

# absolute india

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Delhi Police impose section 144, ban processions & demonstrations till March 12, citing

## FARMERS ON THE WAY

Large containers to block the road if needed have been kept on borders beside multiple security barricades, which have already been installed there to stop the farmers from entering the city. As per officials, over 5,000 cops, including paramilitary forces, were on their toes to maintain law and order situation on the Delhi borders.

► The order stated that there is a likelihood that some anti-social elements/agitator groups may take advantage of the situation and indulge in activities prejudicial to the maintenance of peace, public order as well as law & order in Delhi/New Delhi.  
► The order also stated that there shall be a prohibition on blocking of roads, passages, any type of procession agitation, rally, public meeting by the agitators or general public or public representatives by way of assembly/gathering of five or more persons with or without weapons in the entire jurisdiction of Delhi, except for purposes specifically permitted under law.



participants of the march entering into the territory of Delhi/New Delhi. "The participants are likely to use tractors, trolleys/trailers as mode of transport for entering into the territory of Delhi/New Delhi, which will inevitably be a great hazard on Delhi roads and will cause danger to other road users/residents of Delhi/New Delhi, Plying of tractor is also banned in New Delhi, And whereas the convergence of such a large number of potential agitators presents a serious significant threat to public safety, the security of public and private property and the maintenance of public peace/order and tranquility within the region," it read. The CP also urged all residents, community leaders and stakeholders to extend their full cooperation and support to the law enforcement agencies in the implementation of the order, with the understanding that it is aimed at safeguarding the collective security and well-being of the populace.

### Ex-Maha CM Ashok Chavan quits party; more may follow

**Team Absolute | Mumbai**  
Shocking the Congress, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Shankarrao Chavan quit the party, and also as MLA, amid speculation of many other senior leaders planning to follow suit, here on Monday. Chavan submitted his resignation to the state Congress President Nana Patole. Sparking hectic political activity, Chavan, 66, called on Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar this morning before going incommunicado. A few hours later Chavan's resignation letter surfaced, he changed his profile on X and then tweeted details that he has quit the Congress. In his letter, he has also written by hand 'former' (maaji) MLA from Bhokar Assembly constituency, but has not cited any reasons for his move. Soon after the developments, Patole has air-dashed to Chhattisgarh to meet Rahul Gandhi on his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra and then will go to New Delhi to discuss the issue with party bigwigs on Chavan's abrupt decision. Simultaneously, political circles were agog with con-



jectures of the probability of several other legislators and leaders following in Chavan's footsteps. This is the third major 'leak' to rock the Congress in the New Year, with more in the pipeline.

### Rahul's yatra in UP rescheduled & shortened

**Lucknow:** The Uttar Pradesh leg of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra has been rescheduled and shortened due to the ongoing UP Board exams. UPCC chief Ajay Rai said that the yatra would now enter UP on February 16 instead of February 14, and exit on February 22/23 instead of the earlier plan of February 27/28. The yatra will skip western UP and instead head to Bundelkhand. While a revised plan will be released shortly, it will continue with its primary itinerary from Chandauli to Lucknow.

### RLD JOIN NDA

**New Delhi:** Before the Lok Sabha elections 2024, Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) President Jayant Chaudhary has announced to join the NDA. RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary has made his stand clear on the question of joining NDA. Jayant Chaudhary said that I have talked to all my MLAs. We had to take a decision in a short time, the circumstances were such that we decided to go with NDA. Jayant Chaudhary said that all our MLAs and workers are with us. Jayant Chaudhary's joining NDA will be a big blow to the I.N.D.I.A alliance. Because Jayant Chaudhary is considered to have a good hold in Western UP and he has a lot of influence on the Jat vote bank. However, now it remains to be seen what impact Jayant Choudhary's alliance with BJP will have on the I.N.D.I.A alliance.

## Nitish Kumar govt wins trust vote in Bihar Assembly

**Patna | Agencies**  
Nitish Kumar-led government in Bihar comfortably managed to win the vote of trust on Monday. The Nitish Kumar government got 129 votes in Bihar assembly while the opposition leaders walked out from the House. Three RJD MLAs -- Chetan Anand of Sheohar, Neelam Devi of Mokama and Prahlad Yadav - voted in favour of Nitish Kumar government. Deputy speaker Maheshwar Hazari did not vote in the assembly as the Nitish Kumar already crossed the magic figure of 122. If the situation was tight, then he might have cast his vote in the favour of Nitish Kumar government. Hazari is a MLA of JD-U. After winning the vote of trust, former industry minister Shah Nawaz Hussain congratulated Nitish Kumar for the victory. "Under the guidance of PM Narendra Modi and the leadership of Nitish Kumar, the double-engine government will work at a rapid



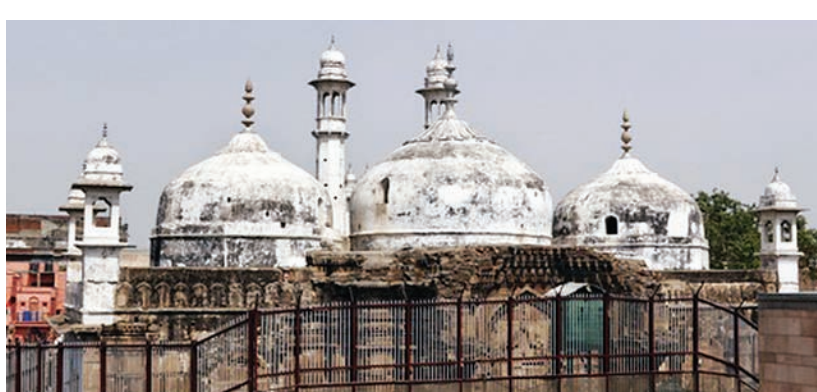
pace in Bihar for the development. It is a new start for the new mission with new energy." RJD and Mahagathbandhan played well during the vote of trust but they failed at the last moment due to the three RJD leaders who cross-voted.

## GARLIC PRICES SOAR IN GOA, RESTAURANTS HIT

**Panaji:** The rates of garlic have skyrocketed almost fourfold to Rs 400 to 500 per kg in Goa, affecting Chinese cuisine of various fast food outlets and restaurants, due to shortage of supplies. Talking to reporter Hajrat Ali of wholesalers K.R. Traders said that as supply is very low, the prices have soared. "We get the garlic from Madhya Pradesh... due to low production, the prices have gone up since the last many days. This trend will remain for more 15 days and then the prices may decrease," Ali, who supplies garlic to most of the places in South Goa, said. He said that their business is affected, as people purchase in low quantities. In Bhopal, Capital city of Madhya Pradesh, garlic price soared upto Rs 600.

## ALLAHABAD HC TO HEAR MUSLIM'S PLEA ON GYANVAPI ON FEB 15

**Prayagraj (UP) | Agencies**  
The Allahabad High Court on Monday adjourned till February 15 the hearing on a plea challenging the Varanasi district court order allowing Hindu prayers in a cellar of the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi. Justice Rohit Ranjan Agrawal passed the order on the appeal filed by the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee, which looks after the affairs of the mosque adjacent to the Kashi Vishwanath temple. After hearing the counsels for the Muslim side -- Punit Gupta and SFA Naqvi -- at length, Justice Agrawal fixed February 15 as the date for further hearing in the matter on Naqvi's request.



Appearing on behalf of the mosque committee, SFA Naqvi submitted before the court that what right the plaintiff (Vyas) has in the disputed property is not decided yet and therefore without ascertaining the right of the plaintiff, the order to permit puja in the cellar is illegal. The Muslim side also filed certified copies of court orders which were not filed earlier, and these were taken on record. The Hindu side in the case also filed some papers to prove their possession on the property in dispute. The Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee had moved the high court on February 2 within hours of the Supreme Court refusing to hear its plea against the Varanasi district court order and asking it to approach the high court. The Varanasi district court had ruled on January 31 that a priest can perform prayers before the idols in the southern cellar of the Gyanvapi mosque.

## Electric cables to be laid like railway tracks on Delhi-Jaipur road: Gadkari

**Udaipur | Agencies**  
Tram-like services will soon run between Jaipur and Delhi, which will have the best of facilities and the fare will also be less as three buses will be connected like train coaches, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, said here on Monday while laying the foundation for 17 road projects. Gadkari said he had gone to Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia, some time ago where there was a cable above the road on which electric bus was running. "Electric cables will be laid on the road like a railway track. After this, an electric bus will be run by connecting three buses like a coach. This service will have facilities like a plane. There will be a category like business class where tea and snacks will



also be available. "Its fare will be 30 per cent less than the diesel buses running on the roads. The special thing is that it will soon be started from Jaipur. Currently, an electric bus is being operated between Delhi and Jaipur," Gadkari said. During the programme, Gadkari gifted projects worth Rs 2,500 crore to Rajasthan which included construction of the six-lane Chittorgarh-Udaipur road, among others.

## From Qatar to Pakistan, Modi govt's diplomacy ensures success of India's rescue missions

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**  
Undoubtedly, the release of eight Indian Navy veterans by Qatar could be possible only as a result of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's diplomatic efforts. The welcome development reflects his unwavering commitment to ensuring the security and well-being of all Indians, irrespective of geographical boundaries. Definitely, a lot of hard work and diplomatic efforts made by PM Modi and his team of diplomats in Delhi resulted in the safe return of the Navy veterans from Qatar. The PM's meeting with Qatari Amir Tamim Bin Hamad on December 1 last year in Dubai helped achieve the release of these officials, nearly 18 months after they were arrested in an alleged case of espionage. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) appreciated the decision of the Emir of Qatar to enable the release and home-coming of the Indians -- marking a big diplomatic win for



India. This shows the Modi government's determined focus on rescuing Indian citizens who are stranded either abroad or on domestic soil. The government under his leadership has always ensured that Indians facing troubles anywhere in the world or in any part of the country are not abandoned. They should not be left in the lurch. Rather, they should be extended a help-

## UPI services launched in Sri Lanka, Mauritius

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**  
India on Monday successfully launched its Unified Payment Interface (UPI) services in Sri Lanka and Mauritius. RuPay card services were also launched in Mauritius as part of this initiative. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the inaugural event virtually alongside his Mauritian counterpart Pravind Jugnauth, and Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe. Indians visiting the two nations will be able to utilise UPI services to make payments, and Mauritians travelling to India will be able to do the same. Additionally, Mauritian banks will be able to issue RuPay cards and use them for transactions in both India and Mauritius. The launch of the Indian services comes amid growing bilateral



economic ties with Sri Lanka and Mauritius. UPI services, developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), enable immediate real-time bank transactions using mobile phones. RuPay is an Indian-based card payment network that is widely accepted at retail locations, ATMs, and online platforms globally. Prior to this, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) worked with Lyra, a well-known French expert in e-commerce and proximity payments, to introduce UPI services to France.



# TEJASHWI WONDERS WHAT MADE 'FATHER FIGURE' NITISH RETURN TO NDA

Patna | Agencies

During the debate on the no-confidence motion in the Bihar Assembly on Monday, RJD leader and former Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav said he always considered Chief Minister Nitish Kumar as a father figure, and wondered what made the JD-U chief ditch the 'Mahagathbandhan' and return to the NDA led by the BJP.

"I always considered Nitish Kumar as 'Dashrath' (character from 'Ramayan'). I don't know what forced him to leave the 'Mahagathbandhan'," Tejashwi said.

"I also want to congratulate Nitish Ji for being sworn-in as the Chief Minister of Bihar for the ninth time, including thrice in one term. Can anyone take the guarantee that he will not switch sides again," the RJD leader said on the floor of the House.

