been named as accused, the official said.

# First brick for new Ayodhya Mosque reaches Mumbai from Mecca

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Symbolising reconciliation and religious harmony, the first brick for the foundation of the proposed grand mosque in Ayodhya arrived here on Wednesday after a consecration pilgrimage to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The brick, baked in a Mumbai kiln, was sent for a 'gusl' (wash) with the holy Zam-Zam water in Mecca and in perfumes in Medina before it was brought back here.



This brick is scheduled to reach the new upcoming Masjid Mohammed Bin Abdullah mosque - named in honour of the Prophet Mohammed - at Dhannipur Village in Ayodhya around mid-April, most likely after Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations.

The brick's auspicious journey will commence from the home of Haji Arfat Shaikh, Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation member and Chairman of the Masjid Mohammed Bin Abdullah' Development Committee, who is overseeing the preparations.

"The new masjid and the institution around it would be an important centre of prayer and healing in India... Its construction and renovation, by the grace of Allah will be magnificent, majestic and would prove to be as aesthetically important a monument as the Taj Mahal globally," remarked Shaikh.

Terming the upcoming mosque as "special", he said it is the first masjid coming up in India that would be built on the basis of the 5 Tenets of Islam, for which 5 symbolic minarets, that would be visible for over 11 kms, shall be constructed.

"Also, the world's largest copy of the Holy Quran, that will be 21 feet long, will be placed in this mosque," said Shaikh. The brick is crafted from Mumbai's black soil, adorned with inscriptions from the Holy Quran, and was brought to the city in a solemn ceremony after a sacred pilgrimage

undertaken by five Muslims.

On its journey from Mumbai to Ayodhya, there will be grand spectacles and processions, starting from Kurla suburb to Mulund, and then it will go to Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh, with breaks for prayers and people to pay their respects every 300 kms en route.

A descendant of the Sufi saint Sarkar Peer Adil shall have the honour of carrying the first brick along with representatives of multiple and diverse Islamic sects, symbolising inclusivity and unity within the Indian Muslims.

The new mosque will launch its new website on February 29, along with a QR code for complete transparency and will accept donations for the projects inside the mosque complex.

These would include a cancer hospital, a college, a senior citizens' home and a vegetarian kitchen flanking the new mosque, which would be four times bigger than the erstwhile Babri Mosque that was razed in December 1992.

# Navi Mumbai woman goes into labour on local train, cops rush her to hospital for safe delivery

Team Absolute | Navi Mumbai

25-year-old woman, Zakia Mehboob Syed, suffered labour pains while riding a local train in Navi Mumbai. The event occurred Tuesday morning at about 8:30 am when the train arrived at Nerul station. The railway police responded immediately to secure her safety.



Senior Police Inspector Sambhaji Katare of the Government Railway Police reported that three female police constables helped take Zakia to Meenatai Thackeray Hospital in Nerul via ambulance.

At the hospital, Zakia successfully delivered a baby girl, and both mother and child were reported to be in good health.

According to the report, the woman's husband expressed gratitude to the railway police for their rapid aid at this critical time.

In a similar incident, a 30-year-old woman last year gave birth on a road in Kurla region of the city and the police later took the mother and the infant to a civic hospital.

Agency reports stated that officials in VB Nagar Police Station told the media that they received information in the afternoon about a woman giving birth in an area close to Kamani Junction.

The report added that the woman, identified as Suvarna Mirgal, lost consciousness after birthing her child. He

added that the Nirbhaya Squad of the police had responded promptly and took the woman and baby to the nearby civic hospital.

He said that the child and mother were safe and added that Senior Inspector Rajeen Chavan and other officials visited them at the hospital.

# Ajit Pawar faction files caveat in Supreme Court

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Ajit Pawar side took preemptive legal action on Wednesday, submitting a caveat before the Supreme Court. This step is intended to ensure that they have an opportunity to state their case if the Sharad Pawar group decides to appeal the Election Commission's order recognising Ajit Pawar's faction as the legitimate Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), stated a report.



According to the report, Advocate Abhikalp Pratap Singh filed the proviso on behalf of the Ajit Pawar camp to prevent any unilateral decisions against them if the opposition party petitions the Supreme Court.

The Election Commission's ruling, released on Tuesday, certified Ajit Pawar's group as the authentic NCP, dealing a huge loss to party founder Sharad Pawar. In addition, the EC granted Ajit Pawar's group the NCP emblem 'clock', the report added.

According to the report, the EC indicated that its judgement

was based on a variety of tests, including a review of the party's constitution, objectives, and organisational and legislative majority, per the established standards for such determinations.





## EDITOR'S SPECS

## GO FOR CHALLENGING CAREERS

Known once for its young boys joining terrorist groups in large numbers, J&K's Tral town in Pulwama district is now hitting news headlines for the right reasons. A young man from Tral town, Raja Shahzaib Raza, is the first local to become a pilot for Air India. Shahzaib did his schooling from the reputed Tyndale Biscoe Memorial School in Srinagar. Family sources said he later obtained his B.Tech degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Kashmir. He got himself enrolled in Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udaan Academy in Amethi (Uttar Pradesh). Shahzaib applied for the pilot's position in Air India after completing his training. After undergoing all the tests and procedures, he was appointed as a pilot by the airlines. Locals in Tral town said that Shahzaib has made them proud because till the recent past, youth of the town were looked upon with suspicion for alleged militant links. "Shahzaib has proved that the youth of our area have finally chosen the right path. "He is a great inspiration for hundreds of our youth who want to excel in various fields to serve the country and make an honourable living", said Sajad Ahmad Ganai, 56. The path breaking career choice made by Shahzaib has come as an enviable alternative to those locals trying to join the civil services. It carries the hopeful message to hundreds, who look forward to joining challenging careers in the country. "The basic point is not whether you become an IAS/IPS officer or not. The basic point is that in a country like India, choices are umpteen provided you have the determination to work hard and with honesty and the right motivation," said Shahid, 22, a youth from Tral town.

## 200-YR-OLD LEGACY OF LOYALTY, PURITY & HONESTY HELD DEAR TO HEART BY SRINAGAR'S 'GANWANIS'

Located in the very heart of J&K's old Srinagar city, this 200-year-old shop is not just a retail outlet, it is an icon of an honest dedication to purity, trust and customer loyalty that has withstood all the 'invasions' by modern day multi-facility departmental stores.

Over 200 years back, a small shop of genuine spices, tea, edible oil and salt was started in Zaina Kadal area of Srinagar city close to the graveyard of Kashmir's sultans including that of Zaimul Abbadin better known as 'Budshah' (Great King) for his vision of justice across religions and developmental genius.

This small trader's shop came to be known as 'Ganwani's shop' after the man who first started it. The family legacy has passed from father to son and is now run by the 5th generation of the Ganwanis.

Right since its establishment the shop had become synonymous with all that was truly traditional and pure in spices like tamarind, red chillies, fennel seeds, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, cumin, salt, mustard oil, green tea and other grocery items. From far off places like Gurez in Bandipora district, Kamah in Kupwara district, Uri in Baramulla district, distant villages of south Kashmir districts, discerning buyers have been coming to buy their choice grocery goods from this shop that is still trusted by buyers and the local chefs called the 'Wazas'.

There is no reputed family of these local chefs who would trust spices etc those who go into the



making of the multi-course local feast called the 'Wazwan' if the spices etc have come from any shop other than the 'Ganwanis'.

"Well, we are not going to risk our reputation by using doubtful spices and condiments in the Wazwan feast. So the rule of thumb has been to buy these things from the Ganwanis", said Zahoor Ahmad, 52, who belongs to a reputed family of Wazas living in old Srinagar city.

The loyalty of the Ganwanis and the trust of their buyers has grown manifold over the years.

"You buy grocery items etc from this shop for any amount for marriage, engagement, family reunions and other ceremonies. You are assured of the genuineness of your buy plus the right

opened a bigger shop some distance away from his father's without compromising on the family's reputation of honesty, purity and genuine price.

Ghulam Nabi Wani, the father spends a part of his time at Naseer's shop to ensure that the family legacy is transferred as honestly as he inherited it. When a buyer purchases some spices etc from Naseer's shop, Ghulam Nabi takes a while looking at the goods and then nods his head in approval with a smile that depicts his satisfaction. Ghulam Nabi said when his father took him to sit at the family shop, he was hardly 15 years old.

"I worked as an apprentice to my father for some years before he trusted my judgement to ensure that the family tradition remained in proper hands", said Ghulam Nabi.

