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Kamal Nath to stay in Congress, informs party amid buzz on switch to BJP

BACK TO PAVILION



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress has claimed that its veteran leader from Madhya Pradesh, Kamal Nath, is not joining the BJP. This is what Nath has told them when asked about the matter, party general secretary Jitendra Singh told news channel.

Nath is in Delhi amid a buzz that he is joining the BJP, upset over his removal from the state party chief

post after the Congress's crushing defeat to the BJP in the recently held assembly election.

His successor on the post, Jitu Patwari seconded Jitendra Singh, blaming the buzz on "misuse of media".

"This was a conspiracy made against Kamal Nath. I spoke to him and he said that all these things are just rumours, and he is a Congress person and will continue to be a

Congress person... he will continue to have Congress ideology till his last breath. This is his own thoughts, he said this," he said.

The Congress claim, though, sits awry with what Nath's loyalists have to say. Nath has enough reasons to join the BJP and "the people" want him to do so, they argue.

One of them, former Congress MLA Deepak Saxena, told news agency that only Nath is being

blamed for the party's rout. He was also said to be the one to shoot down the Central leadership's seat share understanding with the Samajwadi Party for the state elections, thereby creating a rift within the nascent INDIA bloc.

"The Public want Kamal Nath should go to the BJP so that development works will be done in the Chhindwara," he was quoted as saying by news agency.

"The way he (Kamal Nath) has been removed from his post... there is a group of 11 senior Congress members, we all discussed and decided that if we are neglected like this then it would be better to go to BJP and get the work done. I will also go," he had added.

Earlier, sources said party leaders including Jitu Patwari, were reaching out to the MLAs to avert a mass exodus in case Nath does change sides.

Sources said those under spotlight include former ministers Sajjan Singh Verma and Sukhdev Panse and MLAs Satish Singh Sikarwar, Sukhdev Panse, Sanjay Uikey, Nilesh Uikey, Sohan Valmiki, Vijay Chaur, Kamlesh Shah and Lakhna Ghangoriya.

Sources also said a section of BJP leaders had objected to Nath's inclusion in the party on account of his alleged role in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, BJP leader Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga had raised questions on the issue.

Your smart garden mower can become entry point for cyberattack: Researchers

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A team of researchers has found an unexpected correlation between a smart garden mower and cybercrime, revealing that this innocent device can be a weak spot for your home's security network. According to VPN service provider ZenShield, a threat actor can hack into the device by using the lawnmower software that powers smart devices. Internet-connected devices, like your smart garden mower, become a part of what's known as the Internet of Things (IoT). While these devices offer convenience, they also become gateways for cybercriminals to infiltrate other more sensitive devices on the same network, the researchers explained.

A recent study showed that homes with smart devices, including garden mowers can experience about 12,000 hack attempts weekly.

"It's a weird world where your lawn mower can become the entry point for a ransomware attack," said Steffan Black, a technology expert at ZenShield.

In the study, a fake smart



home was created, equipped with a range of real devices, and linked to the internet. Hackers attempted to break into the devices up to 14 times per hour.

"These criminals aren't really interested in messing with your grass clippings. But they are very interested in finding weak points in your home network that they can exploit," Black stated.

According to the researchers, IoT devices are a popular choice for cybercriminals for several reasons such as ease of access, backdoor entries, and proximity to valuable information.

To secure your IoT devices, the researchers suggested several steps -- change default settings, regular software updates, and network segregation.

BJP national convention hails PM Modi for Ram Mandir, passes resolution

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The BJP on Sunday hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the Ram temple in Ayodhya and also passed a resolution on it amid chants of Jai Shri Ram, on the second and final day of the party's national convention.

Presenting the proposal, BJP national president J. P. Nadda said that the BJP government under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi is moving towards the establishment of Ram Rajya.

Nadda said the Prime Minister is working to uplift spiritual and cultural consciousness.

In 2019, after the Supreme Court verdict, the central government led by Prime Minister Modi formed Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra trust which led to speedy completion of the temple work.

Nadda also mentioned about the strong penance observed by the Prime Minister before the 'pran pratishtha' ceremony of Ram Lalla at the Ram Temple.

Addressing the second day of the Bharatiya Janata Party's National Council Meet, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the INDIA bloc is a supporter of corruption, dynasty politics, and appeasement, while the BJP and NDA allies follow the principle of 'Nation First'.

He also took a dig at the Congress for



not participating in the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, giving credit to Prime Minister Modi for its construction.

Shah claimed that by winning for the third time, they will make India the third largest economy in the world.

The Home Minister said that in the 75 years of Independent India, there have been 17 Lok Sabha elections, 22

governments and 15 Prime Ministers. Every government in the country has tried to bring development as per its own time. But today I can say without any confusion that the work of overall development, development of every sector and development of every individual has only happened in the 10 years of PM Narendra Modi's government."

SMRITI IRANI AND RAHUL GANDHI IN AMETHI TODAY



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amethi Lok Sabha constituency, a traditional stronghold of the Gandhis, is all geared up for intense action and political

fireworks on February 19, with the same-day arrival of Rahul Gandhi and Smriti Irani, two bigwigs of BJP and Congress party.

Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra reached

Prayayag in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday evening and on Monday he will head to Amethi, the Lok Sabha constituency that sent him to Parliament thrice in 2004, 2009 and 2014.

On the other hand, Union Minister Smriti Irani, who outsmarted Rahul in the 2019 poll battle, is also reaching her constituency as part of her four-day tour.

Notably, the two leaders or their convoys are unlikely to cross paths during Amethi visit. This is probably for the second time after 2019 Lok Sabha elections that the two leaders will be in the town, at the same time. Last time, they were in city during 2022 Assembly elections, when both leaders added vigour to the respective parties campaign.

After losing 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Rahul almost 'abandoned' his erstwhile three-time Parliamentary constituency. This visit is probably his second after 2019.




महाराष्ट्र शासन



सुराज्याचा मार्ग दाखवणाऱ्या

रयतेच्या राजाला

मानाचा मुजरा!

“ छत्रपती शिवाजी महाराजांचं कार्य आजही भारताच्या इतिहासाला गौरवान्वित करतंय. ”
- नरेंद्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री



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'FOREIGN NATIONS ALSO KNOW AAYEGA TO MODI HI,' SAYS PM CITING INVITES FOR 2ND HALF OF 2024

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday reiterated his call for 'third term for BJP-led NDA' at the Centre, saying that even foreign nations now have a 'premonition' about his government returning to power, for the record third term.

"I have received invites from foreign nations to visit them in July, August, September; they also know 'aayega to Modi hi'," said PM Modi addressing the BJP national convention in the national capital on Sunday.

Notably, the Parliamentary elections are due in April-May 2024 and a new government and the 18th Lok Sabha will have to be in place by May 2024. "Elections are yet to happen but I am already getting invitations. What does this mean? It means other countries also know that BJP will return to power. They also know 'Aayega to Modi hi'," PM Modi said.

PM Modi also spoke at length about India's growing and strengthening ties with the Gulf nations and



said that the relationship with Arabian nations was growing by 'leaps and bounds', a great deal of which, believe experts, could be attributed to Prime Minister's charisma and personal rapport with global leaders.

"When I took oath in 2014, many critics questioned my experience as an MP. Many things were said about foreign policy. Recently, I visited UAE and Qatar. Not one but five Arab countries have given me highest honour of their country, this is

not the honour of Prime Minister but also that of 140 countrymen," he said, amid wave of applause and cheers by the BJP leaders.

Addressing the huge gathering of BJP brass and party leaders, PM Modi also lashed out at the Congress over its repeated questioning of Centre's tough decisions and nationalists stance. "Congress party had pointed fingers at our security forces, not just once but twice and questioned surgical strikes as well as Balakot airstrikes," he said.

PM Modi also urged the party leaders and functionaries to work towards realising the dream of 370+ seats, as this could turn out to be a fitting tribute to revocation of Article 370 under BJP government.

He also taunted the Opposition over 'losing steam' ahead of high-voltage poll battle in 2024 and said that some of them have been started echoing BJP's poll slogan, 'Abki baar, 400 paar'.

"Today, Opposition leaders are also chanting slogans of 'NDA sarkar, 400 paar'," he said.

Union ministers in Chandigarh for 4th round of talks with farmers



Chandigarh | Agencies

A team of three Union ministers on Sunday evening arrived in Chandigarh to hold a fourth round of talks with farmer leaders. Official sources said the Central ministers - Piyush Goyal, Arjun Munda and Nityanand Rai, first started an informal meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann at a hotel in Sector 17. After the meeting, they will

start deliberations with the farmer leaders regarding the ongoing protest. The Punjab unit of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of protesting farmer organisations, gave a call for day and night mass protest against MPs, MLAs and district presidents of the BJP from February 20 to 22. The previous round of talks largely remained inconclusive as they failed to address the farmers' demands for a legal guarantee of the

minimum support price (MSP) of their crops. Protests have been going on because the third round of talks was inconclusive despite Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann playing the role of intermediary between farmers and Union ministers. After the last round of talks that ended early February 16, Union Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda said: "We have had discussions in a positive manner on various issues."



LIC of India launched a new product LIC's Amritbaal at the hands of Dr. Vivek Joshi, Secretary, Financial Services, Ministry of finance, GOI alongwith Shri Siddhartha Mohanty, Chairperson, and other Senior officials of LIC of India.

IGP Kashmir chairs security review meeting ahead of 'coming events'

Srinagar | Agencies

Inspector General of Police Kashmir Zone V. K. Birdi on Sunday convened a meeting which was attended by senior officers of various security agencies to comprehensively review and strengthen security arrangements in anticipation of visits by VVIPs to the UT of J&K, as well as other events in offing, a police statement said.

"During the meeting comprehensive briefing was given by participating officers on the security plans devised in the backdrop of coming events. Recognising the importance of maintaining a delicate balance between security needs and the smooth conduct of events, IGP Kashmir directed officers to ensure heightened vigilance, particularly during night-hours, to mitigate the risk of terrorist threats," the state-



ment said. Emphasising the imperative to bolster intelligence gathering and anti-terrorism operations, IGP Kashmir urged officers to minimise the risk of unto-

ward incidents by strengthening security at vulnerable points, especially during significant events. "Special attention was given to enhancing security along the

National Highway, tunnels, minority pickets and other critical pockets," the statement said.

"Furthermore, specific directives were issued to intensify security/surprise naka measures in both uptown and downtown areas of Srinagar, with 24x7 patrolling and increased presence at entry and exit points of the district. The IGP also stressed the importance of briefing personnel to take care of SOP, considering the heightened security concerns during events."

The IGP Kashmir Zone emphasised the critical need for thorough monitoring of vulnerable areas and prompt action against suspicious activities. "Special instructions were given to border district heads to maintain strict vigilance along the LoC and hinterland to prevent the potential terror activities," the statement added.

AAP, Congress mutually decided to go solo in Punjab: Kejriwal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rebuffing rumours about all not well in opposition bloc INDIA, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said that it is "mutual decision" of the AAP and Congress to go solo in Punjab for the Lok Sabha elections, and there are no differences between them.

Talking to reporters about AAP's decision to go it alone in Punjab, Kejriwal, who met Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi for lunch, said that the decision was mutual and there is no hostility over this.

The Chief Minister said that the AAP is holding seat-sharing talks with the Congress in Delhi as not



going for it will make things easy for the BJP.

Since a decade, the BJP has been winning all seven parliamentary seats in the national capital.

Earlier, when Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced AAP's decision contest all 13 seats in the state, Punjab Congress leader Pratap Singh Bajwa had said that is what the grand old party wants exactly.

