

# absolute india

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## PM MODI EXPLAINS WHY CRORES OF CITIZENS ARE HIS FAMILY MEMBERS

Kolkata | Agencies

Attacking INDIA bloc partners for launching 'personal attacks' against him, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday explained why crores of citizens are his family members.

While addressing a rally on women empowerment organised by West Bengal BJP at Barasat in North 24 Parganas district, the PM narrated his life story. He said, "At a very young age, I left my home with a bag to move around the entire country and know my nation. I was not carrying a single penny. But not for a single day, I was in empty stomach. That is where I realised that the people of the entire nation are members of my family." So, he added, since the time the current NDA government came to power in 2015, it started working



relentlessly for women empowerment. "I have set a target so that 30 crore women become lakhpati didis in the country. When so many lakhpati didis will surface in rural India what kind of prosperity the rural

economy of the country will achieve," said the Prime Minister.

The PM also accused the INDIA bloc partners of launching personal attacks against him by linking his family issue.

"They are claiming that since I do not have a family of my own, I am so much against ancestry-driven politics in the country. But they do not know that crores of people of my country are my family members. The women of the entire country are my family members. I am confident that whenever I will come under such scathing attacks, the women of the country will come forward to protect me," he said. Speaking on the occasion, PM Modi said that the state governments run by INDIA bloc partners are creating hurdles for implementing different central projects for women empowerment in the respective states. "The INDIA bloc partners are only interested in appeasement of fundamentalist forces. So the women of the country will have to come forward to resist such evil intentions of the INDIA bloc partners," he added.

## LS polls: MP CM Mohan Yadav flags off 29 'rathas'

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav flagged off BJP's 'prachar rathas' at party headquarters on Wednesday.

Mini-trucks with BJP's slogans such as -- "Fir ek baar Modi sarkar", "Modi ki guarantee" and some more.

As many as 29 raths fitted with LED screens will be moving in each Lok Sabha constituency in Madhya Pradesh to highlight the achievements of BJP-led Central government.

The raths were flagged-off amid the 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'abki bar 400 paar' slogans.

Ashish Agrawal, MP BJP media cell head, said that 29 rathas (one for each 29 Lok



Sabha constituency) have been flagged off. "These rathas will be going to villages to tell the people how India has transformed in

the last 10 years, and to make the people realise why PM Modi's third tenure is important for making India a developed country," he added.

## Hezbollah member killed, 6 injured in Israeli strikes in Lebanon

Beirut | Agencies

A Hezbollah fighter was killed, and six "civilians" wounded on Wednesday in Israeli air strikes targeting several towns and villages in the border region of southern Lebanon, Lebanese military sources told the media. The military sources, who spoke anonymously, said that one of the raids targeted a house in the southern town of Bint Jbeil, killing a person inside and wounding another.

They added that another raid also destroyed a house in the southeast village of Dibbine, wounding five civilians, including two children, Xinhua news agency report-



ed. Meanwhile, Hezbollah said its fighters attacked several Israeli sites of Kiryat Shmona, Ruwaisat Al-Alam, and Avivim.

The Lebanon-Israel border has been witnessing increased tension since October 8, 2023, after Hezbollah fired dozens of rockets toward Israel in sup-

port of the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, prompting Israel to respond by firing heavy artillery toward southeastern Lebanon.

The confrontations between Hezbollah and Israel have killed 340 people on the Lebanese side, including 227 Hezbollah members and 65 civilians, according to Lebanese security sources.

## Shankar Mahadevan lends his voice to 'Devadhi Dev' penned by Maha Dy CM Devendra Fadnavis

Mumbai | Agencies

Grammy-winning singer-composer Shankar Mahadevan has gone behind the mic for the devotional track 'Devadhi Dev'.

The song has been penned by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, and promises a treat to all devotees of Lord Shiva.

The song also features the Mahamrityunjay mantra sung by Amruta Fadnavis, the wife of Devendra Fadnavis. It adds depth to the track making it a perfect song for the upcoming Mahashivratri festival.

Talking about the song, Padma Shri awardee Shankar Mahadevan said: "It's an honour to musically embellish and sing 'Devadhi Dev' written so beautifully by Devendra.



All the attributes of Lord Shiva are woven perfectly for a composer to

bring out devotional aspects from the music."

Devendra Fadnavis said: "My family has been celebrating Mahashivratri since my childhood. The attributes of Shiva and the stories from Shiva Purana had a great impact on me since then."

He shared that the lyrics came naturally to him while he was travelling last year. "Being a singer, my wife Amruta realised the potential in it as a song and immediately shared it with Shankar. I am happy that Shankar agreed to compose it and sang it so beautifully. Happy to have Amruta singing a small part in it too," Devendra Fadnavis said.

Amruta Fadnavis shared: "'Devadhi Dev' is a beautiful song, and I hope this song becomes a part of our Mahashivratri celebration in India."

## CENTRAL GOVT STAFF TO GAIN AS DA LIKELY TO BE HIKED TO 50

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central government is likely to announce a 4 per cent increase in dearness allowance (DA) for its employees this month to compensate them for inflation.

At present, the DA for Central government staff and dearness relief (DR) for pensioners is fixed at 46 per cent, which is likely to go up to 50 per cent.

According to the recommendations of the 7th Pay Commission, once the DA reaches 50 per cent, there will also be an increase in the house rent allowance, children's education allowance, transport allowance etc. due to the Central government staff, which will further raise their take-home pay packet.

Then implemented, the increase in DA and DR will be effective from January 1, 2024, as a result of which the government staff and pensioners



will also get arrears for the previous months.

The dearness allowance for Central government employees is calculated based on the latest Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-

IW). The Labour Bureau, a wing of the Ministry of Labour, publishes the CPI-IW data every month.

The Union government usually revises the dearness allowance twice a year, in January and July. The

Centre had announced the previous DA hike on October 18, 2023, which came into effect from July 1, 2023.

Similarly, before this, the DA hike that kicked in from January 2023 was announced on March 24, 2023.

## B'luru cafe blast: NIA releases photo of suspected bomber, announces Rs 10 lakh reward

Bengaluru | Agencies

The National Investigation Agency (NIA), probing the Bengaluru cafe blast case, on Wednesday released the photo of a man suspected of carrying out the explosion and also announced a reward of Rs 10 lakh for providing information/ clues about him.

Karnataka Home Minister G. Parameshwara earlier on Wednesday said that the NIA has got a vital clue in connection with the blast that took place at the Rameshwaram Cafe here on March 1 in the Whitefield area.

Parameshwara further said that the case is being jointly probed by the NIA and the Special Wing of Central Crime Branch of Bengaluru Police.

Rameshwaram Cafe is located at Brookfield locality in the Whitefield area which houses many well-known IT companies.

Though probe agencies have managed to collect the CCTV footage of the accused individual, he is yet to be traced and apprehended. Even Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had said on March 1 that the bomber would be nabbed in "a few hours".



According to sources, the man behind the low-intensity IED blast had boarded and alighted around 10 Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation buses during his movements to and from the cafe to "confuse the investigating agencies".

Officials have been scanning the CCTV cameras within the 3-km radius of the blast site, a source said.

## Sensex scales 74K peak for first time; last 1,000 points rally took 37 sessions

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Sensex jumped 409 points on Wednesday to close above the 74,000 mark for the first time.

The Sensex settled at 74,085.99, up 409 points, or 0.55 per cent on Wednesday, while the Nifty 50 closed at 22,474.05, up 118 points, or 0.53 per cent, both settling at their fresh closing peaks.

BSE's total market capitalisation was reported to be at Rs 391.3 lakh crore, after hitting a new high of Rs 394 lakh crore on March 2, a few lakh crore short of the Rs 400 lakh crore mark.

The latest 5,000-point milestone of the Sensex, emanating from 69,000, took place in about 65 sessions or 3.1 months.

The latest 10,000-point milestone from 64,000 took



place in 172 sessions or 8.3 months, as per the analyst.

It took 32.1 years for the Index to climb the 35,000 points milestone, in January 2018. The next 35,000 points got added over the next 5.9 years (a rise of 100 per cent).

This was aided by the price appreciation of listed stocks alongside new issues and listings coming to the public.

India's GDP during the three months ending December 2023 grew at 8.4 per cent, the highest among all the large economies in the world.

## AFTER PROLONGED DRAMA, CBI FINALLY GETS SHEIKH SHAHJAHAN'S CUSTODY

Kolkata | Agencies

After prolonged drama for the past two days, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday evening finally got the physical custody of Sheikh Shahjahan, the accused mastermind behind the attack on ED and CAPF teams at Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district on January 5.

Soon after the Calcutta High Court directed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the West Bengal police to hand over Shahjahan to the custody of CBI by 4.15 p.m. on Wednesday, a central agency team reached the CID headquarters at Bhabani Bhavan in Kolkata, where Shahjahan was housed since his arrest on February 29.

However, the CBI team had to wait for over three hours to get Shahjahan's physical custody.

As the CBI team waited at the Bhabani Bhavan, the CID officers took Shahjahan to the state-run S.S.K.M. Medical College & Hospital for a medical check-up.



Shahjahan was handed over to the CBI team after he was brought back to the CID headquarters following the medical check-up. Finally, at around 7 p.m., the convoy of CBI vehicles left Bhabani Bhavan.

A visibly shattered Shahjahan could be spotted sitting silently on the backseat of one of the vehicles in the convoy.

From Bhabani Bhavan, Shahjahan was first taken to the Central government-run E.S.I. Hospital in Joka for a second round of medical check-up. After the medical examination, he will be taken to CBI's Nizam Palace office in central Kolkata.

On Tuesday, a CBI team had gone to the Bhabani Bhavan to take Shahjahan into custody after the Calcutta High Court directed the CID to hand the accused over to the central agency at the earliest.

However, the CBI officers left empty-handed from the Bhabani Bhavan, as the state government had by then moved the Supreme Court challenging the high court order.





## 'JUNGLE RAJ' OF PREVIOUS REGIMES RESPONSIBLE FOR MIGRATION OF YOUTH, PM MODI SAYS IN BIHAR

Patna | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that the 'jungle raj' of previous regimes in Bihar was responsible for the migration of the youth from the state.

Addressing a massive rally in Bihar's Bettiah city in West Champaran district, PM Modi, without taking the name of former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad, said: "Many youth migrated (to other places) after jungle raj came to Bihar. One family was responsible for the jungle raj in Bihar. They played with the futures of the youth. "During the jungle raj, only one family flourished in Bihar. They are concerned only about their own family. Can they be allowed to rob Bihar? It is the NDA government which has been saving the future of the youth in Bihar," PM Modi said.

