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MPs/MLAs cannot claim immunity from prosecution for engaging in bribery: SC

NO PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

In its unanimous verdict, the Constitution Bench headed by CJI D.Y. Chandrachud held that MPs/MLAs cannot claim immunity from prosecution in a criminal court for engaging in bribery for casting a vote or speaking in a particular manner.

In its 1998 judgment in *P.V. Narasimha Rao versus CBI case*, the apex court had laid down that the parliamentarians, against the backdrop of Article 105 of the Constitution, enjoy immunity against criminal prosecution in respect of anything said or any vote given in Parliament. Similar immunity is conferred by Article 194(2) on Members of the State Legislatures.

In 2019, a 3-judge bench headed by then Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi referred the issue for consideration to a larger bench having regard to the "wide ramifications of the question that has arisen" after Jharkhand Mukti Morcha member Sita Soren approached the Supreme Court in 2014 seeking nullification of criminal charges instituted against her for allegedly accepting a bribe to vote in favour of a particular candidate in the Rajya Sabha elections of 2012.



FARMERS PIL DIDMISSED

New Delhi: Dismissing the PIL seeking directions to the Centre and various state governments to consider the 'reasonable demands' of protesting farmers as withdrawn, the Supreme Court on Monday remarked that such a plea should not be only filed for publicity purposes and a person really committed to the cause should only come forward for filing public interest litigation on the issue. At the very outset, a Bench presided over by Justice Surya Kant was requested by the counsel appearing for the petitioner to allow withdrawal of the petition and sought liberty to file a fresh petition.

At this, Justice Kant said: "Don't file a petition on the basis of news items. You (petitioner) should do your own homework. These are very serious issues and a person who is really committed, sincere and serious only should come forward and not everyone. Do not come only for publicity purposes."

saying that performance part of the bargain in terms of giving vote or speech is not relevant as the offence is committed outside the House.

SG Mehta added that the CJI Chandrachud-led Constitution Bench may have an option to classify the 1998 judgment in *P.V. Narasimha Rao versus CBI case* as per incuriam which failed to take into account the statutory scheme of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1998, instead of making a declaration that it is not a good law.

SBI SEEKS EXTENSION OF TIME FOR MAKING PUBLIC DETAILS OF ELECTORAL BONDS

New Delhi: The State Bank of India (SBI) has moved the Supreme Court seeking extension of time, until June 30, for making public the details of Electoral Bonds purchased until now.

In the application, the SBI said that "decoding" of the Electoral Bonds and the matching of the donor to the donations would be a complex process as stringent measures were undertaken to ensure that the identity of the donors was kept anonymous. "It is submitted that the data related to the issuance of the bond and the data related to the redemption of the bond was kept recorded in two different silos. No central database was maintained. This was done so as to ensure that donors' anonymity would be protected," it said.

It said that donor details were kept in a sealed cover at the designated branches and all such sealed covers were deposited in its Mumbai main branch.

NOTICE ON WRESTLERS' PLEA AGAINST WFI ELECTIONS

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Monday issued notice on petition by wrestlers Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik, and her husband Satyawart Kadian, seeking to annul and declare the recent Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections as illegal for violating the Sports Code. Justice Sachin Datta, who heard the case, sought a response from the Centre through the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, the WFI and the federation's Ad-Hoc Committee. As Centre's counsel sought time to seek instructions in the matter, the court listed the case for next hearing on March 7. The petition argues that the elections conducted on December 21, 2023 were conducted in disregard of the Sports Code, and are urging the WFI to halt any activities related to the sport until the matter is resolved.

'Modi Ka Parivar' becomes BJP's new poll pitch



Amit Shah (Modi Ka Parivar) Anurag Thakur (मोदी का परिवार)

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Modi Ka Parivar' seems to emerge as the new poll plank of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), months ahead of the Parliamentary elections 2024. This comes on back of Lalu Yadav's slanderous attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the latter giving a new political spin to it, rather than engaging in bitter exchange of barbs.

Giving a forceful counter to INDIA bloc and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav's charges at RJD's public rally in Bihar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that the whole country of 140 crore people is his family.

PM Modi's 'Mera Desh, Mera Parivaar' pitch has found a strong connect not just among party workers but also top ministers and party brass, as all took to social media and updated their social media accounts with 'Modi Ka Parivar' title.

From Home Minister Amit Shah to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to BJP President JP Nadda, scores of top ministers and leaders

updated their X bio with 'Modi Ka Parivar' title. 'Modi Ka Parivar' also became a top trend on X on Monday, with thousands of netizens commenting and extending support.

This all began with Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav's remarks on PM Modi at a recent RJD rally in Bihar, where he targeted the Prime Minister with 'fake Hindu' jibe.

PM Modi's counter to INDIA bloc on parivarvaad, appeasement politics and corruption comes as a redux to BJP's popular and highly successful poll campaign 'Main Bhi Chowkidaar', ahead of 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

'Modi Ka Parivaar' slogan is also seen in this context and political analysts believe this is bound to give BJP, strategic advantage over rivals in the 2024 elections.

While Lalu Yadav, convicted in fodder cases, will find hard to back his claims, PM Modi's 'Mera Bharat, Mera Parivar' message will resonate strongly and also find acceptance among people, eventually benefitting it in elections.

Sweden's Saab starts building factory to make Carl Gustaf M4 weapons in India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Swedish defence major Saab has started construction of its manufacturing facility at Jhajjar near Delhi, to make Carl Gustaf M4 weapons, the company said on Monday.

The manufacturing plant is being built in MET City in Haryana's Jhajjar.

Saab plans to start production of weapons at the facility by next year.

The Swedish company has got the government's approval for 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in setting up the project.

Saab will partner with Indian suppliers and will fully meet the requirements of "Make in India" for the systems manufactured in the facility, according to the company statement.

At the new factory, Saab will



deploy complex technologies including the latest sighting technology and advanced carbon fibre winding to manufacture Carl-Gustaf M4 for the Indian armed forces, and components which may be included in other users' systems, it added.

The new Carl-Gustaf M4 is a man-portable weapon system compatible with a wide range of ammunition that can handle all sorts of targets including built-up areas, armoured vehicles, and also be used to illuminate battlefields during night-time operations.

NIFTY EXTENDS GAINS FOR FOURTH SESSION TO END AT RECORD HIGH

Mumbai: India's benchmark indices extended gains for the fourth session on Monday to end at record high, said Devarsh Vakil, Deputy Head Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

Nifty registered fresh all-time high of 22,440 in the early morning trade and consolidated thereafter for the entire session to finally close with the gains of 27 points at 22,405.60 on Monday.

Declining shares outnumbered the advancing shares as the advance decline ratio stood at 0.56 levels on the BSE, lowest in last three sessions. Further, the tepid consumption data influenced the investors to refrain from FMCG and discretionary stocks. The global sentiment is likely to be cautious ahead of US Fed Chair's testimony and ECB policy later this week. Since inflation is above the target range, the Fed is expected to keep its hawkish stance on interest rates and be watchful of unemployment and nonfarm payroll data for more cues.

District hospitals will be made medical colleges in MP; will be upgraded on PPP mode

Team Absolute | Bhopal

It has been decided in the Madhya Pradesh Cabinet meeting that in every district of the state where there are no medical colleges, they will be built on PPP (Public Private Partnership) mode. For this, district hospitals will be upgraded into medical colleges. The work will be given to private agency. In this, 75% beds will be reserved for the poor.

Urban Development and Housing Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya said that private agencies will be able to use 25% of the beds in PPP mode hospitals. It was also decided in the meeting that henceforth, compassionate appointment will be given to the family members of the secretaries posted in the Rural Panchayat Department. Transfers can also take place outside the district.

Madhya Pradesh government has proposed to set up a sub-committee to promote religious activities in the state. The proposed sub-committee will be interlinked with the revenue and cultural departments and would be headed by a senior IAS officer, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said on Monday. A proposal in



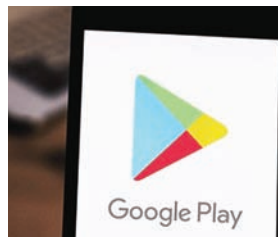
this regard was brought up during a cabinet meeting chaired by CM Yadav on Monday. "A sub-committee interlinking with the revenue and cultural departments will be formed to promote religious activities. The proposal has been made and a detailed discussion will be held during the next cabinet meeting," CM Yadav said. The development came on the day the Madhya Pradesh cabinet left for Ayodhya Dham in Uttar Pradesh to offer prayers at Lord Ram's temple on Monday. The wives of all the cabinet ministers also accompanied them.

Some apps of 8 of 10 Indian firms back on Google Play Store

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As the battle between Google and Indian startups intensifies, some apps of eight out of 10 key homegrown companies -- who are spearheading the fight with the tech giant -- are already back on Google Play Store after they complied with the new policy, sources said here on Monday.

Many apps are already back on the Play Store as they comply with Google's policy and are returning. According to sources, most are opting for the consumption-only option for their relisting on the Play Store. Google had delisted more than a dozen apps by major Indian digital companies, including Matrimony and Shaadi.com from Play



Store. Applications from companies like Alt, Stage, and Aha streaming platforms, Truly Madly and Quack Quack dating apps, Kuku FM audio content platform, and FRND social networking app were also delisted by Google. After facing criticism, the tech giant reinstated some of the apps belonging to Shaadi.com, Info Edge's Naukri, 99acres and NaukriGulf, but many others continue to be delisted.

BJP VS EKNATH SHINDE'S SENA OVER LOK SABHA SEATS IN MAHARASHTRA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The BJP's chief strategist and Union Home Minister Amit Shah will visit Maharashtra tomorrow to iron out the differences over seat sharing with ally Eknath Shinde's faction of Shiv Sena. The Shinde faction has been demanding 22 of Maharashtra 42 seats in line with 2019 -- which had set off the friction with then Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray. But the BJP, which has been enjoying the position of the big brother in the state for the last few years, is not ready to accommodate them. The addition of the Ajit Pawar faction of the Nationalist Congress Party to the mix has not improved matters -- they remain firm on their demand for 10 seats.