"But I still have respect for Nitish Kumar. We had supported him following his call to unite the forces against communalism in the country. In the run up to the 2020 Assembly



elections, I had promised the people of Bihar to give 10 lakh government jobs. Now people of the country have seen how government jobs were given to the common youth," Yadav said.

"After visiting the Raj Bhavan, Nitish Kumar had said he is not feeling well in the company of RJD. Are

we singers and dancers who came for JD-U's entertainment? We came here to do work. The works which were looking impossible, we made them possible. "I am happy to be in the opposition. The people of the country have seen the work we did in the past 17 months. No other government did such work," Yadav said.

## RJD LEADERS WERE EARNING MONEY IN ILLEGAL MANNERS, WILL INITIATE PROBE: NITISH

Patna: After winning the vote of trust in Bihar assembly, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar alleged that RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav and the leaders of Mahagathbandhan, while staying in the government, were earning money in illegal manners.

"I was not against anyone and had given respect to them but I was in pain when I learnt that they were earning money. Even though the BJP, which was with us, had never done any kind of mischief, they (RJD) kept all leaders at one place and offered lakhs of rupees to move legislators here and there. Now, I will initiate investigation about how they could obtain money," Nitish Kumar said while addressing the assembly after sailing through the floor test.

# Kejriwal, Bhagwant Mann visit Ram Temple with family, offer prayers

Ayodhya (UP) | Agencies

Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo Arvind Kejriwal and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann visited the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Monday accompanied by their respective families.

They were welcomed by temple trust secretary Champat Rai, who took them around the shrine complex.

In a post on X, Kejriwal said, "I had the privilege of having the divine darshan of Ram Lalla ji in the Shri Ram temple. Bhagwant ji and his family were also present on this occasion. Everyone together had darshan of Maryada Purushottam Lord Shri Ram Ji and prayed for the progress of the country and the welfare of all humanity. May Lord Shri Ramchandra ji bless everyone. Jai Shri Ram."

This is the second trip of Kejriwal to Ayodhya in recent



times after his visit to the holy site in 2021.

It may be recalled that the Delhi Chief Minister had not attended the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of the Ram Temple on January 22, which was headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Ahead of the grand ceremony on January 22, Kejriwal had claimed that he did not receive a formal invitation to attend the Pran Pratishtha event. "They had sent me a letter, and after we called them, they said a team would come to formally invite me.

But no one came. But it does not matter. In the letter, they wrote that a lot of VIPs and VVIPs would come for the event and, for security reasons, only one person would be allowed," Kejriwal had said. Kejriwal had also called the Pran Pratishtha ceremony a "matter of immense pride and happiness" for everyone across the country and the world.

He had also promised that his government would put in efforts to run more trains from the national capital to Ayodhya.

# Police stop Bengal BJP MLAs from visiting violence-hit Sandeshkhali

Kolkata | Agencies

A team of BJP legislators led by leader of opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, Suwendu Adhikari, was stopped within the limits of Greater Kolkata enroute the violence-hit Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district, which has been on the boil since last Thursday.

The BJP MLAs left for Sandeshkhali in a bus from the south gate of the state Assembly. However, as soon as the bus reached the Basanti Highway on the outskirts of Kolkata, it was stopped by the police.

The officer leading the police team informed that a request came from the office of the Superintendent of Basirhat district police, under which Sandeshkhali falls, stating that the BJP legislators should be stopped within the limits of Greater Kolkata once they head towards Sandeshkhali. Order was also issued to impose Section 144 in Sandeshkhali.

However, Suwendu Adhikari argued that it is not possible to impose Section 144 within the Greater Kolkata territory, which is 60 km away from Sandeshkhali. Adhikari also



thanked Governor C.V. Ananda Bose for making a visit to Sandeshkhali following his request. "I thank the Governor. While I was sure that we will not be allowed to reach Sandeshkhali, I also apprehended that we might be stopped within the Kolkata territory itself," he said. Fashion designer-turned-BJP legislator Agnimitra Paul claimed that the police, which remained 'mute spectators' when women were being harassed, have now become active in preventing BJP's legislative team from visiting Sandeshkhali and meet the distressed local people there.

# Ashok Chavan exit: Future BJP President will be an ex-Congressman, quips Uddhav Thackeray

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The exit of former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan from the Congress triggered strong reactions from the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance on Monday.

In a strong attack, Shiv Sena-UBT President and former CM Uddhav Thackeray said first the Bharatiya Janata Party broke up the Shiv Sena, then the Nationalist Congress Party, now the Congress.

"The BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi make claims of 400-plus (in 2024 Lok Sabha polls), but this proves they have no confidence of even going 40-plus, that's why they are taking people from all other parties. Now so many people from Congress are in the BJP that after a few years, a BJP President may be an ex-Congressman," he said.

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Vijay Wadetiwar hinted at Chavan facing some probe that may have prompted him to quit the party.

"We have been hearing that some investigators were after him, but nothing more developed later... He would know..." the Congress leader said, admitting that it was a shocking setback for the party, while strongly refuting BJP's claims that he (Wadetiwar) would be next to quit the Congress.



Nationalist Congress Party-SP MLA Rohit R. Pawar lamented that when there is a real need to fight for ideology today, senior leaders abandoning their ideology for which they fought all their lives to join the BJP is unfortunate.

"Since the sessions of alliance with BJP will continue, the next battle for identity and ideology will have to be fought by the common masses, and the people are ready for it," he said.

Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) President Prakash Ambedkar said that "the BJP can break any

number of parties or leaders, but Maharashtra will defeat it in the next elections. The Marathi voter doesn't approve of the BJP now".

In a jibe, SS-UBT's MP Priyanka Chaturvedi said that the Adarsh Society scam, the MSC Bank scam or the Maharashtra Sadan scam are no more scams as those 'scamsters' are now part of the BJP. "It isn't a Congress-Mukt Bharat, but a 'Congress-Yukt BJP'... The 'khichdi' cooked in Maharashtra will give stomach poisoning to those cooking and eating it, a matter of time," she claimed.

Shiv Sena-UBT Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut said it was unbelievable that Ashok Chavan, who till yesterday was together and holding discussions with the MVA, is gone today.

"Like Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, will Chavan also claim the Congress now and get the 'Hand' symbol? Will the Election Commission of India oblige? Anything can happen in this country now," he wondered.

Congress' ex-CM Prithviraj Chavan said Chavan's departure was a big blow to the party, but assured that "no other leaders or legislators" have left. "We are in touch with all our people... So far, we have not heard of any such plans, as claimed," he continued.

# TIE-U GLOBAL PITCH COMPETITION BY PU-INCENT AND METACUBE

Lalit Sharma | Jaipur

The-Rajasthan in association with Poornima University's Integrated Nodal Center for Entrepreneurship & Novel Technologies (PU-INCENT) organized the "Global Pitch Competition" powered by Metacube under TIE-U season 2023-24. The session featured many distinguished experts including Abhijeet Katariya, Vice President-Technology, Metacube Software Pvt. Ltd. (Chief Guest); Chirag Singhal, Vipin Jain, Bobby Sharma, Riddhi Bharadwaj from Metacube Software Pvt. Ltd. (Guest of Honors).

Dr. Manoj Gupta, Pro-President, Poornima University extending a warm welcome to all esteemed dignitaries and participants.

After it, initiated the Global Pitch Competition, where startup pitches were presented by JPD Jewellers Pvt.Ltd., Doodhwala's, Pawdrip, Sky Server, Aim Karo, Vench etc. Following the pitches, Bobby Sharma conducted a student engagement activity, featuring an interactive question-answer session and rewarding

**Empowering Growth: udaanCapital and Saint-Gobain Forge Strategic Partnership for Seamless Channel Financing Solutions for Distributors & Retailers**

students with exciting prizes. The results were announced based on the given criteria. Doodhwala secured the first position for its execution plan, while Pawdrip earned the second position for its innovative idea and Aim karo claimed the third position. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Amisha Jain, Captain of PU-INCENT, on behalf of Poornima University.

# Andhra Pradesh leads states in public donations for Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra

Amaravati | Agencies

Andhra Pradesh stands first in the donations for Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra of former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi.

Andhra Pradesh has so far donated over Rs 1.02 crore for the East-West yatra.

Congress MP and party in-charge for Telangana Manickam Tagore on Monday shared the list of five states with highest public donations.

The donations from Andhra Pradesh stand at Rs 1,02,32,907. Rajasthan stands second with donations of Rs 86,42,697. Haryana, Maharashtra and Karnataka are at third, fourth and fifth positions respectively.

Tagore congratulated Andhra Pradesh Congress for leading India in Nyay donations. "Thanks to the visionary leadership of Rahul Gandhi



for promoting transparency in politics, gaining strong support in Andhra Pradesh. Huge appreciation to APCC President Y. S. Sharmila Reddy for driving this initiative forward," he said. Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee President Sharmila thanked the people of Andhra Pradesh. "From the bottom of my heart, I thank the people of Andhra Pradesh who stood at the top position, nationally, in contributing to NYAY dona-

Team Absolute | New Delhi

UdaanCapital, one of India's leading fintech players, today announced that it has facilitated disbursements of over INR 170 crores of working capital to the distribution network of Saint-Gobain Glass Business, a subsidiary of Saint-Gobain, one of the world's premier glass manufacturers. The disbursements were enabled through a partnership with Saint-Gobain for their distributors and retailers via udaanCapital's Channel Financing program for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). As part of this collaboration, approximately 200+ distributors of Saint-Gobain have been successfully onboarded by udaanCapital over 20 months, spanning 122 cities and 23 states across India.

Post Covid, brands have been keen to explore solutions that boost the liquidity in their MSME buyer base without building up receivables on their books or taking excessive credit expo-



sure. Saint-Gobain's core objective while evaluating a channel financing partner was to ensure widespread adoption of the program pan India and a technology enabled solution capable of leveraging their existing cash discount structures for the MSME buyers. udaanCapital emerged

# 5 arrested in K'taka after gang intervenes between quarrelling couple, wife raped

Bengaluru | Agencies

A married woman was raped by a six-member gang on the pretext of helping her in Gangavathi town in Koppal district of Karnataka.

The police said that five accused have been arrested while the hunt for the main accused is underway.

The five accused have been identified as Moula Hussain, Shivakumar, Prashanth, Mahesh and Madesh.

The main accused has been identified as Lingaraj.

Police said that victim (21), a native of Bengaluru, had come to meet her husband in Gangavathi town on February 9 at about 9.30 p.m. The victim met her husband but soon a quarrel ensued between the couple.

Police said that the gang had observed the quarrel between the couple and after the fight intensified between the couple, the gang intervened and sided with the wife.

"On pretext of helping her, the gang attacked her husband and dragged him away," the police said.

Police said that they then lured the victim to a dark spot and then forcefully took her to a park and raped her. "The main accused identified as Lingaraj raped the woman while others



helped him to commit the crime," police said.

Police said that after raping her, the accused along with other associates escaped from the spot leaving behind the victim.

The victim later lodged a complaint with the Gangavathi police station regarding the incident.

# udaanCapital and Saint-Gobain Partner to Promote Channel Financing in the MSME Sector

as a preferred partner to create a win-win proposition for the brand and their MSME buyers udaanCapital's app seamlessly onboard borrowers and facilitates immediate invoice payments to Saint-Gobain, this fosters cash flow management, boosts sales, and strengthens relationships with channel partners. The program allows access to inventory without upfront payment, facilitating a smooth flow of goods and contributing to business growth. As more distributors join the financing program, liquidity increases, enabling higher purchases from Saint-Gobain. udaanCapital's customized solution plays a key role in reducing Saint-Gobain's Days Sales Outstanding (DSO), providing buyers with an extended credit period. Additionally, buyers have flexible payment terms or incentives in form of cashback for early payments. The credit limits tied to purchases are reusable upon repayment, further contributing to the overall efficiency of the financial process.