"The RJD, Congress and the leaders of the INDIA bloc are living in the 20th century. The NDA government has planned to make every house a 'Surya Ghar' by the installation of solar power units to generate and



sell electricity in the country. The leaders of the INDIA bloc are living in the 'lantern era'," PM Modi said. The Prime Minister further said

the Opposition leaders have been criticising him for speaking the truth. "Those who believe in familism are targeting me. They are saying

that 'Modi has no family'. I want to tell them that 140 crore people of the country are my family... every person in the country has been saying 'Modi ka Parivar'. Had 'Bharat Ratna' Karpoori Thakur been alive, they might have disrespected him as well as he had not promoted his family members in politics. They might have done the same to leaders like Ram Manohar Lohia, Jay Prakash Narayan and B.R. Ambedkar as well had they been alive," he said.

Further slamming the leaders of INDIA bloc, PM Modi: "The leaders of the INDIA bloc are also targeting Lord Ram. Ram Lalla was in a tent for years. Bihar is the land of Goddess Sita, Luv and Kush," he said.

PM Modi also said that he wants to end poverty in the country and hence his government was providing free food grains, health insurance, among other amenities and facilities for poor people.

"The NDA government has reopened the fertiliser factory in Barauni and the people of the state have been getting jobs there," the Prime Minister added.

## Former MP Dhananjay Singh sentenced to seven years jail in kidnapping case

Jaunpur (UP) | Agencies

A special court in UP's Jaunpur on Wednesday sentenced former MP Dhananjay Singh to a seven-year jail term in a case of extortion and kidnapping.

The special court for MP/MLA cases also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on him.

The former MP was convicted on Tuesday for kidnapping Jal Nigam project manager Abhinav Singhal and taken into custody.

Singhal had filed a case against the former MP from Jaunpur in Line Bazar police station, accusing him of kidnapping, extortion and threats. The work of laying sewer lines worth about Rs 300 crore was going on in Jaunpur and Singhal alleged that the former MP obstructed the work.



"He forcefully called me to his residence with his men, demanded extortion and threatened to kill me," he

told the police. He had filed a case against four people including the former MP.

## Senior Trinamool leader Tapas Roy joins BJP ahead of LS polls

Kolkata | Agencies

Ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, former Trinamool Congress leader and veteran politician Tapas Roy, who had resigned both from his Assembly post and primary party membership on March 4, officially joined the BJP on Wednesday afternoon.

Roy was welcomed into the saffron camp by state BJP President and Lok Sabha member Sukanta Majumdar, and leader of opposition in the state Assembly Suwendu Adhikari, who handed over the party flag to him.

From today, I am part of the BJP family and as long as I live, I will continue to be here. I will try to work as directed by the BJP leadership with equal sincerity, something which I have done all through my political



career. "It was impossible for me to continue in the Trinamool Congress, which is running the state government without caring for the minimum democratic decorum. Trinamool has become a party dominated by anti-social elements like Sheikh Shahjahan, Shibu Hazra and Uttam Sardar. So, I have consciously quit the Trinamool and joined the BJP," Roy said. Although Roy resigned as a Trinamool legislator on Monday, his resignation is yet to be accepted by Assembly Speaker Biman

Bandopadhyay. According to the Speaker, there were some technical mistakes in the resignation letter of Roy, who has been asked to submit a revised letter on Thursday.

Reacting to Roy joining the BJP, rebel Trinamool leader Kumal Ghosh, who continues to be the party's state General Secretary, said that had the ruling party leadership taken initiatives at the right time, the exit of a senior leader like Roy could have been avoided. "Personally, Roy joining the BJP is a matter of immense pain," Ghosh said.

## OPPOSITION TIPRA MOTHA PARTY TO JOIN BJP-LED MINISTRY IN TRIPURA

Agartala | Agencies

After hectic parleys for the past year and the signing of a tripartite agreement with the Centre and the Tripura government on March 2, the opposition Tipra Motha Party (TMP) will join the BJP-led coalition government in the state, adding a new twist to Tripura's politics.

Sources said that incumbent opposition leader and senior TMP legislator Animesh Debbarma and party MLA Brishaketu Debbarma are likely to take oath as Cabinet ministers at the Raj Bhavan on Wednesday evening or Friday.

"Chief Minister Manik Saha is scheduled leave for Malda in West Bengal on Wednesday to attend a political event. TMP supremo Pradyot Bikram Manikya Deb Barman is also out of the station. In view of this, the date of the swearing-in-ceremony would be readjusted," the sources told IANS.

Media reports said that one or two MLAs from the ruling BJP are also likely to be included in the Council of



Ministers headed by Chief Minister Saha.

Since the BJP-led alliance assumed charge for the second consecutive term on March 8 last year, three ministerial berths are lying vacant.

Another tribal-based party, the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura

(IPFT), is also an ally of the BJP-led government, and its lone MLA Sukla Charan Noatia is a Cabinet minister in charge of Cooperation, Tribal Welfare (TRP and PTG) and Welfare of Minorities Departments.

The TMP, in its maiden electoral battle in the February 16 Assembly

polls held last year, had fielded 42 candidates, including 20 on the tribal reserved seats. The party had won 13 seats with a vote share of 19.69 per cent, as it highlighted its demand for 'Greater Tripaland' or a separate state for the tribals under Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution.

## K'taka LS candidates to be finalised on March 7: Dy CM Shivakumar

Hubballi (Karnataka) | Agencies

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said on Wednesday that a decision regarding the finalisation of candidates for the Lok Sabha elections will be made by the Congress on March 7 (Thursday).

Speaking to reporters in Hubballi, Shivakumar said, there is an election committee meeting tomorrow in New Delhi under the leadership of AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge. "We will take a call in the meeting," he stated.

When asked about when BJP MLAs S.T. Somashekar and Shivaram Hebbur will join Congress, Shivakumar asked why only two-three names be taken in this matter. The workers have been asked to induct leaders who like the ideology into the Congress party. "I can't reveal the secrets any further," he



maintained when asked which MLAs are ready to join the Congress.

"After a month, we will see how former CM Shettar will issue a statement of repentance," he added.

When asked about the delay in the

Mahadayi project, Dy CM Shivakumar maintained that the question in this regard should be asked to Union Minister for Mine, Coal and Law Pralhad Joshi. Former CM Jagadish Shettar who had joined

Congress and later went back to BJP should also be questioned on why the clearance for the forest land is not given?

"I have called a tender already with the condition of commencing the work after the clearance. They will be respected if they give consent. Union Minister Joshi has more responsibility in this regard," Shivakumar stated.

Nearly Rs 1,000 crore projects are inaugurated in Athani region. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is also joining the event. The development works are taken up in the state for Rs 1.26 lakh crore which has been set aside in the budget.

When asked about quashing the ED case against him, Shivakumar stated, the media projected the incident of raids on him in a certain manner, when arrested and released it was projected differently. Now, you are quiet, Shivakumar stated.

## Raj DSP's son among 14 trainee sub-inspectors arrested in SI exam paper leak case

Jaipur | Agencies

The Rajasthan Police have arrested the son of one of its officers in the SI exam paper leak case.

Nagaur Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Omprakash Godara's son is among the 14 trainee sub-inspectors who have been arrested in the SI exam paper leak case, ADGP (SOG) V.K. Singh told IANS on Wednesday.

"Yes, it is confirmed that Nagaur DSP's son is one among the arrested.

"Those 14 trainee sub-inspectors were taken for medical test on Wednesday and shall soon be produced in court," he added.

The Special Operations Group (SOG) of the state police on Tuesday arrested 14 trainee sub-inspectors who were detained on Monday in the Rajasthan Public Service Commission exam scam.

The Police officials said that the arrested trainee Sub-Inspector, Karanpal Godara secured 22nd rank and his father has been on leave since the day of his son's arrest.

Special Operation Group (SOG) has revealed that the paper of Police Sub



Inspector Recruitment Exam-2021 was leaked from Ravindra Bal Bharti Senior Secondary School, Shanti Nagar Hasanpura, Jaipur.

A member of the paper leak gang was already hiding in the school room where the papers were to be kept. As soon as the room was sealed after placing the papers, the gang member took out the papers from the packet, clicked their photo and sent it to the gang leader, said ADGP (SOG) V.K. Singh.

The role of the school principal, Rajesh Khandelwal, has also come to light in the SOG investigation.

## PM takes ride on India's first underwater metro line in Kolkata with schoolchildren



Kolkata | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday took a ride on India's first underwater metro rail, connecting Howrah District with Esplanade Metro Station in central Kolkata, in the company of some schoolchildren.

The Prime Minister interacted with the schoolchildren during the underwater metro ride and held discussions with them on various subjects of academic and extra-

curricular interest.

The Prime Minister reached the Esplanade Metro Station at 10 a.m. on Wednesday after which he inaugurated a number of metro railway projects nationally, including the one connecting Howrah with Esplanade. At the inauguration programme he was accompanied by West Bengal Governor, CV Ananda Bose, the Leader of Opposition, Suwendu Adhikari and the BJP's state President, Sukanta Majumdar.

## Folk singer found dead in mysterious circumstances in Varanasi

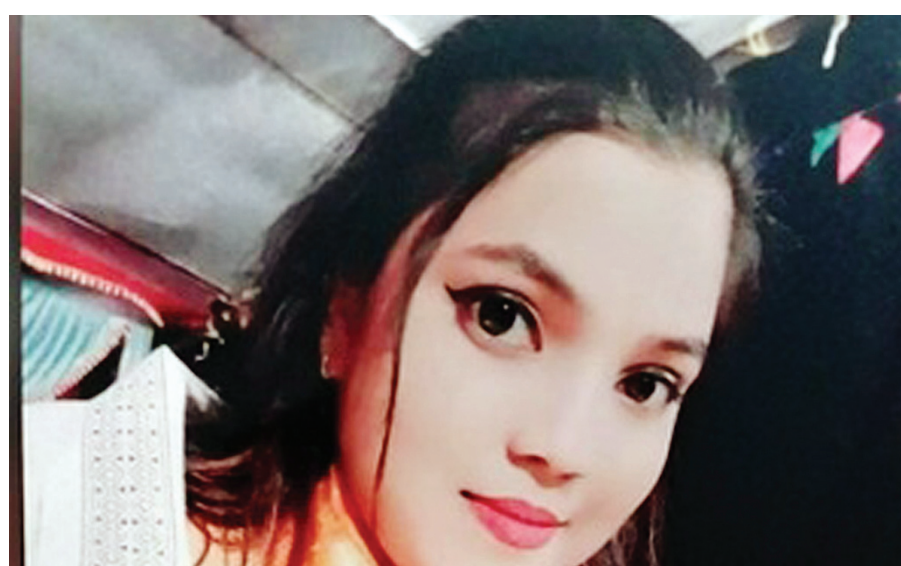
Varanasi | Agencies

Popular Birha (folk) singer Aanchal Patel a.k.a. Anchal Raghvani, 22, was found dead under suspicious circumstances in a flat located in Tarna of Shivpur police station area in Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi district, said officials on Wednesday.