Sources say of the 48 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra, BJP



wants to field its candidates on 30 seats, Shiv Sena can get 12 seats and NCP six seats. But the division is yet to be finalized, with the parties failing to be on the same page.

The BJP, which has been set a target of 400 seats by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, knows Maharashtra is crucial to reach this figure. The party has to balance all permutations and combinations while taking its allies

along. The trouble is over a handful of seats in Vidarbha, North Maharashtra and Marathwada regions, with all three allies posting their claims.

So amid a massive lack of coordination, the BJP and the Shiv Sena leaders last week found themselves facing off in two crucial seats in the state -- Amravati and Ratnagiri Sindhudurg (Vidarbha, Kolan

region). While former Shiv Sena MP Anand Rao Adsul has staked claim from Amravati, the BJP is preparing to field sitting MP Navneet Rana from this seat.

The statement of Union Minister Narayan Rane -- former Congressman who joined his Maharashtra Swabhiman Paksha with the BJP in 2019 -- has further spiked the unease within the Shiv Sena. Mr Rane has said the BJP will contest Ratnagiri Sindhudurg. The BJP has also come out in support of Amravati's Independent sitting member Navneet Rana, who is said to be contesting on a BJP ticket. "Navneet Rana is our associate member, she has supported NDA in the last five years, hence she will remain with us," senior BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis has said.

BJP COUNCILLORS WIN POSTS IN CHANDIGARH CIVIC BODY

Chandigarh: The BJP's Kuljit Singh Sandhu and Rajinder Sharma on Monday won the posts of Senior Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively, by defeating INDIA bloc candidates Gurpreet Singh Gabi and Nirmala Devi in the re-election in the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation. Sandhu secured 19 votes and the Congress' Gurpreet Gabi 16 while one vote was declared invalid. For the Deputy Mayor's post, Rajinder Sharma emerged the winner by securing 19 votes, while the Congress' Nirmala Devi got 17 votes.

The results were announced by the INDIA bloc's Mayor Kuldeep Kumar Dhalor, who was the presiding authority for the poll. He was declared elected on the directive of the Supreme Court.

In a 35-member municipal House, the BJP has 17 councillors. The BJP's strength increased from 14 to 17 after three AAP councillors switched loyalties.



DELHI'S RS 76,000 CR BUDGET: RS 1,000 TO WOMEN, FREE ELECTRICITY CONTINUES

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Finance Minister Atishi on Monday unveiled the AAP government's Budget of Rs 76,000 crore for the fiscal year 2024-25 in the Assembly.

In her maiden budget speech, Minister Atishi emphasised her government's commitment to prioritise the welfare of the poor and focus on providing free and high-quality healthcare, education, and essential services.

One of the key highlights of the budget is the allocation of Rs 15 crore towards the implementation of the 'Business Blaster' programme, which currently operates exclusively in schools, and is aimed at providing seed money for new startups.

Furthermore, Atishi announced a substantial allocation of Rs 2,000 crore for the 'Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana' to empower and support women, under which every woman above 18 years of age will receive Rs 1,000 per month.

Addressing the issue of electricity, the Finance Minister noted that



despite providing 24 hours of free electricity, all electricity companies in Delhi remain profitable. A budget of Rs 3,353 crore has been proposed for the power sector for the upcoming fiscal year.

Ensuring continued access to essential resources, Atishi affirmed that all Delhiites will continue to receive 20,000 litres of free water, benefiting 17 lakh consumers. Moreover, significant progress has been made in

connecting 1031 unauthorised colonies to the sewer system, with a budget of Rs 7,195 crore proposed for the Delhi Jal Board.

Highlighting the strides made in the education sector, the Delhi Finance Minister underscored the commitment to improving infrastructure. "Since Independence until 2014-15, 24,000 classrooms were available in the government schools, but within nine years, Arvind Kejriwal's government has constructed 11,000 new classrooms," she said.

The budget allocated 21.57 per cent of total expenditure to education, reflecting the government's dedication to enhancing educational opportunities for all.

She further said that in the fiscal year 2014-15, the budget for the justice system was Rs 760 crore, and in 2024-25, it has increased by nearly four times, reaching Rs 3,098 crore.

"Under this there will be construction of four new court complexes, whose total cost is Rs 1,108 crore and Rs 100 crore earmarked for a new scheme of hybrid hearings in district courts," said Minister Atishi.

RBI bars IIFL Finance from sanctioning or disbursing gold loans

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday directed IIFL Finance Ltd. to stop sanctioning or disbursing gold loans or assigning/securitising/selling any of its gold loans with immediate effect.

The company can, however, continue to service its existing gold loan portfolio through usual collection and recovery processes, the RBI said.

The RBI said its inspection of IIFL's financial position has revealed material supervisory concerns in the gold loan portfolio of the company, including serious deviations in assaying and certifying purity and net weight of the gold at the time of sanction of loans, and at the time of auction upon default.

The inspection also showed breaches in the loan-to-value ratio; significant disbursement and collection of loan amount in cash far in excess of the statutory limit; non-adherence to the standard



auction process; and lack of transparency in charges being levied to customer accounts by the IIFL.

These practices, apart from being regulatory violations, also significantly and adversely impact the interest of the customers, the RBI pointed out. Over the last few months, the RBI has been engaging with the senior management and the statutory auditors of the company on these deficiencies; however, no meaningful corrective action has been evidenced so far. This has necessitated the imposition of business

restrictions with immediate effect, in the overall interest of the customers, the RBI said. These supervisory restrictions will be reviewed upon completion of a special audit to be instituted by the RBI and after rectification by the company of the special audit findings and the findings of RBI Inspection, to the satisfaction of the central bank. This business restriction is without prejudice to any other regulatory or supervisory action, which may be initiated by the RBI against the company, the central bank statement added.

Uttar Pradesh BJP MP opts out of LS polls over 'obscene video'

Lucknow | Agencies

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki, Upendra Singh Rawat, said on Monday that he was withdrawing his candidature for the upcoming general elections after an alleged obscene video went viral.

Rawat, who is the sitting MP from Barabanki, was named in the BJP's first list of candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

After his nomination, a video clip went viral showing Rawat in a compromising position with a woman of foreign-origin.

The Barabanki MP, however, called the video fake and lodged an FIR as well.

According to the FIR, some people allegedly made



public a fake video of the MP in an attempt to tarnish his image. In a post on 'X', Rawat said: "An edited video of mine is being made viral which is generated by DeepFake AI technology, for

which I have lodged an FIR. In this regard, I have requested the national president to get it investigated. I will not contest any election in public life until I am proven innocent."

Twin blows to Congress in Gujarat as Arjun Modhwadia, another leader quit party

Gandhinagar | Agencies

In twin blows to the Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, its senior leader from Gujarat, Arjun Modhwadia, quit the grand old party on Monday, and also resigned from his position of Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA).

Modhwadia, a senior leader from the Mer community of coastal Saurashtra, is a former Leader of the Opposition and ex-Gujarat unit Congress president. He submitted his resignation to Gujarat Assembly Speaker, Shankarbai Chaudhary.

According to sources, Modhwadia is likely to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Meanwhile, Ambarish Der, Working President of the Gujarat Congress and a former MLA from Rajula assembly constituency, also resigned from the party on Monday.



Modhwadia's resignation comes on the heels of public disagreements he had with the Congress' central leadership, particularly concerning the

party's decision to decline the invitation to attend Pran Pratishtha ceremony of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya in January. Modhwadia's departure is

seen as one of the most substantial losses for the Congress in Gujarat.

He was considered a close aide to late Congress leader Ahmed Patel, and a key figure in the state's political landscape. Meanwhile, another Congress leader, Ambarish Der, who quit the party, expressed his dissatisfaction with the party leadership's choices. He said the Congress should operate more like a political entity rather than an NGO.

He is a prominent figure in the Ahr community. Der has announced his plans to rejoin the BJP in a ceremony scheduled for March 5 in Gujarat BJP headquarters -- Shree Kamalam, in Gandhinagar. Additionally, a public function is set to be held in the Rajula Assembly constituency to mark his induction back to the BJP.

He also said that he would be returning to the BJP under any pre-conditions.

Telangana CM not for confrontation with Centre, calls PM 'elder brother'

Adilabad (Telangana) | Agencies

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday said that the state government does not want confrontation with the Centre and called Prime Minister Narendra Modi an "elder brother".

Sharing the dais with the Prime Minister at the launch of development works in Adilabad, Revanth Reddy said that the state government has no intention of a confrontation with the Centre and would like to work together for the state's development.

"If there is a clash between the Centre and states the people will suffer. Politics should be only during elections. After the elections, the elected public representatives should work for the state's development with the help of the Centre," he said.

Unlike his predecessor K. Chandrasekar Rao, who was not receiving the PM on his visits to the state for the last couple of years, Revanth Reddy reached Adilabad to welcome the PM and attended the official programme.

This was PM Narendra Modi's first visit to Telangana after the Congress came to power in the state.

Revanth Reddy stated that his government gives respect to those who hold constitutional posts.



"For us, Prime Minister means elder brother. If there is support from the elder brother, every CM in his state can carry forward development. If Telangana is to develop like Gujarat, your help is needed," he said, adding that Hyderabad as one of the five metropolitan cities in the country would also like to contribute to the PM's goal of a \$5 trillion economy.

He recalled that after assuming office as the Chief Minister, he met the Prime Minister and requested him to fulfill the commitments made in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 and also discussed other issues related to the state.

The Chief Minister thanked the PM for his cooperation for the development works in Telangana, especially transfer of defence lands in Hyderabad for construction of skyways. He sought the Centre's assistance for expansion of Metro Rail, Musi river development, and for establishing semiconductor industry.