# Tough on quotas, Maratha leader warns 'No idea what will happen after Feb 15'

Team Absolute | Jalna (Maharashtra)

On his fourth hunger strike in seven months, Shiv Sanghatana leader Manoj Jarange-Patil on Monday warned that he could not predict what would happen after Thursday (February 15) if the government does not take concrete measures for declaring Maratha quotas as promised.

On this third day of his hunger strike, Jarange-Patil reiterated that the latest round of agitation will continue till "the assurances and orders of the government are implemented and the Marathas get all the benefits".

He was interacting with mediapersons at his village Antaravali-Sarati here this morning as hordes of his supporters thronged around him, many expressing concerns and anxiety, for him (Jarange-Patil) and the cause being fought since August, 2023

Jarange-Patil pointed out that Chief Minister



Eknath Shinde's MahaYuti government issued the draft notification (January 26) for expanding the OBC quotas to include Kumbi-Marathas and

Maratha-Kumbis, besides the 'sage-soyare' (the family bloodline).

"The draft is not enough. It must be enacted into a law. What is the government waiting for? They should immediately take steps to convert the notification into a law. If the government fails to take appropriate steps by February 15, I don't know what the Marathas will do. You have already witnessed what happened when they marched towards Mumbai last month," he declared.

"As you all have sons and daughters, we also have our children... We don't want to challenge the Mandal Commission in the courts. You live and let us also live. Give us justice," said Jarange-Patil in a gritty tone.

According to present indications, the state government is likely to convene a Special Session of the Legislature to announce the Maratha quotas this month, as assured by Shinde in December, 2023.

# Pune engineer kills mother, blaming her for his divorce

Team Absolute | Pune

In a shocker, a Pune engineer slit the throat of his visiting middle-aged mother after holding her responsible for his recent divorce, officials of Khadki Police Station said here on Monday.

The incident occurred late on February 10 at the Range Hills quarters of the accused, Dnyaneshwar S. Pawar, 35, working as an engineer with the Khadki Ammunition Factory's telecom department.

He has been arrested from Shirdi pilgrimage town in Ahmednagar, and will be produced before a Magistrate Court in Khadki this afternoon for remand.

According to preliminary investigations, Pawar was apparently disturbed after undergoing a divorce from his wife some time ago, so was living and working alone in Khadki, officials said.

Last week, he called up and requested his mother, Gunfabai S. Pawar, 56, living in Shirampur, Ahmednagar district, to visit and



spend some time with him and she readily agreed. However, just before midnight,

Dnyaneshwar slit her throat with a sharp-edged weapon, packed up his belongings, locked up the house and

fled from the crime scene in the early hours.

On February 11, the neighbours saw the locked house and finding it unusual they finally summoned the Khadki Police, said ASI B. R. Bhalerao. When they entered the Pawars' home, the Khadki Police came across Gunfabai's body lying in a pool of blood, with Dnyaneshwar missing from the place and nobody having any inkling of her whereabouts. The Khadki Police immediately launched a probe, deployed tech-intel, activated informers, scanned CCTV's footage to finally zero in on him late on Sunday, and nabbed him from Shirdi pilgrimage town in Ahmednagar.

"He has been brought to Khadi for further investigations and shall be produced before a Magistrate Court here later today (Feb.12)," said Bhalerao.

The accused has confessed to his diabolic act and indicated that he nursed a grudge against her as she reportedly was responsible for his divorce some time ago.

# Will decide my political path in two days: Ex-CM Ashok Chavan after quitting Cong

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Hours after quitting the Congress and as MLA, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Chavan said here on Monday that he has not thought of joining any other party, but will decide his future course of political action in the next couple of days.

"I have quit the Congress Party, as MLA and from all other party posts today... I have broken all my involvement with the party. I have no complaints and till yesterday I worked honestly for the party," said Chavan.

To repeated queries, he declared that he has yet to decide on joining any party, including the BJP, and will announce his next moves in a couple of days.

He also categorically stated that he has made any kind of political demands



to join any party, plus rubbished specu-

lation that he was 'in touch' with other Congress MLAs to quit along with him.

On the reasons for his quitting, Chavan said: "There may be some reasons... But I am not the kind to wash dirty linen in public... I don't have to tell everything in public. It's not in my nature to talk of any individuals in public," Chavan asserted.

This was Chavan's first reaction after severing all links with the Congress with which he was connected since his student days, and went on to hold several important party and government posts including CM.

To contentions, he countered: "I admit the Congress has given me a lot, my family has a legacy with the party. But even I have worked very hard and sincerely for the party till I was with it. However, now I have made a decision to quit, and I do not hold any grudges against anyone."

# ED searches 22 locations in Mumbai linked to builder Lalit Tekchandani; seizes Rs 30 cr

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday carried out searches at multiple locations in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai linked to builder Lalit Tekchandani over alleged cheating of prospective homebuyers.

Following the searches, the financial probe agency seized Rs 30 crore, comprising bank balances and fixed deposits (FDs).

The ED searches were carried out at multiple locations linked to Tekchandani under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Notably, the builder was arrested last month for alleged cheating and forgery.



The agency has been on the lookout for the proceeds of crime.

The ED had initiated the investigation on the basis of 2 FIRs registered at the Talaja police station and Chembur police station.

It is claimed that the com-

pany registered in Tekchandani's name collected huge money from prospective homebuyers in the name of a housing project in Talaja (Navi Mumbai) and then siphoned it off for personal gains and creating assets in the name of rela-

tives. As per agency records, the company M/s Supreme Construction & Developer Pvt Ltd collected funds to the tune of Rs 400 crore from more than 1,700 homebuyers for the housing project and then left them in lurch. The ED searches also resulted in the seizure of Rs 27.5 lakh cash and incriminating documents, relating to the acquisition of properties in the names of Tekchandani's family members. FDs amounting to Rs 29.73 crore were also unearthed during the searches, which have been frozen with immediate effect. Some digital devices and documentary documents were also impounded.

# Sanjay Raut mocks former CM Chavan's exit from Congress

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Chavan quit the Congress party, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut said that Chavan might now stake a claim to the Congress party and its emblem, the 'hand.' Raut drew comparisons with recent political defections in Maharashtra, implying that such an outcome was possible.

Raut expressed surprise at Chavan's unexpected exit from the Congress and questioned whether he would follow in the footsteps of Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, who successfully claimed the Shiv Sena party emblem after breaking from their respective parties. Raut's remarks highlighted the state's changing political allegiances.

"I can't believe it. Till yesterday they were together, discussing; today he left... Will Chavan, like Eknath Mindhe and Ajit Pawar, now claim Congress and take the 'hand' symbol? And will the Election Commission give it to them? Anything can hap-



pen in our country," Raut said in his social media post. Meanwhile, Congress MP Manickam Tagore shared a scene from the famous film 'Sholay,' comparing Chavan's resignation to a moment of terror that led to defeat and the party general secretary Jairam Ramesh, without mincing his words, labelled him a 'traitor'.

Amid speculation over Chavan's likely shift to the BJP, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis warned that numerous Congress leaders could join the BJP due to unhappiness among their party ranks.

Fadnavis' statements hinted at altering dynamics in Maharashtra's political scene, with implications for both the Congress and the BJP.

Chavan's resignation dealt a huge blow to the Congress party, which was aggravated by the exits of other key leaders, including Millind Deora and Baba Siddique. Chavan's political career, which includes multiple terms in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly and a spell as Chief Minister, has been marked by controversy, including allegations of corruption in the Adarsh Housing Society fraud.

# Viral video shows leopard near Mumbai housing society

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A leopard was spotted strolling near the wall of a Mumbai housing society along the Jogeshwari-Vikhroli Link Road, triggering panic among the residents and others in the area, a forest official said on Sunday, reported a news agency.

The big cat was captured on CCTV cameras installed at the Mumbai housing society, located close to the Aarey forest. The footage has gone viral on social media.

"A leopard roaming next to our society is very scary and dangerous. It can lead to a conflict situation. We are coordinating with forest officials to address this issue," said a resident of the Mumbai housing society.

Forest staff are closely monitoring the situation followed by daily night patrolling in and around that area, the official said. Citizens should not panic and instead, contact the 1926 toll-free helpline of the forest department in case of leopard sighting, he said.

More sightings of leopards in suburban Mumbai, especially on the periphery of



SGNP (Sanjay Gandhi National Park) or Aarey is not dangerous, said Pawan Sharma, founder and president of RAWW (Resqink Association for Wildlife Welfare).

He said wild animals often stray towards human habitats in search of easy prey due to their natural instincts.

"Citizens should avoid entering dark areas at night. They should keep their society well lit for clear visibility. Small children and pets should be accompanied with adults, while security guards should stay in their cabins and use torches at night," said Sharma, who is also the honorary wildlife warden with the forest department.

# Mumbai airport customs seizes gold worth Rs 97 lakhs from 5 passengers

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Customs sleuths at Mumbai airport recently seized a kilogram of gold valued at (approximately) Rs 97 lakhs. The gold was recovered across five different cases.

An official from customs, while sharing details said, "In the first case, an Indian national arriving from Dubai via Spicejet Flight SG 60 was intercepted, leading to the discovery of 570 grams of 24 karat crude gold jewellery and 22 karat gold jewellery concealed within the clothing worn by the passenger."

"The second case involved a foreign national arriving from Colombo via Vistara Airlines Flight UK 132. Upon inspection, customs officials found 538 grams of 24 karat crude gold jewellery and a rhodium-plated kada concealed within the passenger's trousers," the official added.

Another senior official from Customs said, "In the third case, an Indian national arriving from Abu Dhabi via Vistara Flight UK 256 was found with 240 grams of 24 karat gold dust in wax hidden



within their trousers." The official added much like in the third case, another Indian national arriving from Abu Dhabi via Ethihad Airways was carrying 215 grams of 24 karat gold dust in ash concealed within the inner lining of their check-in luggage.

Meanwhile, insiders from the agency said, "In the fifth case, an Indian national arriving from Singapore via Air India Flight AI 343 was intercepted with two 24 karat gold bars, collectively weighing 200 grams, concealed within their sandals." The seized gold, along with

the individuals involved, have been handed over to the appropriate authorities for further investigation, confirmed a senior customs official.

Additional Commissioner of Customs Zone III Sarika Shah, when asked about the status of the five arrestees, said, "If the amount of gold is above Rs 1 crore with a passenger, he is sentenced to judicial custody. If it is over 50 lakhs, the person is released on a bailable bond which he has to pay or the person is taken into customs custody. There is no police custody in this matter."



EDITOR'S SPECS

WILL CONG-SP ALLIANCE SURVIVE THE SEAT-SHARING TEST IN UP?