The singer's brother, Vikas, who reached the spot after receiving information about the incident on Tuesday, has accused her husband and a woman of murder.

Vikas has filed a complaint against Aanchal's husband and a woman at Shivpur police station. The police have taken Aanchal's body into their custody and sent it for post-mortem.

Shivpur police officials said that Aanchal's husband and the woman have been detained and were being interro-



gated. The police said further action will be taken after the post-mortem report comes.

Birha singer Aanchal, who originally lived with her family in Dhelwariya (Jaitpura) area in Varanasi, was living with her husband Deepak and some other people in a flat located in the Tarna area for the past two months.

According to family members, they got a call on Tuesday saying that Aanchal had died. Aanchal had married Deepak three years ago. The flat where Aanchal lived was also frequented by outsiders. Her family members said that Deepak also used to torture her. Aanchal's family members said that she was mentally disturbed after marriage.

A Birha singer Aanchal had made her own identity at a young age in the Purvanchal region.





## BHIND WITNESSES A SURGE IN DEVELOPMENT - CM DR. MOHAN YADAV

► CM DR. YADAV TRANSFERS RS 816 CRORE FROM KISAN KALYAN YOJANA TO OVER 80 LAKH FARMERS WITH A ONE CLICK. OVER 25 LAKH FARMERS RECEIVE RS 775 CRORE UNDER PRIME MINISTER CROP INSURANCE SCHEME. INAUGURATION AND DEDICATION OF 68 DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES WORTH RS 193 CRORE 35 LAKH. ANNOUNCEMENT OF COLLEGE IN NAYAGAON, REJUVENATION OF GAURI SAROVAR, MEHGAON TO BE GIVEN NAGAR PANCHAYAT STATUS, OPENING OF AGRICULTURE FACULTY IN BHIND AND CONSTRUCTION OF ETAWAH-BHIND ROAD. CHIEF MINISTER DR. YADAV ADDRESSES "FARMERS AND SAHKARITA SAMMELAN" IN BHIND



crore under the Kisan Kalyan Yojana to 80 lakh farmers. Additionally, he allocated Rs 775 crore from the Crop Insurance Scheme (Kharif 2023) to assist more than 25 lakh farmers. Amidst the event, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav inaugurated and dedicated 68 development projects, totaling Rs 193 crore 35 lakh. Furthermore, he announced initiatives including the establishment of a college in Nayagaon, rejuvenation of Gauri Sarovar, elevation of Mehgaon to Nagar Panchayat status, introduction of an agriculture faculty at the Bhind college, construction of the Etawah to Bhind road and the building of the Lelwari bridge.

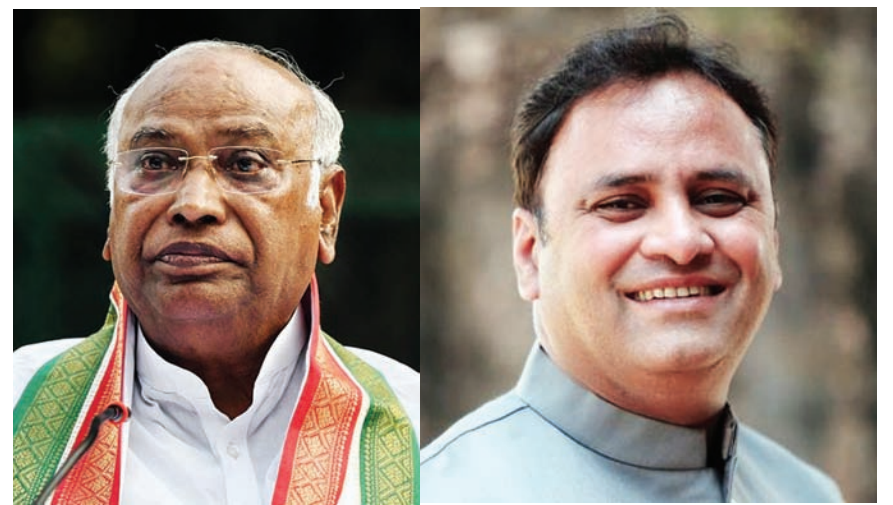
keep the enemies of the country within their limits. While paying obeisance to Vankhadeshwar Mahadev in Bhind and Doctor Hanumanji of Dadraua, highlighting Bhind's historical association with outlaws, now transformed into a domain governed by law. Driven by a commitment to progress, the state government is focused on streamlining the lives of Chambal residents. Dr. Yadav commended the initiatives led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, emphasizing their role in advancing the nation's prosperity and global stature.

ensured the safety of all citizens and initiated the distribution of Covid vaccines to over 100 countries worldwide. Additionally, Modi facilitated the provision of permanent housing to 22 crore disadvantaged individuals across the nation. Dedication of joint tehsil offices in Bhind and Mehgaon, electricity substation in Dandraua and higher secondary schools in Jakhauri and Sherpur. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav today inaugurated 50 development initiatives including drinking water works of Jal Jeevan Mission in Pariaya, Mora, Akhosar and Narsingharh, works of tap water scheme in 45 villages and construction work in Bhind jail under the dedication and bhoomi puja of 68 development projects costing 193 crore 35 lakhs. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav dedicated water supply scheme in Lahar, Gormi, Alampuray and Daboh, joint tehsil office in Bhind and Mehgaon, bridge on Son river on Alampur-Bhagwapura road and Gaur bridge, Jal Jeevan Mission in Mehda, Kurthar, Bhampar and Shahpura. Along with this, he also dedicated the road from Sevda to Kanwar and Jamma to Manpura, electricity substation at Dandraua, higher secondary and high schools at Jakhauri and Sherpur and semi-urban police station at Ater. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav also distributed benefits under various schemes. After the death of Sharda Baghel's husband due to electrocution, a cheque of Rs. 4 lakh was given to Baghel as financial assistance.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav during the Kisan and Sahkarita Sammelan in Bhind, facilitated the transfer of Rs 1,816

## Political meaning being explored in the meeting of Mallikarjun Kharge and Arun Yadav



Team Absolute | Indore

The political meaning of the long discussion held in private between Congress National President Mallikarjun Kharge and former Madhya Pradesh unit president of the party Arun Yadav is beginning to be discovered. This meeting is being considered important from the point of view of ticket distribution for Lok Sabha seats in the state. In fact, the party's national president Mallikarjun Kharge arrived on Wednesday to participate in the public meeting organized in Badnawar, Madhya Pradesh

under Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra'. There was a long discussion in private between Mallikarjun Kharge and former state president Arun Yadav at Indore airport. Some pictures of this discussion have also surfaced, in which it is seen that both the leaders are very serious and are discussing. Later both the leaders went from Indore to Badnawar by helicopter. There were talks of making Arun Yadav the party's candidate in the recently held Rajya Sabha elections. But, this did not happen. Now Lok Sabha elections are near and

the party is going to announce the names of the candidates soon. Arun Yadav is a big OBC face of the party and has influence in many parts of the state. This meeting of Kharge and Yadav is being considered important for the selection of candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. In the state, BJP has made Dr. Mohan Yadav, who belongs to the OBC category, the Chief Minister and the search is on for a strong OBC face within the Congress to compete with him. Not only this, BJP has declared candidates for 24 out of 29 Lok Sabha seats in the state, out

## Jyotiraditya Scindia in Guna to meet farmers

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Wednesday began a day-long visit to home turf Guna in Madhya Pradesh, first time after the BJP nominated him as the candidate for the seat for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. He is scheduled to visit several villages to meet the farmers whose crops were damaged in heavy hailstorm across the Gwalior-Chambal region recently. During the inspection of damaged crops, Minister Scindia will prepare a report and submit to the state government to provide compensation to the farmers. This visit is being seen as Scindia kick-starting his poll campaign in Guna, where he faced a shocking defeat in 2019. Jyotiraditya Scindia will be contesting his first Lok Sabha election on a BJP ticket from his family bastion. Suraj Goswami, a Shivpuri-based BJP worker said that the Minister has given clear instructions to the district administration and concerned ministers to resolve the problems



of people on priority without any delay. "Some party leaders wanted him to contest the coming Lok Sabha election from Gwalior, but he wanted to understand why the people of his home turf were angry with him," Goswami told reporter. Jyotiraditya Scindia, who had contested the last Lok Sabha election on a Congress ticket, had lost to BJP's K.P. Yadav. However, the BJP this time, has fielded Scindia, instead of retaining its sitting MP Yadav.

## PILOT INJURED AFTER TRAINER AIRCRAFT CRASHES IN MADHYA PRADESH'S GUNA

Bhopal: A woman pilot has been injured after a trainer aircraft crashed in Madhya Pradesh's Guna. The plane had taken off from Neemuch - about 250 km away as the crew flies - on Wednesday and an engine problem is suspected to be the cause of the crash, officials said. The officials said the pilot, who was a student of the Chimes Aviation Academy, had sought to make an emergency landing at the Guna aerodrome after reporting an engine issue. The pilot crashed off the runway while attempting to land. The injured pilot is being treated at the district hospital in Guna. "After developing a malfunction, a trainer aircraft flying from Neemuch to Dhana (in Sagar district) made an emergency landing, during which the pilot lost control. The trainee pilot sustained injuries and has been hospitalised," Sub-Inspector Chanchal Tiwari of the Guna Police was quoted as saying by news agency.