He also requested the Prime Minister to help the state in construction of Tummidi Hatti project in Adilabad district, which will irrigate 1.50 lakh acres of land. Referring to inauguration of NTPC's 800 MW (Unit-2) of Telangana Super Thermal Power Project in Peddapalli, Revanth Reddy said as per the promise made at the time of the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh, the installed capacity of NTPC thermal power project should be 4,000 MW but due to the previous government's inefficiency, only 1,600 MW was generated.

He announced that the state government will give all required permissions for the remaining 2,400 MW of power generation.

Justice Gangopadhyay ends judicial career with recommendation for action against district judge

Kolkata | Agencies

Calcutta High Court's Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay on Monday ended his career on the bench with a recommendation for proceedings against a district judge in West Bengal's East Midnapore.

He came to the court on Monday morning and one after another, recused himself from all cases before him, including those which are partly heard or those where the verdicts are reserved. He briefly heard a vigilance-related case against a district judge in East Midnapore and recommended proceedings against him to Chief Justice T.S. Sivagnanam.

"The Vigilance Department of the Calcutta High Court has brought a serious charge against the said district judge. I would request the Chief Justice to look into the report in the matter. If the contents of the report are true, the said district judge should be terminated," he said in his last order as judge.

Justice Gangopadhyay had announced his decision to resign as a judge on Sunday.

He had told media persons that on Monday, he will deal with all the cases pending with him, and on Tuesday, send his resignation to the President. "After forwarding my



resignation, I will share with you all about my future plans," he had said.

On Monday, while he left his court at 2.47 p.m. for the last time, he received tearful farewells from the common people assembled there to meet him.

"My work is over here. Now I have decided to do something else," Justice Gangopadhyay told those present in the court.

Rioters to pay price for vandalising public property, declares Uttarakhand CM Dharam Singh

Dehradun | Agencies

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Dharam Singh said on Monday that miscreants and rioters will be made to pay a heavy price for instigating violence and vandalising public property.

The state government, in a cabinet meeting, approved the setting up of a Special Claims Tribunal with the aim to penalize and punish the perpetrators of violence and also to tighten the noose around those who incite public unrest at such occasions.

The initiative to deter such offenders comes almost a month after Haldwani was rocked by series of violent incidents including stone pelting, torching of vehicles and also burning of police stations. The violence was apparently fanned by a mob,



angered over demolition of an illegal madrasa in Banbhoolpura. The Chief Minister, briefing reporters after the cabinet meeting, said that those who disturb the peace in the state will have to pay for it now. "The compensation for the damage to public property caused during the riots will be recovered from the rioters themselves. Those who disturb the peace will have to pay a heavy price and the state will set an example which will be remembered for years by the generations of rioters who tarnished the sacred land of Devbhoomi," said CM Dharam Singh.

Let's convey a unique message to the masses: NCP leader to VBA chief Prakash Ambedkar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Perturbed by the dilly-dallying stance of Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) president Prakash Ambedkar on the seat-sharing alliance, a senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader on Monday reached out to him, appealing to "convey a different to the masses".

NCP (SP) National General Secretary Jitendra Awhad has penned a note to Prakash Ambedkar, saying that the next generation will not forgive them if the Constitution is tampered with, given the "current scenario".

Awhad pointed out how he always propagated the progressive ideas and ideology of great icons like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Jyotirao Phule, Chhatrapati Shahu



Maharaj and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, among the people of Maharashtra.

"We also have the legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. With full respect to that legacy, I would like to say that your goal and our aims are the same -- that

is, to save the Constitution and Democracy. We have to ensure that this priceless gift from Dr. Ambedkar is safe, and we are ready to pay the price for it," said Awhad. He cautioned that if the Constitution is tampered

with and Democracy endangered, then the future generation will "never forgive us", and urged Prakash Ambedkar to help convey a different message to the masses -- though the VBA has not reacted so far.

"Let's have a meeting of all like-minded parties in the state on priority," said Awhad, in view of the confusion prevailing over the VBA's status in the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance. MVA leaders pointed out that in the past few days, the changing stance, unilateral statements, demands and claims on seats or candidates, have led to doubts and uncertainties among the Congress-NCP (SP)-Shiv Sena (UBT) and other allies as they struggle to cobble an amicable seat-sharing arrangement.

Churu MP Rahul Kaswan rues being denied LS ticket

Jaipur | Agencies

The sitting BJP MP from Churu, Rahul Kaswan, on Monday expressed his displeasure after being denied a ticket from Rajasthan for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

In his first list of 195 candidates announced on Saturday, the BJP has named Paralympian Devendra Jhajharia in place of Rahul Kaswan from Churu.

"Taking to social media on Monday, Kaswan said, "What was my fault? Was I not honest? Was I not hard-working? Was I not loyal? Was I tainted? Had I left any stone unturned in getting the work done in Churu? I was at the forefront of the implementation of all the schemes of the Honourable Prime Minister." Kaswan added, "What else was needed? Whenever I ask



this question, everyone remains speechless. No one is able to give me an answer. Maybe my own people can tell me something."

Kaswan showed signs of displeasure as soon as he was denied a ticket by the BJP on Saturday.

Kaswan, a two-time MP from Churu, belongs to a well-known political family in the city. His father Ram Singh Kaswan has been a four-time BJP MP besides being the MLA once.



NAGPUR LAUNCHES 'ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS ACTION PLAN', FIRST IN MAHARASHTRA

Team Absolute | Nagpur

The state's second capital Nagpur has launched the state's first 'Zero Carbon Buildings Action Plan' to boost decarbonisation in the realty sector by 2050, and help contribute to India's 'Net Zero' target by 2070, officials said here on Monday.

All types of buildings - residential, commercial, and institutional - account for 58 per cent of Nagpur's total energy consumption and 56 per cent of the city's Green House Gas emissions in 2017-18, according to Nagpur's Climate Resilient City Action Plan.

NCRCAP is developed by Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) and Nagpur Smart and Sustainable City Development Corporation Limited (NSSCDCL) with technical assistance from ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, South Asia and the UN-Habitat.

The proposed ZCBAP includes a holistic roadmap covering all public buildings, government-led affordable housing, commercial buildings as well as homes, and an implementation strategy to achieve net-zero buildings city-wide by 2050.

The plans comprise actions to help GHG emissions in the context of choice of building materials, and how buildings are designed, built, managed and de-constructed.

"The ZCBAP is a significant milestone in Nagpur's low emission development, aligning with national-international goals for sustainable development and climate action," said one of the global partners ICLEI South Asia's Executive Director Emani Kumar, working along with UNEP, GEF and WRI.



The plan aims to transform Nagpur as a city where all buildings, existing or new, to achieve 'Net Zero' carbon emissions by 2050, and is interwoven with India's Nationally Determined Contributions focusing on slashing GHG emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 per cent (from 2005 levels) in the next 25 years, for the long-term strategy till 2070.

NSSCDCL CEO Prithviraj B. P. said that 'Net Zero' refers to reducing GHG emissions to the lowest possible amount, plus balancing out any remaining emissions by using natural processes that absorb gases through green cover and oceans.

"The 'Net Zero' buildings aim to minimise GHG emissions from construction materials, building use, and end-of-life demolition by employing reduction strategies across their entire lifecycle," said Prithviraj, on the plan that is in tune with other strategies.

The ZCBAP will have short, medium and long term interventions of a building's life starting 2023, new buildings to be Net Zero by 2030, all buildings to be carbon-neutral by 2050, with different strategies involving all stakeholders.

NMC Municipal Commissioner Abhijeet Chaudhari said that the Orange City is already making major strides towards sustainability in its architecture with buildings like the Metro Bhavan, the Forest Department Corporation of Maharashtra Bhavan, both having green building certifications.

The Metro project here has the longest multi-layer viaduct in Asia and key buildings across sectors are embracing green best practices to

improve the quality of life of the Nagpur residents, he said. Kumar said that new (pre-construction) buildings shall be planned to include a cooling design with low carbon materials and technology along with facility to tap solar energy; during construction using sustainable building materials like sun-dried bricks, using concrete mixes with industrial and agricultural byproducts for structural-non structural parts wherever feasible; and at the occupancy stage stress on improving energy performance with audits, BEE rated equipment and other measures of energy options.

At the end of the building's life, deconstruction instead of demolition is recommended prior to redevelopment projects and training the demolition contractors.

Mumbai's walls become battlefield for BJP-Congress slogan war

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The BJP and the Congress are gearing up for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections and have engaged in a wall graffiti war in the western suburbs.

While the BJP has stencilled lotus symbols and Modi slogans, Congress has taunted back with slogans demanding jobs and welfare.

However, an unidentified activist has filed a police complaint for defacement of public spaces. The slogan 'Ek Baar Firse, Modi Sarkar' is being painted with the lotus, which is the election symbol



of the BJP. In response, the Youth Congress started printing 'Rojgar Do, Nyay Do' alongside the BJP slogan. The Working President of Mumbai Youth Congress, Sufiyan Haider, said that the BJP has painted graffiti on the

walls of many public places. "We saw graffiti with a lotus symbol. But no one is taking action on it. We saw graffiti at Jogeshwari West, Malad Appa Pada. So, we also responded by painting graffiti last week," said Sufiyan.

Mumbai Police EOW files closure report in MSC bank scam case involving Ajit Pawar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has presented a closure report on the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank fraud, in which the state's Deputy Chief Minister, Ajit Pawar, is accused. The scam is centred around an alleged illegal lending scheme of Rs 25,000 crore, in which district and cooperative banks supplied loans to sugar cooperative societies and other companies in the state, reported news agency.

According to the report, Mumbai Police filed a 'C' summary report with the special court and the next hearing of the same will be held on March 15. A 'C' summary report is submitted when a case can neither be confirmed nor disproven.

The court will consider whether to accept the report or direct the agency to continue the investigation and prepare a charge sheet.



Ajit Pawar, along with over 70 other persons who served as directors of MSC Bank during the relevant period, was accused of granting loans to sugar mills at significantly reduced rates and selling properties at remarkably low prices, in violation of banking regulations and Reserve Bank of India guidelines, the report added.