Seat-sharing arrangement has been one of the major contentions for the INDIA bloc and with only three months remaining for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the INDIA bloc is yet to come up with a seat-sharing formula between its alliance partners. In Uttar Pradesh, the INDIA bloc partners -- Congress and Samajwadi Party (SP) -- have been on loggerheads over the seat-sharing arrangements as both the parties have now started to short-list their own candidates on various seats while the alliance partners are in agreement only on few seats across the UP. Sources said that SP has offered Ballia, Fatehpur Sikri, Rampur, Maharaganj, Barabanki, Sultanpur, Kanpur, Saharanpur, Bhadohi and Bahraich seats to Congress. Despite there being no alliance between the two parties on Rae Bareilly and Amethi seats, SP has not fielded any candidates as of now. Before giving seats to Congress, SP had also asked who the candidates are for Congress to contest on the seats it is demanding. On this basis, Congress has shared the names of some seat-wise candidates with the INDIA bloc. Sources said that Congress was keen to field Raj Babbar from Fatehpur Sikri but the actor-turned-politician is not keen to contest from Fatehpur Sikri seat. They said that the second choice for Fatehpur Sikri seat can likely be Ramnath Sikarwar. Samajwadi Party has also upset the Congress apple cart in Lakhimpur Kheri where it has declared Utkarsh Verma as its candidate. Given the tensions between the Congress and SP over seat-sharing arrangement, it remains to be seen whether the alliance -- in the biggest state of the country, seats wise -- will survive the test or go their own separate ways in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

RG'S REGRESSIVE CASTE POLITICS WON'T TAKE OFF WITH YOUTH

Deepika Bhan

Is Rahul Gandhi cutting himself off from the youth with his caste politics? For some time, he has been consistently talking about caste and each of his public speeches is heavily loaded with references, often in a clear provocative style. He may be believing that by talking about caste blatantly, which his party never exhibited so openly, he will jigger a sensitive nerve in the society and break the BJP's 'Hindu' spell. But he seems to be overlooking the fact that this period is different. For a majority of the young population in India, the priorities are good education, a paying job, a sound social circle, a mobile phone, laptop and enough space to enjoy and explore. For them, the circle includes those with whom the 'vibe' gets matched and which often transcends caste and religion. More youths want and aspire for a cosmopolitan life and caste seems to be the least concern for many of them. The political hawks may say that the population of such youths is not that big and caste continues to remain one of the top societal concerns. It may be true in certain pockets and regions, but the recent state elections have proven that caste is no longer the basis for voting a candidate. Had it been so, the electoral results in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan would have been different. Even before these three, the electoral results would not have been so in 2014 and almost every election after that. Had elections in India only been caste-influenced, then Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) would not have been in such a bad state in Uttar Pradesh. So would not have been Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party. The truth is that the Congress has been going down consistently and the BJP's vote share is ever on rise. The Congress party won 52 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, just eight seats more than its 2014 tally. Its vote share -- 19.5 per cent -- was almost the same as 2014. On the other hand, the BJP increased its seat tally and vote share in consecutive elections, since its defeat in 2009. After winning a majority with 282 seats in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP further extended its lead by 21 seats to 303 in the 2019 polls. Even in the Assembly elections, the Congress performance has been dismal. Except Telangana and Karnataka, where the victory was more because of the efforts of the local leaders, the



party is nowhere else to be seen.

The Congress has not only lost elections, big or small, it has also lost a number of its leaders, both young and veterans, and even those whose families for generations had been with the Congress. Most were disillusioned with the top leadership, including Rahul Gandhi, and directly or indirectly blamed him for a lot of ills that have crept within the party. Rahul Gandhi's sudden interest in caste-based politics stems from the fact that it has been losing out heavily since 2014 in wooing the OBCs since the advent of Narendra Modi, who is himself from the backward caste, on the national scene. With Modi's kind of politics, almost all castes are voting for him. And this is proven by the increasing vote share of the BJP. The saffron party's all-India vote share in the 2019 Lok Sabha election -- 37.6 per cent -- was almost double that of 2009 -- 18.6 per cent. This was largely due to the party's inroads in the OBCs, Adivasis and Dalits.

While BJP seems to be growing beyond the caste-dynamics, Rahul Gandhi has pushed his party into regression. Whether inside Parliament or outside, he has been systematically making pinpointed references to caste equations. During discussion on the Women Reservation Bill in Lok Sabha last year, he pushed for a separate quota for OBCs in the bill and also pushed for the Caste Census data to be released. In 2023 also, he said in a conclave, "I was shocked that out of 90 people (Secretaries) who controlled the government of India, only three are from the OBC community." Gandhi's caste references have become more aggressive of late as the elections to the Lok Sabha near. In the western Odisha town of Jharsuguda on February 8, Rahul Gandhi during his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra accused PM Modi of lying that he was born in the Other Backward

Class. "Your Prime Minister was not born OBC and he was born in a general caste. He was born in Teli caste in Gujarat. The BJP government had included his caste in OBC category in 2000. He keeps lying everywhere that he was born OBC." However, this allegation was trashed by the BJP which came out with the facts that the status was granted to the community by the Congress supported government in Gujarat in late 1990s. Rahul Gandhi may be under immense pressure to prove himself, but that does not mean that he should resort to narrow politicking. And, this is something which is too obvious for anyone, including the youth of the country, to ignore. With 66 per cent of India's population below the age of 35, can anyone afford to be regressive? The leaders and more so Rahul Gandhi, need to understand this.

international

SUCCESS OF IMRAN KHAN BACKED INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES MARKS A STINGING REBUKE TO PAK MILITARY

Islamabad | Agencies

Independent candidates affiliated with former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party has secured the most parliamentary seats in last week's nationwide election as per the Pakistan Election Commission, media reports said. It is a stunning victory for an incarcerated Khan who, two years ago faced a dramatic ouster as Prime Minister and most recently faced a military-led crackdown analysts say was designed to thwart the cricket icon's return to power, CNN reported. "You kept my trust, and your massive turnout has stunned everyone," an AI-generated video of Khan shared by the PTI that mimicked his voice, said to his millions of followers shortly after his victory. "Now show the strength of protecting your vote." Khan's team has previously used AI to deliver his speeches from behind bars. The continued success of Khan



aligned candidates marks a seismic moment in the country's recent history: It has delivered a stinging rebuke to the powerful military, a usually untouchable force that has long sat at the apex of power in Pakistan and - according to Khan's aides and many supporters - cracked down on his party, CNN reported. Despite the PTI backed independents winning the most seats in parliament, questions loom over what the next government of Pakistan will look like. None of the three major parties have won the necessary seats to declare a majority in parliament and, therefore, will be unable to form government on their own, leaving it unclear who will be picked as the country's next prime minister, CNN reported. The results were also announced more than three days after polls closed, prompting accusations of electoral fraud from the PTI, CNN reported.

Gaza | Agencies

The death toll in the Israeli army's heavy strikes on the southern city of Rafah and surrounding areas of the Gaza Strip exceeded 100 on Monday, Palestinian news agency Wafa said. About 40 airstrikes on the Rafah area in the early hours of Monday were conducted by the Israeli army, with intensive ground shelling, it said. The Israeli army said in a statement that it conducted "a series of strikes on terror targets" in southern Gaza on Monday, but did not provide other details. The death toll of Palestinians from Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip has risen to 28,176 since October 7, 2023, with 67,784 others being



injured, the Gaza-based Health Ministry said in a statement. Since the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza, about half of the residents there have fled to Rafah, adjacent to Egypt, in search of safety, Xinhua news agency reported. The border city, which receives food and medicine aid from foreign countries and UN agencies through the Rafah crossing, is crowded with tents on empty agricultural lands, in schools and along roadsides.

JAPAN CULLS 14,000 BIRDS AFTER AVIAN FLU OUTBREAK

Tokyo: About 14,000 birds have been culled in the southern Japan after an avian influenza outbreak was confirmed, local authorities said on Monday. The bird flu has been confirmed on a poultry farm in the Minamisatsuma City of Kagoshima, according to the prefectural government, adding that the culling operations for it and nearby farms under the same management were completed within a short span, Xinhua news agency reported. Burial of the culled birds and disinfection of the poultry houses are expected to conclude within the next few days, and the national authorities are expected to determine whether the virus is highly pathogenic. To prevent further spread of the infection, the prefecture has imposed restrictions on the movement of approximately 363,000 chickens and quails being raised at 15 farms within a radius of 3 km to 10 km from the affected area. Following genetic testing which confirmed the virus, the prefectural authorities initiated the culling process on Sunday. The case marks the ninth avian influenza outbreak in the country this season. The bird flu season in Japan typically begins in October each year. In the last season, Japan saw a record 84 outbreaks of highly pathogenic bird flu at farms in 26 of the country's 47 prefectures, with a record 17.71 million birds culled, leading to an egg shortage and price increases.

Charities under strain as foreign students 'struggle' in Canada: Report



Toronto | Agencies

With international students struggling amidst worsening housing and affordability issues in Canada, charities and support groups say they are under strain and have urged the government to step up support. With nearly 500,000 international students living in the Greater Toronto Area, Khalsa Aid's

national director Jindi Singh says charities are taking on more than their fair share of the load, Ottawa-based CBC news channel reported. "We truly feel it's not really our role," Singh told the news outlet. The Canadian branch of Khalsa Aid, helping over 8000 students struggling to access food, clothes, and shelter in cities across the country,

says the government and post-secondary institutions should be doing more to support international students in need. Jindi said that the organisation has been presently receiving five calls a day from international students needing food, clothing, and shelter, especially from Brampton in Ontario province where he said that the situation is "acute". Since last June, Khalsa Aid has delivered over 5,000 grocery bags full of non-perishable food to students in this city, which attracts tens of thousands of international students annually. The president of the College Student Alliance, Azi Afousi, told CBC that student unions across Ontario have reported fielding more calls about housing struggles, adding that one of her colleagues shares a house with 15 other people. International students contribute about CA\$22 billion (\$16.4 billion) annually to the Canadian economy and pay four times more tuition than domestic students. According to a September 2023 report by consulting firm Higher Education Strategy Associates, students from India alone contributed \$2 billion to Ontario's post-secondary institutions' operating income last year, compared to roughly \$1.8 billion the provincial government contributed.

US military confirms airstrikes on Houthi targets in Yemen's Hodeidah

Sanaa | Agencies

US military on Sunday confirmed that it struck Houthi targets near the Yemeni Red Sea port city of Hodeidah a day earlier, claiming to have hit the group's two unmanned surface vessels (USVs) and three anti-ship cruise missiles. In an online statement, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said its forces successfully conducted self-defence strikes against these targets north of Hodeidah "that were prepared to launch against ships in the Red Sea" on Saturday afternoon. "CENTCOM identified these USVs and missiles in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen and determined they presented an imminent threat to US Navy ships and merchant vessels in the region," it added as quoted by Xinhua news agency report. On Saturday evening, Houthi-run al-Masirah TV reported that US and British aircraft carried out a fresh round of airstrikes on Houthi



targets, hitting the Al-Salif port northwest of Hodeidah city, without providing more details. Houthi group has launched dozens of missile attacks against Israel-linked merchant vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since mid-November last year, in what the group said were done out of solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza. Washington has warned Houthis to re-list them as a "global terrorist organisation" if the group doesn't stop attacking shipping, Houthi group has been controlling the strategic Red Sea port city of Hodeidah since the 2018 UN-brokered Stockholm Agreement, which was backed by the US and Britain, forcing the Yemeni internationally recognised government out.





## FASHIONABLE NOW TO DEMOLISH HOMES: HIGH COURT ON UJJAIN BULLDOZER ACTION

### In strong remarks on bulldozer action against those accused in criminal cases, the Madhya Pradesh High Court has said it has become "fashionable" for civic authorities to demolish homes without following proper procedure.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Indore bench of the high court made the observations earlier this month in a case relating to the demolition of the home of Rahul Langri, who faces a case of voluntarily causing hurt to extort property. He is accused of threatening and assaulting a man, who later died by suicide. Langri was arrested and sent to jail. Police then got in touch with the civic body and his two-storey house in Ujjain was razed.

Langri's wife Radha approached the court and said in her petition that a notice in the name of Raisa Bi, the previous owner, was served and the house was razed the next day without hearing them out. The house, she said in her petition, was not illegal. She said the house was registered with the housing board and they had taken a bank loan.

Justice Vivek Rusia ruled that the demolition was illegal and awarded a compensation of Rs 1 lakh each to Radha Langri and her mother-in-law Vimla Gurjar.