Naseer's shop has a battery of helpers and it is evident that the demands of the market and the growing number of buyers have made the makeover inevitable, but there is the same level of honesty and purity which has been the hallmark of the Ganwanis for 5 generations.

"How can one cheat and betray his family tradition of 200 years?"

"For me, more important than the money I make is the number of buyers who leave my shop with the same satisfaction they would during the days of my forefathers", Naseer Ahmad told IANS while looking at his father, who sits some distance away from the son.

## Ram brings us together: Devdutt Pattanaik

Sukant Deepak

In times when Lord Ram has ceased to be just God, author Devdutt Pattanaik, who has to his credit around 50 books on mythology stresses that for him, he symbolizes the eternal soul and someone who believes in taking everyone along.

"It cannot get more inclusive than Him. Let us not forget that he is the Maryada Purushottam. For him, dharma is paramount. As a king, he always follows the path of righteousness, no matter what the consequences," the author says.

Talk to him about the fact that in these highly polarised times, when anyone talking about mythology and the richness of Indian culture can be branded right-wing, Patnaik tells IANS, "Honestly, Right thinks I am

Left, and vice versa. What needs to be understood is that we do not need such binaries in a country like India. After all, Shiva is on the right and Shakti sits on the left. They have to be together. This divide is foolish. The king must take everyone together. Left means goddess, right is god. The sad part is that some people try to contain me in political ideologies without even reading my books or listening to lectures. Anyways, everyone is free to brand me anything -- just buy my books."

Even as the cloud of homogeneity looms supreme when it comes to mythology and culture, Pattanaik opines that whoever claims to have arrived at the 'truth' is lying.

"We all are trying to get to the 'truth'. It will always be an eternal journey. Hindu religion has multiple layers,



and everyone interprets its different facets in his/her way -- which lends richness. I have always said, it is not important to seek out the original as everything is interpretation," says the author who was at the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF)-2024 to talk about his latest book 'Bahubali: 63

Insights Into Jainism' (HarperCollins India). Pattanaik feels that there is an intense focus on Hindu mythology and little interest in understanding others like Jainism and Buddhism.

In recent times, when several historians have pointed out the tendency to paint mythology as history, the writer, a doctor by education, says, "Well, what can you do if someone is determined not to be convinced? History is about the past while mythology lives in the past, present and future. History is about events, and mythologies are about ideas. While the former deals with facts, the latter is about conviction. And the medium is interesting stories... But again, not much can be done when some people just cannot differ-

entiate no matter how much you guide them. And I also believe that no society can exist without myths." Pattanaik believes that religion is important to make us feel secure. "Humans are essentially an insecure lot, and religion tends to give them a certain strength. It is important to remember in this context that even atheists have a religion -- in the form of ideology, for example, the Marxists. The key point is that religion must make you shant, it is not supposed to have a dopamine effect."

For someone who has also been involved with television and OTT, he feels that most channels are just looking for TRPs.

## international

## ANOTHER INDIAN STUDENT FOUND DEAD IN US; 5TH DEATH SINCE JANUARY

New York | Agencies

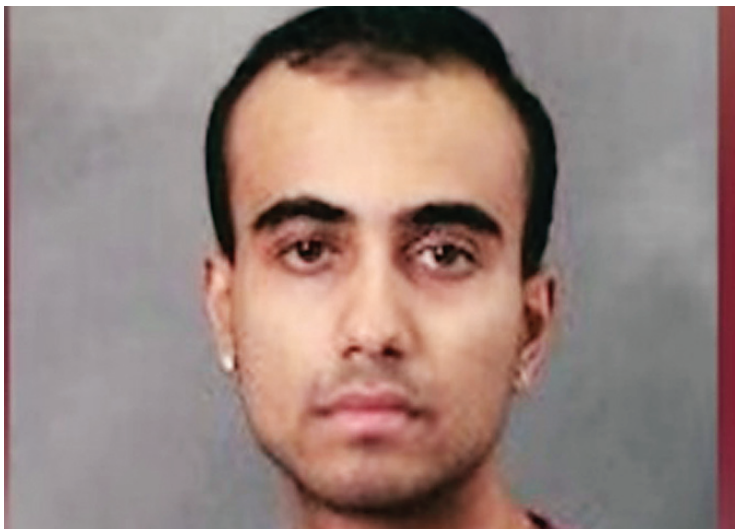
A 23-year-old who was pursuing a doctoral degree at Purdue University has been found dead, taking the number of Indian students killed in the US to five since the start of this year.

Sameer Kamath's body was found at about 5 pm on Monday at Crow's Grove Nature Preserve in Williamsport, Warren County Coroner Justin Brummett said in a news release published Tuesday afternoon.

Kamath, a US citizen according to the coroner's office, was a doctorate student in the Mechanical Engineering Department at Purdue University, Indiana-based Journal & Courier reported, citing the Coroner's Office.

He graduated from the department in August 2023 with a master's degree in mechanical engineering.

The release from the Coroner's Office said a forensic autopsy is scheduled to be performed in Crawfordsville and the family has been notified about the death.



The Warren County Sheriff's Office further stated there is no threat to the public and that the incident is being investigated by them.

With Kamath's death, five Indian students have died in quick succession in

the US since the start of this year, including Shreyas Reddy Benigeri in Cincinnati and Purdue University's Neel Acharya in Indiana.

A total of 403 deaths of Indian students abroad have been reported since

2018 due to various reasons including natural causes, accidents and medical conditions, the government informed Lok Sabha recently.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said the welfare of Indian students abroad is one of the foremost priorities for the government.

A country-wise breakup showed 91 Indian students died in Canada, 48 in the UK, 40 in Russia, 36 in the US, 35 in Australia, 21 in Ukraine, and 20 in Germany.

Indian students constitute more than 25 per cent of the over one million foreign students studying in the US, according to a November 2023 Open Doors report.

The number of Indians who travelled to the US for higher education increased by 35 per cent and resulted in an all-time high of 2,68,923 students in the academic year 2022-23, the report said.

Last year, the US consular team in India issued over 140,000 student visas -- more than in any other country in the world, setting a record for the third year in a row.

## Court rules Trump does not have immunity from election subversion prosecution

T.N. Ashok | Washington

Former President Donald Trump suffered a major setback as an appeals court has ruled that he is not immune from prosecution for alleged crimes he committed during his presidency to reverse the 2020 election results.

The ruling is a major blow to Trump's key defence thus far in the federal election subversion case brought against him by Department of Justice's special counsel Jack Smith. Trump faces four counts from the case, including conspiring to defraud the US and to obstruct an official proceeding, and he has pleaded not guilty.

The appeals court has set up a very fast schedule for Trump to ask the Supreme Court to block the immunity ruling, giving him until Monday to file an emergency stay request with the court. Judges ruled no president "has carte blanche to violate the rights of individual citizens to vote".



In its ruling that the former President does not have presidential immunity in the January 6 case, the appeals court said his immunity claims would reject "the most fundamental check on executive power".

Trump's stance "would collapse our system by separating powers placing the President

beyond the reach of all three Branches including the judiciary and the executive. Presidential immunity against federal indictment would mean that, as to the President, the Congress could not legislate, the Executive could not prosecute and the Judiciary could not review," the appeals court said.

## Snowfall in eastern Canada causes state of emergency

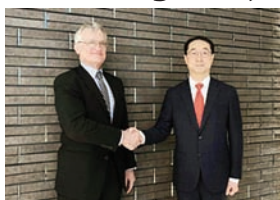
Seoul | Agencies

South Korea's chief nuclear envoy vowed unwavering efforts to stop North Korea's missile provocations and make it return to dialogue during his meeting with his Swedish counterpart on Wednesday.

Kim Gunn, special representative for the Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, made the point in the meeting with Peter Semneby, who was visiting South Korea this week, the ministry said in a release, Yonhap news agency reported.

Kim reaffirmed South Korea's commitment to creating conditions that will make the North stop provocations and come back to denuclearization talks, despite the recent flare-up of tensions amid Pyongyang's continued missile launches and its hostility toward the South.

During the talks, Kim



stressed that denuclearising North Korea is a prerequisite for achieving peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and the shared objective of the international community.

Semneby, in turn, explained Sweden's diplomatic efforts regarding the North's nuclear and missile issues, and promised to continue close communication with South Korea over the matters. Sweden offered the venue for the working-level talks between the two Koreas in late 2019 following the no-deal Hanoi summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and then US President Donald Trump earlier that year.

## 25 killed, over 40 injured as two separate blasts target election candidates in Balochistan

Quetta | Agencies

At least 25 people were killed and over 40 others injured on Wednesday in two separate explosions targeting election candidates in Balochistan province, just a day before general elections in Pakistan, local media reported.