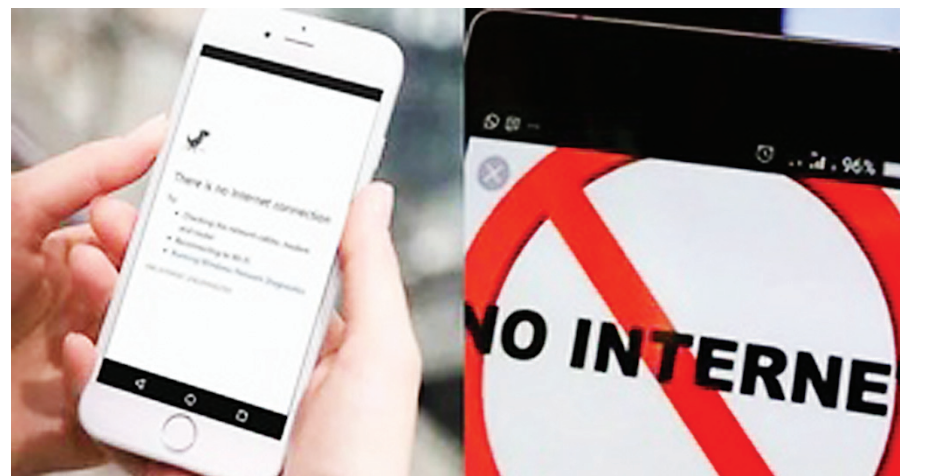
Recently in an interview to a private TV channel, Bajwa had said: "We cannot go with AAP in Punjab, as AAP is the ruling party and Congress is in opposition."

Reacting to the development, the BJP termed the opposition alliance as "opportunist".

TN POLICE INTERCEPT GANJA CONSIGNMENT BOUND FOR SRI LANKA, THREE HELD

Chennai: With the arrest of three people from Nagapattinam district, Tamil Nadu Police on Sunday claimed to have seized over 364 kg of ganja which was meant to be smuggled to Sri Lanka. The arrested persons have been identified as K. Sathiyaseelan (37) who hails from Velankanni, M. Mahendran (38) from Naluvadhappathi and T. Sugumar (29) of Pushpavanam. Nagapattinam Superintendent of Police, Harsh Singh told IANS that the accused were planning to smuggle ganja to Sri Lanka through the sea route using the fibre glass boat that was seized. Vettaikaraniruppu Police have registered a case against the three accused under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

Internet suspension extended to 20 police stations in Punjab's seven districts



Chandigarh | Agencies

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has expanded the Internet suspension to 20 police stations in seven districts from earlier 11 police stations in three districts. The new orders will be in

effect till midnight of February 24. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann had taken exception to the Centre issuing orders for Internet suspension. The CM had said that he had taken up the matter and sought to revoke the suspension. He had said that he had

taken up the matter and sought to revoke the suspension. On February 15, the Ministry had ordered the suspension of telecom services in Shutrana, Khanauri and Fatehgarh Sahib in Punjab in the wake of Bharat bandh call by farmer unions.

Akhilesh to join Rahul's yatra in Rae Bareilly

Lucknow | Agencies

Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav will join the 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra', led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, in Rae Bareilly on Tuesday.

Top sources said that the Congress and SP are likely to finalise their seat-sharing arrangement in the state within the next two days.

The seat-sharing between the two parties has been stuck since January 27 when Akhilesh had announced 11 seats to the Congress which caught the party off-guard.

There have been no further developments in seat-sharing since then. There was no acknowledgement from Congress about the 11 seats though both the parties constantly maintained that talks are going on. In the meantime, Akhilesh accepted Congress National President Mallikarjun



Kharge's invitation to join the Nyay Yatra.

SP National Secretary and Spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary said: "Akhilesh will join the Nyay yatra for some distance with Rahul. He will join the yatra in Rae Bareilly -- most likely at Bachhrawan."

Bachhrawan is a Vidhan Sabha seat that the SP won in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections.

Rae Bareilly and Amethi are two Lok Sabha constituencies where the SP has not fielded any candidates in several successive Lok Sabha elections. The two parties, despite being rivals earlier, had not been fielding candidates against the Gandhi and Yadav family members.

Students take to anti-sleep pills in exam season

Lucknow | Agencies

Prajakta Swarup, a Class 10 student, underwent a major brain surgery for a clot that led to swelling of nerves, last week.

The girl had been staying up all night preparing for her board examinations. Her mother had been giving her steaming cups of coffee to help her stay awake.

Prajakta collapsed one evening and was hospitalised. Her parents later found a bottle of pills in her drawer and when they handed them over to the doctor, they were shocked to learn that their daughter had been on anti-sleep pills.

"Shocking though it may sound, an increasing number of students, today, are taking these anti-sleep pills that help them stay awake during examinations. This is a very dangerous trend and the drugs are being smuggled in from countries like Bangkok. These drugs can have dangerous side effects, especially if taken with an overdose of caffeine -- too many cups of coffee -- as it happened in Prajakta's case," said a leading neurosurgeon Dr Sharad Srivastava.

According to the doctor, these drugs are being sold over the counters with names like 'chuniya' and 'meethi'.



"These are variants of Modafinil that is said to improve memory, and enhance one's mood, alertness and cognitive powers. The drug has a smoother feel than amphetamines and enables the user to stay awake and alert for 40 hours or more at a stretch. Once the drug wears off, you just have to catch up on some sleep," said another medical practitioner who did not wish to be named. A chemist, Surinder Kohli, admitted that the sale of anti-sleep pills, memory enhancers has shot up for the past one month. "Customers are ready to pay any amount for these drugs. They also buy energy drinks to ward off fatigue," he said but

parried questions about the legality of over-the-counter selling of these drugs.

Modafinil, sold under the brand name Provigil, among others, is mainly used in treatment of disorders such as narcolepsy, shift work sleep disorder, idiopathic hypersomnia, and excessive daytime sleepiness associated with obstructive sleep apnea.

A senior police official made a shocking revelation when he said, "It is terrorists who are now using these anti-sleep drugs to stay awake during combat hours. It was first found during the 26/11 attacks that the terrorists carried drugs in the backpacks. Most of us do not know details about these drugs and there have been no complaints so far from the common people, so no action has been taken."

Dr R K Saxena, a well-known psychiatrist, said that the increasing trend of students using anti-sleep pills during examinations was actually a result of growing stress and peer pressure. "There is immense pressure on children to score high percentages so that they can get admissions in good colleges. The children are berated if they get even half a per cent less than their friends. The pressure to score 98 and 99 per cent in board examinations is slowly killing them. Parents should accept the fact that such high per-

centages can be unrealistic and not every child can score these marks," he said.

Dr Saxena said that in today's world, parental guidance was almost non-existent, especially in cases where both the parents were working.

"Parents do not have the time to watch changes in their child's behaviour and counsel her or understand the pressure that he feels. The child is left on his own and starts taking these drugs on the recommendation of friends," he said.

Prajakta's parents now admit that they did not realise the kind of pressure their daughter was facing. "She kept telling us that she wanted high scores in examinations so that she could get admission in a good college in Delhi because that is where her friends would be going," her father said.

Teachers, meanwhile, blame the parents as well as students for not maintaining a consistent study pattern.

Pushpa D'Souza, a retired teacher from an English medium girls' school, said, "Students do not study all year through. They bunk classes and the parents remain blissfully unaware. If the parents monitor their children's study pattern throughout the year, the examination tension will ease to a considerable extent."



BMC'S FIRST 'SEA FOOD PLAZA' IS A RAGING HIT WITH MUMBAI; MORE IN PIPELINE

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

In November 2023, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) hesitatingly opened a weekend 'Sea Food Plaza' at the little-frequented Mahim Beach and seafont, with around a dozen eye-catching stalls and awaited customers.

The stalls were run by 14 women's Self Help Groups (SHGs), each having average 10 women members, under the BMC's Mahila Bal Kalyan Yojana.

The SHG volunteers, all hailing from the local Koli community -- the fisherfolks and the original inhabitants of Mumbai from the 12th century -- clad in their traditional attire with a lot of gold jewellery, welcome the early skeptics.

Then came the casual walk-in diners, followed by the foodies, and as the reputation grew to spread, ravenous people go there in droves -- on all Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays -- in the evenings, savouring the Koli-style cuisine against the backdrop of the sun setting behind the Bandra-Worli Sea Link on the Arabian Sea horizon.

"In just three months, we have clocked more than 30,000 footfalls here... From the weekends, we added an extra day (Wednesday), and now there are demands from some quarters to make it a daily affair," BMC's Community Development Officer, Advocate Vedika Patil told correspondent.

The BMC assisted each SHG kickstart with a revolving fund of around Rs 25,000 and soft-loans of upto Rs 5-10 lakh at seven per cent interest rates, set up the small tents, the open kitchenettes, chairs, tables, electricity and all other requirements to launch the first designated 'Sea Food Plaza'.

Advocate Patil said that the SHG members earn from the business and divide the profits among



themselves, with the BMC's strict directive to adhere to quality and hygiene.

There are at least five tables, 20 chairs, lighting arrangements, bins to collect dry-wet waste, aprons, gloves, header caps, etc. to serve the customers, and each of the registered SHG's information is provided on individual hoardings erected at their respective stalls.

"The BMC has directed all the SHGs that there should be no compromise on food quality and cleanliness if they want to succeed..." smiled Advocate Patil, saying the women whip up a large variety of Koli style sea-food preparations, dry, gravy, fried, grilled, with or without accompaniments, plus take-away parcels.

The BMC's Director (Planning), Prachi Jambhekar, said that besides promoting the tourism initiatives in Mahim and the neighbourhood, "it has also provided gainful employment

the local women virtually at their doorsteps".

The BMC Commissioner I.S. Chahal and his team, including Ashwini Joshi, Ajitkumar B. Ambi, plus Jambhekar and Patil counseled the women on the significance of SHGs, the concept of entrepreneurship, imparted training on marketable fish and fish-based products, aquaculture, running the stalls, etc.

The fishermen husbands of the SHG members or other male members bring the "day's catch" from the Arabian Sea just outside their homes in the mornings, the womenfolk sort and get them cleaned, marinated and all-ready for the 'night catch' by the droves heading for the Sea Food Plaza.

On the mouthwatering menus are: Fish or prawns Koliwada, Gaboli, Stuffed Pomfret, Tisrya Masala, Teekhat Moongdal, Bombay Duck fry, Prawns masala, rice or rice-bhakris, sol-kadhi, among a lot more, delighting die-hard sea-foodies like Sham Yenpure and Dwarakanath Nagvekar.

As the Sea Food Plaza catches the taste-buds of the physical visitors and the eyes of people at longer distances, it has now tied up with an online food delivery app (ZOMATO), which ferries all orders across Mumbai to the drooling customers. BMC officials said that that with the 'pilot project' off to a flying start, the civic body would consider exploiting other sea-side locations or beaches like Girgaum Chowpatty, Worli, Dadar, Juhu, Versova, Marve, Gorai, etc, which are frequented by thousands of people comprising locals, domestic visitors and international tourists.

Incidentally, Juhu Beach is already famed for its 'chowpatty' with an array of chaats, bhelpuris and other fast-food stalls that swarm with customers, and a Sea Food Plaza in the vicinity could give a stiff competition to the established eateries/hotels in the region.

Sharad Pawar-led NCP says dynastic politics breeds in BJP

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Sharad Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) on Sunday said that the dynastic politics breeds in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and asked the ruling party to look within before accusing others of indulging in it.

In its national council meeting (underway in Delhi), the BJP is targeting the opposition on dynastic politics and nepotism, the Sharad Pawar-led party's national spokesperson Clyde Crasto said in a statement, according to a news agency.

"Dynastic politics breeds in the BJP. The BJP says it will win 370 seats on its own and its NDA alliance will get 400 seats (in Lok Sabha polls). If it is so confident why is constantly targeting the opposition?" he asked.

The BJP is scared as the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (I-N-D-I-A), comprising several leading opposition parties like the Congress and NCP-SP, was getting stronger by the day with the support of the people, Crasto said.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a plea of Sharad Pawar challenging an Election Commission order recognising the Ajit Pawar-led faction as the real NCP, the news agency reported on Sunday. A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and KV Viswanathan is likely to hear Sharad Pawar's plea.