The court also ordered action against civic officials for carrying out the demolition. The



petitioners have now decided to move the civil court for higher compensation. "As observed repeatedly by this court, it has

become fashionable now for local administration and local bodies to demolish any house by drawing up proceedings without comply-

ing with the principal of natural justice and publish it in the newspaper. It appears that in this case also the criminal case was registered against one of the family members of the petitioners and demolition activities were carried out," the court said.

The court added that instead of razing the houses, the petitioners should have been asked to get the construction regularised. It added that "demolition should be the last recourse to be followed, that too after giving a proper opportunity to the owner of the house to get it regularized". The petitioner Radha Langri alleged that her husband was jailed on false charges and their house demolished. "They gave a day's notice and then razed our home. We tried to show them the property papers, but they did not listen. Now we have got justice," she said. She added that a crime is committed by an individual and not by the family. "This (bulldozer action) should not be done." The petitioner counsel Tehzeeb Khan said, "If a criminal stays in a house, it does not mean every person in that house is a criminal. Razing his house will punish the innocents too."

## BJP MLA Siddharth Tiwari challenges Digvijaya to contest LS poll from Rewa



Team Absolute | Bhopal

BJP MLA Siddharth Tiwari has challenged Congress leader and MP Digvijaya Singh to contest the Lok Sabha elections from Rewa.

The debutant MLA said Singh has staunch supporters in Rewa district, and therefore, it should not be a big challenge for him to win the Lok Sabha election from this particular constituency.

Tiwari's challenge come after a social media post, questioned announcing five "Bharat Ratna" in the fortnight, and sought elections through ballot paper instead of EVMs. Responding to Singh's post, Tiwari asked, "Are you (Digvijaya) saying that Kamal Nath won Chhindwara by fakery? I challenge you to contest 2024 Lok Sabha election from Rewa Parliamentary constituency. As your bigoted supporters find you uber-

acceptable, this should not be a big challenge." Importantly, it was perhaps the first time, Tiwari, who joined the BJP ahead of the assembly election and got elected MLA from Tenothar seat in Rewa district, was vocal against Kamal Nath and Singh. Siddharth, who is the grandson of former Assembly Speaker (late) Srinivas Tiwari, has joined the BJP in November last year after he was denied a ticket from the Congress. His grandfather Srinivas Tiwari was Assembly Speaker during Singh's government in Madhya Pradesh from 1993 to 2003. For the last four consecutive terms, the BJP bagged Rewa Lok Sabha. Siddharth's father (late) Sundarlal Tiwari had won the Rewa Lok Sabha seat on Congress ticket last in 1999. Siddharth had also contested Lok Sabha from Rewa in 2019 on Congress ticket, however, he lost against BJP's Janardan Mishra.

## Will Sonia Gandhi go to Rajya Sabha from MP? Kamalnath's dinner politics

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Five Rajya Sabha seats in Madhya Pradesh are falling vacant on April 2, 2024. One of these seats will go to Congress's account. There are many contenders from the Congress party. Among these, former CM Kamal Nath was considered to be a strong contender. After this a new discussion has started. MP Congress has sent a letter to Sonia Gandhi. Also he has been requested from MP to go to Rajya Sabha. It is being said that the request has been made after getting the consent of the big leaders of the party.

After Sonia Gandhi's name surfaced, the candidature of Congress leaders who were contesting for Rajya Sabha from Madhya Pradesh have been cleared. Former CM Kamal Nath, State President Jitu Patwari and former



Union Minister Arun Yadav were also in this race. A few days ago, former CM Kamal Nath had also met Congress President Sonia Gandhi in Delhi. After this, speculations intensified that Kamal Nath may also go to Rajya Sabha. However, Leader of Opposition Umang Singh has said that Kamal Nath ji is not going to Rajya Sabha. Talking to the media, State

President Jitu Patwari said that there is a feeling in the entire country regarding Sonia Gandhi that she has resigned from the post of Prime Minister. It is a matter of good fortune for me if she goes to Rajya Sabha from Madhya Pradesh. He said that the respect of Madhya Pradesh will increase. Also, there will be strength in the honor of Madhya Pradesh.

## Women should move forward in the field of science, technology and engineering, government and society are with them: Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav

**MOTHER POWER HAS ALWAYS BEEN RESPECTED IN INDIAN CULTURE. CHIEF MINISTER DR. YADAV LAUNCHED SEVERAL TECHNICAL COURSES AND TRAINING SESSIONS INCLUDING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, BLOCK CHAIN TECHNOLOGY, VIRTUAL REALITY, INDUSTRIAL SAFETY, ETC. DISTRIBUTED STIPEND WORTH RS 6 CRORE 60 LAKH TO 8 THOUSAND TRAINEES OF SIKHO KAMAJO YOJANA WITH A SINGLE CLICK. ADDRESSED THE PROGRAM OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN SCIENCE**

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav said that today's day is dedicated to encouraging and underlining the participation of women in science. For this purpose, this day is very important and I feel proud to participate in this program. This day is important from the point of view of all the countries of the world, but in the context of India, the importance of this International Day increases even more, because in our culture mother power has always been given respect. We have Goddess of knowledge Saraswati and Goddess of wealth Lakshmi and we also accept the country in the form of Mother India. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav was addressing the program organized at Kushabhau Thackeray International Convention Center on the International Day of Women's Participation in Science. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav inaugurated the program by lighting the lamp.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that the first citizen of our country is a woman. President Draupadi Murmu



holds the highest post in the country. This is the beauty of democracy, and this system has increased the respect we all have for the illustrious Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This also indicates that in our country, doors are open for all positions and possibilities for women, they should make every possible effort to move forward, the government and society are with them. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav digitally inaugurated various courses and training sessions in various institutions of the state with a single click. Industrial safety training was started in all the government IITs of the state

under Indo German Initiative for Technical Education (IGITE). In collaboration with IIT Delhi, Artificial Intelligence and Internet of Things course was started in Jabalpur Engineering College and Blockchain Builder Technology course was started in Ujjain Engineering College for training in online mode. Similarly, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality courses were also launched in SV Polytechnic Bhopal. Procurement Essential for Student Advancement (PESA) course launched at Mahila Polytechnic College, Bhopal in collaboration with IIT Indore.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav distributed a stipend of Rs 6 crore 60 lakh to eight thousand selected trainees under the Sikho Kamao scheme through a single click. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav honored the accomplished women in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) field and the women candidates selected in the employment fairs - Mehak Shubhare, Ruby Singh Yadav, Aishwarya Tiwari, Ragini Rawat, Shraddha Kushwaha, Offer letters were distributed to Aarti Kudape etc.

## Shivraj stood with folded hands, PM ignored him and left

Team Absolute | Jhabua

Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh on Sunday. When PM Modi finished his address, he met the senior BJP leaders present on the stage. During this, former CM of the state Shivraj Singh Chauhan was standing on the stage with folded hands to greet him, but during this the PM ignored him. Later Shivraj came down from the stage. There was no communication between PM and Shivraj nor did PM look at him. In the past too, Shivraj Singh Chauhan has been seen neglected in PM's stage and programs.

PM Modi had reached Jhabua just before the beginning of Lok Sabha elections. When he finished his speech,



he started greeting the CM and other leaders on the stage with folded hands. There was a gap of about five chairs between him and former CM Shivraj Singh Chauhan. Seeing the PM coming, Shivraj Singh looked at him twice with folded hands and greeted him, but no reaction was given from the PM. Although when PM Modi

moved forward with folded hands, it seemed that he would meet Shivraj, but at the same time, when the women leaders standing at the end of the stage moved forward with folded hands, the PM greeted them and turned back before reaching Shivraj. Shivraj still took a few steps towards the PM from behind, but the PM did not even look at him.

## The date of State Service Examination Mains 2023 will not be extended

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In the meeting held on Monday regarding the postponement of the State Service Examination Mains 2023, it was decided that the date will not be extended. A meeting was held with the Chairman of the Commission, Dr. Rajesh Lal Mehra along with other board members and officials, but the issue arose that due to one examination, the schedule of many examinations would be disturbed. Therefore these should not be taken forward. While the Commission has a demand to extend the date, most of the messages through emails are also about not extending it. After this, it has been decided that as per the schedule, the State Service

Examination Mains will be conducted from March 11 itself. The Commission has not been able to find a way so that if the date of Mains is extended then more examinations will not be disturbed. Therefore it was decided that the examination should not be proceeded with.

Many objectionable messages were sent to the Commission. Although these messages were coming from impersonators instead of the candidates, this incident made matters worse and such messages were taken very seriously.

Still the Commission was continuously trying to find a way out, hence once again a meeting was held on Monday, but the final decision was that the date should not be extended.

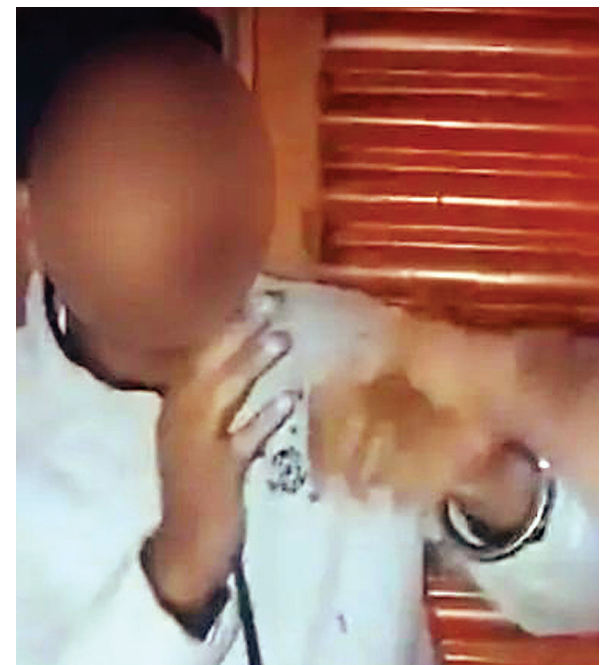
## Tribal youth beaten with kicks and punches, victim kept pleading

Team Absolute | Betul

A video of beating of a tribal youth has surfaced in Betul. In this 2 minute 42 second video, it is seen that a man is brutally beating a young man.

The incident happened on Saturday night. After the video surfaced on Sunday, a case has been registered against one named and three other people under Atrocity Act and other sections at Betul Kotwali police station. The accused Chanchal Rajput and Chandan Sardar were arrested around 1.30 pm on Monday afternoon. The remaining are being searched. Chanchal Rajput is the co-convenor of Narmadapuram division of Bajrang Dal. Congress has demanded immediate investigation and action in this matter.

In the video, the accused sometimes punches and sometimes kicks the young man on his face and abuses him. The victim pleads with the beater. Begs. He falls at his feet, but he does not listen. He continues to hit him. Just then someone's voice



comes from behind. He asks the young man to become a rooster. The young man becomes a cock. Even after becoming a cock, the accused hits him on the back with the elbow of his hand. Then his partner stops him from killing him. But he does not agree. SP Siddharth Chaudhary

said that the police traced the victim youth. He told that he works for a DJ. The DJ owner had an old dispute with the accused Chanchal Rajput. He was beaten for this very reason. The victim told the name of the accused Chanchal to the police. He does not recognize the remaining three accused.