## Successful operation of lower jaw of 11 months old girl in AIIMS Bhopal

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Under the guidance of Prof. (Dr) Ajai Singh, Executive Director, AIIMS Bhopal, a team of oral and maxillofacial surgeons conducted successful surgery for the tumor (odontogenic myxoma of mandible) of the lower jaw of an 11-month-old girl. Bablu Sehariya, a resident of Vidisha, who is a laborer by profession, brought his 11-month-old daughter Ritika Sehariya to the dental department of AIIMS Bhopal last month. The swelling in the lower jaw of the girl was increasing rapidly since about 6 months. Due to which the girl started having difficulty in eating and breathing. The girl's father told that the swelling in the jaw has increased in size by more than 4 inches in about 6 months. The family had earlier consulted the local doctor at Vidisha but he advised to go to a big institute as soon as possible. The family then brought her to the dental depart-



ment of AIIMS Bhopal and showed her to Dr. Anshul Rai. After doing all the tests on the child, it was found that the girl had a tumor of the lower jaw. The girl was very young and there were a lot of complications in the surgery due to her age. Understanding all the complications, Dr. Anshul Rai (Additional Professor, Department of Dentistry) and his team of assistant doctors performed the surgery. Dr. Nagabhushan of the anesthesia

department gave anesthesia skillfully. Generally, odontogenic myxoma tumor is found in young people. Such a big tumor in an 11 month old child is very rare. For the first time, such a major operation has been done on such a small child in AIIMS. The girl was very small so this surgery was done with a conservative approach. Efforts were made to save the infection-free part of the lower jaw so that the child's future life is not affected. The surgery lasted more than four hours. The child was kept in the hospital and taken care of for a week. After complete recovery she was discharged from the hospital. Prof. (Dr.) Ajai Singh, Executive Director of AIIMS Bhopal, has congratulated the surgeons for this successful surgery. This operation was done under Ayushman Bharat scheme. The patient's father says that he had not had the Ayushman Card, he would have been unable to get this major operation done.

## MAN DIES BY SUICIDE AFTER FRIEND KILLED IN ROAD CRASH

Dhar: A 28-year-old man allegedly died by suicide soon after he lost his close friend in a road accident in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh, police said on Wednesday. The man, Kanti, hanged himself to death from a tree on Tuesday evening at Nalkheda on Indore-Ahmedabad highway after recording a video statement in which he said he was taking his own life as his friend died in an accident when they were going on a motorcycle, they said. "Two motorcycles collided on the highway, in which a man identified as Narve Singh (29) died while his friend Kanti survived. Both of them were friends and resided at Phuldandvi in Jhabua district.



They were returning home from Ujjain when the accident occurred," Rajgarh police station in-charge Sanjay Rawat said. Shattered and distraught due to the death of his friend, Kanti died by suicide near the accident site, he said. The two persons on another motorcycle involved in the accident, suffered injuries and are undergoing treatment, the official said. "I am telling everyone that my close friend has died and I am also dying. Don't trouble my family members, he said in the video in the tribal dialect of Jhabua. Further investigation into the case is underway, he said.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Rudraksh Mahotsav and Shivamahapurana story is going to be organized from March 7 under the guidance of Pandit Pradeep Mishra at Kubereswar Dham in Sehore. Devotees from different states across the country will come to Sehore to participate in the event. Keeping in mind the convenience of the devotees, Railways has announced to run special trains or provide temporary halts. In this festival, Rudraksha recommended by Pandit Pradeep Mishra is distributed. During the pro-

gram, on the occasion of Mahashivratri festival on March 08, the devotees coming from Ujjain, after visiting Ujjain, will also participate in the program organized at Kubereswar Dham Dham located in the district. In Shivamahapurana story, lakhs of devotees will travel by road every day from Madhya Pradesh and other states. Due to which there remains a possibility of accident. For heavy vehicles going from Bhopal to Indore, they will be able to go from Bhopal to Indore via Shyampur, Biaora. Whereas heavy vehicles going from Indore to Bhopal will be able

to go to Bhopal from Dewas via Vyavra, Shyampur. All small vehicles and passenger buses going directly from Bhopal to Ashta, Dewas, Indore will go from Crescent intersection in Sehore towards Indore via Bhaukhedi junction and Amlaha. Similarly, vehicles going from Indore to Bhopal, Sehore, will be able to go to Sehore, Bhopal from Amlaha via Bhaukhedi Junction and Crescent intersection. Only vehicles going to Kubereswar Dham will be able to go directly through the highway, all other vehicles will be operated through the diversion route only.

## Spot printing of question papers done at more than one thousand centers in class 5th-8th examination

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The board pattern examination for classes V-VIII, being conducted by the School Education Department, started from March 6. Under the system started on an experimental basis by the State Education Center from this year, the question papers reached about 1000 and 10 selected examination centers of the state through online mode. Under this arrangement, the question paper link was activated at 7.30 am on the login of the Center Head and Assistant Center Head, through which spot printing of question papers was done at the examination center

itself and given to the candidates. Director, State Education Center, Dhanaraju S said that this process is being done on an experimental basis to maintain the confidentiality of the question papers and to save time and resources spent on printing and transportation. On the first day of the examination, the examination was successfully completed by downloading and printing question papers in 97 percent of the centers under the spot printing process. Spot printing of question papers could not be done in some centers due to power interruption, network problem and technical problem of printer etc.

## Building a strong economy is possible through better management of cattle: Dy CM Shukla

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Deputy Chief Minister Rajendra Shukla said that the economy can be strengthened by better management of cattle. He said that cow progeny is beneficial at all times. Along with milk and milk processed products, many products can also be made from cow urine and cow dung which are important for making cowsheds self-reliant. The Deputy Chief Minister said that cow progeny has economic, social and religious importance. It is important to develop the feeling of cow protection and cow service among the people. The Deputy Chief Minister inaugurated the workshop of beneficiaries on 'Gau Raksha Samvad' on better management of destitute cattle and cow shelters at Kushabhau Thackeray Auditorium, Bhopal. Shukla said that along with infrastructure development, provision of human resources (cow servants) is an important component in the management of cow shelters. Along



with this, better arrangements for manufacturing and marketing of various products are necessary to provide economic strength to cow shelters. The Deputy Chief Minister informed the people present about the efforts being made at Basaman Mama Gau-Vansh Vanya Vihar, Rewa. He said that better management of cow sheds will ensure conservation and promotion of cow progeny and will also create employment. Animal Husbandry Minister Shri Laxhan Patel said in the inaugural session of the workshop that the suggestions received on cow protection and better management of cow shelters will be helpful in cow service. He said that the aim of the government is that no cow should become destitute or become a victim of any accident. Along with protection of cow progeny, arrangements for better nutrition should be made. An action plan will be prepared by brainstorming in the workshop on self-reliance, administrative, financial, social and legal issues and provisions of cow shelters.





EDITOR'S SPECS

'Bade bhai' sparks unending political debate in Telangana

Controversy over the Chief Minister calling the Prime Minister 'elder brother' raged on in Telangana with Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader, T. Harish Rao on Wednesday, lashing out at Revanth Reddy for heaping praises on Narendra Modi. On Tuesday, BRS Working President, KT Rama Rao had predicted that CM Revanth Reddy would prove to be another CM Eknath Shinde. Talking to select reporters on Wednesday, former minister and BRS leader T. Harish Rao lashed out at CM Reddy and said that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had called the Gujarat model a failed model but CM Reddy wants the same for his state. Harish Rao said CM Reddy through his remarks had made it clear that the Congress will not come to power at the Centre and that PM Modi will get a third term. He alleged that CM Reddy had not only betrayed the people but had also betrayed Congress MP Rahul Gandhi. The 'Bade bhai, chhote bhai' debate was triggered after CM Reddy's comments at his first public appearance with the PM after his government came to power. Sharing the dais with the PM at an official programme at Adilabad on March 4, CM Reddy had addressed him as 'elder brother'. Stating that he had no intention of having a confrontation with the Centre, the CM sought the PM's support for Telangana's development. Terming CM Reddy's comments as 'shameful', BRS Working President, KT Rama Rao on Tuesday predicted that the Congress leader will join the BJP after the Lok Sabha elections. Defending his remarks, CM Reddy asked if the PM was not an elder brother figure to the people. CM Reddy added that he sought support for the state's development and not for his personal benefit. The CM said his requests should be seen in the context of political structure and the federal system.

Deficit snowfall poses growing risk of glacial lake outburst in Himalayas, warn glaciologists

Vishal Gulati

The reduced snowfall in the Himalayas increases glacial lakes that pose a growing risk of lake outburst floods in the Himalayas, warn glaciologists. They call for increasing preparedness, international cooperation and climate adaptation. The Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh received large deficit winter precipitation of 31 per cent since January 1 with nine out of 12 districts having received deficient precipitation, says the Meteorological Centre in Shimla. The highest cumulative monthly rainfall in winter in Himachal Pradesh occurred in 1954, it says, adding the state received isolated rainfall in January with weak activity on many days and one day of normal activity on January 31. In February, the state received five spells of precipitation with moderate precipitation at few places. Kullu and Mandi districts received normal rainfall with excess precipitation in Chamba district.

Meteorologists told that warmer winters continued for the second consecutive year across India. The cumulative countrywide rainfall from January 1 to February 29 is a large deficit by 33 per cent. The actual rainfall recorded during the winter season was 26.8 mm against the normal average of 39.8 mm.

According to meteorologists, increasing global warming has been altering the weather patterns, leading to anomalies in the temperatures and rainfall patterns.

The prime weather system, western disturbances, continued to dodge western Himalayas as they mostly travelled in the upper latitude.

Western disturbance is known to drive the weather activities and bring winters to northwest India and adjoining areas of central India. Both the intensity as well as frequency of western disturbances has been on the lower side this winter season.

Western disturbances are primarily disturbances originating in the west and travelling in the upper atmosphere in the subtropical westerly jet and arriving in the Indian sub-continent during the winter time. Their frequency peaks during December to February, with an average number of four to five per month.

Climate change and associated glacier recession have led to the formation of new glacial lakes and the expansion of existing ones across the Himalayas.

Many pose a potential glacial lake outburst flood threat, a climate change-induced threat, to downstream communities and infrastructure.

The term glacial lake outburst flood refers to the catastrophic release of a water reservoir that has formed at the site of a glacier.



Glaciologists warn of last year's Sikkim-like glacial lake outburst in other Himalayan states too.

According to a recent report on the Himalayas by the University of Zurich, glacial lakes are highly dynamic water reservoirs that respond to climate change by expanding in number, size and volume. This is particularly evident across the mountains of Asia, including in the Hindu Kush Karakoram Himalayas, Tien Shan and Tibet.

As a result of climate change, and consequent accelerated glacier recession, the number of glacial lakes in Hindu Kush Karakoram Himalayas increased from 4,549 lakes (398.9 square km) in 1990 to 4,950 lakes (455.3 square km) in 2015.

Several large-scale and regional assessment studies confirm the growth of glacial lakes and their hazardous potential across Asia.

Jammu and Kashmir has the highest combined exposure to potential glacial lake outburst flood with 556 lakes that include very high and

high danger lakes.

This was followed by Arunachal Pradesh with 388 lakes, and Sikkim with 219 lakes. Sector-wise, Jammu and Kashmir face the greatest glacial lake outburst flood threat to roads and population, whereas the threat to cropland and hydropower is greatest in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, respectively.