As per the report, the Enforcement Directorate (ED), however, filed an intervention petition disputing

The Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam case pertains to alleged fraudulent disbursement of loans amounting to Rs 25,000 crores to various sugar factories. The PIL filed in the HC, per the ANI report, disclosed the alleged fraudulent activities, saying that certain sugar mills defaulted on loans issued without due diligence. MSC banks later confiscated these mills and auctioned them off to various bank officers and politicians.

Northwesterly winds bring chill to Mumbai; AQI 'satisfactory'

Team Absolute | Mumbai.

After having experienced warmer days, the temperature in Mumbai dipped again with the city recording its lowest maximum daytime temperature for March on Sunday. The daytime temperature on March 3 was 28.8 degrees Celsius which is 4 degrees below the normal average. Meanwhile, on Monday morning, the city recorded a temperature of 20.6 degrees Celsius.

The temperature dip in the city can be attributed to the northwesterly to westerly winds prevailing over the region, per the India Meteorological Department. An official from the weather bureau noted that when



northwesterly winds blow, the temperature in the city lowers.

A meteorologist had earlier told mid-day that the city has witnessed a drop of almost 8 degrees Celsius in the maximum temperature in the last few days. They had also said that the city will be experiencing cooler weather for the next three days with temperatures to likely drop to 16 degrees Celsius at Santacruz.

Meanwhile, Mumbai's air quality on Monday morning is 'satisfactory' with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 58. Among all areas, Siddharth Nagar in Worli and Ghatkopar recorded moderate air quality with their respective AQIs at 156 and 133. Meanwhile, all the other areas, as per the Central Pollution Control Board's SAMEER app recorded 'good' air quality.

Vehicle theft racket: Thane police arrest four, recover 47 stolen cars

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Thane police has arrested four members of a gang involved in stealing vehicles and selling them after tampering with documents, an official said on Monday.

MBVV Police Commissioner Madhukar Pandey told newswire PTI that the accused were arrested from different parts of the state in the last two days, and 47 stolen

vehicles worth more than Rs 7.32 crore were recovered.

The racket came to light when the police were probing into cases of vehicle theft registered at Kashimira and Valiv police stations in February and June 2021, he said.

The gang allegedly used fake documents to register non-existent vehicles in states such as Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland and obtained registration numbers and online NOCs

from RTO offices for re-registration in Maharashtra, the official said.

The accused then allegedly stole vehicles matching the information in NOCs, replaced the engine and chassis numbers, and registered them in Maharashtra for resale, he said.

The thefts had taken place in the jurisdiction of 16 police stations over the last three to four years, the official said.

Police book man for raping female friend 15 years ago; his brother for forcing abortion



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Navi Mumbai Police has registered an FIR on the complaint of a 31-year-old married woman claiming she was raped 15 years ago in Jalna city by her male friend.

The woman claimed that the latter's brother forced her to undergo abortion and threatened her family members, newswire reported quoting an official. No arrest has been

made so far, a Khandeshwar police station official said.

The woman, a resident of Panvel, alleged Ramesh Akhade, who is known to her, had raped her repeatedly when they were living in Jalna in 2009, following which she became pregnant, as per the First Information Report.

When the woman informed Akhade about her pregnancy, he and his brother Raju Akhade threatened her and her mother, the official said quoting the FIR. "Raju Akhade forced the woman to accompany him to Sanpada in Navi Mumbai and made her undergo abortion," he added.

The woman later got married to another man but Ramesh Akhade allegedly forced her to get separated from her husband and made her stay with him in Panvel. "However, differences cropped up between them and he drove the woman out of his house, following which she lodged a complaint with the police," as per the FIR.

Ujjain man undergoes 'bilateral hand transplant' at Mumbai hospital; plans to marry now

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

In a rare case, a man from Madhya Pradesh underwent a 12-hour long 'bilateral hand transplant' surgery at the Global Hospitals in Mumbai and is now on his way to regaining near-normal movements of his upper limbs, and look forward to marriage, officials said here on Monday.

The patient, Jeevesh Kushwah (32), sustained a high-voltage electric shock in December 2020 while working at a steel fabrication factory in the pilgrim town of Ujjain.

The bachelor suffered severe electric burns on both his arms and legs and was initially treated at an Ujjain hospital and later in Indore, where the family was given a grim medical verdict.

The medicos said that in order to survive, the patient's right leg and both hands would need to be amputated, leaving the family devastated.

However, to save Kushwah's life, the family agreed and within days, his right leg was amputated at above knee-level, and a couple of weeks later, both his arms were amputated at below elbow-level.

Subsequently, the distraught family managed to procure artificial limbs for him and he could stand and walk with the artificial leg.

However, the artificial hands were of little or no use as they were not fully functional, and he remained dependent on his family members or brothers to carry out his routine daily tasks.

The case had multiple unique challenges, but the hospital and



its medical team managed to accomplish the bilateral hand transplant without any glitches, said IHH Healthcare India COO, Dr. Vivek Talaulikar.

Kushwah was kept in the ICU

where he recovered without any problems. He was moved out of his bed after 4-5 days to start passive physiotherapy and then discharged after three weeks on March 2.

Satbhai said that Kushwah is expected to regain reasonable hand functions in the next 6-9 months, but will be on lifelong immunosuppression besides taking the required precautions and care.

An elated Kushwah explained his frustrations, depression and sheer helplessness for even simple acts like holding things, wearing clothes, eating, bathing, toilet, etc. of the past five years.

But he is now looking forward to regaining all these normal activities, besides his independence and dignity with his new pair transplanted hands.

Even his brother Manoj Kushwah is very happy and termed it "like Dr. Satbhai and his team giving Jeevesh a new lease of life".

And now they plan to get him married soon...!



EDITOR'S SPECS

'Ram Rajya' and election

Did Delhi Finance Minister Atishi centre the budget she presented for the national capital on Monday around the 'Ram Rajya' out of the fear of the high-decibel campaign launched by the BJP ever since the inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya in the run-up to the upcoming Lok Sabha elections? Quoting a 'chaupai' from Ramcharitmanas, Atishi said on the floor of the House on Monday, "We all are inspired by the life of Lord Ram, hence we pledge to realise the dream of Ram Rajya in Delhi. "Whenever Ayodhya is described, it is said that there is no other city as beautiful and prosperous as Ayodhya in the world. Today, under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, we are also working hard in Delhi to bring prosperity to the capital just like the way it was in Lord Ram's Ayodhya. In the journey of establishing Ram Rajya in Delhi, an important indicator is the prosperity of the city," Atishi said. In fact, the Delhi Finance Minister on Monday repeatedly referred to Ram Rajya during her budget speech in the Assembly, which shows the AAP's focus on the theme ahead of the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls. Arvind Kejriwal is fully aware that the BJP will try to capitalise on the Ram Temple wave in all the seven Lok Sabha seats in the national capital. In view of this, the AAP seems to be preparing a specific strategy to counter BJP's campaign. If one looks at his speeches, whenever Kejriwal speaks about AAP's Tirth Yatra Yojana, he makes it a point to mention Ayodhya. In fact, last month Kejriwal had himself visited the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, accompanied by his wife, mother and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and his family.

Electrician-turned-music maker who used only Indian instruments for soulful melodies

Vikas Datta

It is one of Hindi films' most cherished and eternal romantic songs, featuring the urbane Guru Dutt and the ethereal Waheeda Rehman, but the dream-like music for "Chaudvin Ka Chand Ho" was scored by its composer within 10 minutes and its opening lyrics took even lesser time.

Music director Ravi, to whom we owe this melody, revealed the tune came to him as he was returning home from work and it took him "just 5 to 7 minutes" to refine it.

Stopping there, he called up lyricist Shakeel Badayuni and recited "Chaudvin ka chand ho...". In a minute, Shakeel responded with "Ya aftaab ho..." and after another couple of minutes, added "Jo bhi ho tum khuda ki kasam, lajawab ho".

"Chaudvin ka Chand" (1960) proved to be a pace-setter for Ravi, who was born in Delhi on this day (March 3) in 1926, for it established his reputation, and he went on to score for many other top movies in the 1960s, especially those made by B.R. Chopra.

It is incredible how many of his songs permeate Indian popular culture - be it children's lullabies such as "Chandamama door ke" or "Chal mere ghode", birthday songs like "Ham bhi agar bachche hote", and the evergreen "Mera yaar bana hai dulha" and "Aaj mere yaar ki shaadi hai", celebrating the Big Fat Indian Wedding.

It is not bad for a self-taught musician, whose foray into (the then) Bombay had him spend the night at railway station platforms and subsist by repairing household electrical appliances.

Ravi Shankar Sharma, or Ravi as he became known in his film career, was interested in music but received no formal training in it and picked up its nuances from hearing his father sing bhajans.

He worked as an electrician in the Posts and Telegraph Department in New Delhi from



1945 to 1950 and occasionally sang on AIR, before moving to Bombay in 1950. Waiting for a break, he revealed he used to clean ceiling fans at Rs 2 per piece and repaired the electrical appliances of his creditors.

He did not have to wait long, however, as S.D. Burman selected him for the chorus for a song in "Naujawan" (1951) and then, Hemant Kumar first used him in the chorus of the iconic "Vande Mataram" in "Ananda Math" (1952), and then, made him his assistant.

Ravi helped Hemant Kumar in films like "Shart", "Jagriti", and above all, "Nagin" (all 1954) - where he later disclosed how the iconic 'been' music in "Man dola mera tan dola" was derived from the already recorded "Mera dil yeh pukare aaja".

His first independent work was the film "Vachan" (1955) - where he also wrote lyrics for "Chandamama

door ke" and sang a duet with Asha Bhosle ("Yun hi chupke chupke").

He would go on to give Asha Bhosle a prominent place in play-back with songs ranging from the playful "C A T cat, cat maane billi" ("Dilli ka Thug", 1958) to the wistfully romantic "Jab chali thandi hawa" ("Do Badan"), to the entrancingly philosophical "Aage bhi na jaane tu" ("Waqt").