The first attack claimed at least 15 people's lives while over 30 were injured after an explosion took place outside an independent candidate's office in Balochistan's Pishin while the second blast took place outside the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) office in the Killa Saifullah district, Geo News reported.

At least 12 people were killed and over 30 others injured in an explosion outside an independent candidate party's office in Balochistan's Pishin, Geo News reported.

The blast took place outside the political office of independent candidate Asfand Yar Khan Kakar in Pishin's Khanozai area. Kakar is contesting



elections from NA-265 constituency and Balochistan Assembly constituencies - PB-47 and PB-48.

The injured have been shifted to the

Tehsil Hospital Khanozai, while the bodies have also been transferred, the hospital's MS Habib told Geo News.

Habib said most of the injured are in

critical condition.

Following the blast, an emergency has been imposed across hospitals in Quetta for which additional staff has also been called.

He added that operation theatres with the staff are ready to treat injured at the Trauma Centre, Civil Hospital, BMC, Benazir and Sheikh Zayed Hospital. The independent candidate was not present inside his office when the explosion took place in PP-47 in Pishin.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has taken note of the blast and sought report from Balochistan chief secretary and Inspector General of Police (IGP), Geo News reported.

A spokesperson for the ECP said directives have been issued to take action against those involved in such incidents.

Speaking with Geo News, Kakar said that the blast happened in a motorcycle outside his election office.

## FIVE EARTHQUAKES HIT VIETNAM

Hanoi: Five earthquakes hit Vietnam's Kon Tum province on Wednesday.

All the earthquakes caused no disaster risk as the strongest quake occurred at 10:11:50 (Hanoi time) with a magnitude of 4.0 and focal depth at about 8.1 km, Vietnam News Agency reported. Four other earthquakes occurred one hour later with magnitudes of 3.3, 2.8, 2.5 and 3.7 and focal depths ranging from 8.1 to 10.1 km, Xinhua news agency reported. Nguyen Xuan Anh, Director, Institute of Geophysics, said it would continue to monitor and process earthquake data in Kon Plong district. According to the institute, since February 2021, the frequency of earthquakes in the district has shown an increasing trend.

The one with the highest intensity was recorded in August 2022 with a magnitude of 4.7, causing tremors in the epicenter and surrounding areas.





## Assembly Budget Session

# GOVERNOR COULD NOT READ THE ENTIRE ADDRESS DUE TO CONGRESS'S OPPOSITION, ADJOURNED

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The first day of the budget session of Madhya Pradesh Assembly was full of chaos. Governor Mangubhai Patel started his address with the consecration of Ram Lalla in Ayodhya and enumerated the plans and achievements of the government. But due to opposition by Congress members regarding Harda incident and other issues, he could not read the entire address and left. The opposition said - the Governor was lied to. Speaker Narendra Singh Tomar said that the rest of the Governor's address should be considered read.

During Governor Mangubhai Patel's address, Congress MLAs created a ruckus alleging breach of promise. Copies of BJP's resolution letter were waved and slogans were also raised.

In his 48-page address, the Governor explained the government's plans and achievements in 59 points. He read some excerpts from the speech. After this he left the house. The consecration of Lord Ram in Ayodhya has drenched the entire country in a devotional atmosphere. My government has committed and started work for Ram Van Gaman Path in Chitrakoot and Orchha. Helicopter service will be started for pilgrim-



age sites. The Governor said- More than 50 lakh people have been benefited in the Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra. Wherever the footsteps of Shri Ram and Shri Krishna have fallen in Madhya Pradesh, those places will be developed as pilgrimage places. 724 km long road projects worth more than Rs 10,000 crore

have been awarded. Ken-Betwa, Parvati-Kalisindh-Chambal link project will prove to be a milestone in the development of the state. The Governor said that there is a plan to provide training to 7 thousand youth in future job skill courses through prestigious institutions like IIT in the state. A system for upload-

ing marksheets and degrees in DigiLocker is being implemented for the students of the university. Focusing on skill development and employment of youth, certificate and diploma courses have been started in colleges based on market needs. Four global parks are being developed in the state.

Former Chief Minister Kamal Nath wrote on Twitter that the Governor's address in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly has once again made it clear that the Dr. Mohan Yadav government of the state has gone back from the major promises made to the public in the assembly elections. In the assembly elections, BJP had made three big promises to the people of Madhya Pradesh, the first of which was that Rs 3,000 per month would be given to women under the Ladli Brahmin Yojana. But, in the Governor's address today, there was no mention of giving Rs 3,000 under Ladli Brahmin Yojana.

Regarding the address, Kamal Nath further said that it is clear that Dr. Mohan Yadav government intends to be openly dishonest with the people of Madhya Pradesh, especially with the women and farmer brothers and has gone back on the promises made in the elections. This is a sheer fraud and the Congress party will raise its voice against it at every level.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF SHOULD REMAIN ALERT TO CONTROL ILLEGAL LIQUOR SALE, NOISE POLLUTION AND ILLEGAL MEAT SALE: CHIEF MINISTER DR. YADAV

INSTRUCTIONS TO COLLECTORS THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCE



Bhopal: Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav has said that the administrative staff should remain active and alert for controlling the illegal operation of firecracker manufacturing units, illegal trade of liquor, violation of noise control laws and illegal sale of meat in open spaces in the state. Issuing instructions to collectors through video conference on Tuesday, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav, told them to ensure strict action against those involved in illegal sale and trade of liquor. Along with this, action should be taken against those guilty of intoxicating children. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that legal action should be taken against those responsible for

noise pollution. With examinations round the corner, the use of loudspeakers at a volume exceeding the prescribed limit is prohibited. We all must be sensitive and discharge our responsibilities in this regard. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav instructed the collectors to implement effective arrangements to curb the trend of cheating in examinations. Those selling meat in the open in cities and villages should not act against the rules. Instructions have been given for this earlier also. It should be ensured that the trade is conducted as per rules. Such shops should be inspected from time to time from the point of view of public health.

## MASTER TRAINERS BEING PREPARED IN BRITISH PROJECT TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN THE STATE

Bhopal: Special emphasis is being given to teachers teaching English language in government schools in the state to enhance their communication skills along with new teaching methods in teaching English language. English language is being taught to students from class 9 to class 12 through innovative teaching methods through games.

The Board of Secondary Education has made arrangements to provide 6 days residential teacher training to master trainers under the British Council Project. British Council is an international organization, which is working to promote education and cultural activities in the state. Under the project, training has been provided to 178 master trainers from different districts in the training programmes. This project has been beneficial for both teachers and students.

# Scindia starts extensive outreach in Guna, launches fresh attack on Congress

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has launched an extensive outreach programme in his family bastion Guna-Shivpuri constituency for the last few days.

However, it is not yet clear whether he will be contesting the upcoming Lok Sabha election or not as BJP is yet to announce the candidates for 29 seats in the state. In Guna, the minister was seen beating drums and dancing with tribals during a programme.

On Tuesday, the minister was seen trying his hands at a traditional Indian game - 'gilli danda'. "I have played a lot of cricket, today I had a lot of fun playing gilli-danda," he said. He also launched a fresh



attack on Congress saying the grand-old party gave only slogans for 'elimination of poverty' but did nothing during its long 65 years of regime.

"First they (Congress) gave a slogan 'gareebi hatao' (eliminate poverty) and then, came out with another slogan -- 'roti, kapda aur makan'. The Congress

has always cheated the tribals during its 65 years of power in the country, but did nothing for tribals," the minister said.

Addressing the gathering during a programme in Shivpuri, Scindia was heard appealing to tribals, saying, "The Congress has cheated you for years, and now it's your turn to give them a befitting reply." Sources told reporter that Scindia has recently visited the RSS office in Bhopal, and the meeting lasted for 40 minutes. Scindia had contested the Lok Sabha election in 2019 on Congress ticket from Guna constituency, but he lost against BJP's K. P. Yadav. In March 2020, Scindia shifted to BJP and was elected as Rajya Sabha MP and made minister in the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet.

## 407 LOCAL BODIES OF THE STATE WILL BE ABLE TO WITHDRAW AN AMOUNT OF RS 99 CRORE

Bhopal: As many as 407 bodies of the Urban Development Department have got permission to withdraw an amount of Rs 99 crore 79 lakh from the treasury under registration and stamp duty. This permission has been granted by the Finance Department. Urban Development Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya had held a discussion with officials of the Finance Department regarding the financial problems of the local bodies.