## MANY CONGRESSMEN INCLUDING FORMER MLA JOIN BJP

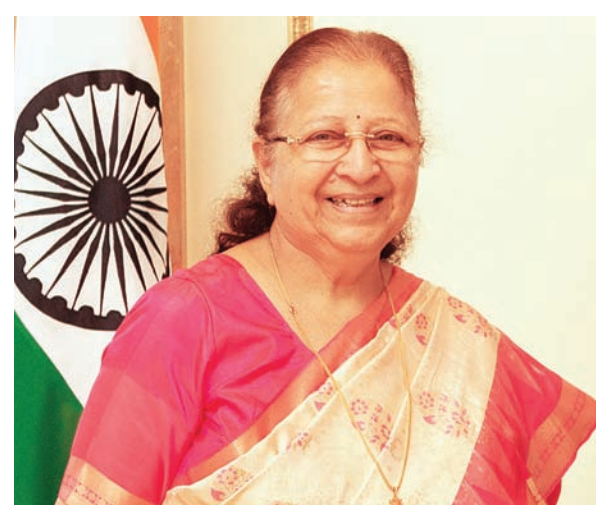
Bhopal: Another wicket of Congress fell on Monday (12 February) in Madhya Pradesh. The process of joining Congress leaders in BJP is not showing any signs of stopping. Now Vidisha Congress President Rakesh Katare has joined BJP. Apart from this, former Congress MLA from Tikamgarh Dinesh Ahirwar, Vidisha District President Rakesh Katare and Khajuraho Congress leader Kailash Dwivedi have joined BJP. State President VD Sharma got him the membership of the party. During this, former ministers Narottam Mishra and Bhupendra Singh were present.

## FORMER LS SPEAKER MAHAJAN INVITED TO JOIN CONGRESS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Former Lok Sabha Speaker and Indore MP Sumitra Mahajan had given a statement two days ago that Kamal Nath should join BJP after taking blessings of Ram. Now there has been a counterattack from Congress on this statement of Mahajan.

Congress has written a letter to Mahajan asking her to join Congress and contest Lok Sabha elections from Indore on Congress ticket. Girish Joshi wrote this letter along with Congress divisional spokesperson Vivek Khandelwal. Congress spokesperson



has written in the letter that you have invited former Chief Minister of Madhya

Pradesh Kamal Nath by writing a letter. You get membership of Bharatiya Janata Party

with Jai Jai Siya Ram slogans. Mahajan ji, we Congressmen request that, today the country is witnessing the assassination of the Constitution made by Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar ji, senior leaders of your own Bharatiya Janata Party are doing such acts. We request you. Today there is a need to save the Constitution in the country. Therefore, you should take membership of Congress Party with slogans like Jai Jai Siya Ram Jai Save Constitution. Contest elections from Indore Lok Sabha seat on behalf of Congress Party. In the interest of the country, state and city, you should further join the Congress.

Particulars	STANDARD				CONSOLIDATED			
	For the Quarter ended on 31.12.2023	For the Year to Date ended 31.12.2023	For the Quarter ended on 31.12.2022	For the Year to Date ended 31.12.2022	For the Quarter ended on 31.12.2023	For the Year to Date ended 31.12.2023	For the Quarter ended on 31.12.2022	For the Year to Date ended 31.12.2022
Total Income	1,00,00,000	3,00,00,000	1,00,00,000	3,00,00,000	1,00,00,000	3,00,00,000	1,00,00,000	3,00,00,000
Total Expenses	(80,00,000)	(2,40,00,000)	(80,00,000)	(2,40,00,000)	(80,00,000)	(2,40,00,000)	(80,00,000)	(2,40,00,000)
Profit/(Loss)	20,00,000	60,00,000	20,00,000	60,00,000	20,00,000	60,00,000	20,00,000	60,00,000



## Taylor Swift congratulates beau Travis Kelce with a kiss after win

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Taylor Swift and football player Travis Kelce marked a fairy tale ending as they kissed after the Kansas City Chiefs won Super Bowl LVIII. Swift has been a supporter of Kelce throughout the Kansas City Chiefs' journey to the big game. At one point, fans panicked that Swift would not make it to Las Vegas as she was scheduled the night before to perform in Japan in support of The Eras Tour, reports deadline.com.

The singer arrived at Allegiant Stadium with her friends Blake Lively and Ice Spice. After the Chiefs won the Super Bowl against the San Francisco 49ers, Swift rushed to the field to congratulate Kelce, with cameras catching the moment the couple kissed.

Chiefs coach Andy Reid previously praised the way Swift and Kelce have handled the added media attention their romance has caused.

"She's been great," Reid said in an interview while making an appearance on the Let's Go! podcast hosted by Tom Brady, Larry Fitzgerald and Jim Gray.

"Listen, she's a good girl and I'm happy for Trav, and there has been no distraction that way at all. Trav's handled it right, she's handled it right, and we just move forward, so it hasn't been a problem at all."

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell talked about the effect that Swift has had on ratings and the game.

"Having the Taylor Swift effect is also a positive," Goodell said at a press conference this week.

"Both Travis and Taylor are wonderful young people, they seem very happy. She knows great entertainment and I think that's why she loves NFL football. I think it's great to have her a part of it. Obviously, it creates a buzz, another group of young fans. Particularly young women."



## Sophie Turner enjoys public date night with boyfriend Peregrine Pearson

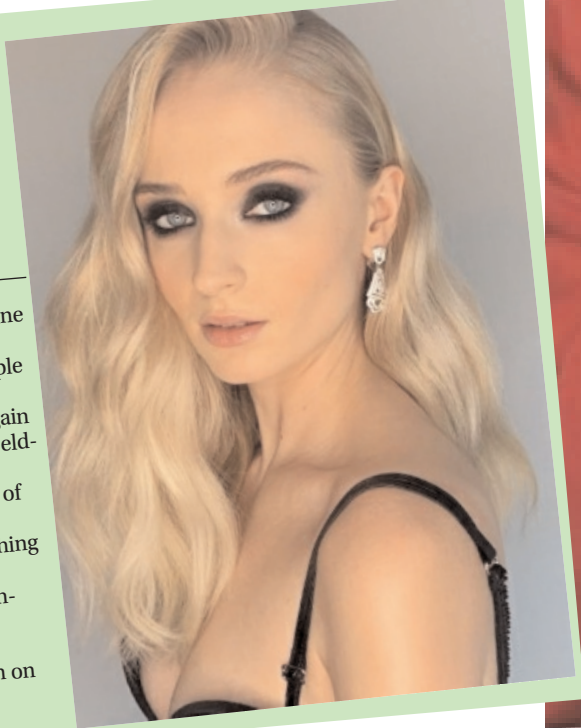
Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Sophie Turner has been spotted on a date night with her new boyfriend Peregrine Pearson, days after going official with their romance. The 'Game of Thrones' star split from ex-husband Joe Jonas last summer after four years of marriage. The former couple also share two young daughters, Willa, three, and 19-month-old Delphine, reports deadline.com. But five months on from announcing their separation, the 27-year-old has found love again with aristocrat Peregrine, who is known to pals as Perry. The property developer, 29, is the eldest son of Michael Pearson, the 4th Viscount Cowdray, a county in Sussex.

From one of the wealthiest families in Britain, he stands to inherit an estimated fortune of \$283 million.

As per Mirror.co.uk, Perry was first linked with Sophie when the pair were spotted laughing and joking in Paris last November.

Since then the pair have been seen locking lips in London and while ex-Joe, 34, has confirmed he is now in a relationship with 33-year-old model Stormi Bree, Sophie has gone Instagram official with Perry and tagged her new beau in photos from a recent ski trip. In photos taken over the weekend, Sophie confirmed her new romance in snaps taken on Saturday night at a Chinese New Year celebration at Stanley Zhu's Year of Dragon Celebration at Dixie Queen in London.



Barry Keoghan 'lost sight of cameras' during infamous grave sex scene

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Saltburn' actor Barry Keoghan has spoken candidly about the grave scene in the film. The movie focuses on Oxford University scholarship holder Oliver Quick and his best friend Felix Catton (played by Jacob Elordi).

Throughout the movie, Oliver struggles to fit in with his wealthy peers before becoming infatuated with Felix, reports

Mirror.co.uk. Oliver's love for Felix is demonstrated in various parts of the flick.

Famously, one scene sees Felix relaxing in a bath while pleasuring himself in his luxury home as Oliver watches on in delight. Seconds later, he dived straight into the bath and slurped up the water and bodily fluids. But as if that wasn't shocking enough, he was later seen having sex with Felix's grave.

As per Mirror.co.uk, the actor, 31, previously stated that the scene was completely unscripted and he went with the flow but he's now shed more light on it. He said: "I mean, I shagged a grave in Saltburn, right? Can't get closer to death or getting mud diseases in your... I should get that checked."

Speaking during an interview with the 'Hot Ones' podcast, Keoghan went on to add: "Saltburn" really pushed it. Every role pushes it, and I like to be pushed. I don't want something comfy. I want to really artistically go there and there's moments on sets and movies where you lose sight of camera and you kind of get this, it's only for two seconds or so, but it's like this nauseous feeling when you're just so present and it's what we chase. We, as actors, chase it every time we go on set."

Director and creator Emerald Fennell said that the scene "goes from funny to horrible too terrible to sort of weirdly sexy to awful again."

While filming the scene, Barry admitted he just let "his body lead the way" after he "planted seeds". Meanwhile, Fennell said: "I spoke to Barry in the morning. And I just said, 'I don't know, Barry. I think that he would... Unzip' and Barry just said 'Yup'."

## Mark Wahlberg's tempted to skip his 4 a.m. workouts 'more often than you think'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Mark Wahlberg's early morning workout sessions have become legendary, as he often begins at 4 a.m. However, he revealed that sometimes, he doesn't want to work out at all.

Wahlberg was speaking to People at the LIV Golf Las Vegas Big Game Party. "I feel it more often than you think," Wahlberg said when asked if ever feels like not exercising.

But, he says, he usually begins his day sitting in a 35-degree tub of water and ice, known as a cold plunge, and that gets him in the mood.

"I'm like, 'Okay, I'm awake, I'm alive.' We're a go right after that," Wahlberg explains.

"So I just go and I do the work."

Wahlberg often posts videos of his workouts on social media, earlier this week the actor revealed his impressive abs in a video on Instagram that showed him lifting his t-shirt but he acknowledges that rest and recovery are "equally important."

Indeed, the actor was spotted indulging in some relaxation in December, when he spent time with his family on a vacation to Barbados though his toned physique on the beach during the trip showed off the effect of all his hard work in the gym.

However, Wahlberg says that staying in shape and doing things intentionally the hard way is important to his lifestyle.

"I don't want to miss something because if, God forbid, I kind of cut corners, don't show up, don't put the work in and I don't get the results that I want, I know why. I don't want to live with that regret," he said, adding: "I always feel better after and I just go and get it in."

On days that he's not completely all in, 'The Family Plan' star says he will do less in the gym or may not do exactly what he planned.

Sometimes, though, his approach will change during the workout.

"I start out sluggish and the next thing you know I've ramped it up to a 12 and I



got the best workout that I've had in a long time," he said.

He explained his achievements in the gym, like in his life, are down to his strong work ethic.

"But the hard work that I've put in has always been a reason why I have success. So I attribute to that and my faith and the amount of effort that I've put into everything. So why would I do anything different?"

## Robert De Niro's first impression of Leonardo DiCaprio: 'That kid had something special'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Veteran star Robert De Niro knew Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio was special as soon as they met, and championed him to producers. The pair first met when DiCaprio auditioned for the 1993 drama 'This Boy's Life', which also starred De Niro.