Ravi also helped Mahendra Kapoor evolve from yet another Mohammed Rafi clone, and set Shamma Kapoor on his rollicking career with songs like "Baar baar dekho" ("China Town", 1962).

Some of Ravi's best-known works include "Ae meri zohra jabeen", influenced by an Afghan folk song, and other tracks of "Waqt", "Na munh chhupa ke jyo", and "Tum agar saath dene ka vada karo" from "Hamraaz", and the Arabian-themed "Ghairon pe karam" in the spy flick "Aankhen" (1968), and there are many more

evergreen songs to his name from his 100-odd films,

Take the pensive "Chalo ik baar phir se, ajanabi ban jaaye" ("Gumrah"), the comforting "Ae mere dil-e-naadan, tu gham se na ghabrana" ("Tower House", 1962), the sensuous "Chhu lene do naazuk honthon ko" ("Kaajal", 1965), the philosophical "Sansar ki har shai ka itna hi fasaana hai" ("Dhund", 1973), the poetic lament "Garibon ki suno" ("Dus Lakh", 1965), and the playful "Tum jis pe nazar dalo" ("Yeh Rastey Hain Pyar Ke", 1963).

True to his early days when he would hear his father's bhajans, Ravi is also known for "Jai Raghunandan Jai Siyaram" ("Gharana", 1961) and "Badi der bhayi Nandlala" ("Khandaan", 1965).

What distinguished Ravi's

music was its simultaneous simplicity, smoothness yet profundity and how it never drowned the singer's voice. Also, he never used western musical instruments, confining himself to the santoor, sitar, shehnai, and others.

He only worked sporadically in the 1970s before making his comeback with "Nikaah" (1982) and then reinvented himself, as a music composer for Malayalam films, ostensibly at the urging of singer Hariharan. As 'Bombay Ravi', he did some 15-odd films between 1986 and 2005, of which at least 10 were super hits.

Ravi spent his last years in peaceful retirement before passing away a few days after turning 86 in 2012.

international

OPEC+ MEMBERS EXTEND OIL OUTPUT CUTS TO Q2

Vienna | Agencies

Several OPEC+ members have announced extensions of oil output cuts into the second quarter to support the "stability and balance of oil markets".

OPEC+ is an oil-producer group comprising member countries of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and their allies.

OPEC stated on Sunday night that its Secretariat "noted the announcements" of several OPEC+ countries extending additional voluntary cuts totalling 2.2 million barrels per day (bpd) for the second quarter of 2024, Xinhua news agency reported.

The reductions are taken from the quotas adopted at the OPEC+ ministerial meeting in June 2023. They are in addition to the voluntary output cuts announced by OPEC+ countries



in April last year and later extended until the end of 2024, OPEC said.

In November last year, Saudi Arabia, Russia and several other OPEC+ countries announced volun-

tary production cuts totalling about 2.2 million bpd for the first quarter of this year.

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Energy said on Sunday that the country, the

de facto leader of OPEC, would extend its voluntary production cut of 1 million bpd through the end of June. The country's oil production will be approximately 9 million bpd until the end of the second quarter, according to the ministry.

Russia, a leading OPEC ally, also announced voluntary cuts of 471,000 bpd from its crude production and exports for Q2, slightly lower than its cuts of 500,000 bpd in Q1.

Other OPEC+ countries, including Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman, also extended their voluntary production cuts into Q2.

However, the OPEC statement noted that these voluntary cuts "will be returned gradually subject to market conditions" to support market stability after June. OPEC+ countries are set to convene a ministerial meeting in June to discuss production targets.

New govt on anvil in Nepal as PM Prachanda splits with coalition partner

Kathmandu | Agencies

A reshuffle of the cabinet is on the cards in Nepal on Monday with the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) severing its alliance with its coalition partner Nepali Congress.

The chasm has been reportedly widening between the two biggest parties in the Himalayan Kingdom over the claim for chairmanship of the National Assembly.

"Government to change today and the new Cabinet will be formed. Swearing in of ministers will also take place today," Surendra Pandey, Vice Chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), said in a social media post on Monday.

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' will reportedly induct ministers from the CPN-UML, Rashtriya Swatantra Party, and Janata Samajbadi Party apart from the CPN (Maoist Centre).

The move comes after PM Dahal met CPN-UML's K.P. Sharma Oli, the former prime minister, on Sunday to discuss a new political alliance following a breakdown in their partnerships in 2020 as well as 2023.

The Kathmandu Post reported that PM Dahal will be sending over a letter to President Ramchandra Paudel on the reshuffle, and the new ministers will likely be administered an oath of office and secrecy on



Monday evening.

Emerging from an officer bearers' meeting on Monday, Maoist Centre leader, Devendra Paudel, said the step to join hands with the UML "was taken with a plan to forge a left unity for the long term".

Paudel was quoted as saying in the daily that a new power equation was developed as the Nepali Congress was creating hindrances for the prime minister to perform.

Becoming the Prime Minister of the South Asian nation in December 2022 with the support of CPN-UML, Dahal cut cords with the party and shook hands with the Nepali Congress within months.

Dahal's Maoist Centre party is the third biggest group in the 275-member parliament, in which a ruling alliance or party must have 138 votes of support.

IDF carries out heavy shelling against Hezbollah in south Lebanon, West Bank

Tel Aviv | Agencies

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has carried out heavy shelling against Hezbollah in south Lebanon and West Bank areas, media reports said.

Reports said that the IDF fighter jets are continuing their shelling against Hezbollah infrastructure in Aya As Shab and Kfar Kila areas of southern Lebanon as well as in the West Bank.

The Israeli attack comes after Hezbollah allegedly carried out rocket attacks on the northern territories in Metula, Malkia and Ghajar on Sunday.

Israeli intelligence has said that they fear heightened tensions in the West Bank area in



the coming days and have also increased the deployment of troops in the border areas of the West Bank.

The Hezbollah Chief Hassan Nasarullah has also in a recent televised address lashed out against Israel on the situation in Gaza and the plight of Palestinians.

Israel has also warned Hezbollah, and has publicly announced that Israel is prepared for a multi-pronged war if needed.

US Vice Prez Harris calls for increasing flow of aid to Gaza

Washington | Agencies

US Vice President Kamala Harris has urged Israel to "significantly increase the flow of aid" to Gaza by opening new border crossings and not imposing "any unnecessary restrictions".

"What we are seeing every day in Gaza is devastating. We have seen reports of families eating leaves or animal feed, women giving birth to malnourished babies with little or no medical care, and children dying from malnutrition and dehydration," she said on Sunday in Selma, Alabama.

"Just a few days ago, we saw hungry, desperate people approach aid trucks, simply trying to secure food for their families after weeks of nearly no aid reaching northern Gaza. And they were met with gunfire and chaos... Our hearts break for the victims of that horrific tragedy and for all the innocent people in Gaza who are suffering from what



is clearly a humanitarian catastrophe," Harris added.

She further said that the Israeli government must ensure that humanitarian personnel, sites, and convoys are not targeted.

"And they must work to restore basic services and promote order in Gaza so more food, water, and fuel can reach those in need."

Harris also hit out at Hamas, saying that the group cannot control Gaza, and the threat it poses to the people of Israel "must be eliminated".

"Hamas has shown no regard for innocent life, including for the people of Gaza, who have suffered under its rule for almost two decades. And Hamas still holds dozens of hostages, for nearly 150 days now -- innocent men and women, including American citizens, who were brutally taken from their homes and from a concert," she added.

About truce talks, Harris said: "Hamas claims it wants a ceasefire. Well, there is a deal on the table. And as we have said, Hamas needs to agree to that deal... Let's get a ceasefire. Let's reunite the hostages with their families. And let's provide immediate relief to the people of Gaza."

13 shops gutted in fire in Bangladesh



Dhaka: At least 13 shops were gutted in a fire in Mohipur fishing port in Bangladesh's Patuakhali district, local media reported.

The fire broke out in a fish store and later spread to nearby shops, Dhaka Tribune reported. It was spotted in Akon's fish farm after which locals attempted to extinguish it.

The fire was controlled in two hours, as per Kalapara Fire Service Station Officer Ilias Hossain.

A fireman was injured in the fire fighting operation who was rushed to hospital, the fire service official said.

Cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained. Details are awaited.



MP BJP JOINS 'MODI KA PARIVAR' CAMPAIGN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

With the Bharatiya Janata Party launching a nationwide campaign - 'Modi Ka Parivar', party leaders in Madhya Pradesh have started taking it further on social media.

State BJP president V. D. Sharma, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, former CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan and several other party leaders have written 'Modi Ka Parivar' on their social media handles.

It came a day after former Bihar CM and Rashtriya Janata Dal patriarch Lalu Yadav made a personal attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a public rally in Bihar's Gandhi Maidan on Sunday.

MP BJP chief V. D. Sharma, talking to reporter on Monday said that PM Modi treats every citizen of the country as his family. "PM Modi starts his address with the words 'mere parivar-jano'. This line itself defines a lot," Sharma added.

Hitting back at the RJD patriarch, Sharma said Lalu Yadav's entire politics has been limited to his personal family. "What should I say about Lalu Yadav whose politics has always been limited to his sons and daughters. It



was his frustration that came out," Sharma added. Sharma stated that the BJP will take the campaign 'Modi Ka Parivar' to the ground and it will

continue until the Lok Sabha election is over. When asked if the BJP has got a new slogan for the coming election like 'Mai Bhi Chowkidar' during the

Lok Sabha polls in 2019, Sharma said the "BJP is quite capable to run its campaign on its own."

Chief Minister had darshan of Ram Lalla, said - Rahul's culture does not match with Sanatan.