Commissioner, Urban Development and Housing Department, Bharat Yadav said that the concerned bodies will be able to do all necessary work along with basic facilities with the amount to be withdrawn. An amount of Rs 197 crore 90 lakh has been allocated for the bodies under registration and stamp duty.

# WILL NSA TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE CULPRIT OF HARDA: ARUN YADAV

Team Absolute | Bhopal

After the explosion in an illegal firecracker factory in Harda district of Madhya Pradesh, former Congress state president Arun Yadav has asked the government how the blacklisted factory was running and whether NSA will take action against the factory operator.

Former Union Minister Yadav has written on X, the owner of Harda Firecracker Factory is a BJP leader. His blacklisted factory was running under the protection of a powerful leader. There have been two explosions in the factory in the last few years in which six people lost their lives.

He wrote, "In 2011, 14 people died in the firecracker factory in



Tikamgarh and Rau and in 2014, 15 people died in the firecracker factory in Badnagar. In the year 2015, 79 people died in the Petlawad blast in Jhabua.

The government has taken action against these people." Why not learn anything from the incidents."

Yadav has said that the people of the state want to know what is the relation of the factory owner with the ruling party and which leader of Harda does the factory owner enjoy the protection of? How was the firecracker factory operating in a populated area even after being blacklisted? Will the government take action under NSA against factory owners and patrons? When the factory was illegal, where did such a large amount of explosive material come from?

# SDM who abused farmers in Ratlam removed

Team Absolute | Bhopal/Ratlam

Abusing farmers in Javra of Ratlam district of Madhya Pradesh has proved costly for the Sub Divisional Revenue Officer (SDM). After the video went viral on social media, Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav has removed the SDM and attached him to the district headquarters.

In fact, a video of Anil Bhana, SDM of Ratlam's Javra area, went viral on social media, in which he is allegedly abusing farmers using abusive language. Chief Minister Yadav took this video seriously and removed him from Javra.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav wrote on Twitter, "The act of misbehavior with the

villagers by Javra SDM of Ratlam district is unfortunate and condemnable. On my instructions, the SDM has been attached to the district headquarters. Good governance is our basic mantra. Citizens in Madhya Pradesh This kind of indecent behavior will not be tolerated."

The video that is going viral on social media is from Badayla Charasi area, where farmers had stopped the work of doubling and access road. His demand was for compensation. During this time this incident happened. Even before this, Mohan Yadav had taken action against the officer who misbehaved. Earlier, a collector and a tehsildar had found it costly to use abusive language against the common people.

# Shock to Congress in Madhya Pradesh, many leaders including Jabalpur Mayor join BJP



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Congress has suffered a major setback before the Lok Sabha elections in Madhya Pradesh. Many councilors and Panchayat officials including Jabalpur Mayor Jagat Bahadur Annu have left Congress and joined BJP.

In a ceremony organized at the state office of BJP, BJP State President Vishnu Dutt Sharma, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and other senior leaders gave membership

of BJP to Jabalpur Mayor Jagat Bahadur Municipal Corporation councilor, District Panchayat President of Dindori and other Panchayat representatives.

Mahakaushal of the state is the area which is considered to be the stronghold of senior Congress leader and former Chief Minister Kamal Nath. BJP has made a dent in this stronghold and has given membership to the BJP to a large number of Congress leaders of this area.

# GOVT STANDS WITH AFFECTED PERSONS IN CRITICAL HOURS, TO EXTEND ALL POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE: CHIEF MINISTER DR. MOHAN YADAV

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav today visited District Hospital Harda and met the persons injured in the firecracker accident and inquired about their health.

Dr. Yadav instructed the hospital management for the best treatment of those injured. He said that the government is with the affected in this hour of crisis. All possible help will be given to the injured.

The injured persons informed the Chief Minister Dr. Yadav that their houses were damaged. Cattle heads also died. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav directed the Harda Collector to list the damaged houses and provide them housing to the affected families. He said that the wounded cattle would be given treatment. Compensation for the dead will also be provided to the affected cattle owners. Former Minister Kamal Patel, Principal Secretary Home Sanjay Dubey, Additional Director General of Police Jaideep Prasad, Divisional Commissioner Narmadapuram Dr. Pawan Kumar Sharma, Commissioner Health and



Family Welfare Department Sudam P Khade, Inspector General of Police Irshad Wali, Harda Collector Rishi Garg. Senior officers and public representatives were present.

**Rs 1 lakh each to seriously injured** Chief Minister Dr. Yadav distributed provided financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh each to 5 persons seriously injured namely - Govind Moolchand Chandel,

Hemant Dinesh, Asghar Sajjad Hussain, Yusuf Akhtar and Ghanshyam Narmada Prasad. He gave financial assistance of Rs 25-25 thousand to other injured.

**Rs 4 lakh each to families of deceased** Chief Minister Dr. Yadav consoled the families of the deceased. Assuring the families of the deceased, he said that all possible assistance will be ensured. It is noteworthy that among the 10

people who died in this accident on Tuesday were Bano Bi father Salim Khan, Priyanshu father Munnalal Prajapati, Mubeen Khan father Safur Khan, Anuj father Shobharam Kuchbandiya, Abid father Rehman Khan, Usha father Mukesh Chandel, Mukesh father Tulsiram Beldar, Ayaz father Siraj Khan, Pramilaibai father Sunil Chauhan and Rahim father Roshan Khan.

## Harda firecracker factory explosion: Relief and rescue operations continued throughout the night



Team Absolute | Harda

Relief and rescue work is going on after the explosion and fire in an illegal firecracker factory in Harda district of Madhya Pradesh.

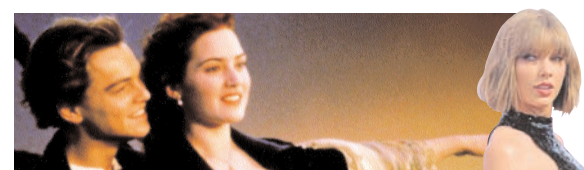
The teams engaged in relief and rescue work remained busy in their operations throughout the night. Efforts to completely extinguish the fire are still ongoing.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav is reaching Harda today. Several explosions took place one after the other at around 11 am on Tuesday in Bairagarh colony of Magardha Road in Harda and

the fire also took a huge form. In these blasts, along with the collapse of the multi-storey building of the factory, many nearby buildings were also razed to the ground.

So far 12 people have died in the accident. More than 150 injured are undergoing treatment in various hospitals. The relief and rescue work that started after the accident continues on Wednesday also. Smoke is still visible intermittently at the spot. Fire brigade and NDRF teams are using JCB and Pokeland machines to remove the debris. The Chief Minister has constituted a committee to investigate this accident.





## Brad Pitt 'wanted to quit' 'Legends of the Fall': Director Edward Zwick

Los Angeles | Agencies

Director Edward Zwick has reflected on directing Brad Pitt, 60, in 'Legends of the Fall'. In his upcoming memoir, 'Hits, Flops, and Other Illusions: My Forty something Years in Hollywood', the 'Blood Diamond' director wrote that the 1994 film was "in limbo" after Tom Cruise, who was in talks to play Tristan Ludlow, dropped out due to issues with the character's "ethics".

In an excerpt from his upcoming memoir, the director wrote, "I never gave up hope on getting Legends made, however, and was always looking for the right actor to play Tristan", reports 'People' magazine.

The excerpt has been published by 'Vanity Fair'. After meeting with Brad Pitt, Zwick observed that he "had a genuine passion for the script and a strong attraction to the character."

"Growing up in rural Missouri, he had known men like Tristan, he said. When he left the meeting, I felt I had found the right actor. I was more determined than ever to push it over the line," Zwick wrote. According to Zwick, Pitt's feelings about the film changed after a table read.

As per 'People', he recalled Pitt's agent calling the studio saying he wanted to quit and producer Marshall Herskovitz "talking him off the ledge".

Zwick wrote that "it was the first augury of the deeper springs of emotion roiling inside Brad", expressing that he could be "volatile when riled".

"Sometimes, no matter how experienced or sensitive you are as a director, things just aren't working," wrote Zwick. "You think the actor is being oppositional, while he finds you dictatorial. Some actors have problems with authority, but just as many directors are threatened when intelligent actors ask challenging questions that reveal their lack of preparation. Both are right and both are wrong."



**SZA**  
'was scared' to speak with Beyonce at 2024 Grammys

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-songwriter SZA has shared that she was too starstruck to speak to Beyonce at the 2024 Grammys.