On February 16, the top court had agreed to urgently list the plea after Sharad Pawar stated that a whip may be issued by the faction led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

The veteran leader had sought an urgent hearing of his plea in the wake of twin blows suffered by the group led by him and the consequential fear of facing action for possi-



ble violations of whip by his MLAs.

Sharad Pawar had sought urgent hearing in view of the February 15 order of Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar.

Rahul Narwekar held that the NCP faction led by Ajit Pawar was the real NCP and that the anti-defection provisions in the Constitution cannot be used to stifle internal dissent. Prior to this, the poll panel announced on February 6 that the Ajit Pawar faction is the real NCP and also allotted the party's 'clock' symbol to the group.

The special Maharashtra assembly session is beginning on February 20.

Sharad Pawar, who founded the NCP with former Lok Sabha speaker Purno Sangma and Tariq Anwar in 1999 after their expulsion from the Congress, filed the petition through lawyer Abhishek Jebaraj.

Prior to him, the Ajit Pawar faction had filed a caveat in the Supreme Court through advocate Abhikalp Pratap Singh to ensure that no ex-parte order is passed in favour of the Sharad Pawar group if the latter moves the top court. Ajit Pawar, currently a deputy chief minister in Maharashtra, had walked away with a majority of NCP MLAs in July last year and supported the BJP-Shiv Sena government led by Eknath Shinde.

Filmmaker Rajkumar Santoshi granted bail in cheque bounce case

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rajkumar Santoshi's lawyer Binesh Patel confirmed that the filmmaker has been granted bail in the cheque-bouncing case and that the court has postponed the judgement for the next 30 days.

During a hearing in the case on Saturday, the court ordered a two-year jail sentence for Rajkumar Santoshi while asking him to repay double the amount that he owes to a businessman. The Jamnagar court in Gujarat allowed filmmaker Rajkumar Santoshi a 30-day stay on the order to appeal against an order. It will allow Rajkumar Santoshi to challenge the verdict in a higher court.

In the same context, Rajkumar Santoshi's advocate Binesh Patel stated that they will appeal against the magisterial court's judgement. As per the statement from Rajkumar Santoshi's advocate, "First of all, the court has stayed its judgement for 30 days and granted Mr Santoshi bail



after we sought time to appeal against the judgement at a higher forum," Patel said.

He added, "The prosecution didn't produce any documentary evidence to prove that Mr Santoshi had taken money at all. The prosecution itself has admitted that a third party had collected the said money from the complainant. In return, the third party had provided altered 11 cheques of Rs.10 lakh each, which Mr Santoshi was not aware of. The magisterial court overlooked these facts and ruled against us. Therefore, on the

grounds of invalid and false claims, alterations happened in the cheques, and the fact that the complainants do not want to present or call in the said third party who had collected the money, about Mr.Santoshi does not know. So we shall appeal at a higher forum with the above-highlighted points and even more." The complainant, Ashok Lal, a prominent industrialist and shipping magnate from Jamnagar, claimed that he received 10 cheques of Rs 10 lakh each from the filmmaker, totalling Rs 1 crore, which subsequently bounced.

Piyush Bhojani, the advocate for the businessman in the case, confirmed the sentencing to ANI on Saturday. Meanwhile, on the work front, Rajkumar Santoshi is set to come out with his next directorial venture 'Lahore 1947', which is being produced under the banner of Aamir Khan Productions. This project marks the collaboration of Sunny Deol, Santoshi, and Aamir Khan for the first time.

Supriya Sule reacts to buzz over Ajit Pawar's wife contesting against her

Team Absolute | Pune

Speaking on the speculations about Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar's candidature against her in Baramati, the pocket borough of the Pawar clan, NCP-Sharadchandra Pawar leader Supriya Sule, said on Sunday that "anyone can contest elections in a democracy."

The big battle for Baramati has intensified, with Lok Sabha polls ahead this year.

Sule told the news agency, "How can this be a family fight? Anyone can contest elections in a democracy. I also said yesterday that if they have a strong candidate, then I am ready to talk to that candidate. Whatever topic, time, or place they decide, I am ready to sit down and discuss..."

On the issues she will be fighting, she said, "I am contesting for Parliament polls. Unemployment, inflation, a big Paytm issue, and the scam of the electoral bond... People who have been accused of



corruption...all those corrupted... if they are convicted...they all are joining the BJP," she said, adding, "whether corruption took place in the country or not. This is a big issue."

Her remarks came in the backdrop of the recent Supreme Court verdict striking down as "unconstitutional" the electoral bond scheme.

Her latest remarks came a day after publicity campaign vehicles in Baramati showcased pictures of NCP Chief Ajit Pawar and his wife Sunetra, even as speculation continued on her being the candidate of the NCP (Ajit Pawar) for the constituency in the Lok Sabha.

This constituency, which was repeatedly represented by Sharad Pawar, is currently represented by

his daughter, Supriya Sule. The campaign vehicle carried a banner with photographs of Sunetra Pawar and Ajit Pawar with the symbol of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP).

The Baramati Lok Sabha segment has traditionally been a bastion of Sharad Pawar and his daughter Supriya Sule.

Supriya Sule was first elected to the Rajya Sabha in 2006, followed by three consecutive terms in 2009, 2014 and 2019 as a Member of Parliament in Lok Sabha.

Sunetra Pawar is a social worker and hails from a political family. Her brother is a senior politician and former minister, Padamsinh Patil.

Sunetra Pawar is the founder of the Environmental Forum of India, an NGO founded in 2010 and serves as a trustee for the indigenous and well-known educational institution Vidya Prathishthan. She has been a Think Tank member of the World Entrepreneurship Forum in France since 2011.

40 Maharashtra cops transferred after viral bribery video

Team Absolute | Thane

Forty traffic policemen were transferred en masse in Thane after a viral video showed some personnel allegedly taking bribes from motorists in the city's Mumbra area, an official said on Sunday. All the personnel who have been transferred are from the Mumbra division of the traffic police, the official said.

They include Mumbra traffic division senior inspector Suresh Khedekar, two assis-



tant sub inspectors apart from constables, the official said.

"The transfer orders were issued by Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Vijaykumar Rathod on Saturday. These personnel have been shifted to the control room," he said.

The video showed traffic police personnel taking money from drivers of heavy vehicles passing through the congested Mumbra stretch of the highway which is an arterial route into Mumbai.

Sex racket busted in Navi Mumbai, cops rescue 14-year-old girl; 2 held

Navi Mumbai | Agencies

Police in Navi Mumbai busted a sex racket and arrested two persons meanwhile, a minor hailing from Bangladesh was rescued, a police official said on Sunday. As per the report, the sex racket was busted in the Talaja area of the city.

Reportedly, a raid was conducted on Saturday on a flat in a residential society after a tip-off confirmed by a decoy, Sub Inspector Suresh Kurhade of Talaja police station said.

The cop added, "Two persons identified as Samon Shaikh and Mohinoor Mandal were arrested and a 14-year-old girl, who hails from Bangladesh, was rescued. A case has been registered under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act."

In another incident from Goregaon, the Bangur Nagar cops busted a sex racket last week involving a former Bollywood artiste and her domestic help.

Kanika Goldar, 62, a former Bollywood actress, was arrested together with her cook, Naresh Kumar Dangi, for running a high-profile sex



work ring from her home in Goregaon. The arrest occurred during a raid conducted by Bangur Nagar police on Saturday, a mid-day report stated.

According to the report, the authorities received a tip concerning Goldar's illegal activity, prompting them to

begin undercover investigations. During talks with a bogus buyer, officials interfered and detained Goldar and Dangi. They also rescued three others, including a make-up artist and two aspiring actresses, who had reportedly been tricked into sex work.

Investigations found that the rescued women, originally from Kolkata, had been involved in the sex labour ring for several years. Goldar, disillusioned with her Bollywood ambitions, allegedly turned to manage the network as an alternate source of revenue.

EXPLOSION REPORTED AT SCRAP GODOWN IN PUNE

Pune: An explosion occurred at a scrap godown in the Kudal Wadi area of Pimpri-Chinchwad, Pune, Maharashtra. The incident, which took place on Saturday, prompted the deployment of 10 fire tenders by the Pimpri-Chinchwad Fire Department to contain the resulting fire.

According to the news agency, fortunately, the fire was successfully brought under control by the authorities. However, further investigation into the cause of the explosion is ongoing, and more details are awaited.

Nigerian national arrested with MD worth Rs 5.5 lakh

Mumbai | Agencies

A Nigerian national named Abdul Razzaq Hassan was nabbed in Navi Mumbai carrying 55 grammes of mephedrone worth Rs 5.5 lakh. The arrest occurred at a housing society in Kharghar's Sector 35 after authorities received a tip-off. The Kharghar police confiscated the unlawful material and filed a case under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act. Investigations into the accused's peddling network are ongoing. According to the report,



the arrest reflects law enforcement's ongoing efforts to combat narcotics trafficking in the region. The Thane Police in Maharashtra destroyed a drug manufacturing and

trafficking network in the Thane district, resulting in the arrest of eight people. During the raid, the police confiscated Rs 55.7 lakh worth of mephedrone, stated an agency report.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Urgent need for global action against antimicrobial resistance

Even as nearly 5 million deaths are associated with Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) every year worldwide, a new report has called for urgent need for global action. The 2024 AMR Preparedness Index Progress Report, released by the Global Coalition on Aging and the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), shows that while large global economies have made some progress in their efforts to address AMR, they need to do more to reduce the health and financial impact. The report assesses how the 11 largest global economies -- Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea, the UK, and the US -- have advanced on calls to action laid out in the 2021 AMR Preparedness Index. The 2021 Index examined over 100 metrics to evaluate and rank countries' performance against AMR and establish benchmarks for policy action and leadership. "Each year, nearly 5 million deaths are associated with AMR, with a disproportionate impact on low and middle-income countries. Without the creation of innovative and novel antimicrobials, growing resistance to our existing drugs threatens our ability to perform even routine medical care," the report said. "AMR is a significant barrier to health system sustainability and public health, including healthy ageing. It is also an economic challenge -- without correcting course on AMR, the World Bank estimates that AMR could cost the global economy as much as \$3.4 trillion annually by 2023," it added. The report showed that the UK maintained its position as the global leader in the fight against AMR, and many of the countries showed promising progress in many areas, but there is still greater action and targeted investment needed across all countries evaluated, particularly to revive the floundering pipeline of novel antibiotics.

DEFENDING INDIA'S BORDERS

D C Pathak

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime is noteworthy for giving full attention to both security and economic development and in particular for building the defence capacity of India to deal with the adversary on land and sea, ensuring at the same time that the air power is blended suitably on these two fronts - apart from the independent capability that the Air Force had of delivering blows to the enemy behind the battle lines.

The military build-up on the LAC is strengthened by our troops being prepared to engage the adversary also in a mountain warfare with suitable air support.

On LoC, a message has already been delivered to Pakistan that India would not hesitate to inflict a 'surgical strike' deep in its hinterland to neutralise any militant bases used for cross-border terrorism against India in Kashmir or elsewhere.

After the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution, the situation in Jammu & Kashmir has been effectively controlled and the process of development given an unprecedented boost.

Meanwhile, in the emerging areas of missile development and space, India has registered a phenomenal advancement enhancing the status of the country as a nuclear power. The Centre has been engaged for quite some time now in upgrading at the strategic level, both our capacity for effectively handling maritime defence of the Indian Ocean as well as our air power.

Developments in the Maldives leading to the advent of an unfriendly regime there under President Mohamed Muizzu, fall out of the Israel-Hamas military conflict producing targeted attacks of pro-Hamas militant outfits in Syria-Iraq region on the cargo ships in the Red Sea as also an acceleration of operations of sea pirates linked to drug mafia in the area and the moves of China to increase its outreach and influence in the Indian Ocean, have all lent urgency to India's marine defence plans and warranted adoption of proactive measures by this country to counter the adversarial activities of the Sino-Pak axis in the region.