However, the highest-priority lakes, where urgent monitoring and local site investigations are recommended, include 13 lakes in Sikkim, five in Himachal Pradesh, four in Jammu and Kashmir, two in Uttarakhand and one in Arunachal Pradesh.

As glaciers melt, risks of catastrophic events -- landslides, sudden ice shears, and in some cases glacial lake outburst floods -- will rise.

Experts say the warming observed in recent decades has been accompanied by increased snow avalanche frequency in the

western Indian Himalayas.

Powder snow avalanches tend to occur after intense snow precipitation during cold winter conditions, whereas wet and dense flows often coincide with warm spells, typically toward the end of the winter and early spring.

As a consequence, changing climatic conditions may modify avalanche activity. Land cover changes such as afforestation and deforestation are also likely to play a role.

According to the weather models, snow avalanche probabilities are highest if warmer temperatures persist during these months.

Extensive adaptation therefore needs to begin immediately to prepare for this future, even as mitigation to preserve glaciers as much as possible is also prioritised.

international

Key terror operative among 22 detained in West Bank: Israel

Tel Aviv | Agencies Israeli forces have detained 22 Palestinians including a prominent terror operative from West Bank, officials have said. The detainees reportedly also include two Palestinian prisoners who were released during the Israel-Hamas truce in November 2023.



According to Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the detained terror operative identified as Mohammed Tanji was planning a series of attacks in the West Bank area. He was detained from the Balata refugee camp near Nablus in the northern West Bank in an overnight raid on Tuesday.

Tanji is identified as a leader and founder of the Balata Battalion, a local wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror

group in the refugee camp.

Tanji was "one of the main operatives in the terror infrastructure in Balata over the past year", the IDF said.

The Palestinian Prisoners' Club, a non-governmental organization, said in a statement on Tuesday that the arrests were carried out in the cities of Ramallah, Hebron,

Nablus, Tulkarm, Qalqilya, and Jericho.

The club identified Aman Nafe and Hanan al-Barghouti from the village of Kobar near Ramallah, both of whom were released in a hostage-for-prisoner swap during a temporary truce between Israel and Hamas in November last year, and Mona Abu Hussein from

the village of Aboud, among those arrested.

In a separate incident in West Bank, an IDF soldier was "grievously wounded" after being stabbed by a Palestinian teenager. The teenager was identified as Mohammed Shehadeh (17).

The condition of the soldier is critical, the IDF said.

Since the onset of the Israel-Hamas conflict on October 7 last year, Israel has arrested approximately 3,450 wanted people in the West Bank, with about 1,500 of them belonging to Hamas, according to Adraee.

The West Bank has experienced escalating tension and armed confrontations in cities, villages, and refugee camps since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Ukraine shoots down 38 Russian drones, says Ukrainian Air Force

Kiev | Agencies

Ukraine shot down 38 of the 42 Shahed-type attack drones launched by Russia overnight on Wednesday, the Ukrainian Air Force said in a statement as quoted by media reports.

Russian military forces attacked with five S-300 anti-aircraft guided missiles from the occupied parts of Donetsk region, while the drones were launched from the occupied Crimea, as well as Kursk region and Russia's port city of Primorsko-Akhtarsk in southern Krasnodar Krai, The Kyiv Independent reported.

Russia has been using Shahed drones



supplied by Iran at targets deep inside Ukraine.

Mobile fire groups and anti-aircraft missile units of the Ukrainian Air Force repelled the attack over Dnipropetrovsk,

Odesa, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy, Kharkiv, Vinnytsia and Sumy region.

Earlier on Tuesday night, Russian forces launched a wave of attack drones at Ukraine's northeastern Sumy, striking multiple areas of the city, according to the regional military administration, The Kyiv Independent reported.

The administration said that all injured persons were receiving medical attention, but did not provide details on the number of casualties or the extent of the damage.

Several explosions were also reported on Tuesday evening in Odesa and Khmelnytskyi.

Seven killed, 30 injured in road accident in Nepal



Kathmandu | Agencies

Seven people were killed and 30 others injured on Wednesday when a passenger bus plunged into Trishuli river in Nepal's Dhading district. The accident occurred when the bus en route to Kathmandu veered off a highway and plunged into the water body. The Kathmandu Post reported. The rescue team has recovered five bodies, and two people succumbed to their injuries while being rushed to treatment,

according to local police. Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in the incident. The prime minister has directed the authorities to ensure effective rescue operations and health treatment for the injured. Bus driver Hariram Harijan has been taken into police custody for investigation. Common causes of the accident in the country are difficult terrains, poor conditions of roads and vehicles and overloading.

Latvian govt approves list of banned agricultural goods from Russia, Belarus



Riga | Agencies

The Latvian government has approved a list of Russian and Belarusian agricultural and food products that will be banned from importing into the country starting from March 8, media reported. The Baltic country's Parliament voted to ban the imports on February 22 in the wake of farmers' protests against the influx of agricultural goods originating in Russia or Belarus, The Kyiv Independent reported. The ban will apply to vegetables, fruits, berries, nuts, cereals, raw materials for fodder, and ready-made fodder. The restrictions will also apply to products of Russian or Belarusian origin coming from third-party countries. "As a

country bordering Russia, Latvia is trying to find the fastest way possible to sever economic ties with the aggressor country," the Latvian government's said in a statement. "This Latvian initiative to ban the import of agricultural and fodder products from Russia and Belarus... is an additional element to the common EU sanctions policy."

Russian agricultural products sparked tensions not only in Latvia but also in other EU countries supporting Ukraine against Moscow's aggression, The Kyiv Independent reported. Lithuanian farmers complained that the volume of Russian goods has risen sharply in recent years, destabilising markets across the EU.

Nikki Haley to quit GOP presidential race?

Washington | Agencies

Indian-American Republican presidential aspirant Nikki Haley is set to quit the race for the White House, clearing the decks for her former boss and GOP frontrunner Donald Trump, according to media reports. The former two-time South Carolina Governor is expected to make the announcement on Wednesday at Charleston in her home state, sources in know of her plans told CNN. The 52-year-old on Tuesday scored a surprising victory over Trump in the Republican primary in Vermont state, which came just after her Washington DC win, putting her in the history books as the first woman ever to achieve the milestone. Her move follows a series of losses in GOP nominating contests on Super Tuesday where her rival Trump maintained a formidable lead. Trump and US President Joe Biden are leading in "Super Tuesday" wins in their respective party's primaries for the 2024 presidential election. Having been defeated in South Carolina, her home state, questions were being raised about Haley's presence in the race, and more importantly, how long would she get donors to pump money into her campaign. Despite her debacle at the primary, Haley made



clear in her speech that she was not giving up.

"I said earlier this week that no matter what happens in South Carolina, I would continue to run. I'm a woman of my word," she said. "I'm not giving up this fight when a majority of Americans disapprove of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden," she added, sharpening her attacks on Biden and Trump by calling them "grumpy old men".

EU presents 'first-ever' defence industrial strategy

Brussels | Agencies

The European Union (EU) has presented its "first-ever" European Defence Industrial Strategy at the EU level in response to security concerns.

"To increase European defence industrial readiness, Member States need to invest more, better, together, and European," the European Commission (EC) said in a press release on Tuesday. The strategy presented by the EC "sets a clear, long-term vision to achieve defence industrial readiness in the European Union", it added. According to the strategy, EU member states are expected to procure at least 40 per cent of defence equipment in a collaborative manner by 2030, to ensure that the value of intra-EU



defence trade represents at least 35 per cent of the value of the EU defence market by 2030, and to make steady progress towards procuring at least 50 per cent of their defence procurement budget within the EU by 2030 and 60 per cent by 2035. "With the return of high-intensity conflict on our continent, Europe cannot wait any

longer to strengthen the European defence technological and industrial base's ability to produce more and faster," said Thierry Breton, European commissioner for the internal market. As a means to deliver the strategy, the EC also tabled on Tuesday a legislative proposal for a European Defence Industry Programme and a framework of measures to ensure the timely availability and supply of defence products, Xinhua news agency reported. The EC said that the program will mobilize 1.5 billion euros (about \$1.63 billion) of the EU budget over the period 2025-2027, to continue enhancing the competitiveness of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base.





Elections 2024

All Maha parties witness last-minute jockeying for Lok Sabha seats

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As the countdown for the Lok Sabha elections gets underway, Maharashtra is witnessing a massive and desperate tug-of-war among parties and prospective candidates for their favourite or winnable seats of the 48 constituencies in the state.



In at least one constituency, a prominent candidate is available, but there's no unanimity on which party ticket-symbol that person will contest, though the prospective nominee appears unperturbed with the goings-on and manages a knowing grin all ways.

On the ruling side, the BJP's partners Shiv Sena-NCP are said to be making big demands in terms of numbers, but they are unlikely to be obliged, as per current indications.

The Opposition side is also plagued by a similar scenario with both Congress-Shiv Sena-(UBT) claiming a large chunk of the seats, though the NCP

(SP) has not committed itself to any figure.

Since Monday night, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has been camping in Maharashtra - and today in Mumbai - to work out an amicable solution to the seat-sharing problem, especially pertaining to a few key constituencies, while throwing in a Youth Convention in Jalgaon and a rally in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar on Tuesday evening.

The MVA's top leaders like Sharad Pawar, ex-CM Uddhav Thackeray, Nana Patole and Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi President Prakash Ambedkar are meeting this afternoon to hammer out their differences and finalise the respective lists of candidates and constituencies, with some surprises likely to be thrown up.

Simultaneously, for national parties like BJP and Congress, even their central leadership based in New Delhi are taking a keen interest in the state-level seat-sharing formula, and conducting their own meetings for the purpose.

Sources in most parties exude confidence that all major-minor issues are likely to be sorted out by the weekend and their candidates shall be ready to venture for victory in the political battlefield for Lok Sabha-2024.

Women face gender and pay discrimination, claims new survey



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Women across sectors in the country face pay gaps and gender discrimination at workplaces compared to their male counterparts, claims the second survey in the series 'Women and Finance' conducted by DBS Bank India and CRISIL, which was released on Wednesday ahead of the International Women's Day (March 8).

The survey conducted among more than 800 salaried and self-employed women in 10 cities considered various factors like age, income, marital status, professional aspirations, and personal lifestyles, etc.

The findings corroborate industry views on persistent gender disparities at the workplace, and the perceived pay gap was as high as 23 per cent among salaried women while gender bias stood at 16 per cent.

For 69 per cent of salaried women, salary and career advancement was the top factor when selecting a job, while 42 per cent of self-employed women prioritised independence and flexible work hours.

Interestingly, remote working was not a high priority among salaried

women, with only 3 per cent agreeing that it is essential.