Team

Absolute | Ayodhya | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav and his cabinet members reached Ayodhya on Monday with his family. He saw Ramlala. During this, he attacked former Congress President Rahul Gandhi and said that his culture does not match with Sanatan. On Monday, Madhya

blessed after seeing Ramlala. It felt as if Punya Pratap had been found.

He said that I have prayed to the Lord that Lord Ram blesses everyone and the flag of Sanatan continues to wave like this.

Regarding Rahul Gandhi, he said that his culture does not match with Sanatan.

Earlier, on reaching Ayodhya, he was given a warm welcome. The ministers raised slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram'. Kailash Vijayvargiya

Mantralaya.

Earlier in Bhopal, he said that, "The connection between Samrat Vikramaditya and Ayodhya Dham and Lord Shri Ram is timeless, Ram resides in our body and soul. After darshan and blessings of Lord Shri Ram, the state government will further expand the public welfare works. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav stated this in a discussion with media representatives at the airport before leaving for Ayodhya Dham with the members of the Council of Ministers for Lord Shri Ram's darshan. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav also called upon the people of the state to visit Ramlala."

After the Cabinet meeting, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav along with the Cabinet members reached the Raja Bhoj airport by bus from Mantralaya where he was welcomed with slogans of Jai Shri Ram amidst beating of drums. The officials greeted the Chief Minister and members of the Council of Ministers by adorning them with turbans, applying tilak with Jai Shri Ram inscribed on it, angavastram and bouquets. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav, accompanied by his wife and Cabinet members left for Ayodhya by plane.



Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav along with his cabinet had reached Ramlala's darshan. During this he said that seeing Lord Ram is a reward for many births. Today life became

sang the bhajan 'Ram aaye hain to Ram Rajya Laayenge' in the bus itself. Earlier, in Bhopal, CM Dr. Mohan Yadav and his cabinet members boarded a bus and reached the airport from

Cop thrashes 2 men tied with ropes, suspended

Team Absolute | Betul

A head constable has been suspended for allegedly beating up two youth tied with ropes in connection with a theft case in Madhya Pradesh's Betul district, police said on Monday.

The incident took place in Desli village under Mohda police station limits last week and a video of it surfaced on social media platforms on Sunday, an official said. In the video, the two young men are seen tied with ropes and being beaten up by a police-

man with a plastic pipe in front of some shops while some persons are standing nearby. Additional Superintendent of Police Kamla Joshi said the video of head constable Kamta Prasad Keer thrashing the two persons in connection with a mobile phone theft case came to their notice on Sunday. Taking cognisance of the video, the Betul superintendent of police has suspended Keer, who was posted at the Damjipura police post, Joshi said. A probe is being conducted into the incident, she added.

5TH-8TH BOARD PATTERN EXAM FROM 6TH MARCH

▶ ABOUT 12 THOUSAND EXAMINATION CENTERS WERE CREATED FOR 25.50 LAKH STUDENTS IN THE STATE. ALONG WITH GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS, STUDENTS FROM PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND MADRASSAS WILL ALSO BE INCLUDED.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The board pattern examination for classes 5th-8th, being conducted by

the State Education Center, School Education Department in the state, is starting from March 6. In order to ensure easy transportation of students, the State Education Center has created 11 thousand 986 examination centers in near-by schools for the examination. Director of the State Education Center, Dhanaraju S said that in determining the examination centres, special care has been taken that these examination centers should be at minimum distance from the schools. Also, facilities should be available for the students at these examination centers as per the capacity of the schools. It

is noteworthy that along with government schools, students of private schools and madrassas will also appear in this board pattern examination.

Director State Education Center said that although instructions have been given to all the schools to include every student in these examinations. Even after this, if for some reason any student of class 5th or 8th has not been able to register till the examination date, then instructions have been given to the center heads to include him/her in the examination. The details of such students will be entered on the portal after the examination.

MPPSC MAINS on 11th March, hence hearing of 12th on 7th: MP HC

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The crisis over the pre-result of State Service Mains 2023 (MPPSC MAINS 2023) has intensified. Anshul Tiwari, the advocate of the petitioners in Jabalpur High Court, strongly raised the issue of 'The Sutra' (Web Portal) and said that the High Court itself has written in its earlier order that the cases of other petitioners who could not come can also be heard and the date has been extended. In such a situation, for those petitioners who could not come, these three preliminary questions should also be discussed. The advocate said that this case is listed on March 12 and you have called the secretary, but mains is on March 11. Jabalpur High Court Justice Vivek Aggarwal took this matter seriously and said that the hearing will now be kept on March 7. There is no point in hearing after Mains starts, you inform the commission and call the secretary.

The Commission was reluctant when the High Court conducted the hearing first, on this the High Court made a scathing comment and said that the expertise of the expert was already visible in your preliminary questions. The question of Matcalfe is being linked to Banting and in the book presented by you,



Matcalfe has been mentioned in the question of freedom of the press. Now you are justifying that the question should be answered considering it to be Matcoff and not Bentinck.

The way the High Court has expressed its displeasure over the working style of the Commission in view of the entire case, there is a crisis on the three questions of the Pre. These questions carry 6 marks, which means this will cause a big change in the entire result. If the High Court rejects these questions, then the Commission will have no option other than revising the preliminary results. Yes, if you insist then you will have to go for stay, but this too will take a long time and there is a holiday from 8th to 10th March, in such a situation the State Service Mains will have to be postponed.

The purpose of our Yatra is to provide 'justice' to every section: Rahul Gandhi

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Former National President of Congress, Rahul Gandhi, while thanking the people who came to Radhogarh in large numbers to support the Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra, said that the first yatra was of about 4 thousand kilometers, which got tremendous support from all of you, in which many states got exemption. So now for the second time, Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra is being organized which will run from Manipur to Maharashtra. Madhya Pradesh is a state where we have had the privilege of visiting both times.

Gandhi said that the Bharatiya Janata Party has divided people on the basis of religion, caste and state politics. The Congress party is ensuring that everyone comes together. The ideology of BJP is the ideology of hatred and our ideology is the ideology of the shop of love against hatred.



Gandhi further said that we have added one more word in this yatra and that word is "justice" because the purpose of our yatra is to provide

'justice' to every class. Bharat Jodo Yatra could not reach many states and people had requested that the Yatra should take place from their

states also, hence this Yatra is being conducted for the second time.

Rahul Gandhi said that 90 percent people pay GST, but it fills the pockets of 20 rich industrialists, the way to get rid of these problems is caste based census. Due to Agni Veer Yojana, today the path of entry into government service is closed for the poor, Congress brought PSUs, BSNL, VSNL, Hindustan Paper, all these were created by Congress, Modi ji is giving them to the industrialists.

Gandhi said that today unemployment, corruption, caste based census are not shown in the media, Ambani ji's wedding is shown, you can watch Bollywood or Bill Gates on TV but farmers are not seen dying at the border. Caste based census is an issue for the benefit of this 90 percent class, we talk about loan waiver. We talk about employment, we talk about justice with you. Along with this, Shri Gandhi heartily thanked the people who came to listen to him.

Education is fruitful when used for human welfare : Mangubhai Patel

▶ GOVERNOR TAKES PART IN THE THIRD CONVOCATION OF L.N.C.T. UNIVERSITY. FIVE RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREES FOR THEIR SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that the true meaning of education lies in human welfare. Students should work for human welfare throughout their life. They should be ready and sensitive to help the poor and deprived sections. They should always remember their family, society and nation in every success of life. He called upon the youth to contribute in building developed India with their knowledge and expertise.

Governor Patel was addressing the third convocation of LNCT university, Bhopal. He presented honorary degrees to famous film lyricist Sameer Anjaan, educationist Sushri Shivani Patil, paraswimmer Satendra Singh Lohia, spiritual guru Hariharanand Swami and Anil Goswami on behalf of the university for their special contribution in



various fields and awarded gold medals to meritorious students on behalf of the university. He also dedicated the souvenir of the university.

Governor Mangubhai Patel said that for a developed and healthy India, it is important for the youth to be healthy, educated and skilled. Youth should pay special attention to their eating habits. Patel has given four mantras to the youth: regular exercise, nutritious diet, plenty of water and sleep.

Governor Mangubhai Patel said that the youth of today are the future of tomorrow. Universities should work towards preparing quality human

resources. Create methods to teach students on the basis of discovery, discussion and analysis. Train them how to think, rather than what to think. Patel said that students should develop a sense of dedication for research, innovation and excellence. Develop skills and entrepreneurial qualities along with education in students. Make them job givers and not job seekers. Governor Shri Patel said that students should be inspired to find solutions to the needs and challenges of society and national development. Provide them with the experience of cooperating in capacity development of deprived sections. Earlier, Governor Mangubhai Patel was welcomed by presenting him a sapling and memento. Union Minister of State for Steel and Rural Development, Faggan Singh Kulaste congratulated the recipients of honorary degree, convocation students and gold medal winners and wished them a bright future.

Vice-Chancellor of the University, J.N. Chouksey gave the welcome speech. Secretary L.N.C.T. Group Dr. Anupam Chouksey proposed the vote of thanks. Vice Poonam Chouksey, Executive Director Dharmendra Gupta, members of the University Education Council, students and family members were present in the convocation ceremony.

Jabalpur and Ujjain cities selected in Cities 2.0

▶ DEVELOPMENT WORKS WORTH RS 250 CRORE WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN THESE 2 CITIES. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS SANCTIONS THE PROPOSAL

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Jabalpur and Ujjain cities of Madhya Pradesh have been selected in Cities 2.0. This was announced today by the Union Urban Affairs Ministry in New Delhi. A total of Rs 250 crore will be spent on development works in these two cities at the rate of Rs 125 crore per city. In this regard, today the Urban Development and Housing Department presented a proposal before the Council of Ministers meeting

chaired by Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav. The proposal has been approved by the Cabinet.