India has rightly stepped up its association with Quad - the multilateral forum working for rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region in the backdrop of the Chinese expansionist designs there. This helps the Indian strategy of checking the Chinese ingress into the Indian Ocean as well. Security of the



11,000 km-long coasts of India and of over 13,00 off-lying islands, called for a comprehensive marine defence strategy for the Indian Ocean and beyond and India is doing the needful in this regard. While outlining this strategy at the UN in 2021, Prime Minister Modi highlighted the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes, protection of maritime environment and trade rights and collective action against the threat of terrorism.

A lot of work is being done in the Modi regime to strengthen maritime defence and create necessary infrastructure on the land to facilitate the Navy's task of safeguarding coastal security in coordination with the security set up on the ground.

In a far-sighted policy approach, the Centre is investing in improving the lives of the families in coastal areas, particularly those of fishermen to get them to play their role in the wider coastal look-out network for the cause of security. A three-tier system of Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Police is in operation.

The Union Home Minister has in May last year laid the foundation stone of the National Academy of Coastal Policing at Dwarka in Gujarat.

Earlier, Prime Minister Modi spelt out the vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) to define India's leading role in the Indian Ocean.

In October 2022, the National Maritime Domain Awareness project was launched and 51 Nodal points of the Navy and Coast Guard have since been established as a part of the Coastal Surveillance Network.

A National Maritime Security Coordinator has been appointed under the National Security Advisor (NSA) to strengthen the

coordination at the national level in the sphere of maritime defence and security.

It may be mentioned that 'defence' is protection against an open attack while 'security' is meant to safeguard the country against the covert offensive of the enemy. 26/11 remains a point of reference for how to prevent surreptitious attacks planned through the sea route.

What stands out in the strategy of the Modi government is that a much-needed integral approach to national defence, border management and internal security has been adopted on an understanding of the interlinks that joined them and the coordinated effort that was needed to sustain their constant advancement. This has been in evidence in the area of maritime defence more than elsewhere, for good reasons.

While the Indian Navy has been diligently safeguarding our marine borders, the Central Armed Police Forces including the Coastal Security Police Force operating under the Ministry of Home Affairs are entrusted with the task of securing the coastal areas.

Coastal states have been provided with a total of 120 Coastal Police stations and six Marine Police Operation Centres.

In September last, the Coast Guard conducted Operation 'Sajag' along the western coast involving 48 ships, customs, marine police, ports and the Indian Navy. It revalidated coastal security mechanisms and helped to raise the level of awareness among fishermen at sea.

Incidentally, some three lakh boats have already been registered and the colour coding process of fishermen's boats has been completed as part of the plan to create an integral securi-

ty system on the marine front.

The defence strategy of India rests on self-dependence, bilateral or multilateral relationships based on mutual benefits relating to security and economic advancement, special attention to ASEAN and the South, measures to counter the hostile activity of the Sino-Pak axis particularly in the Indian Ocean, strategic friendship with the US in recognition of the need for the two largest democracies of the world to work together, without diluting the importance of India's bonds with Russia, and an independent stand on issues of global peace and human development. This has paid rich dividends. India has consistently denounced terrorism at all international forums and identified growing 'radicalisation' in the Islamic world as a global threat, especially to the democratic order.

The external threats to internal security have become deeper on account of the collaboration between China and Pakistan in carrying out covert operations on Indian soil, clandestine funding of narco-terrorism and resort to narrative building and 'influence warfare' by anti-India lobbies often in concert with civil society groups hostile to the present regime. After Kashmir, the border state of Punjab now needs close attention in view of the attempts being made - mostly outside of India - to revive the separatist Khalistan movement.

There is a new-found realisation that if the democratic state has to protect the nation and its people, the citizens also have to be aware of the dangers facing the country and be willing to contribute their mite to the safeguarding of national security.

Acts of terrorism, drug peddling and hate crimes occur where people live and logically therefore both information seekers and action takers - Intelligence and Police - have to go closer to the ground so that the gap between 'information' and 'action' is minimised. Also, channels for the security-related information flowing from the public to the concerned authorities have to be put in place. The Homeland Security in the US is said to have provided this.

In the era of 'proxy wars' and 'covert' offensives, a developed sense of nationalism and willingness of conscientious people to act as the eyes and ears of the nation in the interest of internal security, would be of great help in keeping the nation safe.

(The writer is a former Director of the Intelligence Bureau. Views are personal)

international

Trump launches sneaker line after court fined him \$355 mn penalty in civil fraud case

Washington | Agencies

Former US President Donald Trump has launched a sneaker line, a day after a New York judge fined him and his companies nearly \$355 million in the civil fraud case.

The former president unveiled "Trump Sneakers" at Sneaker Con in Philadelphia.

He placed a pair of gold sneakers, which a new website priced at \$399 and named the "NEVER SURRENDER HIGH-TOP SNEAKER", on the podium as he spoke, media reports said.

"This is something I've been talking about for 12 years, 13 years, and I think it's going to be a big success," said Trump, the frontliner in GOP nominations in a potential rematch between him and President Joe Biden for 2024 presidential elections.

By Saturday night, the \$399 sneakers were listed as sold out on the website. There had been 1,000 pairs of the sneakers available for purchase, according to



the site. The former president is also selling two versions of sneakers that have "T" and "45" on the sides for \$199, according to the website. Cologne and perfume are for sale at \$99 each.

According to the website, the products are "trademarks of CIC Ventures

LLC. Trump Sneakers are not designed, manufactured, distributed or sold by Donald J. Trump, The Trump Organization or any of their respective affiliates or principals. 45Footwear, LLC uses the Trump name, image and likeness under a license agreement," CNN reported.

MAN SHOTS 12 OF HIS FAMILY MEMBERS IN IRAN

Tehran: A man shot dead 12 members of his family and injured three others in Iran's Kerman province, country's semi-official news agency reported.

Addressing reporters, Kerman's Police Commander Nasser Farshid said the incident occurred at 4.30 a.m. local time (0100 GMT) in Faryab County, when the 25-year-old armed man opened fire on his two stepbrothers and their family members in two houses, Tasnim news agency reported.

The accused committed the crime due to "family differences", Farshid said, adding a manhunt had been launched to arrest him, Xinhua news agency reported quoting Tasnim news.

As per Ebrahim Hamidi, head of Kerman's Justice Department, the man used a Kalashnikov rifle for the crime, state media reported.

40 PALESTINIANS KILLED IN ISRAELI RAIDS IN GAZA



Gaza | Agencies

At least 40 Palestinians were killed and many others injured in Israeli airstrikes that targeted residential homes in the central Gaza Strip, the media reported. Palestinian medical sources told Xinhua news agency on Saturday that Israeli warplanes launched a series of violent raids on several homes in the areas of Nuseirat, Al-Zawaida, and Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, killing dozens of people and wounding many others. The sources added that civil defence crews were able to recover 40 bodies, while dozens

remained under the rubble, noting that the dead and wounded were transferred to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the city of Deir el-Balah, Xinhua news agency reported. The Ministry of Health, run by Hamas in Gaza, announced that the number of Palestinian deaths had risen to 28,858 since the start of the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023. Israel is launching a large-scale military war on the Gaza Strip for the fifth month in a row after Hamas carried out a sudden and unprecedented attack on the Israeli towns adjacent to the Strip, killing about 1,200 Israelis and taking more than 200 hostages.

RUSSIAN CLAIMS FULL CONTROL OF UKRAINE'S AVDIIVKA TOWN

Moscow: Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu has said Moscow has taken full control of Ukraine's Avdiivka town.

The troops of the Center group, led by Lieutenant General Andrey Mordvichev, had completely captured Avdiivka, the defence ministry announced on its Telegram channel, Xinhua news agency reported.

Ukraine had lost more than 1,500 servicemen in Avdiivka in the last 24 hours, the defence ministry said.

The full control of Avdiivka had allowed the Russian troops to push back the front line from Donetsk, thus significantly securing the military from Ukrainian attacks, the ministry added.

Ukrainian Armed Forces commander-in-chief Oleksandr Syrsky on Saturday said that the country has ordered withdrawal of troops from Avdiivka town.

In a post on social media, Syrsky said: "To avoid encirclement and preserve the lives and health of servicemen, I decided to withdraw our units from the city and move to defence on more favorable lines."

US-British coalition conducts fresh strikes in Yemen's Hodeidah: Media

Sanaa | Agencies

The US-British military coalition has conducted multiple strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen's Red Sea port city of Hodeidah, the media reported. The strikes hit in and around the port city, including the area of Ras Issa in the district of al-Salif, northwest of the city, said the Houthi-run Satellite TV Channel al-Masirah, on Saturday, without providing further details about any casualties.

The US-led coalition has made no comment yet on Saturday's alleged strikes, but it issued a brief statement detailing the Houthi attack on Friday, Xinhua news agency reported.

Late on Friday, "four anti-ship ballistic missiles launched from Iranian-backed Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen into the Red Sea. It is assessed that at least three missiles were launched toward the commercial vessel MT Pollux, a Panamanian-flagged, Denmark-owned, Panamanian-registered vessel. There were no reported injuries or damage from MT Pollux or any other ship in the area," the US Central Command (CENTCOM) wrote on X.

The Houthis in their satellite television claimed responsibility for the missile



attacks against the MT Pollux on Friday, describing the vessel as an "enemy British oil tanker". On Friday, the US Department of State announced the designation of Ansarallah, commonly referred to as the Houthis, as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist group" for their terrorist attacks and hijacking of international civilian commercial vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since last November. The Houthis said their attacks came in solidarity with Hamas, vowing to launch more attacks unless Israel stops its war in Gaza.

The armed Houthis have said the US-British airstrikes against their mobile missiles have "no impact" on the group's military capabilities and vowing to launch more.

Pakistan headed towards an inevitable debt default, warns think tank

New Delhi | Agencies

The quantum of debt Pakistan requires is growing faster than the net output of the economy (GDP). This means that the economy's ability to grow or increase output is constrained. This is unsustainable, Tabadlab, an Islamabad think tank said in a report.

"It demands transformational change. Unless there are sweeping reforms and dramatic changes to the status quo, Pakistan will continue to sink deeper, headed towards an inevitable default, which would be the start of the spiral," the report said.

"Pakistan's debt is a formidable, existential, and pertinent challenge, that requires immediate and strategic interventions. Debt repay-



ments are at a historic high, deprioritising the needs of a growing population, such as social protection, education, health, and crucially, climate change," it said.

Detailed in Tabadlab's analysis, 'A Raging Fire', the gravity of this crisis is laid bare, revealing the depth and breadth of the problem, the quantum of financial resources lacking, and the

path forward with or without transformational structural changes.

Since 2011, in nominal terms Pakistan's external debt has near doubled, and domestic debt has increased by sixfold. In FY-2024, Pakistan will need to pay back an estimated USD 49.5 billion in debt maturities (30% of which is interest, and none of which is a bilat-

eral or IMF loan), the report said. Debt accumulation has been overwhelmingly used to continue fostering a consumption-focused, import-addicted economy, without investment in productive sectors or industry. Pakistan's debt profile is alarming, and its borrowing and spending habits are unsustainable, the report said. Increasing demands of a growing population require more money for social protection, health, education, and climate change related disasters, adaptation strategies, and the green transition. Pakistan's climate and debt vulnerability exacerbate one another, but there is an opportunity to synergise and mitigate both existential crises at the same time, it said.



WILL KAMAL NATH'S BJP MOVE LEAD TO EXODUS? CONGRESS WORKS TO LIMIT DAMAGE

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The buzz over veteran leader Kamal Nath's possible switchover to the BJP has put the Congress in damage control mode, with party leaders reaching out to MLAs to ensure that the senior leader's exit does not turn into a mass exodus months ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Jitu Patwari, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Umang Singhar and other top leaders are speaking to MLAs one on one to hear out their grievances, according to sources. The focus is on MLAs, former legislators and Congress functionaries known to be close to Nath and his son and MP Nakul Nath. A major chunk of MLAs switching over will weaken the Congress in Madhya Pradesh and also shield the turncoats from the anti-defection law.