Semi-affluent women, earning between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 25 lakh annually, reported a gender pay gap of 18 per cent and gender bias of 12 per cent, while affluent women, with salaries ranging from Rs 41-55 lakh per year, admitted to a pay gap of 30 per cent as well as gender discrimination of 30 per cent.

A significant chunk -- 42 per cent of salaried women living in metros, encountered challenges while negotiating salaries, though this differed from region to region.

In Kolkata, 96 per cent of salaried women said they do not face a challenge in negotiating their pay, while only 33 per cent in Ahmedabad felt the same.

DBS Bank's Managing Director Kishore Poduri said that women constitute half of the global workforce and around 30 per cent of the employee base in India, and the survey findings can address many issues to help them thrive personally and professionally.

The salaried unmarried women (26 per cent) show a greater appreciation for mentorship and career development opportunities compared to their married

counterparts (16 per cent), said the survey.

This, however, varied with the national average (19 per cent), Kolkata (46 per cent), Delhi (33 per cent), and Chennai (32 per cent), endorsing the child-care support/maternity benefits, and Pune (35 per cent) finding sabbatical policies valuable compared to the national average of 5 per cent.

On the lifestyle front pertaining to health, dining and leisure, 66 per cent women in metro cities undergo comprehensive annual health check-ups, 32 per cent dine out or order food more than once a week, while 24 per cent spend more than four hours daily on non-office screen-time.

In addition, 32 per cent of married women took 3-5 leisure trips in the past year, or nearly double as compared to their unmarried counterparts, while 47 per cent were generous spenders, using up more than 70 per cent of their income.

The survey also revealed that 39 per cent women from this segment have high credit card spends in discretionary categories like travel and shopping, compared to the pan-India average of 33 per cent.

Tata Power installs 1,000 green energy-powered EV charging points in Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Tata Power on Wednesday said it has achieved over 1,000 of its EV charging points in Mumbai which are powered by green energy.

Tata Power said that it has outlined a plan to expand its green energy footprint to an additional 4,000 charging points across Maharashtra, in a phased manner. Currently, Mumbai is equipped with over 1,000 green charging points, out of which 44 are public, 385 are in residential societies, 58 are across commercial locations such as malls, hotels, workplaces, etc, and 531 are fleet charging points. "With over 10,000 EVs and growing four-wheelers on the roads, Mumbai is rapidly embracing e-



mobility. To support this growth, Tata Power is spearheading the development of an extensive EV charging infrastructure throughout the city," the company said in a statement.

Tata Power has provided EV charging services to players like Everest, CAB-E and also has EV charging points at prominent residential societies.

"To encourage intercity travel along popular routes, Tata Power has installed over 19 fast charging points on the Mumbai-Pune highway and about 26 fast charging points on the Mumbai-Goa (via Pune) highway," said the company.

The initiative is aligned with Tata Power's 'Sustainable Is Attainable' movement, positioning the company as a pioneer in the shift towards a greener future, it added.

Tata Power has a diversified portfolio of 14,453 MW, spanning across the entire power value chain -- from renewable and conventional energy generation to transmission & distribution, trading, storage solutions and solar cells and module manufacturing.

Indiabulls Real Estate shares down over 9 pc on order to vacate Nashik SEZ land area

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Mumbai

Indiabulls Real Estate shares are down more than nine per cent on Wednesday after Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) asked the company to vacate the land area measuring 512.068 hectare in processing zone of Special Economic Zone (SEZ) at Sinnar in Maharashtra's Nashik district.

Indiabulls Real Estate is trading at Rs 106.95 down 9.21 per cent.

Subsequent to the company's replies to the showcause notices and claim petition, as received by Indiabulls Real



Estate Limited and Indiabulls Industrial Infrastructure Limited, a subsidiary of the Company (IIIL) from MIDC, the concerned authority i.e. Executive Engineer, MIDC, fixed the matter for hearing on February 5 wherein the company and IIIL presented the matter before the

Executive Engineer on merits and the matter was reserved for passing necessary orders.

"While IIIL was in the process of planning and conducting further development on the land at SEZ and submitted a preliminary proposal of revival plan, on without prejudice basis, with MIDC,

and was expecting a favourable order of such hearing, the MIDC has issued the vacation order, directing the company and IIIL to vacate the land area admeasuring 512.068 hectare in processing zone of such SEZ at Sinnar, Nashik district, Maharashtra, within one month of receipt of order," Indiabulls Real Estate said.

"The company believes this order to be unlawful and is evaluating legal options to defend itself/seek redressal against the said unlawful order, including filing of an appeal before appropriate authorities or court(s), and shall take all desirable actions in the matter," it added.

Not answerable to Amit Shah but only the people of Maharashtra, says NCP (SP)

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Nationalist Congress Party (SP) on Wednesday said that it was not answerable to senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Home Minister Amit Shah -- a day after he criticised party leader Sharad Pawar.

The response of NCP (SP) by national spokesperson Clyde Crasto and chief spokesperson Mahesh Tapase came after Amit Shah slammed Sharad Pawar, saying the "people of Maharashtra suffered him for 50 years", and questioned his contribution to the state.

"We do not owe an explanation of any kind to Amit Shah. Questioning what Pawar 'saheb' has done for the people of Maharashtra does not need to be answered or explained. The people of Maharashtra, and also the people of India know what Sharad Pawar has done for them in his 50 years of service towards them," Crasto said.

Condemning Amit Shah's remarks in Jalgaon and Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Tapase pointed out Sharad Pawar's substantial contributions to nation-building, particularly his



leadership in the agricultural revolution, compared with the current plight of farmers, plus his proactive involvement in the relief and rehabilitation efforts in Gujarat 2001 earthquake.

"Despite Gujarat and Centre having BJP governments then, a non-BJP

Marathi leader like Sharad Pawar stepped forward to aid and reconstruct Gujarat, reflecting Maharashtra's cultural ethos of empathy and unity, epitomising the true essence of responsible leadership.

"Sharad Pawar's endeavours in disaster management garnered him recognition nationally and internationally, with late former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee publicly acknowledging his steadfast commitment to humanity," said Tapase.

Crasto claimed that from Amit Shah's "outburst", it was clear that "he and others from the BJP take the name of Sharad Pawar to get some free publicity".

He told Amit Shah that before pointing fingers at others, he and his party should look in the mirror and ask what they have done for the people of the country.

"All know that Sharad Pawar, in 50 years of his political career, actually 55 years, has served the people of Maharashtra and India, and the people are happy with him. So the BJP that has failed to give good governance, has no right to question Pawar," said Crasto.

Mumbai boy's skull recovered day after his headless body found in mangroves



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai Police on Tuesday recovered the skull of a 12-year-old boy whose headless body was found in mangroves in Wadala area nearly 35 days after he went missing, an official said. The boy, identified as Sandeep Yadav, had been missing since January 28 after he went out with one Bipul Sikari, also a resident of Wadala. A day before Sandeep's headless body was found. Police said when Sandeep's father Bechai Yadav and others had confronted Sikari, he had told them that he handed over the boy to a transgender person. "Sikari was thrashed and was subsequently taken to Wadala Truck Terminus police station. A cop told him to wash the blood but Sikari fled taking advantage of the circumstances," the official said. Sandeep was the only child of the Yadav couple born 14

years after their marriage. Meanwhile, police registered a case of kidnapping and continued the search for the boy. Police were informed on Monday that a headless body was lying in mangroves in the Wadala creek area, the official added. He was identified by his father with the help of his clothes, footwear, and a 'kada' he was wearing. During a search on Tuesday, police found the skull lying 15-20 feet away from the spot where the corpse was found earlier. Police have added sections 302 (Punishment for murder) and 201 (causing disappearance of the evidence of the offence) of the Indian Penal Code and formed teams to nab Sikari. According to the official, Sikari is a resident of West Bengal and was arrested in a murder case earlier. He had jumped parole in the previous murder case and came to Mumbai, the official said.

J. Kumar Infra to build bridges for Mumbai Eastern Freeway, Navi Mumbai creek



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has awarded a Rs 1,330 crore contract to J. Kumar-RSP (JV) for constructing an elevated road corridor for the Eastern Freeway in south Mumbai, an official said here on Wednesday. Similarly, the J. Kumar-SMC (JV) has bagged a Rs 493-crore contract to build a creek bridge from the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC).

In Mumbai, the J. Kumar-RSP will construct the 5.6-km long elevated corridor from Orange Gate to Grant Road, considered a key to reduce traffic snarls at the southern end of the Eastern Freeway, plus facilitate movement to the Mumbai

Coastal Road and other major thoroughfares coming up in the vicinity.

With a 70 per cent stake in the Rs 1,330 crore project, J. Kumar's share will be around Rs 931 crore, and the bridge will be completed in 42 months, helping slash the commuting time from the present 50-60 minutes to barely 5-6 minutes.

For the Navi Mumbai project, the J. Kumar-SMC will build the creek bridge linking Ghansoli-Airoli along the Palm Beach Road, to ease the traffic in the region, and connect several other major infra projects there. With a 70 per cent stake in the Rs 493 crore project, J. Kumar's share will be around Rs 345 crore and the 1.95 km-long bridge will be completed in 30 months, as per its regulatory filing.

Airbus, IIM-Mumbai join hands to provide aviation education, skills

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Airbus and the Indian Institute of Management, Mumbai (IIM-Mumbai), have joined hands to provide aviation education to professionals and empower them with industry-ready skills through the Airbus Beyond programmes, officials said here on Wednesday.

Airbus India & South Asia President and MD, Remi Maillard, and IIM-Mumbai Director, Manoj K. Tiwari, inked the agreement.

IIM-Mumbai will offer short-term aviation courses to aspiring and working professionals who will be able to harness the power of the Airbus Beyond programmes in aviation logistics, supply chain management, operations excellence, cargo handling, strategic procurement, business analytics and digitisation.

"Skill is the fuel that drives growth. Airbus realises the potential of India's growing



aviation industry and strengthens the ecosystem through our sustained skilling efforts. Along with IIM-Mumbai, we shall combine our expertise and resources to create comprehensive programmes that will help advance the future of

aerospace education and skilling in India," said Maillard.

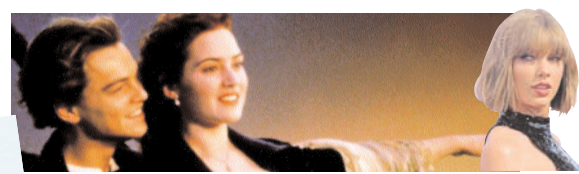
This will further support the creation of a strong pipeline of industry-ready talent for the aviation sector in the country, he added. "This collaboration marks

a significant stride towards fostering excellence in management education within the aviation sector. Together, we aim to blend academic rigour with industry expertise, propelling innovation and leadership in aviation management," said Tiwari.