Urban Development Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya has expressed happiness over the selection of Jabalpur and Ujjain cities in Cities 2.0. He said that the state government is committed to the overall development of cities. He said that the works sanctioned under this scheme in these two cities will be completed on time with utmost quality. Only 18 cities in the country have been selected under Cities 2.0. These include Ujjain and Jabalpur. In both these cities, those works will be taken up on priority, so that private investment can be encouraged in these cities and employment opportunities get a boost. Mahakal Rudra Sagar Integrated Development Project was launched in Ujjain Smart City Project under Cities

1.0 Programme by the Union Ministry of Urban Affairs. In this project, Rs 80 crore was approved as grant amount to Ujjain Smart City. Out of this, an amount of Rs 72 crore has been received as loan. Under the project, 9 works were launched. Of these, 6 works have been completed. The other two works will be completed by June 2024 this year. Under Cities 2.0, such works are being carried out which can preserve the environment and promote investment in the selected city. Private participation is also being encouraged in these works. Approval was given on the proposal presented by the Urban Development and Housing Department. After approval, the loan along with interest for the sanctioned project in the 2 cities selected in the 2.0 cities will be provided by the Central Government and the State Government on the basis of 50:50 ratio.



Ranji Trophy: Big win over Tamil Nadu takes Mumbai into final for 48th time

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai have entered the final of the Ranji Trophy for a whopping 48th time after beating Tamil Nadu by an innings and 70 runs inside three days in the second semifinal of the 2023/24 season at the Bandra Kurla Complex Ground on Monday.

Mumbai resumed the day on 353/9 in their first innings and added 25 more runs to their overnight total to take a lead of 232 runs over Tamil Nadu. Tanush Kotian and Tushar Deshpande were involved in a partnership of 88 runs for the final wicket. But Kotian was stranded on 89 when Deshpande was dismissed by Washington Sundar for 26, as Mumbai's first innings came to an end on 378 in 106.5 overs.

Tamil Nadu's second innings was left in disarray when Shardul Thakur, after making a crucial 109, sent back openers Narayan Jagadeesan and B Sai Sudharsan in quick succession. After Sundar fell to Mohit Avasthi, Tamil Nadu were left in absolute tatters at 10/3. Baba Indrajith scored a fighting 70 and had a 73-run stand with Pradosh Ranjan Paul for the fourth wicket.



But once Paul and Indrajith fell, followed by Vijay Shankar and R. Sai Kishore in quick succession, Mumbai eventually bowled out Tamil Nadu for just 162 in 51.5 overs, with left-arm spinner Shams Mulani taking 4-53, with Player of the Match Thakur, Avasthi and Kotian taking two wickets each.

Mumbai, who won their 41st Ranji Trophy title in the 2015/16 season, now await the winner of the semifinal clash between Vidarbha and Madhya Pradesh, which is currently underway at VCA Stadium in Nagpur. The title clash will be held in Mumbai from March 10-14, with Wankhede Stadium looming as a likely venue.

In Nagpur, Vidarbha's batters, led by Yash Rathod's unbeaten 97 and Akshay Wadkar's 77, propelled the hosts to end the day at 343/6, with their lead over Madhya Pradesh standing at 261 runs.

Brief scores: Tamil Nadu 146 & 162 all out in 51.5 overs (Baba Indrajith 70; Shams Mulani 4-53) lost to Mumbai 378 all out in 106.5 overs (Shardul Thakur 109, Tanush Kotian 89 not out; Sai Kishore 6-99) by an innings and 70 runs.

Vidarbha 170 & 343/6 in 90 overs (Yash Rathod 97 not out, Akshay Wadkar 77; Anubhav Agarwal 2-68) lead Madhya Pradesh 252 by 261 runs.

Delhi HC issues notice on wrestlers' plea against WFI elections

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Monday issued notice on petition by wrestlers Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik, and her husband Satyawart Kadian, seeking to annul and declare the recent Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections as illegal for violating the Sports Code.

Justice Sachin Datta, who heard the case, sought a response from the Centre through the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, the WFI and the federation's Ad-Hoc Committee.

As Centre's counsel sought time to seek instructions in the matter, the court listed the case for next hearing on March 7.

The petition argues that the elections conducted on December 21, 2023 were conducted in disregard of the Sports Code, and are urging the WFI to halt any activities related to the sport until the matter is resolved.

Citing the broader implications of the WFI's actions, the petition notes that many athletes beyond the petitioners have suffered due to the federation's practices, allegedly under the influence of its former President Brij Bhushan Singh.

Notably, the wrestlers were actively involved in the protest last year at Jantar Mantar, which called for the arrest of the then WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh over allegations of sexual harassment against several female grapplers.

The plea now accuses the WFI of attempting to silence and sideline protesting athletes, impacting their international participation



prospects. Moreover, the petition calls for the Ad-Hoc committee to continue managing the WFI's daily affairs or, alternatively, for the appointment of a retired Supreme Court judge to oversee the federation's management.

The wrestlers have labelled the WFI a "habitual offender" for consistently ignoring directives from the Sports Ministry and the ad-hoc committee, actions they claim have significantly hindered the career growth of Indian wrestlers. Despite the Sports Ministry's directive for the WFI to cease its management functions and refrain from conducting trials or national events, the federation allegedly persisted in organising unauthorised trials and events.

The petition seeks for the court to invalidate the December 21 elections, labelling them as fundamentally flawed and conducted in stark violation of the Sports Code.

Santosh Trophy: Services hand Railways a 2-0 defeat to march into semifinals



Team Absolute | Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh)

Shafeel P.P. and Samir Murmu scored in the first half as six-time winners Services put up a commanding display in the first quarterfinal of the 77th National Football Championship for Santosh Trophy, defeating Railways 2-0 at the Golden Jubilee Stadium here on Monday.

Forced to play second fiddle for most of the match against a rampaging Services side, the railwaymen were swept off their feet as early as in the ninth minute when a foul in the area allowed the winners to take the lead through a penalty converted by Shafeel P.P. Their second goal came almost at the stroke of halftime; a brilliant effort by Samir Mumru saw

Services go into the break leading 2-0.

That Services, who made the semifinals in the last edition too, were the better team on the pitch was clear from the very beginning. In the sixth minute, midfielder Rahul Ramakrishnan had a probing ball in his possession on the left and as he was cutting in, Railways defender Nitesh Kumar Yadav challenged him in a manner that didn't receive the referee's approval.

Defender Shafeel, who stepped in to take the spot-kick had the goalkeeper Raja Barman beaten convincingly on the right, but the referee ordered the kick to be retaken as one of the Services players rushed inside the box even before the shot was taken.

Unperturbed, Shafeel slammed the ball in once again, this time on the left.

Services were mostly creating trouble for the rival defenders from the left. The Railways' defence looked harassed and managed to survive till the 45th minute. However, they had no answer to the goal scored by Samir Mumru, which was a spectacular effort. Latching on to the ball on the right, Mumru took an angular shot that entered the goal, almost kissing the far post.

Railways are three-time former champions who also finished runners-up on six other occasions. Over the years, Railways have produced some legendary players -- PK Banerjee, Arun Ghosh, and Prasanta Sinha, to name a few.

K.L. Rahul back in India, set for IPL comeback following a medical checkup



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Star Indian wicketkeeper-batter K.L. Rahul has returned from London after a medical check-up as he was experiencing some discomfort in his right quadriceps. He suffered an injury during the first Test against England in Hyderabad and was ruled out of the remaining games.

"He will stay in the National Cricket Academy in Bangalore for rehab and will work to get fully fit ahead of the IPL 2024," a source close to the cricketer told IANS on Monday.

As IPL 2024 approaches, Rahul is eager to hit the ground running during the cash-rich league. It is believed that the Lucknow Super Giants skipper will soon get clearance from the National Cricket Academy (NCA). "It was not a major injury but he was just not feeling a hundred per cent fit and didn't want to take any risk so missed the England series, he went to London for the check-up, and now he is fine and soon to get a clearance from the NCA," the source added.

IPL 2024: M.S Dhoni posts cryptic 'new season-new role' post on Facebook ahead of tournament opener

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni sent the fans into a frenzy by posting a cryptic note about donning a new role in the new season of the Indian Premier League (IPL), starting on March 22.

"Can't wait for the new season and the new 'role'. Stay tuned!" Dhoni wrote in his Facebook post. Fans were left speculating over what new role Dhoni would take up, considering Devon Conway has been ruled out for at least eight weeks due to a left thumb surgery, thus leaving an opening slot vacant at CSK. CSK will be defending their fifth IPL title which they clinched last year after beating Gujarat Titans in a three-day final, caused by rain, at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. With the 2023 IPL win, CSK equalled Mumbai Indians' record for the most trophies won by a team in the league.

Shortly after winning IPL 2023, Dhoni flew to Mumbai to undergo left knee surgery at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, after being troubled by it for the entire season, including wearing a brace while taking a lap of



the Chepauk Stadium in Chennai.

In IPL 2023, Dhoni batted mainly at number seven and eight, by amassing 104 runs at an eye-catching strike-rate of 182.45 in 12 innings. It is yet to be known when Dhoni will join CSK pre-season camp, which began in Chennai on March 2.

CSK will open their campaign in IPL 2024 as the defending champions in a high-stakes clash against Royal Challengers Bangalore on March 22 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai and will then take on IPL 2022 winners Gujarat Titans at the same venue on March 26.

Legends Cricket Trophy to kick off with clash between Yuvraj Singh and Harbhajan Singh in Kandy

Team Absolute | Kandy

India's cricketing greats -- Harbhajan Singh and Yuvraj Singh -- are all set to lock horns in the Legends Cricket Trophy opener, starting on March 8 at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium, here.

Yuvraj Singh, the captain of the New York Superstar Strikers, will lead the side comprising the likes of Dan Christian, Isuru Udana, Jerome Taylor, Ricardo Powell, Chamara Kapugedara, Rahul Sharma, and Lahiru Thirimanne, to name a few.

On the other hand, the Dubai Giants, led by Harbhajan Singh, comprise the likes of Shaun Marsh, Richard Levi, Thisara Perera, Fidel Edwards, and Ben Laughlin, amongst others. Both sides look balanced and will be ready to put up a stellar show on the opening day of the tournament.