Among those under the spotlight are former ministers Sajjan Singh Verma and Sukhdev Panse and MLAs Satish Singh Sikarwar, Sukhdev Panse, Sanjay Ukikey, Nilesh Ukikey, Sohan Valmiki, Vijay Chauri, Kamlesh Shah and Lakhan Ghangoriya. Sajjan Singh Verma, former minister and former MP, has said that Nath has not decided to join the BJP yet but made it



amply clear that he will follow the veteran leader if he makes the big move. "Only three things matter in politics -- Maan (pride), Samman (respect) and Swabhimaan (self-respect). When these are hurt, a leader is bound to take major decisions. As of now, Kamal Nath ji hasn't decided to join BJP. Whatever is doing the rounds is pure speculation. If a towering leader who has dedicated over 40 years of his life to the Congress doesn't get the respect he deserves, he is bound to take major decisions. I have been his

follower for four decades and will follow him," he said.

Verma and Panse are among the MLAs who are currently in Delhi with Nath. Nath and his son Nakul landed in Delhi last afternoon amid a wave of speculation that he may join the BJP. The switchover, if it eventually happens, will be another big jolt to the Congress ahead of the general election. More so, because the state in question here is Madhya Pradesh, a part of the heartland where the BJP is a formidable force and is looking to

repeat its stellar show in the state polls last year.

If Mr Nath is followed into the BJP by a sizeable chunk of MLAs, it will be another big setback to the Congress after the Jyotiraditya Scindia-led mutiny brought down its government in 2020. Incidentally, Nath helmed the Congress government back then.

Nath's remarks to the media yesterday have only added to the buzz. "If there would be any such thing, I would inform you first. You people are getting excited. I am not getting excited, this side or that side, but if there would be any such thing, I would inform you first," he said.

According to reports, the BJP leadership has been in touch with the Nath for several weeks now.

The Madhya Pradesh Congress leadership, however, is putting up a brave front. "Can you dream of the third son of Indiraji (Gandhi) joining the BJP?" state party chief Jitu Patwari told reporters yesterday. He said Nath stood with the Congress like a rock during the 2020 mutiny.

In his four-decades-long political career, Nath has held several positions within the Congress, as well as in the central and state governments. His son, Nakul Nath, is currently Congress MP from Chhindwara, a stronghold of the veteran leader.

Hive of bees turn up uninvited at Guna wedding, 12 injured



Team Absolute | Guna

In a shocking incident in Madhya Pradesh, a swarm of bees disrupted a wedding ceremony, leaving several guests injured. The incident took place during a wedding celebration in Guna district, where a hive of bees positioned on the hotel's roof attacked attendees.

Eyewitnesses reported that the swarm descended upon the guests, stinging them

relentlessly. Chaos ensued as people ran in panic, trying to escape the aggressive bees, show visuals from the site.

The hive on the roof of the Kasturi Garden Hotel, housing a large number of bees, sent the aggressive colony down to the garden where the wedding ceremony was taking place. The attack left nearly a dozen people injured, with some of them sustaining serious injuries. Local authorities and

emergency services were quick to respond to the situation. Medical teams rushed to the scene to provide immediate first aid to the injured guests. A few individuals with severe injuries were immediately admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for further treatment.

The hotel management is now under scrutiny to determine whether proper precautions were in place to avoid such incidents.

Acharya Vidyasagar ji inspired us to follow the right path: Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav has said that Acharya Vidyasagar ji had special affection towards Madhya Pradesh. The people of the state received his blessings. His good deeds will always inspire us.

The samadhi of the revered saint Shriromani Param Pujya Acharya Gururav Shri 108 Vidyasagar Ji Maharaj, a wealth of spiritual consciousness, is an irreparable loss for the entire world.

Acharya ji's restrained life and thoughts will always



inspire us. Acharya ji passed away on the intervening night of Saturday-Sunday. According to the information

received, Acharya ji's last rites will be performed this afternoon in Dongargarh, Chhattisgarh.

TWO DAY BANANA FESTIVAL IN BURHANPUR FROM 20TH FEBRUARY

Exhibition of banana species to be main attraction

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A unique two-day banana festival is being celebrated in Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh on 20th and 21st February. Being organized by Burhanpur District Administration, famous banana scientists and banana producers of the country will discuss issues related to banana production, export possibilities, economic prosperity of banana growers.

Exhibition of different species of banana will be the main attraction. Issues related to banana plantation, processing, manufacturing of food items, arrangement of crop sale and storage, increasing the possibilities of banana export will be discussed. There will also be discussions with women of self-help groups related to banana production and making useful handicraft artefacts from banana



fibre. Burhanpur is the only banana pro-

ducing district of Madhya Pradesh. Banana has been included in One

District One Product Scheme and recently Burhanpur has received a special award at the national level. The area of banana in Burhanpur district is 23650 hectares and more than 18000 farmers are growing banana crop. Annual production is more than 16 lakh metric tons. The business of banana sales is around Rs 1700 crore annually. Interested investors have also been invited in the field of production.

Madhya Pradesh has secured its place in the global agricultural export market. Currently, 30 thousand metric tons of bananas are being exported annually from Burhanpur district to Iraq, Iran, Dubai, Bahrain and Turkey. The fame of Burhanpur banana has reached far and wide. The hard work of banana producing farmers and the support of the government has given a new identity to Burhanpur.

Ashoknagar's Narmadi Didi becomes Lakhpati Didi

Team Absolute | Bhopal

It is the resolve of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make the didis of self-help groups millionaires. With the help of the state government scheme, Narmadi Ojha, resident of Pipresara village of Ashoknagar district, has fulfilled her resolution by becoming Lakhpati Didi. Many women of self-help groups operating in the state are doing better work and making their own identity in the society as Lakhpati Didi.

Narmadi Ojha tells that there are 11 members in her family. The family has 10 acres of agricultural land. His family's only source of income was farming. Farming was also based on rain. Due to lack of irrigation facilities, there was not enough income from farming. Amidst these problems, I got information about self-help groups. After this, a group was formed by me along with 12 other women. After group formation, I received CIF and RF



amount. After this I got free tailoring training through RSETI. After this, I started earning an income of Rs 5,000 per month from tailoring. A vehicle was purchased by me with CF amount. After this the income increased to Rs 10 thousand per month.

Didi Narmadi tells that she started a glass-aluminium shop in Ashoknagar with a CF amount of Rs 2 lakh 50 thousand. Today I am employing 4 people in my shop. I earn a monthly profit of Rs 30 to 35 thousand from my shop. Today I have 2 vehicles, a glass-aluminium shop and my own sewing machine business. Today my monthly income has increased to Rs 45 to 50 thousand per month. There are 100 didis in my village, who have made a mark in the society as Lakhpati Didis on the basis of their hard work. I tell all the sisters that when the state government has its hands on us, we should not step back from hard work. Everyone has to move forward and take our country towards self-reliant India.

Result of Patwari Recruitment Exam-2022 released

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Principal Secretary Revenue Nikunj Srivastava has informed that the result of Patwari Recruitment Examination-2022 has been finally released by the Staff Selection Board. The result is available on the website of Staff Selection Board <https://esb.mp.gov.in>. Counseling of the selected candidates in relation to this examination will be organized on February 24, 2024 in the district allotted to the candidate.

The Principal Secretary has said that regarding the examination results, the candidates are also being informed separately through

SMS/e-mail/information letter. For this, detailed guidelines related to counseling are available on MP Online portal <https://prc.mponline.gov.in>. By visiting this link, candidates can create their profile and upload their documents.

The Principal Secretary has told that the selected candidates should ensure to appear at the counseling venue in the allotted district at the appointed time on February 24, 2024 with their original documents along with 2 self-attested copies. If the candidate does not appear on the scheduled counseling date, the post will be considered vacant and the candidature of the candidate will be cancelled.

Sikh leaders of BJP do not agree about Kamal Nath, the issue of riots surfaces

Team Absolute | New Delhi / Bhopal

A tussle has erupted in the party over the issue of Kamal Nath joining BJP. Party leaders say that taking 1984 Sikh riots accused Kamal Nath into the party will send a wrong message to the Sikh community. It may cause losses in many states including Delhi and Punjab. Sikh leaders of the party claim that they have raised their views on the appropriate forum of the party and have registered their disagreement on taking Kamal Nath into the party.

This tussle has broken out in the party at a time when there is speculation about Congress leader Kamal Nath and his son Nakul Nath joining BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is asking party workers to gear up to get 370 seats in the Lok Sabha elections.

Sikh leaders of the party say that till now they have been asking for votes from the people of their community by saying that BJP will get them justice. Kamal Nath, along with Jagdish Tytler and Sajjan Kumar, was among the Congress leaders who led rioters during the 1984 Sikh riots. More than 3500 Sikhs were killed in these riots. Congress leader Sajjan Kumar has been convicted for his involvement in these riots, while Jagdish Tytler is facing court action. BJP's national spokesperson and



influential leader of the Sikh community, Sardar RP Singh, said that there is confusion among the people of the Sikh community due to the inclusion of Jagdish Tytler in the party. He has expressed his views on the appropriate forum of the party. He is confident that the party leadership will take appropriate decisions keeping all things in mind. Chhindwara Lok Sabha seat of Madhya Pradesh is also included in these 161 seats, where BJP could not win even in the strong Modi wave. Chhindwara seat has proved to be an inexplicable puzzle for BJP. BJP had won from here in the only election of 1997. Apart from that, no party except Congress could win from here. Congress leader Kamal Nath has influence on this seat since 1980. He has won from here nine times so far, while his wife Alka Nath had won in 1996 and his son Nakul Nath had won in 2019.

Police station Gandhi Nagar exposed the vicious gang involved in snatching and vehicle theft

Team Absolute | Bhopal

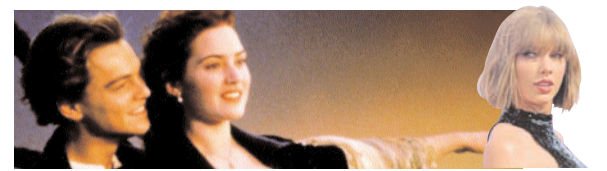
Crime number 40/24,41/24,42/24, section 454,380 of Indian Penal Code has been registered in Police Station Gandhi Nagar, Bhopal, on the incidents of three burnings in the Maple Tree complex situated on Jail Road on 11.02.24 and 12.02.24. Special teams were formed to find out and research was started. In the case, CCTV footage around the incident spot was seen, in which Nayaz, a resident of Bangalore Karnataka, who had committed theft incidents in many police stations of Gandhi Nagar and Bhopal city, was identified. In the case, since no specific information or mobile number of the accused Nayaz was found, the persons who came to meet the accused during the stay of accused Nayaz in jail were identified in which accused Abid resident of Ashta was mainly found to be coming to



meet the accused. When Abid was taken into custody by going to Ashta Sehore and interrogated, he told that he had received some jewelry from the accused Nayaz and Raju for selling in a robbery incident, after which the accused Abid was arrested from Ashta. After taking police remand of accused Abid, after detailed inter-

rogation of the accused, other accused were searched in a planned manner and other accused Nayaz and Raju were arrested and 03 robbery of Gandhi Nagar police station, 01 robbery of Talaiya police station and 02 vehicles of Kolar police station were stolen. The incidents were exposed.

- Crime number 40/24,41/24,42/24 section 454,380 of Bhadvi police station Gandhi Nagar Bhopal, stolen property worth about Rs 4.5 lakh, one laptop of HP company, one watch of Casio Edifice, cash Rs 4500 (total amount 5 lakh 45 thousand)
 - 2. Crime number 13/24,37/24 section 379 of Kolar police station, Honda Activa and Honda Shine worth around Rs 80,000 were stolen.
 - 3. A Dell company laptop worth Rs 75000 was stolen in crime number 46/24 section 454,380 IPC of Talaiya police station. Total value of stolen Mashrooka - Rs 7 lakh
- Name of the arrested accused -**
- 01 Nayaz alias Nayaz, son of Faiyaz, age 42 years, resident of Shivaji Nagar, Timaiya police station, Khalpada, Bangalore, Karnataka.
 - 02 Raju Khatri, son of Bhanwarlal Khatri, age 52 years, resident of village Barela, living in a rented room near Lalghati, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
 - 03 Abid Khan, son of Aziz Khan, age 47 years, resident of Kata Bagh, in front of Reliance Petrol Pump, police station Ashta, Sehore, Madhya Pradesh.