The partnership will help nourish talent and drive transformative impact in the dynamic landscape of the country's aerospace, immensely benefitting professionals in the field of aviation and those seeking opportunities in the burgeoning Indian aviation industry, he added.

As per the agreement, IIM-Mumbai will organise courses, onboard students, and provide infrastructure and logistical support, while Airbus will provide trainers, training material from the Airbus Beyond catalogue for short-term courses in the initial phase and co-curate long-term courses and certify the trainers in the later phase.





# HAILEY BIEBER CALLS OUT SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS, 'BLIND ITEMS' ABOUT HER LIFE WITH JUSTIN

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hailey Baldwin Bieber is in no mood to let the unfounded claims about her and her husband Justin Bieber pass through her radar without repercussions. Hailey has set the record straight about several social media posts on her life with Justin, 'People' magazine reported. Hailey recently took to the Stories section of her Instagram and shared a no-nonsense statement. Addressing the social media posts about her life with Justin Bieber, she wrote, "Just FYI, the stories and constant 'blind items' I see on TikTok are 100% of the time wrong. Made out of thin air... Come from the land of delusion (sic)." As per 'People', she added, "So I know it may be fun feeding into these stories but just know they're always false xx sorry to spoil it." Hailey's post comes almost a week after her father Stephen Baldwin publicly shared a post from Victor Marx - the founder of All Things Possible Ministries - which featured a prayer request for the couple, whose faith has long bonded them together.



# KIM YOON JI MADE MORE MONEY FROM ONE FILM THAN IN HER 8 YEARS AS SINGER

Seoul | Agencies

South Korean actress-singer Kim Yoon Ji, who performs under the stage name NS Yoon-G, shared that she earned more money through one Hollywood movie for streaming giant Netflix than she earned as a singer for 8-years combined. Kim Yoon Ji was a special guest on 'Strong Heart VS', where she talked about her experiences in Hollywood, reports allkpop.com. The actress talked about her role as the key hacker in the Netflix film 'Lift'. Yoon Ji said: "I think a lot of people thought I only had a few lines in the movie. But when they saw the film, they realised that I actually had a lot of scenes. They were really happy for me and I am grateful." The actress was then asked: "This might be rude to ask but (we're still curious) about the scale of the appearance fee." To which, Yoon Ji said: "This is my debut film. I can't share the details but let's just say I earned more than what I earned in 8 years as a singer through this one movie." Moreover, there was a favourable exchange rate, so the earnings were pretty good. "The NS in Kim Yoon Ji's stage name initially meant 'New Spirit', but was later changed to 'New Star'".



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Kate Winslet wishes she had intimacy coordinators earlier in her career, as she would have benefited from them. "I would have benefited from an intimacy coordinator every single time I had to do a love scene or be partially naked or even a kissing scene," Kate told The New York Times Magazine. The actress added: "It would have been nice to have had someone in my corner, because I always had to stand up for myself." Intimacy coordinators are hired to help facilitate communication between actors and directors during risqué scenes. The 48-year-old actress talked about some of the things she wished she would've stood up for herself, reports deadline.com. "I don't like that camera angle. I don't want to stand here full-frontal nude. I don't want this many people in the room. I want my dressing gown to be closer," Kate said. The 'Finding Neverland' star added: "Just little things like that. When you're young, you're so afraid of pissing people off or coming across as rude or pathetic because you might need those things. So learning to have a voice for oneself in those environments was very, very hard."

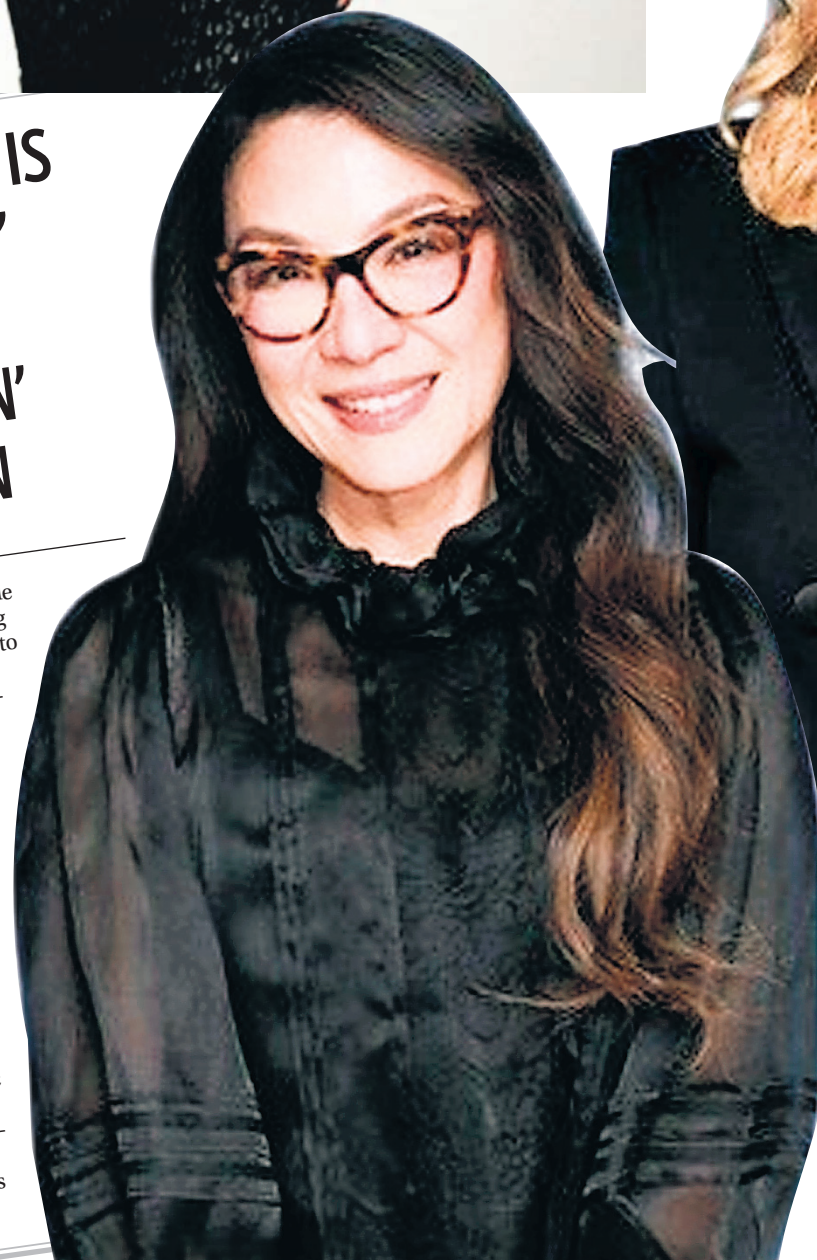


*Kate Winslet wishes there were intimacy coordinators earlier in her career*

# MICHELLE YEOH IS 'HEARTBROKEN' OVER 'THE BROTHERS SUN' CANCELLATION

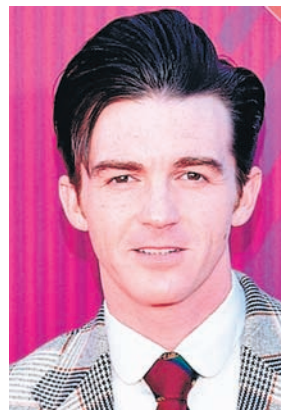
Los Angeles | Agencies

Oscar-winning actress Michelle Yeoh talked about streaming giant Netflix's decision, not to proceed with a second season of 'The Brothers Sun' in an emotional post. "Heartbroken... and finding it so hard to understand why... However, I am so very proud of My Brothers Sun family and what we presented to the world. Heads held high," the actress wrote, next to photos with her co-stars, reports deadline.com. "The Brothers Sun" was launched in January. It also stars Justin Chien, Sam Song Li, Joon Lee and Highdee Kuan. Touted as a dark comedic drama and family soap, the series follows a Taipei gangster, Charles Sun (Chien), who's settled into his life as a ruthless killer.



# Drake Bell opens up about being sexually abused as child actor

Los Angeles | Agencies



Former child star Drake Bell, who featured in Nickelodeon's 'The Amanda Show' and 'Drake & Josh', has talked about being sexually abused as a child actor by the channel's dialogue coach Brian Peck. Drake is featuring in the upcoming Investigation Discovery series 'Quiet on Set: The Dark Side of Kids TV' to claim he was a victim of Peck's sexual abuse. Peck worked as a dialogue coach on Nickelodeon's 'All That' and 'The Amanda Show', the latter of which starred Drake from 1999 to 2002. Peck was taken into custody in August 2003 on more than a dozen charges related to sexual abuse claims involving an unnamed minor, reports variety.com. According to variety.com, it was in 2004, Peck pleaded no contest to performing a lewd act with a 14 or 15-year-old and to oral copulation with a minor under 16. He was sentenced to 16 months in jail and ordered to register as a sex offender in October 2004. A video from 'Quiet on Set' shows Drake coming forward to discuss Peck and the incident. "The clip reveals that former 'Nickelodeon' star Drake Bell will be sharing publicly, for the first time, the story of the abuse he suffered at the hands of Brian Peck, his former dialogue coach, who was convicted in 2004 for his crimes against Drake and ordered to register as a sex offender," read a statement from Investigation Discovery reads. The four-part docu-series 'Quiet on Set: The Dark Side of Kids TV' talks about the toxic work conditions behind children's shows in the 1990s and early 2000s.

# ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Lourdes Leon

# Cameron Diaz in talks to star alongside Keanu Reeves in dark comedy 'Outcome'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Cameron Diaz is in final talks to star alongside Keanu Reeves and Jonah Hill in the upcoming dark comedy titled 'Outcome'. Helmed by Jonah Hill, 'Outcome' will feature Keanu as Reef, a damaged Hollywood star who must "dive into the dark depths of his past to confront his demons and make amends after he is extorted with a mysterious video clip from his past." Details of Cameron's role are still under wraps, reports variety.com. This is not the first time Cameron will feature in the comedic space. She has previously featured in films such



as 'The Mask', 'My Best Friend's Wedding', 'There's Something About Mary', 'Bad Teacher', 'Charlie's Angels' and 'Shrek' franchises.

The actress took a step back from Hollywood in 2018 to put more focus toward her endeavours as a bestselling author and entrepreneur.

She also has 'Back in Action' opposite Jamie Foxx in the Netflix action comedy by the same name, which marks her "un-retirement".