DiCaprio had not auditioned for the central role of Tobias, De Niro told the producer how impressed he was by the young actor's audition. He told PEOPLE: "I said to Art Linson, the producer, I said, 'Art, that kid was really, it was interesting.' I didn't push it. I just said, 'That kid had something special,' and then they turned around and wound up using Leo." The 80-year-old star and DiCaprio went on to work with each other on the 1996 drama 'Marvin's Room' and the 2023 western crime drama film 'Killers of the Flower Moon', reports femalefirst.co.uk. Speaking about their 'Killers of the Flower Moon'



characters, where he played the nephew of De Niro's character, DiCaprio recently told Deadline: "I happened to have done a film [titled] 'This Boy's Life' where I had an abusive stepfather in De Niro. So it was this insanely coincidental, full circle, sort of similar relationship." "It felt like I was stepping into the same or a similar character 30 years later, grown up. (De Niro) was still (playing) this abusive character. He was the abusive stepfather." "Developing Ernest (DiCaprio's character) was interesting because out of all the stuff that I researched — all his writings, all the testimony,

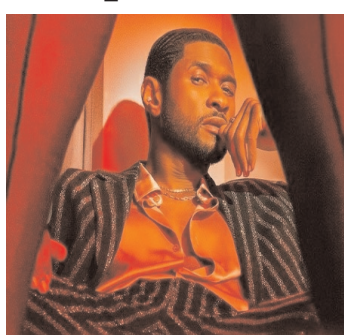
speaking to relatives in Oklahoma — the one resounding consistent element was that this man was quite slow and easily manipulated, that (De Niro's character) Hale had this mental stronghold over him." He also spoke about the thrill he got from working with De Niro and director Martin Scorsese and the awe he felt at the "dual relationship between actor and filmmaker." He said: "It's all we spoke about in our younger age. And to be able to have gotten to have my first opportunity working with Mr. De Niro on 'This Boy's Life', and then have him refer me to Marty saying, 'Here's this kid, I just worked with him.' And then having done, what is it, six films with (Scorsese) now? Something like that."

"And then 30 years later now, getting to work with both of them, my two sort of cinematic heroes, and creating this entire story and narrative in these characters was, needless to say, one of the highlights of my entire career and life."

## Usher sets off rumours of marriage in Las Vegas post Super Bowl

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-songwriter Usher has set off rumours that he plans to marry his girlfriend Jennifer Goicoechea in secret during his trip to Las Vegas for the Super Bowl final. The 45-year-old singer was in Sin City to headline the big game's half-time show on Sunday night but now it's been revealed the singer and his partner obtained a marriage licence in Clark County, Nevada on February 8, reports 'Female First UK'. Reports suggest that he wants to tie the knot following his Super Bowl performance. A source told DailyMail.com Usher - real name Usher Raymond IV - made the decision to marry on the advice from his spiritual advisor and the bash will be an "intimate affair attended only by close friends and family". The publication also reports the couple will exchange vows at one of Las Vegas' famous wedding chapels. As per 'Female First UK' a marriage certificate has yet to be filed with the



courts and the singer has yet to comment publicly on the marriage rumours. He's been dating Jennifer since October 2018 and they are parents to daughter Sovereign, who was born in 2020, and son, who arrived in 2021. Usher was previously married to Tameka Foster - the mother of his sons Usher 'Cinco' Raymond V, 16, and Navid Ely, 15 - from 2007 until 2009. Prior to his Super Bowl performance, Usher opened up about his relationship - insisting the couple have an "amazing dynamic".



Beyoncé





## IND V ENG: RAHUL RULED OUT, PADIKKAL COMES IN FOR THIRD TEST AGAINST ENGLAND

Rajkot | Agencies

Wicketkeeper-batter K.L. Rahul has been ruled out from the third Test match against England due to a sore knee. Rahul, who had already missed the second Test in Visakhapatnam due to a right quadriceps issue, now faces another setback on the road to recovery.

He was due to link up with the squad on Tuesday but after following scans done in Bangalore it became clear that he wasn't up to full fitness.

Rahul's Karnataka teammate, Devdutt Padikkal, will fill the void left by the injured batsman. Padikkal, known for his elegant strokeplay and promising talent, steps up to the challenge, ready to make his mark on the Test stage.

With a strong run of recent form, Padikkal receives his first call-up to the Test squad. With three hundreds to his credit, Padikkal has amassed 556 runs at a 92.67 average in the present Ranji Trophy. He struck 105 for India A against the England Lions, right before he blasted 151 in a Player-of-the-Match effort on Friday against Tamil Nadu.



Debuting in the 2018-19 domestic season, Padikkal has participated in 31 first-class matches and amassed 2227 runs at 44.54. Against Sri Lanka

in July 2021, he participated in two Twenty20 Internationals for India. With Virat Kohli already sidelined due to personal reasons, India's bat-

ting lineup is left somewhat depleted, lacking the experience and depth needed to counter the English bowling attack effectively. The absence of Shreyas Iyer, overlooked for the remaining three Tests, further adds to the batting conundrum. With crucial positions to fill and key players missing, India's team management faces tough decisions ahead of the Rajkot Test. Adding to the uncertainty is the status of Ravindra Jadeja, whose participation hangs in the balance pending a fitness clearance. The all-rounder, nursing a hamstring injury sustained during the first Test in Hyderabad, is eager to make a comeback on his home ground in Rajkot. However, his availability remains uncertain, leaving a question mark over India's bowling options.

Updated India squad for the third Test: Rohit Sharma (c), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Devdutt Padikkal, Sarfaraz Khan, Rajat Patidar, Ravindra Jadeja, KS Bharat (wk), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Axar Patel, R Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Jasprit Bumrah (VC), Mohammed Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Akash Deep

## Paul defeats Giron to lift Dallas Open trophy



Dallas (US) | Agencies

Tommy Paul defeated countryman Marcos Giron 7-6(7-3), 5-7, 6-3 in all-American final to lift the Dallas Open trophy, his second ATP Tour title and first since 2021 in Stockholm.

In a back-and-forth battle on the campus of Southern Methodist University Paul secured an immediate break

in the deciding set and never relinquished his advantage.

Giron entered the final with plenty of momentum after earning back-to-back Top 20 wins against top seed Frances Tiafoe and fourth seed Adrian Mannarino. When he clawed through the second set, it seemed he might use the momentum to secure his first ATP Tour title.

But Paul was slightly bet-

ter under pressure, and that made all the difference. According to Infosys ATP Stats, the second seed saved four of the six break points he faced and converted his two opportunities. "That was a pretty unbelievable match. Best final I've ever played," Paul said. After Sunday's title win, Paul will climb to No. 14 in the ATP Rankings, making him the No. 2 American behind Taylor Fritz.

## Argentina beat Brazil to secure men's soccer Paris 2024 qualification

Caracas (Venezuela) | Agencies

Brazil missed out to qualify for 2024 Paris Olympics after losing 1-0 to regional rival Argentina in its South American qualifier.

Brazil, who was bidding for an unprecedented third consecutive Olympic men's soccer title, will miss the Olympic men's tournament for the first time since 2004.

Argentina won 1-0 on a Luciano Gondou goal in the 78th minute of a South American qualifier match on Sunday.

After losing its opening match to Paraguay in a four-team group and beat Venezuela 2-1, Brazil needed



A win or a draw against Argentina to qualify for the Olympics in the last stage of South American qualifying.

Argentina, who tied Venezuela and Paraguay, finished the final qualifying event with five points while Brazil finished with three points. In the 2016 Rio Olympics, Brazil secured its inaugural Olympic soccer gold medal with Neymar

netting the decisive penalty kick during a shootout against Germany at the Maracana stadium. Similarly, in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, Brazil maintained an undefeated record, clinching victory in the final against Spain thanks to Malcom's goal in the 108th minute. Argentina had won gold in 2004 (Athens) and 2008 (Beijing).

## 'It affected my family a bit more', says Maxwell on the Adelaide hotel incident

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has revealed the fallout from an incident in Adelaide which ended with him in hospital impacted his family more than it did him. Previously, on January 19 Glenn Maxwell was briefly hospitalised in Adelaide following an alcohol-related incident.

Returning to Adelaide, the city where a recent incident had left him hospitalized, Maxwell smashed a record-setting 120 runs from just 55 balls including eight towering sixes and 12 fours in a record score team of 4-241 against the West Indies to guide his team to a 34-run victory against the West Indies on Sunday. "I've had

a few cursed Adelaide trips...so it's nice to make this a positive one," Maxwell told Fox Cricket. "I think it probably affected my family a little bit more than it affected me," Maxwell said.

"I was back into training; I was still thinking about this T20 series and the New Zealand tour. I was pretty focused on what I had to do. Obviously, that incident was less than ideal with the timing, but I had that week off away from the game. I came back and got back into my running, my gym program, and I felt really good and refreshed once I got back."

The Victorian, who was rested for the ODI series against the West Indies, was not sanctioned by Cricket Australia over the incident. Amidst

the scrutiny and questions surrounding his off-field conduct, Maxwell remained composed and focused on his training, crediting the support of Australian coach Andrew McDonald and national selection chief George Bailey. "The coach, Bails, everyone really, they have been outstanding," he said. Asked if the incident prompted any reflection, Maxwell replied: "No, I just moved on pretty quickly. I was back in training on Monday, so I was pretty good."

In November 2022, Maxwell broke a leg when he slipped while pretending to chase a friend at a birthday party, which forced him to miss Australia's Test squad to tour India and miss an entire BBL season.



## Bengaluru Open tennis: Ramkumar kicks off Indian challenge on a winning note

Bengaluru | Agencies

Wildcard entrant Ramkumar Ramanathan fought back from a set down to pack off Frenchman Maxime Janvier 6-7(4), 7-5, 6-4 to advance to the second round of the Bengaluru Open 2024 being played at the KSLTA Tennis Stadium here on Monday.

The 29-year-old Indian kept his nerve despite his serve being put under pressure in the opening two sets, by his higher-ranked opponent, to pull off a sensational victory in two hours and 26 minutes to give the home crowd a lot to cheer.

Also biting the dust on the opening day of the main draw was Croatian third seed Duje Ajdukovic, who went down against Tunisia's Moez Echargui 6-2, 6-4 in an hour and 30 minutes.

But the main attraction of the opening day was the show-off between Ramkumar and Janvier and the former rode on home support to make a winning start to his campaign. The opening set was a neck-



and-neck battle with Janvier relying on his first serve percentage to put pressure on the Indian and pocketed the first set through a tiebreaker.

Ramkumar was again under pressure in the second set and managed to save four break-points and then broke Janvier in the 11th game before

wrapping the set in the next to force a decider. With the momentum in his favour, the Indian then broke Janvier early in the third set and then held on to his service games to wrap up the match.

He will now face the winner of the match between top seed Luca Nardi

of Italy and Lucky Loser Dan Added of France.

The Bengaluru Open is being organised by the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA). The ATP Challenger event began on January 12 and will conclude on January 19.

## Granada 10m World Cup: India begins campaign with two junior gold medals

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India began their International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup 10M Juniors WC 10M campaign with two gold medals on Day One of competitions in Granada, Spain. Isha Anil Taksale gave India their first gold with a win in the junior women's 10m air rifle, while Umamahesh Maddineni won the corresponding men's event.

Isha shot 251.8 in the final while Umamahesh shot 252.1. The men's event saw a clean sweep of the medals by India as Parth Mane and Ajay Malik took silver and bronze medals while Shambhavi Kshirsagar won bronze in the women's junior air rifle as India picked up five medals on the day. Isha's 630.9 was enough for her to top the qualifications field as she led a group of three Indians into the top eight. In the final, after trailing Bangladesh's Jafira



Chowdhary after the first five shots, Isha took the lead after the second five and from then on brooked no opposition to take gold. Shambhavi Kshirsagar, who had qualified second, clinched bronze behind Britain's Gwenllian Thorne. It was even better for Umamahesh as they led the

final from the get-go to put it across compatriot Parth Mane, who had earlier pipped him to the top position in qualification.

A 34-member Indian contingent is taking part in the World Cup which will have junior and senior 10m air gun competitions only.