The 'Kill Bill' singer said: "I was scared to go over to Beyonce. I can't speak unless she wants to speak, in my brain, because I don't want to bother her. She looked so peaceful and beautiful," reports People magazine.

She told E! News: "I just admire her. She's a masterclass on poise, grace, artistry, beauty and kindness." Although the 'Snooze' songstress didn't meet the 32-time Grammy winner, 42, she did meet the Houston native's husband — and the 2024 Dr Dre Global Impact Award recipient, Jay-Z.

"Jay-Z did speak to me," SZA revealed. "I was so grateful. Those are literally my favourite people, and it's so crazy that I am seeing them in real life. Jay-Z means the world to me. I'm a Jay-Z stan so bad," she said, adding that 'The Blueprint' rapper is her "all-time favourite."

As per People, along with meeting one of her favourite rappers, the singer won three awards at the 66th annual Grammy Awards. She won best urban contemporary album for SOS, best pop duo/group performance with Phoebe Bridgers for 'Ghosts in the Machine' and best R&B song for 'Snooze'.

SZA garnered six other nominations, which made her the most-nominated artist at the 2024 Grammys.

When SZA accepted the best R&B song award, she got choked up and revealed to the audience: "I just... I'm sorry, I'm just really overwhelmed. You don't really understand."

She continued: "I came really, really far and I can't believe this is happening and it feels very fake." During the awards ceremony, she sang her Grammy-nominated hits 'Snooze' and 'Kill Bill'. She opened the performance with 'Snooze' before launching into 'Kill Bill'.

## Kanye West compares himself to Elvis Presley for not being allowed to perform

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Kanye West while opening up about his struggles he has been facing when it comes to holding concerts and compared himself to Legendary musician Elvis Presley. The rapper compared himself to Presley on social media for not being allowed to perform, reports aceshowbiz.com.

He uploaded a black-and-white photo featuring a message that read, "I HAVE NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO PERFORM IN A YEAR. FEELS LIKE THE ELVIS PRESLEY MOVIE."

He seemingly was making a reference to Elvis being banned from gigs due to his provocative performances. Shortly after sharing the post, West appeared to have been contacted by many to offer him some help. He released screenshots of his text exchanges with a number of people, who assured him that they could help in booking venues, via Instagram Story.

Upon learning that many have ran to help, the "Father Stretch My Hands Pt. 1" spitter issued a follow-up statement on the same social media platform. He penned, "Please reach out to Cara Lewis Group for all bookings -YE."

Earlier that same day, Kanye let out a video to talk about his struggles to book arenas for his shows. In the footage, he could be heard saying, "We just sold out the United Center in seven minutes, and I just want to express to everybody out there to see if it's anyone that can help with this. It's the only arena that I had access to in the past year."

The "Flashing Lights" rapper said: "And when I call, people say there's no avails for me and you know why that is," while seemingly referring to his controversial remarks.

"So if there's anybody out there that can help with this, please do," he concluded.



## Kevin Spacey to pay \$1 million in 'House of Cards' settlement

Los Angeles | Agencies

'House of Cards' actor Kevin Spacey will pay \$1 million to the production company behind the show, to settle claims that he sexually harassed young male staffers on the show. Spacey was dropped from the final season of the show in 2017. He was facing a \$31 million judgment in the case, after an arbitrator found that the allegations were credible and that the production company MRC deserved to recoup its costs for scrapping the final season and starting over without him, reports Variety.

He had agreed to pay the \$1 million over multiple years in installments equal to 10 per cent of his after-tax income. The company has also secured Spacey's cooperation in trying to recoup the balance of its costs from someone better able to pay: its insurance company.

In April 2022, MRC sued Fireman's Fund and Lloyd's of London on the theory that Spacey's absence from the show was covered by their cast insurance policies.

Productions obtain cast insurance to protect themselves in case a key actor becomes too sick to perform. MRC noted that shortly after it was reported on Spacey's misconduct, he checked himself into the Meadows, a facility in Arizona that provides treatment for sex addiction.

The company argued that this qualifies as a sickness that triggers the policies. Judge Mark Epstein has twice thrown out MRC's insurance lawsuit, first in April 2023 and again in November. In November, the judge wrote that it appeared the contracts "were not meant to cover this sort of claim."

The judge dismissed the case entirely with respect to Lloyd's, but allowed MRC to make one more attempt to amend the lawsuit against Fireman's Fund.

Among other deficiencies in the suit, the judge has noted that MRC failed to specify Spacey's ailment, and to explain precisely how it would stop him from performing.

MRC was hampered on that front because Spacey had fought its attempt to subpoena his medical records, and also refused to cooperate with the insurance investigation.

On December 18, the company MRC made its deal with Spacey. MRC agreed to lower the amount Spacey owed from \$36 million including accrued interest to \$1 million. In exchange, Spacey agreed to testify in the insurance case, to be examined by doctors for each side, and to provide his medical records within 10 days.

Armed with new information, MRC filed the amended suit against Fireman's on January 2. The new complaint alleges that Spacey was being treated for anxiety and depression, and that he was therefore unavailable for production.

Fireman's filed a motion last week to throw out the amended complaint, saying it "borders on the absurd." The insurer argues that MRC's position is a "180-degree pivot" from its claim in the arbitration case against Spacey — in which the company argued that Spacey was dropped because he had violated the company's sexual harassment policy, not because he was ill.

In a footnote to his November ruling, the judge had offered that if MRC could allege that Spacey was suffering from debilitating depression, that "would fit far more comfortably within the policies' definition."



## Sofia Vergara keeps a nude pic of herself from when she was 'young, fresh'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Sofia Vergara revealed that she keeps a nude photograph of herself from when she was 'young and fresh' in her closet. While giving a tour of her luxurious walk-in closet, Vergara in an accompanying video, the actress invites viewers into her home, which houses racks of clothing and handbags, and several walls of shoes.

"This is where I actually really live — in my closet," she said.

"This is where I spend most of my time. This is like a girl's girl's dream."

Vergara shares that the objects on the room's large marble-topped center island hold particular significance.

"All this stuff on the counter is very special for me," she says, showing off an antique find from a shop in Paris and a treasured photo of her late brother and late cousin, reports people.com.

Then Vergara holds up a framed black-and-white, nude boudoir-style photo of herself, explaining wistfully, "And this picture, it was when I was young and fresh."

The actress previously flaunted her space while spending some quality time there with



her former 'Modern Family' co-stars Julie Bowen and Jesse Tyler Ferguson in October.

In an Instagram photograph, Vergara shared, fans got a glimpse of a framed photo showing the castmates' re-creation of Sophia Loren's infamous side eye toward Jayne Mansfield in 1957 as Bowen stared down at Vergara's cleavage at the 2014 Emmy Awards.

Vergara purchased the home in 2020 while she was still married to Joe Manganiello. After seven years of marriage, the pair announced their split in July 2023 and Manganiello filed for divorce two days later.

## Henry Cavill's 'not a fan' of sex scenes, says 'sometimes they're overused'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Henry Cavill says he is not a big fan of steamy scenes on screen. During an appearance on the Happy Sad Confused podcast, the actor opened up about steamy moments on camera.

During the podcast, 'Argyle' director Matthew Vaughn said he didn't understand scenes and Cavill added: "I also don't understand them. I'm not a fan."

"I think there are circumstances where a sex scene actually is beneficial to a movie rather than just the audience," the Man of Steel actor said, reports deadline.com.

"I think sometimes they're overused these days. It's when you have a sense that you're going 'Is this really necessary? Or is it just people

with less clothing on?' and that's where you start to get more uncomfortable and you're thinking 'There's not a performance here, there's not a piece which is gonna carry through into the rest of the movie.'"

Cavill said that sex scenes "can be great in a movie" as "they can really help with the storytelling," he thinks leav-



ing stuff for the imagination is even better. "Most of the time, the human imagination is gonna trump it, and so I think it can be a little bit of a copout if a TV show or a movie is just filled with gyrating bodies, and you're going 'OK? But what is this doing for us?' Apart from the idea of like, 'Ooo, naked person, great,'" he added.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Brooks Nader





## BUMRAH BECOMES FIRST INDIA PACER TO CLAIM POLE POSITION IN ICC TEST RANKINGS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has become the first India pacer to top the ICC Men's Test Bowling Rankings. In the latest update to the rankings on Wednesday, Bumrah was propelled to top of the Test bowlers' ranking after an outstanding haul of nine wickets in the second Test against England in Visakhapatnam, which India won by 10 runs.