Speaking ahead of the tournament and commenting on the opening clash between the New York Superstar Strikers and Dubai Giants, Shavain Sharma, Director of the Legends Cricket Trophy, said, "We could not have asked for a more exciting tournament opener in this new format of the Legends Cricket Trophy. Both Harbhajan and Yuvraj are loved across the subcontinent, and they have strong followers in Sri Lanka as well.



So, we are expecting a massive turnout for the first game." The 90-ball games hosted at the Pallekele Stadium in Kandy will see teams deploy five bowlers, each granted three overs to make their mark. Adding to

the excitement, a strategic twist emerges as one bowler must step up to deliver four overs by the 60th ball, a decision strategically influenced by both performance and strategy. The first season of the Legend Cricket Trophy

played in the 20-over format, was held in Ghaziabad, India, from March 22 to 30 in 2023. Indore Knights and Guwahati Avengers were declared joint winners of the inaugural season after the final was washed out.

Yashasvi Jaiswal amongst nominees for ICC Men's Player of the Month award for February 2024



Team Absolute | New Delhi

India's in-form opener Yashasvi Jaiswal has been nominated for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for February 2024 alongside New Zealand's Kane Williamson and Sri Lanka's Pathum Nissanka.

Jaiswal is nominated for the first time in the ICC Player of the Month awards following a sensational month in Tests against England.

India began the month trailing 1-0 after losing the Hyderabad Test by 28 runs, but overturned the deficit with thanks in large part to the remarkable form of Jaiswal.

He smashed back-to-back double centuries in Visakhapatnam and Rajkot -- the latter equalling the record for most sixes in a Test innings with 12. With more runs coming in the fourth Test at Lanka in the fourth Test at Lanka, including a half-century in the first innings, Jaiswal, 22, ended February having amassed 560 runs at an average of 112.

The back-to-back double hundreds at the age of 22 years and 49 days also made him the third youngest batter in the world to record two double cen-

turies in Tests after Sir Donald Bradman and Vinod Kamble. Jaiswal has also rose to the top of the leading run-scorer list in the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25 cycle.

On the other hand, Williamson is nominated for the honour for the first time since March 2023 after another series of century scores dominated the headlines in New Zealand's first-ever Test series victory over South Africa.

Williamson's two Tests during February heralded 403 runs and the Player of the Series accolade, as he hit twin centuries in the first Test at Mount Maunganui (118 and 109) before his 133 in the second innings at Hamilton helped the hosts chase down 267 to seal a series whitewash.

Meanwhile, Nissanka excelled in Sri Lanka's recent three ODIs and three T20Is against Afghanistan, smashing the first ever ODI double-century for his country at Pallekele (210 not out in 139 balls) to begin the month in a blistering fashion.

More runs came in the third ODI, as Nissanka hit 118 in 101 balls to seal another convincing win for Sri Lanka,

before a half-century in the final T20I showdown capped a fine month. In all, Nissanka hit 346 ODIs runs and 91 T20I runs to earn his first nomination for the award.

In the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for February 2024, UAE duo of Kavisha Egodage and Esha Oza have been shortlisted alongside Australia all-rounder Annabel Sutherland.

All-rounder Kavisha hit 218 runs and took eight wickets during the course of the Asian Cricket Council's Women's Premier Cup won by the UAE. Esha, the UAE skipper, claimed the Player of the Tournament award, topping the run-scoring charts with 249 runs at an average of 62.25.

Annabel, meanwhile, unleashed fireworks in her record-breaking 210 off 256 balls -- the fastest ever in women's Tests when Australia faced South Africa in the one-off Test at Perth earlier this month. She proved to be a valuable asset with the ball in hand too, taking 3-19 in the first South Africa innings, followed by 2-11 in the second, as the home side won by an innings.



Sajid Nadiadwala ventures into Marathi cinema



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Filmmaker Sajid Nadiadwala is venturing into Marathi cinema along with Tejaswini Pandit of Sahyadri Films to enhance storytelling norms with films that celebrate diverse tales.

Sajid Nadiadwala of Nadiadwala Grandson Enters has presented Jophiel Enterprise, led by Warda Nadiadwala, and Sahyadri Films, helmed by Tejaswini Pandit, for a special collaboration.

Talk about the collaboration, producer Warda

Nadiadwala said: "I have a deep connection to the land, culture, and language... it's our home. Teaming up with Tejaswini Pandit fills us with excitement as we aim to present audiences with fresh perspectives and deeply impactful stories."

Warda added: "I truly believe with Tejaswini's insights about Marathi cinema we aspire to exceed your expectations and sincerely hope for your love and blessings as we embark on this new journey in the illustrious and flourishing Marathi Cinema."

Jacqueline Fernandez shimmers in sexy little black dress

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Jacqueline Fernandez has set the internet ablaze on Monday with her superhot pictures in a little black shimmery dress.

The diva, who has a huge fandom of 69 million followers on Instagram, dropped sizzling hot pictures in a sleeveless little black dress, with a plunging neckline.

The outfit was rounded off with black stockings, and matching stilettos.

For the makeup, Jacqueline, who was most recently seen in 'Cirkus', opted for rose pink lips, blushed cheeks and a perfectly contoured face. She accessorised the look with a golden bracelet in one hand, and flaunted her nicely done manicure.

The post is captioned with a spade emoji. She gave the tune of 'All the stars' to her post.

Actress Aneet Kaur commented: "My oh my".

One fan wrote: "So sexy", another said: "that black dress and youuuu".



Chitrangda's Monday mood: 'Hair flipping' workout done!

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Chitrangda Singh has set the Monday mood right by hitting the gym early in the morning. Taking to Instagram stories, Chitrangda shared a boomerang video of herself from the gym.

In the clip, the actress is seen sitting on a bench in the gym and taking a mirror selfie video. Dressed in black gym wear, she is seen flipping her hair.

For the caption, Chitrangda wrote: "Hair flipping' workout done!"

Chitrangda stepped into the world of acting with 'Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi', a crime drama, in 2005. She then featured in films such as 'Yeh Saali Zindagi',



'Desi Boyz', 'I, Me Aur Main', 'Baazaar', 'Inkaar' and 'Saheb', 'Biwi Aur Gangster 3'. She made her web debut with the

romantic comedy anthology 'Modern Love Mumbai' in 2022. The actress was last seen on screen in 2023 film 'Gaslight' starring Sara Ali Khan.

Shraddha wants to talk about her b'day, but is under the weather

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Shraddha Kapoor seems to be under the weather, going by her post on social media. Shraddha, who turned 37 on Sunday, took to Instagram stories on Monday, where the actress revealed she is not keeping well. The actress took a snapshot of her coffee mug and wrote: "B'day ke baarein mein share karna hai lekin... Haalat (sick emoji)."

Mazedaar get well soon wish karo year (Wanted to share about my birthday... but health (sick emoji). Send some fun, get well soon wishes)." Talking about her work, Shraddha was last seen on screen in 'Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar' starring Ranbir Kapoor. Directed by Luv Ranjan, the film marked Shraddha's return after a three-year hiatus.



Mouni steals a kiss with 'serial kisser' Emraan Hashmi



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Mouni Roy, who plays Yasmin Ali in the upcoming web series 'Showtime', has sealed a steamy kiss with Bollywood's 'serial kisser' Emraan Hashmi. Emraan (44) has gained fame for his on-screen kissing scenes in movies like 'Murder', 'Aashiq Banaya Aapne', 'Aksar', and 'Jannat', among many others.

And now in the show 'Showtime', Emraan, who plays Raghu Khanna, can be seen kissing Mouni aka Yasmin. A new clip shows Yasmin saying, "You guys are only concerned about numbers. No one cares about entertainment."

She then asks Raghu, "What happened to Agent Haseena? The world needs to know that I am doing some-

thing like 'Kill Bill'. Yasmin Ali in and as Agent Haseena."

Raghu says, "Trust me, you are irreplaceable. We will announce it soon. Now give me that kiss."

Their kiss then sets the screen on fire. Set to showcase the producer-actress dynamics and all that lies in-between, the two share some great chemistry on screen.

Mouni also took to her Instagram and shared a solo poster of herself, wherein it is written: "Connections get you good roles. Not talent - Yasmin Ali."

The picture also has a tagline: "The leading lady in Agent Haseena... and in ace producer Raghu Khanna's life."

The post is captioned as: "Connections and talent, she has it all to power through

the world of showbiz."

Talking about slipping into the role of a glam heroine, Mouni said: "I truly believe that work begets work. The kind of work that you've done will get you the next few offers and you can choose the best possible one from that."

"There is always more dimensions to a person and talent has no bounds. So just because somebody can dance that doesn't mean that they can't act or when somebody looks glamorous, it's only because of styling or hair and make-up."

"It requires a lot of hard work and more than that, the director's vision to cast someone in different parts which many times does not happen in this industry, and in turn, people end up typecasting you," she added.

Tamannaah says it's 'only the beginning' as she clocks 19 years in showbiz



Team Absolute | Mumbai

It was 19 years ago, when Tamannaah Bhatia's debut film 'Chand Sa Roshan Chehra' was released in 2005. However, for the actress, it is just the beginning. Taking to Instagram stories, Tamannaah on Monday re-shared posts from her fans, congratulating her

for completing 19 years in the industry. She thanked all her fans and followers.

In one post, Tamannaah wrote: "Only the beginning my cuties."

Tamannaah's friend Kajal Aggarwal on Sunday night took X (formerly called Twitter), to congratulate the 'Bhola Shankar' actress on the milestone. The actress

also shared fan-made posters and captioned it:

"#19gloriousyearsofTamannaah big congratulations on almost 2 decades darling Tamannaah Bhatia. Such lovely posters by your adorable fans." Responding to this gesture, Tamannaah wrote: "It's so sweet of Kaju to do this and so thoughtful of you guys."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Pooja Hegde