Rob Reiner's meeting with wife made him change 'When Harry Met Sally' ending

New York | Agencies

Rob Reiner's 1980s classic 'When Harry Met Sally' almost had quite a different ending, according to 'The Hollywood Reporter'. During an interview with CNN's Chris Wallace, the classic film's director and co-writer Rob Reiner revealed that his and Nora Ephron's script originally had a sadder ending for Harry (Billy Crystal) and Sally (Meg Ryan). "It was going to be the two of them seeing each other after years, talking and then walking away from each other," Reiner told Wallace, according to 'The Hollywood Reporter'. "I had been married for 10 years. I'd been single for 10 years, and I couldn't figure out how I was ever going to be with anybody, and that gave birth to 'When Harry Met Sally'." Reiner continued, "I met my wife Michele, who I've been married to now for 35 years. I met her while we were making the film, and I changed the ending." When Wallace asked if fans have Michele to thank for the tear-jerker finale, Reiner said, "That's right." Since 'When Harry Met Sally' was released in 1989, the final moments of the film have gone down in rom-com history as some of the most iconic ever. After years of their will-they/won't-they relationship, Billy crashes a New Year's Eve party that Sally is at and delivers a memorable monologue about how he loves everything about her -- from how her nose crinkles when she looks at him a certain way to how it takes her an hour and a half to order a sandwich, adds 'The Hollywood Reporter'. He tells her, "I came here tonight because when you realise you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible." To this day, 'When Harry Met Sally' is a beloved rom-com, and Crystal thinks the reason why is "because it's the truth". He told 'The Hollywood Reporter' when celebrating the film's 30th anniversary in 2019, "It's an amazing movie, I have to say, because there's no plot. In typical romantic comedies, they go through so much: their adversary, he had to move, he got drafted, he's in the Army, he came back, they found each other again -- no. The obstacle in this movie is themselves."



Margot Robbie, Colin Farrell to be seen together in 'A Big Bold Beautiful Journey'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Sony Pictures has acquired the worldwide rights to 'A Big Bold Beautiful Journey', a fantasy romance starring Margot Robbie and Colin Farrell, in the first major deal of the European Film Market in Berlin, reports 'Variety'.

The film will be directed by South Korean-born American filmmaker Kogonada, who also helmed the TV series 'Pachinko' and the sci-fi drama 'After Yang'. 'The Menu' scribe Seth Reiss has penned the script. 'A Big Bold Beautiful Journey', according to 'Variety', marks Robbie's follow-up role to 'Barbie', the \$1-billion blockbuster that she also produced. Plot details are being kept under wraps, but the film is teased as "an imaginative tale of two strangers and the extraordinary emotional journey that connects them". Production starts this spring in California. "Every once in a great while in this job you read a script so special and original, that you fly to the last page, inspired and uplifted," Tom Rothman, Chairman and CEO of Sony Pictures Motion Picture Group, said in a statement quoted by 'Variety'. He added: "A Big Bold Beautiful Journey", by Seth Reiss, is such a script and together with the superb director Kogonada, the perfect cast of Colin and Margot, and top flight producers Bradley Thomas, Dan Friedkin and Ryan Friedkin, it is a project from heaven. We believe the audience is desperate for originality ..."



Deepika Padukone to join galaxy of global stars at tonight's Battle of the BAFTAs

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Half an hour after midnight tonight (Indian Standard Time), curtains go up on the BAFTAs, the much-anticipated British Academy of Film and Television Awards, with Prince William being the guest of honour and Deepika Padukone one of the presenters. The glittering evening is being beamed live by Lionsgate Play for Indian audiences from 12:30 a.m. onwards.

As the world of showbiz prepares for the BAFTAs, which may not be up there with the Oscars, but are nonetheless counted among the world's top four film awards, here's a curtain-raiser to bring you up to date on the event.

The race this year is between British-born Christopher Nolan's 'Oppenheimer', which has got 13 nominations, including best film, best actor (Cillian Murphy) and best supporting actress (Emily Blunt), and Yorgos Lanthimos's brilliantly original 'Poor Things', which received 11 nods. Emma Stone is a frontrunner in the best actress race.

Nolan, according to BBC.com, is favourite to pick up best director. "Hard to believe given his back catalogue -- which includes 'Dunkirk', 'Inception' and 'The Dark Knight Rises' --



but this will be his first Bafta win if he triumphs at the weekend," says BBC.com.

If, as widely expected, Robert Downey Jr picks up the award for best supporting actor, it will be his second Bafta win -- a whopping 31 years after his best actor win for 'Chaplin' back in 1993, reports BBC.com. Other films hoping for a successful evening include French courtroom drama 'Anatomy of a Fall', nostalgic comedy drama 'The Holdovers', the Leonard Bernstein biopic 'Maestro' with Bradley Cooper playing the lead role, fantasy romance 'All of Us Strangers', black comedy thriller 'Saltburn' and 'Barbie' of course. "Some film fans were left disappointed after Margot Robbie missed the cut for a best actress nomination at the Oscars," notes BBC.com, "but the 'Barbie' star has a chance (albeit a slim one) at the BAFTAs in the same category." Martin Scorsese's 'Killers of the Flower Moon' has an impressive nine nominations and so does Jonathan Glazer's 'The Zone of Interest'. 'Euphoria', 'Saltburn' and 'Priscilla' star Jacob Elordi, says BBC.com, is one of the favourites to pick up the BAFTA rising star award and he's also nominated for best supporting actor in 'Saltburn'. He recently hit headlines when he was accused of grabbing a reporter's throat in Sydney and is not expected to attend on Sunday. Emerald Fennell's film was completely left out in the cold when the Oscar nominations were announced last month, continues BBC.com, so will the BAFTAs show more love to what has already arguably become a cult British classic? 'Saltburn' has got five nods, including best actor (Barry Keoghan) and best supporting actress (Rosamund Pike). It lost out on a best film nomination, but it wasn't the only one -- with just five spots available, 'Barbie' also missed the cut. "Perhaps there's an argument for BAFTA to expand the number of picture nominees, as the Oscars has done, to 10?" notes BBC.com German star Sandra Hüller has the distinction of getting a nomination in two categories -- for best actress 'Anatomy of a Fall' and for best supporting actress in Jonathan Glazer's chilling Nazi drama 'The Zone of Interest'. "Seriously though, she absolutely deserves both," says BBC.com. Another one from BBC.com: "Fun (and unapologetically geeky) fact -- if 'Barbie' or 'Anatomy of a Fall' wins best screenplay, it will be a couple picking up the prize. Greta Gerwig wrote 'Barbie' with husband Noah Baumbach, while Justine Triet penned 'Anatomy of a Fall' with her partner, Arthur Harari. Who should you look out for? Greta Gerwig, Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling will be among those flying the flag for 'Barbie', which has five nominations. Bradley Cooper and Carey Mulligan ('Maestro'), and Christopher Nolan, Cillian Murphy, Emily Blunt and Robert Downey Jr ('Oppenheimer') will all be on the red carpet. Emma Stone ('Poor Things'), Colman Domingo ('Rustin'), Da'Vine Joy Randolph and Paul Giamatti ('The Holdovers') and Paul Mescal ('All of Us Strangers') are also expected. So are Saltburn stars Rosamund Pike plus Sandra Hüller, who stars in both 'Anatomy of a Fall' and 'The Zone of Interest'. Prince William is BAFTA's president and will be attending the ceremony but without his wife Catherine, Princess of Wales, who is still recovering after abdominal surgery. Former 'Doctor Who' star David Tennant will host the show this year. To quote BBC.com, "The Scottish actor certainly doesn't lack a sense of humour, but he won't be making any Ricky Gervais-style barbs at his A-list audience." Tennant said in his defence, "We want to have an evening that's a celebration and that won't make people feel uncomfortable and won't have people being roasted in any way, so it will hopefully be an evening of generosity and joy." The list of presenters include David Beckham, Dua Lipa, Bollywood star Deepika Padukone, Hugh Grant, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Idris Elba, Gillian Anderson and Andrew Scott (who missed out on a best actor nod for 'All of Us Strangers').

Selena Gomez Shares Gorgeous Makeup-Free Selfie After Spending Valentine's Day

Selena Gomez may be the boss of her own cosmetic brand, but the rare beauty lies in her makeup-free moments. The 31-year-old Golden Globe Award nominee posed for a new selfie recently, in which she showed off her natural facial features. In the picture, Selena wore her hair down in a tousled style, and she wore a gray cardigan while flashing her smile for the camera. The 'Only Murders in the Building' actress shared the fresh-faced shot to her Instagram Stories shortly after celebrating her first Valentine's Day with boyfriend Benny Blanco, whom she has been dating since mid-2023. Although she's been enjoying her new-found romance with the record producer, Selena has been busy with her other projects. From a 'Wizards of



Waverly Place sequel series to attending multiple award shows, the Disney Channel

alum somehow finds the time to attend events for her makeup brand, Rare Beauty.

Molly Ringwald Through the Years: Photos of 'The Breakfast Club' Star Then & Now

Molly Ringwald was the ultimate queen of 80s teen movies, starring in iconic films like 'The Breakfast Club', 'Sixteen Candles', and 'Pretty In Pink'. With her gorgeous red hair and killer acting skills, she captured the hearts of audiences worldwide. Molly started her journey in the entertainment industry with a role in 'The Facts Of Life' before she became a household name in John Hughes' films. Even in the 90s and 2000s, she continued to slay on the big screen with standout performances in movies like 'The Stand' and 'Something To Live For: The Alison Gertz Story'. After a brief hiatus, she made a huge comeback on the popular TV show 'Riverdale', a nod to her own rise to fame as a young star. Not only is Molly a talented actress, but she's also a



committed family woman. She's been married twice, first to French writer Valery Lameignère from 1999 to 2002 and later to Greek-American writer and editor Panio Gianopoulos, with whom she has three beautiful children.

We've got a little blast from the past for you! Check out this promo shot of Molly during her time on 'The Facts Of Life' which aired from 1979 to 1988. And if you're itching for more, we've got a whole gallery of photos featuring this 80s icon then and now.

Zendaya Shocks in See-Through Silver Body Armor at 'Dune: Part 2' Premiere in London

Zendaya really knows how to commit to a sci-fi theme. The 27-year-old

actress showed up to the 'Dune: Part 2' red carpet premiere in London complete with pointed heels. Only Zendaya's head was free from her wild ensemble that some might say made her look like C-3PO from Star Wars. The "Rewrite The Stars" singer wore her dark brunette hair in a back bun. Safe to say, this was one of Zendaya's most shocking and unforgettable red carpet looks ever. Zendaya posed at the U.K. premiere with her co-stars including Timothee Chalamet and Florence Pugh. Anya Taylor-Joy was there as well, confirming that she makes an appearance in the highly-anticipated sequel. The red carpet was filled with sand as an ode to the science fiction theme of the popular movie series.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Jennifer Lopez



3rd Test: Jaiswal's double ton, Jadeja's 5-wicket haul help India hammer England by 434 runs

Team Absolute | Rajkot

Yashasvi Jaiswal scored a phenomenal unbeaten double-century while local lad Ravindra Jadeja followed up his first-innings century with a five-wicket haul in the fourth innings as India hammered England by 434 runs in the third Test at the Niranjan Shah Stadium here on Sunday. Jaiswal, who retired hurt on 104 due to back cramps on Day Three, remained unbeaten on a career-best score of 214 off 236 balls. He hit 14 fours and 12 sixes and levelled with Wasim Akram for the world record for most sixes in a Test innings. Jaiswal is also the first Test player to hit 20 sixes in a series. With his smooth power game enthralling fans under bright sunshine, Jaiswal is now the leading run-getter in the ongoing series and also became the third-youngest player to smash two double-centuries in Tests, behind Vinod Kamble and Don Bradman. On the other hand, Gill made a fine 91 while Sarfaraz piled on the misery for England's inexperienced spin bowlers by making 68 – his second fifty on Test debut, becoming the fourth Indian batter to do so. Sarfaraz and Jaiswal, who come from the same school in Mumbai, produced plenty of fireworks in their entertaining 172-run partnership for the fifth wicket in just 26.2 overs as India declared on 430/4, showing that the future of Indian Test cricket batting is indeed very bright.