Bumrah's nine-wicket match haul, which included a brilliant 6/45 in the first innings at Visakhapatnam, has helped him leapfrog Pat Cummins, Kagiso Rabada and compatriot Ravichandran Ashwin. Bumrah is now only the fourth bowler from his country to attain number one position in Test bowlers' rankings after spinners Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Bishan Singh Bedi.

Bumrah, who was named Player of the Match after helping India level the five-match series with a 106-run victory in Visakhapatnam, ended Ashwin's 11-month long reign at the top. Bumrah now has a tally of 881 rating points with Ashwin (904) and Jadeja (899) the only India bowlers to



have aggregated more rating points. Ashwin, who is now at second place in the bowlers rankings after picking just three wickets at Visakhapatnam, and Jadeja, currently

nursing a hamstring injury, also have the unique distinction of being jointly top-ranked, in March 2017. Left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav has moved up four places to 45th position

after a strong return to the Test team in Visakhapatnam.

The batting rankings see left-handed opener Yashasvi Jaiswal progress 37 places to 29th after completing a fine career-best 209 in the first innings, while right-handed batter Shubman Gill go up 14 places to a career-best 38th after notching 104 in the second innings.

For England, opener Zak Crawley is another player to gain after the Visakhapatnam Test, moving up eight places to a career-best 22nd position after scores of 76 and 73. Rookie leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed has moved up 14 places to 70th position.

Left-arm spinner Tom Hartley, who became just the second England player with at least 50 runs and five wickets in each of his first two Tests, has advanced in both lists - up from 103rd to 95th in the batting rankings and from 63rd to 53rd in the bowling rankings. Post the completion of the one-off Test between Sri Lanka and Afghanistan in Colombo, left-arm spinner Prabhath Jayasuriya has moved up to three places to a career-best sixth position after his eight-wicket match haul helped the hosts' win by 10 wickets.

## 75th Strandja Memorial boxing: Sachin, and Sagar storm into quarters

Sofia, (Bulgaria) | Agencies

Former World Youth Champion Sachin and Commonwealth Games silver medalist Sagar entered the quarterfinals on Day Three of the ongoing 75th Strandja Memorial Tournament here on Tuesday.

Sachin (57kg) was up against Uzbekistan's Fayzov Khudoynazar in the pre-quarters and both the boxers came out with an attacking intent but it was Fayzov, who took a slight advantage in the first round.

Sachin looked transformed in the second round and initiated a comeback by using his quick reflexes to dodge multiple attacks before landing some accurate jabs.

In the third round, he was at his attacking best, leaving his opponent clueless with his sharp punches and quick movements, ultimately grabbing a phenomenal 3-2 win to enter the quarterfinals. He will now face Kapanadze Giorgi of Georgia on Friday to secure a place in the semifinals.

Sagar (92+kg) faced Lithuania's Jazevicius Jonas in the pre-quarters. The Indian pugilist looked completely in control of the game from the get-go as he put up a scintillating attacking display, making his way into the quarterfinals with a 5-0 unanimous decision win. Sagar will now take on Zokirov Jakhongir of Uzbekistan on Thursday.

Vanshaj (63.5kg) went down fighting in a



close contest against Iran's Habibinezhad Ali. Both the boxers were cautious in their approach and were looking to capitalize on counterattacks. Vanshaj had his moments of domination but eventually, the final verdict came against him as he lost the bout 2-3 to end his campaign. Late on Monday, Arundhati Choudhary (66kg) made her way into the quarterfinals with a 4-1 win over France's Sonvico Emilie. She will now face Matovic Milena of Serbia on Thursday. Manisha (60kg), on the other hand, went down 2-3 against Zidani Amina of France in the pre-quarters. On Wednesday, five Indian pugilists will kick off their campaign in their respective pre-quarter bouts. Amit Panghal (51kg) will be in action against Rudyk Maksym of Ukraine, Akash (71kg) will take on Traore Makan of France and Deepak (75kg) will face Asankul Uulu Sultan of Kyrgyzstan. Abhimanyu Lourea (80kg) and Naveen Kumar (92kg) will go up against France's Monny Raphael and Voisnarovic Darius of Lithuania, respectively.

## World Athletics ratifies Kelvin Kiptum's world marathon record

Monaco | Agencies

World Athletics, the global governing body for international track and field competitions, has ratified Kelvin Kiptum's world marathon record of 2:00:35 set in Chicago last year. Kenya's Kiptum became the first athlete to break 2:01 in a record-eligible marathon, taking 34 seconds off the world record at the Chicago Marathon on October 8, 2023, the World Athletics informed in a statement on Tuesday.

With that performance, Kiptum improved his Personal Best by 50 seconds to surpass the world record of 2:01:09 set by his compatriot Eliud Kipchoge in Berlin on September 25, 2022. Kiptum pushed the pace throughout the race in Chicago. He broke away from a seven-strong



lead group after reaching 5km in 14:26, joined by his compatriot Daniel Mateiko. They were on world record pace at 10km and passed in 28:42, but the tempo dropped a little and they reached halfway in 1:00:48.

After 30km was passed in 1:26:31, Kiptum kicked and dropped Mateiko. A blistering 5km split of 13:51 took him to the 35km checkpoint in 1:40:22 and he was on sub-2:01 pace, 49 seconds ahead

of Mateiko. Continuing to run with urgency, Kiptum passed 40km in 1:54:23 -- after a 27:52 10km split. He went on to win the race by almost three and a half minutes, crossing the finish line at 2:00:35. "I knew I was coming for a course record, but a world record -- I am so happy," he said. "A world record was not on my mind today, but I knew one day I would be a world record-holder."

## RISHABH PANT 'VERY CONFIDENT' OF PLAYING EVERY GAME IN IPL 2024: PONTING

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting said wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant is 'very confident' of playing every game in IPL 2024, but added that he's still unsure of him to captain the side or be the keeper.

Pant, 26, miraculously survived a near-fatal car crash while on the way to his hometown Roorkee on December 30, 2022. He was then airlifted to Mumbai on January 4, 2023, for surgery and further recovery.

Since then, the left-handed wicketkeeper-batter has been doing extensive rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru. Pant has been making remarkable progress in his recovery, with him being fit for IPL 2024 looking as a realistic possibility for making a return to competitive cricket. "Rishabh is very confident that he's going to be right to play. In what capacity we're not quite sure yet. You would have seen all the social-media stuff, he's up and about and running well. But in saying that we're only six weeks away from the first game as well. So we're not sure if we'll get wicketkeeping out of him this year."

"But I'll guarantee if I asked him now he'll say, 'I'm playing every game, I'm keeping every game and I'm batting at No.4.' That's just what he's like, but we'll keep our fingers crossed. He's such a dynamic player. He's obviously our captain. We missed him incredibly last year," said Ponting in Melbourne to reporters after being named as head



coach of Washington Freedom for the second season of the Major League Cricket (MLC) competition in the USA.

On a sensible note, Ponting said if Pant plays as many matches as possible in IPL 2024, it will be a bonus for the Capitals. "If you understand the journey he's been on the last 12-13 months, it was a horrific incident. One that I know he feels very lucky to have even survived, let alone have the chance to play cricket again."

"We'll just keep our fingers crossed and hope that he can be out there and play. Even if it's not all the games, if we can manage him through 10 of the 14

games or whatever that might be then whatever games you can get out of him will be a bonus."

IPL 2024 is likely to start from last week of March and the Capitals are keen to put in a better performance after finishing at ninth place last season. The IPL 2020 runners-up had just two wins at their home ground, the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi, last year, where their batting failed to click as a unit.

"Our batting was disappointing last year. A lot of the guys that we felt would be able to handle difficult conditions in Delhi, a spinning wicket a lot of the time, we weren't good enough in those conditions. We've got some challenges with our home venue to be honest. We rock up every game, we're not really sure exactly what sort of wicket we're going to get. "So you'd go to the auction expecting you're going to get one (type) of surface and you rock up for five games, seven games there and you get five different pitches so that does make it hard. But we definitely lacked on batting quality last year, which is what we've tried to really improve on this year."

"We've gone to the well with a couple of really highly talented young Indian players that we think that are ready to play straight away. That's the thing about the IPL, it's one year to the big auction so it's not like you can really invest too much in these young blokes and hope to improve them overnight. You've got to get the best talent out there that you think's ready to play. And we've got a few of those this year," concluded Ponting.

## ARMAND DUPLANTIS RETAINS MONDO CLASSIC TITLE

Uppsala | Agencies

Reigning world record holder and Olympic champion pole vaulter Armand Duplantis has kicked off his 2024 year in style with a win at his own hometown meet 'Mondo Classic' here.