## World marathon record holder Kelvin Kiptum, coach die in car crash

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The 24-year-old Kenyan long-distance runner and the marathon world record holder Kelvin Kiptum and his coach Gervais Hakizimana died in a road traffic accident.

The accident occurred on Sunday at 11 pm (local time) on the Eldoret-Kaptagat road, according to Elgeyo Marakwet County Police Commander Peter Mulinge.

Kiptum was driving a Toyota Premio with two passengers on board - Garvais and a lady identified as Sharon Kosgey heading to Eldoret, the Kenyan newspaper Daily Nation reported.

Sharon escaped with serious injuries and was rushed to Racecourse

Hospital for medical attention, while the bodies of the athlete and his coach were taken to the Racecourse Hospital mortuary. The vehicle was badly damaged and was towed to Kaptagat Police Station, it added.

"This was a self-involved accident where one Kelvin Kiptum, the world marathon record holder, was driving his vehicle with two passengers. Kiptum and Hakizimana died on the spot and the third person was rushed to Racecourse Hospital in Eldoret," the County Commander told the newspaper. According to County Commander, Kiptum lost control of the vehicle, veered off the road, hit a big tree before landing in a ditch about 60 metres away. Kiptum was one of the most exciting new prospects to emerge in

road running in recent years. He grabbed headlines when he made his marathon debut in December 2022, clocking 2:01:53 to win in Valencia. Less than a year later, in just his third marathon, he smashed the world record with 2:00:35 to win in Chicago.

That performance, along with his victory earlier in the year at the London Marathon in a course record of 2:01:25, led him to be named 2023 World Athlete of the Year for men's out-of-stadia events.

He made his international debut in 2019 while still a teenager, and clocked 59:54 to finish fifth at the Lisbon Half Marathon. Before moving up to the classic distance, Kiptum reduced his half marathon Personal Best to 58:42 at the 2020 Valencia Half Marathon.

Between 2019 and 2021, Kiptum broke 60 minutes for the half marathon on six occasions. He was in the Kenyan team picked for Paris Olympics.

"We are shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the devastating loss of Kelvin Kiptum and his coach, Gervais Hakizimana," said World Athletics President Sebastian Coe. "On behalf of all World Athletics, we send our deepest condolences to their families, friends, teammates and the Kenyan nation."

"It was only earlier this week in Chicago, the place where Kelvin set his extraordinary marathon world record, that I was able to officially ratify his historic time. An incredible athlete leaving an incredible legacy, we will miss him dearly."



## Shilpa Shetty: Not my characters, but my songs are what people remember

Team Absolute | New Delhi

From "Main Aayi Hoon U.P. Bihar Lootne", "Aaila Re" to "Jeene Ke Ishaare" and "Shut Up & Bounce" among many others, Shilpa Shetty has featured in many iconic numbers, which are still etched in everyone's mind. The actress makes no bones about the fact that one may forget her movies but her tracks always did very well.

Talking about the characters she has played being memorable along with her songs, Shilpa said: "I am glad people feel that way."

She revealed as to why the songs she performed on are still unforgettable.

"I feel that the 90s movies were gold. You can forget movies, maybe my movies didn't do well at the box-office but my songs always did very well. You may not remember the name of the character I played but you'll remember the name of the song I have performed," said Shilpa, who made her debut in 1993 with 'Baazigar'.

The Mangalore-born star credits the music for her career.

"So, I give a lot of credit to music because a lot of our careers were built on the basis of. I did major films with all the music companies because they found me lucky and even I continue to emphasise how important music is," shared the actress, whose latest



offering is 'Indian Police Force'.

The actress feels music plays an important role for films to make it a hit.

"In today's time and age music gets lost and I feel like in all the big films if

the music isn't good it's not a commercially viable film. When the music works automatically the masses and children relate to it. And when you relate to the masses and the children, you have hit a homerun," said Shilpa.

## Elvish Yadav slaps man at Jaipur restaurant, video goes viral

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The 'Big Boss OTT 2' winner Elvish Yadav recently got into a brawl with a man at a restaurant in Jaipur. The video from the incident has gone viral showing Elvish slapping a man, as he storms out before coming back to lock horns with the person again.

However, the second time Elvish tried to get into a physical altercation, he was stopped by his friends. He was then escorted out of the restaurant. The video was shared on X.

Soon after the video went viral, Elvish released an audio statement, accessed by The Khabri, on X. In his statement, the YouTuber defended his actions, and claimed that he slapped the man because he hurled abuses at him.

He said: "Bhai, dekho, matter ye hai, naa mujhe shauk hai ladaai karne ka, naa mere ko haath uthane ka shauk hai. Main apne kaam se kaam rakhta hoon. Main chalta hoon normal. Aur jo photo khichwane ko kehata hai, hum kichwate hai aaram se photo. Par, jo koi piche se comment pass karta hai, usko nahi bakshte (I am not interested in fighting nor slapping someone. I click photos with whoever asks but if you make a personal remark, I don't spare them either)."

He added: "As you can see, there were police and commandos with us. It is not that we've done anything wrong. This was personal. He took a personal dig at me, I personally went and slapped him. I don't have any regrets. I am like this only."



## Tigmanshu Dhulia to helm biopic on 'Mughal-e-Azam' maker K. Asif

Team Absolute | Lucknow

Finally, a biopic on K. Asif, the director and screen writer who helmed 'Mughal-e-Azam', the 1960 Hindi cinema classic, is on its way.

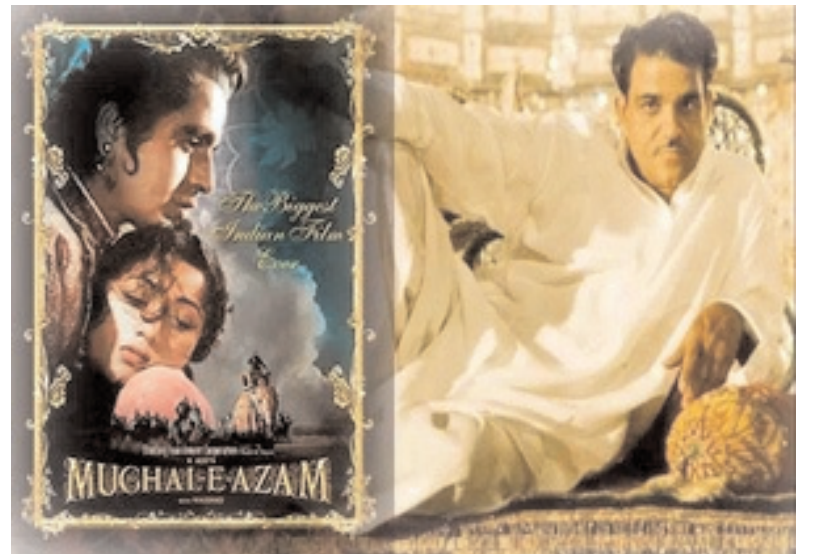
Filmmaker Tigmanshu Dhulia is planning the biopic that will delve into Asif's brief but brilliant cinematic career. Asif, incidentally, was born in Etawah in Uttar Pradesh.

Dhulia, 56, who was here to participate in a literary festival, said there are not many films or documentaries that talk about directors from that era at length.

I have been asked not to talk much about it, but a movie on him (Asif) is in the pipeline," said the director who has made acclaimed movies such as 'Paan Singh Tomar' and 'Haasil'.

"If I make a movie, it will be a grand one. The subject will be big but not the actor," he said referring to the trend in recent movies.

Explaining further, Tigmanshu Dhulia said, "K. Asif saw struggles. He studied only till Class 5 but eventually became a successful film director and producer. He made the film 'Mughal-e-Azam' in 12 years. He only made two-and-half movies in his lifetime but they were



iconic."

Dhulia, who is said to be also making a film on the Rebellion of 1857, added that biopics should not be made earlier than their time.

"It is a big event of our composite culture," Dhulia said. "People from all faiths and communities rebelled together against the British. No one, though, has worked on the subject very well."

On being asked whether he wanted to make a film on Awadh's Wajid Ali Shah, Dhulia noted, "His is not a success story but a tragedy as he was exiled in Metiabruz, Kolkata. He will be a part of the movie on the 1857 Rebellion."

Dhulia also remembered his National School of Drama (NSD) mate Irrfan Khan and called him the greatest actor of all times.

## Kartik Aaryan hails Vidya Balan's return to 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa' franchise

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Vidya Balan, who played the original Manjulika in the 2007 blockbuster 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa', is returning to the franchise for its third instalment.

The actress will join forces with Bollywood star Kartik Aaryan for 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3'. Taking to Instagram on Monday, Kartik extended a warm welcome to Vidya Balan, as he shared a mash-up of the song 'Ami Je Tomar' with visuals of the actress dancing to the song from 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa' and that of Kartik from 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2'.

He wrote in the caption, "And its happening. Og Manjulika is coming back to the world of Bhool Bhulaiyaa. Super thrilled to welcome @balanvidya. This Diwali is going to be crackling #BhoolBhulaiyaa3." Vidya Balan's iconic portrayal of Manjulika in 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa' had left an indelible mark on the audience, creating a lasting impact



that continues to resonate. In the second instalment, Rooh Baba played by Kartik

Aaryan also garnered much love and appreciation from the audience.

## Arshad Warsi, Maria register their marriage after 25 years



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Arshad Warsi is married to his wife Maria Goretti for 25 years. However, the couple recently registered their marriage in court ahead of the silver jubilee celebrations of their union on this Valentine's Day.

As per media reports, the couple registered their marriage in court on January 23. Arshad and Maria got mar-

ried on February 14, 1999. The two walked down the aisle in a church ceremony, followed by a traditional nikah.

The actor said that they registered their marriage for legal reasons, realising its importance when dealing with property matters and for the future. The two registered their marriage under the Special Marriage Act. Their kids couldn't come because only witnesses were allowed.

## Rakul, Jackky to get married on Feb 21

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Rakul Preet Singh and producer-actor Jackky Bhagnani are all set to tie the knot on February 21.

A copy of the wedding card shows that the couple will be having their "pheras" on Wednesday, February 21. The painted card has the mandap surrounded by coconut trees and the sea in the backdrop.

The opening card is in blue and white which has the hashtag #ABDONOB-HAGNA-NI

After dating for a few years, Rakul and Jackky have chosen Goa to be the venue for their wedding. The two had reportedly fallen in love in the same location, according to reports. Jackky's debut film was Kal Kisse Dekha, which came out



in 2009. He then starred in films such as 'F.A.L.T.U', 'Ajab Gazabb Love', 'Rangrez' and 'Youngistaan' among many others. Rakul Singh made her acting debut with the Kannada film Gilli in 2009. She

stepped into the world of Hindi cinema with Yaariyan after which she starred in films such as 'De De Pyaar De', 'Runway 34', 'Chhatrivali', 'I Love You' and 'Doctor G' among many others.

## Aditya Narayan snatches phone from fan, throws it away amid concert

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer Aditya Narayan has received flak after a video of him hitting a fan and throwing their phone amid a concert went viral on social media.

Aditya, son of veteran singer Udit Narayan, was performing at a concert in a college in Chhattisgarh during the weekend.

In a clip, which has now gone viral on social media platforms, the singer is seen crooning 'Aaj Ki Raat' from 'Don' starring Shah Rukh Khan. He is then seen losing his cool over a fan after the singer noticed him record while he was performing.

The next thing in the video shows Aditya hitting the fan with his mic and then taking his phone and throwing it into the crowd. The video also showed that the concert goers were in shock.



However, there is no clarity about what made Aditya so angry over the fan.

This is not the first time Aditya lost his cool. In 2017, he was seen in a heated fight with airport staff at the Raipur airport.

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Vaani Kapoor