Given a mammoth 557 to chase, England crumbled under the pressure of runs and were skittled out for 122 in 39.4 overs, with Jadeja taking 5-41. The result gave India their biggest win by runs in Tests to go 2-1 up in the five-match series.

From 33/3 on the opening day, India have now gone to win at Rajkot with a day to spare. It is also England's second-biggest defeat in Tests, with their implosion coming under bright sunshine, leaving them a lot to ponder ahead of the fourth Test at Ranchi starting on February 23. Resuming from 196/2 and the lead at 322 runs, nightwatchman Kuldeep danced down the pitch to hit Tom Hartley for a delightful six over mid-on, also his first maximum in international cricket. He then slapped a short ball from the left-arm spinner over extra cover for four.

Gill joined the boundary-hitting spree with a trademark short-arm jab and sumptuous drive, even as Kuldeep grew in confidence by drilling Hartley over the bowler's head and bringing in a deft late cut off Wood to bring the fifty up of his stand with Gill. England's frustration was summed up when they burnt a review on Kuldeep off Wood and failed to take one when the batter was trapped

MOST RUNS SCORED BY A SOUTHPAW AGAINST ENGLAND IN A TEST SERIES

With his unbeaten double century in Rajkot on February 18, Yashasvi Jaiswal now tops the table of left-handed batsmen with the highest scores against England in a Test series



| | | |
|-----|------------------------------|---|
| 545 | Yashasvi Jaiswal vs Eng 2024 | H |
| 534 | Sourav Ganguly vs Pak 2007 | H |
| 463 | Gautam Gambhir vs Aus 2008 | H |
| 445 | Gautam Gambhir vs NZ 2009 | A |

plumb LBW on the sweep. Luck deserted India when Kuldeep didn't time the ball well to mid-on and set out for a non-existent single.

He took a couple of steps but sent Gill back, who was too late to get back into the crease and was run out by a direct hit from mid-on despite the batter making a full-length dive, ending his knock at 91, which was coincidentally the same score he made in the 2021 Gabba Test chase. Shortly later, Kuldeep fell when his drive sent an outside edge to slip off Rehan Ahmed. From there on, Jaiswal and Sarfaraz, the Mumbai lads, took a six each off Root over long-on fence, while entertaining the fans with sweeps, flicks, slog-sweeps and lofts till lunch came.

Post lunch, Jaiswal took a single to get his 150 and then scooped James Anderson over fine leg for a boundary. If this wasn't enough, Jaiswal treated Anderson with absolute disdain -- smashing sixes over fine leg, cover, and straight down the ground to take 21 runs off the over. Sarfaraz continued to get boundaries by picking the leg-side gaps with ease, and eventually got back-to-back fifties on debut. Jaiswal's carnage had no stopping as he

reached his 200, leaping in joy, kissing the helmet and raising his hands to soak in the applause from the crowd.

He celebrated the landmark in style by slicing and slog-sweeping Root for back-to-back sixes. Sarfaraz then crunched Rehan for two leg-side sixes and a four lofted over extra cover, before Rohit Sharma declared the innings, leaving England with a mountain to climb. Chasing 557, England were off to a watchful start, in complete opposite of their aggressive nature. Zak Crawley took two boundaries but was involved in a horrible mix-up as Ben Duckett went in pursuit of a single after pushing the ball to mid-wicket.

Crawley sent Duckett back, but it was too late as Mohammed Siraj fired in a throw and wicket-keeper Dhurv Jurel rushed towards the stumps and collected the ball in motion to break the stumps quickly. At the stroke of tea, Crawley was trapped lbw by Jasprit Bumrah by a sharp nip-backer, which England couldn't overturn on review.

Post tea, England fell like nine pins. Ollie Pope tried a cut shot off Jadeja but was caught at first slip. Jonny Bairstow tried a sweep off Jadeja but was trapped plumb lbw. Root battled for 40 balls before missing Jadeja on the sweep and was trapped lbw.

Capitan Ben Stokes was beaten on the sweep against Kuldeep and became the third batter in the innings to be trapped LBW. Rehan Ahmed went for a big shot down the ground off Kuldeep but found long-on. Ben Foakes and Hartley put some resistance with a 32-run standoff 67 balls for the eighth wicket, but the former gave a thick edge on a cut to an impressive Jurel behind the stumps.

Ravichandran Ashwin, who left the match mid-way due to a family medical emergency, came back to take Hartley's inside edge to the stumps and Jadeja ended the match by ending Wood's cameo of 33 off 15 balls when the batter holed out to long-off to complete a dominating win for India.

Brief scores:
India 445 & 430/4 dec in 98 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 214 not out, Shubman Gill 91, Sarfaraz Khan 68 not out; Tom Hartley 1-78, Rehan Ahmed 1-108) beat England 319 & 122 all out in 39.4 overs (Mark Wood 33; Ravindra Jadeja 5-41) by 434 runs

3rd Test: Bowlers showed a lot of character in the face of England batters' onslaught, says Rohit Sharma

Team Absolute | Rajkot

Following a massive 434-run win over England in the third Test at the Niranjan Shah Stadium, India captain Rohit Sharma credited his bowlers for showing character and patience in the face of the onslaught from the visitors' batters, which in his opinion was one of the turning points of the game.

Ravichandran Ashwin's overnight withdrawal after day two's play because of a family medical emergency meant India were one frontline bowler short ahead of day three, as opener Ben Duckett smashed a quick century to lead England's charge.

But other bowlers stepped up, with Mohammed Siraj taking 4-84 in a strong spell after lunch. Kuldeep Yadav impressed with his pace, turn and variations to take two scalps while Jadeja also picked two wickets and Jasprit Bumrah triggered the collapse by taking out Joe Root as England lost their remaining eight wickets for just 95 runs.

It meant India managed to take a 126-run lead and got the much-needed momentum in the match, which wasn't a realistic possibility. Eventually, it paved their way to hammer England and take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series. "Lots of turning points. Once we won the toss, that was a good toss to win. We know runs on board is important in India. The lead was also crucial for us. The way we came out to bowl after the English batters' onslaught, important to stay calm. The bowlers showed a lot of character."

"Not to forget we didn't have our most experienced bowler too. Was proud to watch the bowlers. Then in our second innings, we knew half the job was done. We wanted to extend the lead, and the two youngsters helped extend it. And then finally Jadeja."

"When you play Test cricket, you don't play it in two or three days. You have to stay in the game for five days. They played good shots and put us under pressure but we've got class in our squad when it comes to bowling."

"So obviously the message was to stay calm. Important that time to stay calm, otherwise you drift. We stuck to our plans on day three, and when those things happen, it's a delight," said Rohit after the match ended.

Jadeja was returning to the match at his home ground after missing the Visakhapatnam Test due to a hamstring injury. He made his return count by making 112 in the first innings and had a match haul



of seven wickets, including a 5-41 in the second innings to bowl out England for 122 in a massive chase of 557.

"For this game, we thought he had so much experience in this format, and scored a lot of runs of late. We also wanted left-right batting as well. Sarfaraz being Sarfaraz, we know his quality, we wanted him to have some time before he comes out to bat."

"We saw what he can do with the bat. By no means is it some long plan with the batting order, we go with what's right for us for that Test match. Including calculating what the opponents' bowling attack is," added Rohit.

Jaiswal, who retired hurt on 104 due to back cramps on Day Three, remained unbeaten on a career-best score of 214 off 236 balls. He hit 14 fours and 12 sixes and levelled with Wasim Akram for the world record for most sixes in a Test innings. "I've spoken a lot about him. I'm sure people outside the changing room have also been talking about him. I want to be calm about him, not talk a lot about him. He's started his career on a high," stated Rohit.

National snowshoe championship underway in J&K's Sonamarg

**Team Absolute** | Srinagar

National snowshoe championship is currently underway in J&K's Sonamarg hill station. Officials said that the championship has attracted snowshoe enthusiasts from all over the country, who are competing in various categories and tests of endurance.

The officials said that the fresh snowfall which has blanketed the region has provided the perfect setting for the championship. "The competitors are navigating through

the snow-covered terrain, using their snowshoes to trek through the challenging course," the officials said. They said that the championship has become a popular event in Sonamarg, drawing both participants and spectators to witness the fierce competition and showcase of skill.

"With the stunning snow-covered backdrop and the excitement of the competition, the National Snowshoe Championship in Sonamarg is truly a winter sports enthusiast's dream come true," the officials said.

Anmol seals historic win as India clinch maiden Badminton Asia Team Championships title

Team Absolute | Shah Alam

17-year-old Anmol Kharb on Sunday proved to be India's trump card yet again and sealed a historic win as the Indian women's team clinched its first-ever Badminton Asia Team Championships title after beating Thailand 3-2 in the final, here on Sunday.

Anmol, who is ranked 472 in the world, beat 42nd-ranked Pornpicha Choeikeewong in the deciding rubber to hand India a thrilling victory.

It was the two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu, who kicked off the Indian title charge in style, beating the 17th-ranked Supanida Katethong 21-12, 21-12.

Sindhu thoroughly outperformed her opponent, securing victory in just 39 minutes. This marked Sindhu's fifth triumph in eight encounters against Katethong.

The women's duo of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, who had consistently delivered outstanding performances throughout the tournament, once again rose to the occasion and doubled the lead for India.

The Indian pair, ranked 23rd, caused an upset by defeating the 10th-ranked Jongkolphan Kititharakul and Rawinda Prajongjai with a score of 21-16, 18-21, 21-16. Treesa-Gayatri began with a clear game plan of pinning their opponents to the back court and attacking at every opportunity they got to clinch the opening game. But it was the superior defence of the Thai pairing that helped them claw their way back in the match and it led to the Indians making some uncharacteristic errors.

But to their credit, Treesa and Gayatri hung in when things weren't really going their way and managed to turn around a 6-10 deficit in the decider to draw level at 14-14. They then won five



straight points from 15-all to earn five match-point opportunities. They converted the second one to finish with an all-win record in the competition.

Then, the Thai team staged a fightback when Busanan Ongbamrungphan trounced Ashmita Chahliha 21-11, 21-14 in the second singles rubber. Later, women's doubles national champions Priya Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra went down 11-21, 9-21 against Benyapa and Nuntakarn Aimsaard sister and the match went into the deciding rubber.

It again came down to Anmol to win the deciding point for the team and the 17-year-old once again

delivered in style. She took time to get used to Pornpicha Choeikeewong's power game and trailed 4-6 in the opening game but once she started controlling the rallies there was no stopping her.

She ultimately wrapped up the match 21-14, 21-9 to send the entire team in frenzied celebrations. Congratulating the team on the title triumph, Badminton Association of India secretary Sanjay Mishra said: "It is a proud moment for all of us. It also underlined the depth of badminton talent in India and we are confident that this bunch of players will win many more titles in the coming years."

Pankaj Advani is top seed for CCI Snooker Classic; hoping to defend his title

Team Absolute | Mumbai

India's most decorated cue sports player, Pankaj Advani has been given the top seeding in the Rs 12.5 lakh prizemoney CCI Snooker Classic 2024, organised by the Cricket Club of India, which is scheduled to commence at the CCI's Sir Wilson Jones billiards hall here on Monday.

Advani, who is the most successful cuesports player in the country with 27 World Championship crowns and is the defending champion in the CCI Snooker Classic 2024, is hoping to win back-to-back titles.