The reigning three-time world champion (indoors and outdoors) in pole vault cleared 5.92m before missing all three attempts at 6.02m on Tuesday night. Americans KC Lightfoot and Sam Kendrick finished in second and third, respectively, with Lightfoot also clearing 5.92m but having missed his first attempt at the height - while Duplantis went over on his first. Kendrick soared over 5.82m to finish third.

The line-up for the 2024 Mondo Classic on February 6 at the IFU Arena includes several Olympic and World Championship medalists including Chris Nielsen (US) and Kurtis Marshall (Australia).



The 2023's event saw Duplantis soar to new heights with his 6.10m

record but the Swede was otherwise satisfied starting what is an Olympic

year with Paris 2024 looming this summer.

"I really felt like it was in the cards today, but it wasn't meant to be I guess," Duplantis said on the event's livestream. "To be able to come away with the win it definitely was the most important part. I wanted to jump higher, I think it was possible, but I had a tricky time on the runway today in terms of the poles. The poles felt soft - softer than I thought that they would."

"The atmosphere was fantastic. I wish I could have jumped a little higher for them. It just didn't happen today," Duplantis was quoted by Olympics.com.

'Mondo Classic' holds a competition status as World Athletics Indoor Tour Silver Meeting by the International Association of Athletics Federations, which is the highest possible ranking status and quality level that can be awarded to an international indoor single-event athletics competition.

## Boris Becker announces coaching split with Holger Rune

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former German tennis icon Boris Becker has stepped down from his position as the coach of Danish tennis star and world number seven Holger Rune with immediate effect, the 56-year-old announced in a social media post.

In October of last year, Becker returned to the tennis circuit as Rune's coach. The 20-year-old Dane subsequently made his debut in the ATP Finals in Turin, an eight-man season-ending championship, where his campaign concluded in the group stage.

Rune has worked with numerous coaches over the past year, and Becker is the latest to decide to part ways with the 20-year-old Dane. "I would like to inform you that I will step down as the head coach of Holger Rune with immediate effect. We started this partnership with the initial goal to reach the ATP Finals end of last year but moving forward I realised that in order for this to be successful, I would need to be available for Holger much more than I can," Becker wrote in an X post.

"Due to professional and private responsibilities, I can't give Holger what he needs now. I wish him only the very best and I'm



always going to be his n.1 fan. I truly appreciated this journey together," he added.

Counting on vast experience when in action, Becker for three years was the coach of Serbian great Novak Djokovic. The duo harvested six Grand Slams aside from 25 tournament titles.

Becker's position as head coach of Rune marked his return to a major role following his release from prison. The former Wimbledon champion had served eight months of a two-and-a-half-year sentence for concealing financial assets and loans.

## The district's first PP tiles badminton court was gifted by Chief speaker Douce Boisgelin

200 girl students will get benefits Douce Boisgelin Chief of Girls in Motion participated in the online program.

Shivpuri | Agencies

The first synthetic PP tiles badminton court in Shivpuri district has been established in Government Maharani Lakshimibai Girls Higher Secondary School, Court Road. In this court, 200 students will practice badminton on international standards, and will be conducted by a female coach. Today, with the support of the Girls in Motion and SDIF will conduct badminton at Court at School. Chief speaker and head of girls in motion, the court was formally inaugurated. Through this PP tiles court, international level badminton training



was imparted to the economically backward students

coming from faraway places. Along with this, they will also be provided with dress shoes, racket shuttle and healthy diet to prevent anemia by Douce of Girls in Motion.

Giving more information by the program coordinator Ravi, said that the head of SDIF and Girls in Motion, Douce, collected money for the children from her school and gave it to 200 daughters of Girls Higher Secondary School, Court Road, Shivpuri, through female trainer Kratika Mishra. PTI Manoj Under the direction of Gupta, a batch of badminton will be formed and good training will be provided. So that children of government schools can perform well.

## Youngsters feel they belong on this stage and have purpose within the team: Joe Root

Team Absolute | New Delhi

England's premier batter Joe Root believes that the youngsters coming into the Test side feel like they belong to this format and are driven by a purpose to be within the team.

The ongoing five-match Test series between England and India is squared at 1-1, with the youngsters for the visitors shining in the two games so far. Vice-captain Ollie Pope played an influential hand with his epic 196 at Hyderabad while debutant Tom Hartley took 7-62 on Test debut in the win at Hyderabad.

In the second Test at Visakhapatnam, where England lost by 106 runs, there were silver linings in teenage spinner Rehan Ahmed taking three-fer in both innings and



debutant off-spinner Shoaib Bashir taking four wickets on debut. Hartley also took a four-fer in the second innings while opener Zak Crawley had 70+ scores in both innings.

"It's great and that's all part and parcel of the game. If you play Test cricket for long periods of time, you're going to see players leave the group and see young guys come in. The more you play, the more responsibility you have for trying to create a really enjoyable environment and one that allows them to thrive and feel as comfortable and as confident as possible. These young guys come in and I really feel they belong on this stage and have a purpose within the team," said Root to JioCinema. Talking about Pope's knock in Hyderabad, Root was lavish in his praise. "Ollie went out and probably played one of the best overseas innings you'll see in these conditions, especially against that attack on that surface." The more time we spend in these conditions, hopefully, we can continue to familiarize

ourselves and keep that calmness about how we go about things. But also, when the chances are there and when the time's right, we can keep applying pressure and then try to attack at the right moment."

Asked if England had doubted their Bazball style of play after being bowled out for 246 in the first innings at Hyderabad, Root denied such ideas emerged in the camp. "No. Regardless, of the result of the game, we're always going to play how we know. It's what's given us success for a good period of time now. It's what brings the best out of us."

"We've been in similar situations before. The last time we played India in England, in that one-off Test, we were miles behind in the game and we managed to chase that score down."





## Sunny Leone: I fell in love with my husband watching him play music

Team Absolute | Mumbai

It was in 2011 when Sunny Leone married her husband and musician Daniel Weber, and the two have been setting relationship goals ever since. The actress revealed that she fell in love with him when she saw him play music.

Talking about Daniel, the frontman of American rock 'n roll band The Disparrows, Sunny very proudly told: "Daniel's music is amazing. He truly is an inspiration. He's so creative, talented, smart and he loves playing. I fell in love watching my husband play music the first time I met him."

She added: "It was so hot, so sexy, he was covered in tattoos. I mean, what girl doesn't like that!"

After six years of marriage, in 2017, they adopted daughter Nisha from Latur in Maharashtra, and then welcomed their sons via surrogacy in 2018.

When not working, Sunny, who has just opened a restaurant, said that she's around her family.

"I love my life and I love what I do... I also love being around my children. The days that I don't feel like working are not usually an option. If I need to work I need to work and those days when I have offs I really do enjoy my time at home, family and spending time with my kids," said the actress, who made her Bollywood debut with



'Jism 2' in 2012.

The actress, whose real name is Karenjit Kaur Vohra, has over a decade-long journey in Indian cinema, where she has worked in films such as 'Ragini MMS 2', 'Ek Paheli Leela', 'Mastizaade' and 'Kennedy'.

Apart from her work, Sunny is also loved for her affable nature towards her fans.

Talking about the same, Sunny said: "Most fans just need that one minute of your time or 30 seconds

sometime. They just want a selfie. So, I try to be as nice as I can even if I am tired or having a bad day but I also do believe in being myself and if this does not make me happy anymore, then maybe I should do something different."

"But that is not the case. I love my job and I love what I do and I am genuinely very happy. I have a lot of people around me to keep pulling me down to earth if I seem like I am on a different planet," she concluded.

## Suniel Shetty: Working with Madhuri Dixit is a learning experience

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Suniel Shetty, who is a co-judge with Madhuri Dixit Nene in 'Dance Deewane', has opened up on his equation with the latter, and said working with her is a learning experience for him.

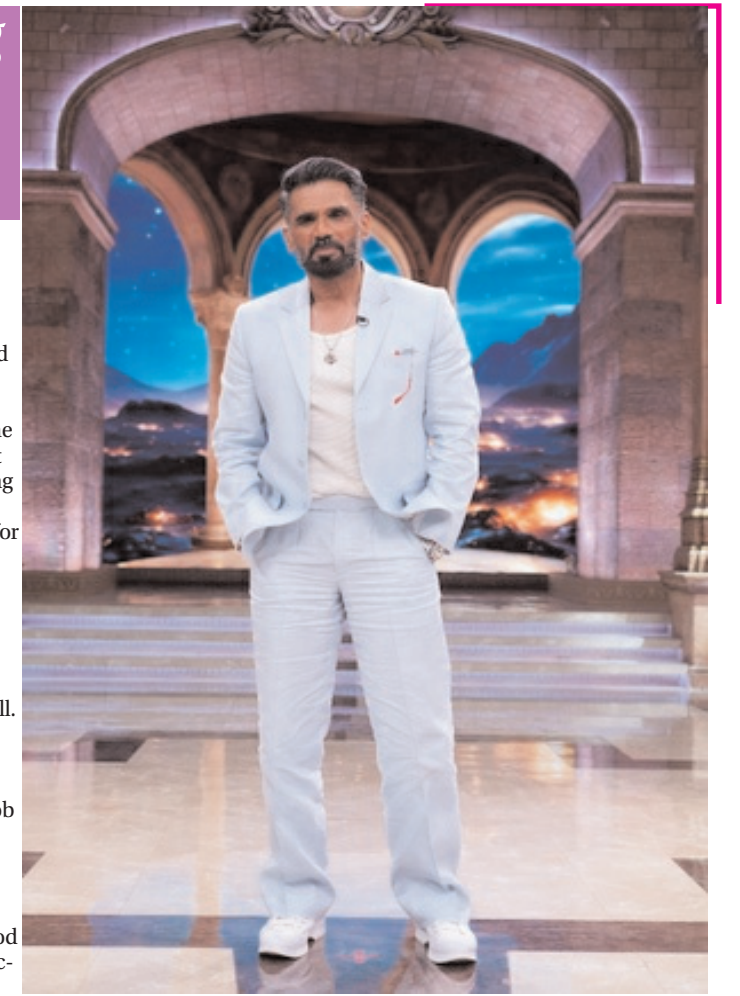
Suniel, who has collaborated with Madhuri for the first time, said: "She has been very thoughtful about taking care of me because she knew that I am getting into something new. She did that beautifully. And not just her, the team and Bharti made it very easy for me."

"The team has taught me how everything works and they are all very good. Madhuri is the queen of expressions and dance, and working with her is a learning experience for me. I'll take home many things from here and I have always been in awe of her as an actor and human being. That smile can kill. I try to focus more on the stage and less on watching her smile," chuckled Suniel.

The 'Border' fame actor further shared that Madhuri is excellent, and she has done a brilliant job of handling him as being a judge is very difficult.

If you get a chance to perform with Madhuri on the show, then which song would you choose to dance with her?

Suniel said: "I will only do the move that I am good at, which is nodding my head while sitting. My dancing is limited to that much."



## Shankar Mahadevan on Grammy win: 'Dreams do come true'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Music composer and singer Shankar Mahadevan has expressed his gratitude with a heart-felt note after his band Zakir Hussain's Shakti band Shakti won the Best Global Music Album award at the Grammys 2024. He said that this is the moment from which he can say that dreams do come true.

Mahadevan took to Instagram, where he shared a string of pictures from Grammy 2024 and said that he never imagined that a band from where he learnt his music would eventually win a Grammy.

He wrote alongside a picture where he is seen posing with a golden gramophone: "WE DID IT. I never imagined that a band from where I have learnt my music and my musical aesthetics would be the band with whom I would eventually perform and win a Grammy. This is the moment from which I can easily say that dreams do come true."

"Shakti was a dream which came true! Thank you Almighty for making this happen! It's truly 'THIS MOMENT'!"

Mahadevan and Zakir's band, which features guitarist John McLaughlin, percussionist V Selvagesh, and violinist Ganesh Rajagopalan, gave a heartening speech.

He said: "Thank you boys. Thank you God, family, friends and India. India, we are proud of you."



He added: "Last but not the least, I would like to dedicate this award to my wife, whom every note of my music is dedi-

## KJo says his 'life has changed for the best' as his 'brightest sunshines' turn 7

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As his twins Yash and Roohi, whom he described as his "brightest sunshines," turned seven, filmmaker Karan Johar penned a heart-warming note for his children Yash and Roohi, along with a special message for his mother Hiroo Johar.

Karan took to Instagram, where he shared a picture posing with his children, whom he welcomed via surrogacy.

Karan wrote: "Happiest birthday to the brightest sunshines (x2) of my life! My life is forever changed, for the best with you two coming into it with your goofy and adorable laughs, unadulterated sass towards ME and of course - an abundance of love to give to the world! Never change...grow up but never change."

He went on to thank his mother, whom he called the strength to his family.

"And thank you to my mom, who is forever the strength of our family...and being a mother figure to Yash & Roohi! Love you forever mom."

It was in 2017 when he welcomed his twins Roohi and Yash. The director named his son Yash after his father, and his daughter Roohi by rearranging his mother's name Hiroo.



## 'TMKOC' completes 4000 episodes, stars say 'grateful'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The star cast of the longest running sitcom 'Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah' (TMKOC) - Palak Sindhvani, Mandar Chandwadkar, Sunayana Fozdar, and Ambika have shared glimpses from the grand celebrations of the 4000 episodes, saying they are grateful, thankful, and humbled for the immense love and support.

The show that aired first in July 2008, is now in its 16th year, and has recently marked 4000 episodes. It is based on the weekly column 'Duniya Ne Undha Chasma' by Tarak Mehta in Chitralekha magazine. Palak plays the character of 'Sonu Aatmaram Bhide', who is the daughter of Aatmaram and Madhavi. This role was earlier played by Jheel Mehta, and Nidhi Bhanushali.

The young actress took to Instagram and shared happy pictures from the grand celebration at the Gokuldharm housing society. The photos show Palak wearing a yellow high neck full sleeves tee shirt and a black overall. She penned a note which read as: "Beyond Grateful.. Time Flies and How!! Congratulations to the entire team of @taarak-mehtakaooltahchashmah for achieving this milestone and Thank You to each one of you for showering so much love and support, Aapke



pyaar se hi hum sab hai!"

Mandar plays the role of Aatmaram Tukaram Bhide, who is a tuition teacher and runs "Bhide Tuition Classes". Sharing a Reel video from the celebrations, the actor wrote in an Instagram post: "Natamastak. Lots of gratitude and love to you all!"

Sunayana plays the role of Anjali Tarak Mehta in the show. This character was earlier played by Neha Mehta. The 'Qubool Hai' fame actress penned a note, saying: "Grateful Thankful and Humbled #taarakmehtakaooltahchashmah @taarakmehtakaooltahchashmahnpf Completing 4000 Episodes!!! fortunate to be a part of this Journey of winning hearts

and making people smile...Wishes and Love to the Entire Team to all who have contributed in this Journey.... And to our ever Loyal, Loving audience who've Loved us like family."

Ambika portrays the character of Komal Hansraj Hathi and is known for her catchphrase 'Oh Come On'. Sharing the video on her social media account, she wrote: "Yet another milestone...4000 Happsodes... There's sure some magic that's working for all of us to come this long... God's grace, His blessings and His way of showering abundance... And the immense love, support and appreciation received from the audience.. Grateful forever."

## Shubhangi Atre on spiritual retreat: There's renewed sense of well-being, connection

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Shubhangi Atre recently went for a peaceful yoga and spiritual retreat in Coimbatore, finding spiritual exploration, rejuvenation, and self-discovery. Sharing details about her spiritual retreat, Shubhangi who plays 'Angoori Bhabi' in the sitcom 'Bhabiji Ghar Par Hai' said: "Venturing to the outskirts, a day at the yoga centre provided a peaceful haven. The ashram served as a serene retreat, allowing me to meditate, practice yoga, and explore amidst the lush surroundings of Dhyanalanga. In the evenings, there were joyous gatherings where like-minded souls met for group meditations, chanting, and reflective discussions."

"Its special culinary offerings aided in skillfully nourishing body and spirit, fostering harmonious balance. The spiritual ambience and positive energy left an enduring impression on my soul. Reflecting on my time there, I am grateful for the profound moments of self-discovery and the nurturing embrace of the spiritual haven," said the 'Kasturi' actress.

"This journey has left an indelible mark on my heart, and I carry forward a renewed sense of well-being and connection. With its rich



tapestry of tradition and contemporary beauty, Coimbatore has truly been a soul-enriching destination." About exploring Coimbatore, Shubhangi added: "Enjoying Coimbatore's delicious cuisine was crucial to my visit. Experiencing various dishes,

from the famous South Indian dosa to local specialties like Kothu Parotta, was a pleasure."

"Exploring local markets was delightful, discovering traditional silk sarees, handicrafts, and spices now serving as cherished souvenirs of my enriching journey."

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sonal Chouhan