The CCI has proved to be quite a happy hunting ground for the articulate and strong-willed Advani, who last year clinched both the CCI Snooker Classic and CCI Billiards Classic titles. He is expected to face stiff opposition from a strong field of high-quality snooker players from the country and abroad.

India's National champion Saurav Kothari, former National champion Ishpreet Singh Chadda, currently the lone India participating in the Professional Snooker circuit in the United Kingdom, another former National champion Aditya Mehta, to name a few, are the other strong contenders for the title.

Besides, the Indian stars, a couple of overseas players, which includes World IBSF Masters champion Habib Subah from Bahrain, and a couple of England legends, will also aim to win the championship cheque of Rs three lakh. The runner-up will receive an award of Rs 1.5 lakh. The losing semifinalists would receive Rs 75,000 each and Rs 40,000 would be presented to each of the four losing quarterfinalists. Cash awards will be given to all players reaching the round of 64.

Former women's national champion Amee Kamani has also been directly seeded in the main draw.



The other players who are directly seeded into the main draw are Krish Bajaj, Digvijay Kadian, Anurag Giri, Rahul Sachdev, Shahyaan Razmi, Md. Husaain Khan, Saurav Kothari, Pushpender Singh, Anurag Bagri, Manan Chandra, Laxman Rawat, Dhvaj Haria, Kanishk Jhanjhar, Brijesh Damani, Kamal Chawla, Rayaan Razmi, Mudisar Ashiak, Paras Gupta, Shoaib Khan, Rajat Khaneja, Hasan Badami, Shahbaaz Khan, Faisal Khan, Alfie Lee, Nikhil Ootam.

'Happy with performance, but focusing on upcoming events', says gymnast Pranati Nayak after WC bronze

Team Absolute | Bhubaneswar

Indian gymnast Pranati Nayak on Sunday said she was happy to win a bronze medal in Vault at the FIG Apparatus World Cup 2024 in Cairo, Egypt but added that in the Olympic year, her focus is on the two events upcoming in the qualifying period that could help her bag a berth in Paris 2024.

Tokyo Olympian Pranati became only the third Indian woman to win a medal at the FIG World Cup when she bagged the bronze medal with a score of 13.620 on Saturday.

The 28-year-old, who trains at the Odisha AM/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre, qualified for the Vault final after finishing 7th with a score of 13.166 on Friday.

Earlier in January, she bagged two medals -- gold in Vault and bronze in Balance Beam -- at the Senior Artistic Gymnastics National Championship 2024 held at the Gymnastics Centre in Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar.

The Olympian will compete in the upcoming legs of the FIG Apparatus World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan (March 7 to 10), and Doha, Qatar (April 17 to 20).

The points accumulated from the World Cup series will contribute to the qualifi-



cation process for the Paris 2024 Olympics.

If she manages to qualify for Paris 2024, she will become the first Indian

gymnast to qualify for back-to-back Olympic Games.

Speaking after winning the bronze medal in Cairo, Pranati said: "I would like to thank everyone for their support. I'm happy with the performance, but I've got two more events, so just focusing on that."

Ashok Mishra, chief coach, Odisha AM/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre said, "I'm really happy with Pranati's performance. The hard work done at the Gymnastics High Performance Centre in Odisha is paying off and we are on the right path. We still have two more events and the focus will be improving the performance."

Congratulating Pranati for her achievement, Vineel Krishna, Secretary, Sports and Youth Services Department, Government of Odisha said: "Many congratulations to Pranati for winning the bronze medal in the Vault at the FIG Apparatus World Cup Cairo 2024. We are proud to see an athlete from our Gymnastics High-Performance Centre doing well on the world stage. Our best wishes to Pranati for the upcoming crucial legs of the World Cup, and we are confident that she will make the country proud."



Varun Dhawan, Natasha Dalal announce pregnancy

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Varun Dhawan and wife Natasha Dalal on Sunday announced that they are expecting their first child with an adorable post on social media. Varun confirmed the pregnancy news with a heartwarming Instagram post. Sharing a glimpse from the maternity photoshoot, the 'Student of the Year' actor wrote: "We are pregnant..need all your blessings and love.. #myfamilymystrength". The monochrome picture shows Natasha wearing a short body con dress, flaunting her baby bump, while Varun is sitting on his knees, holding his ladylove's hands, and kisses the bump. The photo seems to be clicked at their house, and there is a perfect glimpse of their furry friend Joey in the backdrop.

The post received several likes in no time, with the Bollywood celebrities and fans showering love on the soon to be parents.

Anil Kapoor, and Janhvi Kapoor dropped red heart emojis, while Sonam Kapoor commented: "Omg so cute". Arjun Kapoor wrote, "Daddy & Mommy number 1". Harsh Vardhan Kapoor said, "Baby Baby John".

Varun married his long-time girlfriend, and fashion designer Natasha Dalal in January 2021.



'Dangal' actor Suhani Bhatnagar was suffering from rare disease dermatomyositis

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Following the unexpected death of Aamir Khan starrer Dangal actor Suhani Bhatnagar at the age of 19, the actor's parents have now revealed the cause of her death, which was a rare condition called 'dermatomyositis'.

Interacting with the media recently, her father said that she began experiencing swelling in her hands about two months ago. The swelling eventually spread throughout her entire body. Suhani's illness went undiagnosed for a long time until she was admitted to AIIMS 11 days ago. Tests revealed that she had a rare autoimmune disease.

Dermatomyositis is a rare inflammatory disorder characterised by muscle weakness and a distinctive skin rash.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the condition can affect both adults and children. Adults typically develop dermatomyositis between the late 40s and early 60s. It usually appears in children between the ages of five and 15. The condition affects more females than males. Dermatomyositis symptoms can appear suddenly or gradually. The most common signs and symptoms are skin changes and muscle weakness. Under skin changes, a violet-coloured or dusky red rash appears, usually on the face and eyelids, but also on the knuckles, elbows, knees, chest, and back. Dermatomyositis is frequently preceded by an itchy and painful rash. Progressive muscle weakness affects the muscles closest to the trunk, including the hips, thighs, shoulders, upper arms, and neck. The weakness affects



both the left and right sides of your body, and it gradually worsens, as explained by the Clinic.

Munawar Faruqui at fan meetup: 'Nafrat na failaye, pyaar ki baat kare'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Comedian-musician Munawar Faruqui, who had won the trophy of 'Bigg Boss 17', recently attended a fan meet up, and talked about spreading love among the hate, and internet trolling. A video shows Munawar greeting his fans at the Mumbra fan meet-up. He was seen wearing a red T-shirt, blue jacket, black jeans. Munawar, who comes from the Dongri area of Mumbai, addressed the humungous gathering, and said: "I want to say something to you all. So many young audience, along with family audience is present here. Nafrat na bahut asaan hai, mushkil kaam hai kisi se pyaar karna. Mai experience se bata raha hu, sach me pyaar karna bahut mushkil hai. (It is easy to hate someone, but the difficult thing is to love somebody. I am telling you from experience, it is very difficult to truly love)." The 32-year-old had faced several hiccups during his stint in the controversial reality show 'Bigg Boss 17', as all his personal details were out in open.

Speaking about the online trolling and hate, the winner of 'Lock Upp 1' further said: "Mahaul chaha jaisa bhi hai, mujhe bhaichaare dikhte hain, mujhe logo ke beech me pyaar dikhta hai. Or chaha ham zameen me ho, ya internet par ho, hame ek cheez bahut ache se dhyan rakhna padega ki nafrat na



failaye kahin bhi. Ham pyaar ki baat kare aur pyaar failaye (No matter what the environment is, I see brotherhood, I see love among people. And whether we are on the ground, or on the internet, we have to be very careful not to spread hatred anywhere. Let's talk about love and spread love)."

Munawar, who is known for his album 'Madari' further encouraged the youth by telling them to get rid of any

kind of addictions in their lives. "Aj jab young generation yahan par hai to mai request karna chahunga ki nasho se door raho, drugs se door raho. (Today, when the young generation is here, I would like to request that they must stay away from intoxicants, and drugs). Promise me you will leave all the addictions. Nasha sirf barbaadi hai (addictions are just a waste)," he added.

John Cena sings SRK's song 'Bholi Si Surat'; fans go crazy

Team Absolute | Mumbai

American wrestler, actor and rapper John Cena is a big fan of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan. He recently sang a rendition of the song 'Bholi Si Surat' from the 1997 musical romantic drama 'Dil To Pagal Hai'. On Sunday, athlete, and wrestler Guru Sihra took to his Instagram account and shared a Reel video with John Cena.

In the video, Gury can be seen introducing John during their workout sessions, and saying, "I am here with a pretty big Shah Rukh Khan fan." The video also shows John wearing a black tee shirt and a matching cap. He can be heard saying, "You never know what you can learn when you choose the path of growth. Here we are in the gym, so we are trying to grow, but there's tons of paths of growth, and I'm gonna try my best to learn a song."

Gury then said: "This is for you Mr Shahrukh Khan. It goes like this, it's a big hit song." He sings the lines of the song, while John repeats them after him- "Bholi si surat, aankhon mein masti, door khadi sharmaaye, aaye haaye."

The video was captioned as: "Lifting weights and singing Shah Rukh Khan songs @johnkena @wweindia @iamsrk."

The song 'Bholi si surat' is originally sung by Lata Mangeshkar and Udit

SRK flaunts ripped physique as he goes shirtless in Aryan Khan's ad

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Known for his charismatic presence both on and off the screen, Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has once again captivated fans by flaunting his chiseled physique in a shirtless appearance as he takes the centre stage in an advertisement, promoting his son Aryan's fashion venture.

Turning muse for his son's fashion brand D'YAVOL X, SRK shared the new ad campaign on his social media account, wherein we can see his ripped look from the 2023 action thriller 'Pathaan'.

The video features 'King Khan' in long hair and beard look. He is sporting a black sunglasses, and holding a glass in his hand. It shows SRK flaunting his toned biceps and abs.

The video was featured at Mumbai airport. Sharing the snippet, SRK wrote: "Excited to see this now at the Mumbai airport... new lifestyle stuff coming out soon. I like the new cargos."

The video has sent the internet into a frenzy with fans showering love on the 'Swades' actor.

One fan said: "No one can replace Shahrukh Khan," while another wrote: "woooowww pathaan look!"

A user pointed out: "Those abs," while one commented: "OMG That SRK's poster is killer!"

In 2023, Aryan had launched his luxury apparel brand D'YAVOL X. He directed an advertisement video for the brand, featuring him and SRK which marked his first directorial venture.

Meanwhile, on the work front Aryan is currently filming a series, titled 'Stardom', for which he is the show runner, writer, and director.



Aishwarya Sakhuja revisits her college in Delhi; poses with Imtiaz Ali, Tisca Chopra

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Aishwarya Sakhuja paid a visit to her alma mater -- Hindu College, on its 125th foundation day, as a special guest, and reminisced about the beautiful memories of the college, which helped in shaping her past, present and future. Known for her work in 'Saas Bina Sasural', 'Main Naa Bhoolungi', Aishwarya took to her Instagram and shared several pictures from her visit to Hindu College. In the photos, Aishwarya can be seen wearing a blue saree, and posing with alumni's like -- filmmaker Imtiaz Ali, actors Tisca Chopra, Rajesh Kumar, and Kranti Prakash Jhha. The actress penned a heartwarming note, which read as: "I never ever thought that this day would arrive. Going back to your own college as a guest after you have collected a set of experiences of your own and to be told that they count by your own alma mater is truly overwhelming."

"Thankyou Hindu College for shaping my past present and future. I shall forever remember this evening @hindu.college. #hinducollege #125years #college #delhi #memories #alumni," she added.

For the unversed, Aishwarya and Rajesh have shared the screen space in the sitcom 'Sarabhai vs Sarabhai Take 2'.



She played the role of Sonia, sister of

Rosesh Sarabhai (played by Rajesh).

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Manushi Chiller