## Ind vs Eng, 5th Test: I just don't know what bazball means, says Rohit Sharma

Team Absolute | Dharamshala

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma admits that he is still puzzled by the term "bazball" despite praising England's valiant approach and aggressive mindset of play ahead of the fifth and final Test match at HPCA starting on Thursday.

Ever since Brendon McCullum took over as England's head coach and Ben Stokes assumed the captaincy, their unconventional approach to Test cricket, dubbed "bazball," had captured imaginations worldwide.

However, after India beat England by five wickets in Ranchi to take an unassailable 3-1 lead in the 5-Test series, it marked the first Test series loss for England since McCullum took over the major role.

"I just don't know what bazball means. I haven't seen wild swinging from anyone. England have played better cricket than they were here last time. But I still don't know what bazball means," said Rohit Sharma in the press-conference.

But the India captain wasn't one to miss a chance to inject some humour into the proceed-



ings. When England opener Ben Duckett praised Yashvir Jaiswal for his attacking cricket, Rohit couldn't resist reminding him of the flamboyant Rishabh Pant, who was known for his audacious strokeplay.

"When you see players from the opposition playing like that, it almost feels like we should take

some credit that they're playing differently than how other people play Test cricket," Duckett had said in the third Test.

Rohit reminded Duckett about India wicketkeeper-batter Pant, who is currently out of action due to multiple injuries he suffered during a car crash in December 2022.

"There was a guy called Rishabh Pant in our team, probably Ben Duckett hasn't seen him play," Rohit said.

As the conversation turned to the series itself, Rohit reflected on India's ability to bounce back from tough situations. Indeed, it had been a roller-coaster ride with moments of brilliance and resilience.

"It has been a series of comebacks for us. Whenever we were put under pressure we were able to put the pressure back on the opposition. That was pleasing for me," he said.

India are 3-1 up in the series and will look to end the series on a high note with a win at Dharamshala.

## Khelo India athletes will now be eligible for govt jobs: Sports minister Anurag Thakur

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In what will be a major move in turning sports into a viable career option, Khelo India athletes will now be eligible for government jobs, Union Sports minister Anurag Thakur said on Wednesday.

"In keeping with our Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodi ji's vision of a robust sports ecosystem, nurturing talent at grassroots level and turning sports into a lucrative and viable career option, Khelo India Athletes will now be eligible for government jobs," said the minister in a post on X.

"I'm pleased to announce that @DoPTGoI, in consultation with @IndiaSports, has made progressive revisions to the eligibility criteria for sportspersons seeking government jobs," the minister added.

According to the sports minister, medal winners from the Khelo India Games - Youth, University, Para and Winter will be eligible for government jobs.

"Additionally, games and events have been



clearly defined to ensure inclusivity across various sports.

"These revised rules mark a significant stride in supporting our athletes in making Bharat a sporting superpower," he concluded.

## Gaurika closes in on Amandeep in 5th Leg of WPGT

Team Absolute | Gurugram

Gaurika Bishnoi scorched the back nine with five birdies in the last eight holes to close in on the leader Amandeep Drall after the second round of the fifth leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Golden Greens Golf Club.

Gaurika, who began the second day six shots behind, made up four of them, as she added 6-under 66 to her first 70 and reached 8-under 136. Amandeep Drall, who landed a third eagle in two days, shot 2-under 70 and was 10-under 134 and still two ahead. Amandeep set a new Ladies course record on the first day.

Khushi Khanijau (71) was lying third at 1-under 143. She shot 72 in the first round.

Hitaashee Bakshi (72-73), Seher Atwal (74-73) and Neha Tripathi (74-74) were placed in fourth to sixth places. Amandeep began the day well with birdies on the first and the fifth to extend her lead as Gaurika bogeyed second and birdied the fifth.



Amandeep double bogeyed the sixth and bogeyed the seventh. She did birdie the ninth and eagled the Par-5 11th but then ran out of birdies, paring the last seven holes.

As Amandeep parred, Gaurika was on fire with birdies on fifth, eighth, 11th, 12th, 15th, 16th, and the 18th, as she played the back nine in 5-under 31 for a round of 66.

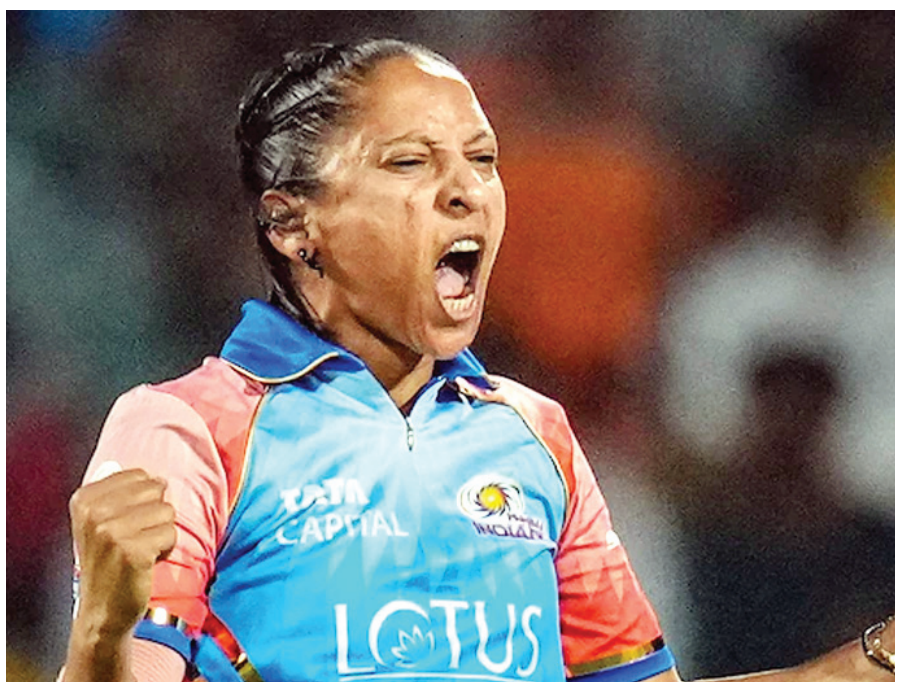
Khushi bogeyed first and third and then the 17th, but in between birdied four times between the fifth and 13th for a 71, which was one of the only three under par rounds of the day.

Amateur Lavanya Jadon (73-76) was the top amateur alongside Rhea Purvi S (76-63), Jahaanvie Walia (75-74), Ridhima Dilawari (74-75) and Shagun Narain (74-75) who were tied for seventh at 5-over 149.

Order of Merit leader Sneha Singh (75-76) was way behind in T-13.

The cut fell at 12-over 156 and 27 players made the grade for the final round.

## WPL 2024: MI's Shabnim Ismail bowls the fastest delivery in women's cricket



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former South Africa pacer Shabnim Ismail, who plays for Mumbai Indians in the Women's Premier League, created history when she bowled the fastest delivery ever recorded in women's cricket.

Ismail broke the record with a delivery that clocked the speed of 132.1km/h (82.08mph) when bowling for the Mumbai Indians in their WPL clash against the Delhi Capitals at Arun Jaitley

Stadium on Tuesday.

It was the first time that a delivery in women's cricket has been clocked at a speed greater than 130km/h, with Ismail's thunderbolt smashing into the pad of former Australia captain Meg Lanning on the second ball of the third over of the match, ICC reports.

Ismail, who appeared for South Africa in all eight previous ICC Women's T20 World Cups and only retired from international cricket

following last year's tournament on home soil, had previously been clocked as bowling at 128km/h (79.54mph) against the West Indies in 2016 and at 127km/h twice during the most recent edition of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in 2022.

However, Ismail's efforts were in vain as she delivered four expensive overs to finish with figures of 1/46 as the MI went down to the DC by 29 runs.

## Hazlewood, Lyon rise in Test bowlers' rankings, Bumrah continues to lead



Dubai | Agencies

Australia's Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon have narrowed the gap with ace Indian pacer Jasprit Bumrah in the latest ICC Men's Test Player Rankings following their exceptional performance in the opening game against New Zealand.

With India pace spearhead Bumrah leading the way on the list for Test bowlers, both pacer Hazlewood (up one place to fourth) and spinner Nathan Lyon (up two spots to sixth) have been rewarded for the performance in Wellington.

The Aussie duo shared 14 wickets between them in

Australia's emphatic 172-run victory in the opening Test in Wellington.

Hazlewood picked a pair of New Zealand wickets in each innings while Lyon helped Australia dominate the contest at Basin Reserve.

New Zealand's Matt Henry and Glenn Phillips each collected a five-wicket haul during that first Test against Australia, with the former moving up seven places to 18th on the list for Test bowlers and the latter improving 19 spots to 48th.

In the batting chart, Australia batter Cameron Green has advanced towards the top 20 after his unbeaten century helped Australia

defeat New Zealand by 172 runs in the first Test in Wellington.

Green, who was named Player of the Match for his 174 not out in the first innings, has moved up 22 places to 23rd position.

New Zealand batter Kane Williamson remained on top of the batting chart despite scores of just zero and nine in Wellington while Steve Smith, Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne slipped down the rankings.

Smith has dropped a position to third (behind Joe Root) after scores of 31 and zero, the first time he has gone below 800 rating points since 2014. Labuschagne is out of the top 10 for the first

time since December 2019 after managing just three runs in the match.

With Head also slipping one slot, India batters Virat Kohli (one spot to be placed eighth, Yashvir Jaiswal (up two places to 10th) and Rohit Sharma (up two places to 11th) have all gained in the rankings. The latest weekly update to the men's rankings also considers performances in the one-off Test between Afghanistan and Ireland in Abu Dhabi.

Mark Adair has moved up 30 slots to 69th position among bowlers after finishing with an eight-wicket match haul that helped Ireland win their first Test in history.

## Paris Olympics: India to start men's hockey campaign against New Zealand

Lausanne (Switzerland) | Agencies

The Indian men's hockey team is scheduled to start their Paris Olympics 2024 campaign against New Zealand on July 27. At a ceremony earlier on Wednesday, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach, as well as FIH president Tayyab Ikram, announced the schedule at the Olympic House in Lausanne. The clash against New Zealand holds particular significance for India, as it marks a chance for redemption following their heartbreaking loss in the penalty shootout at the 2023 Hockey World Cup after



drawing 3-3 in regulation time. The hockey competition in Paris is scheduled from July 27 to August 9 and will be played in the Yves-du-Manoir Stadium, India,

the Tokyo Olympics bronze medalists, is in Pool B and will next take on Argentina on July 29, Ireland on July 30, Belgium on August 1, and Australia on August 2.

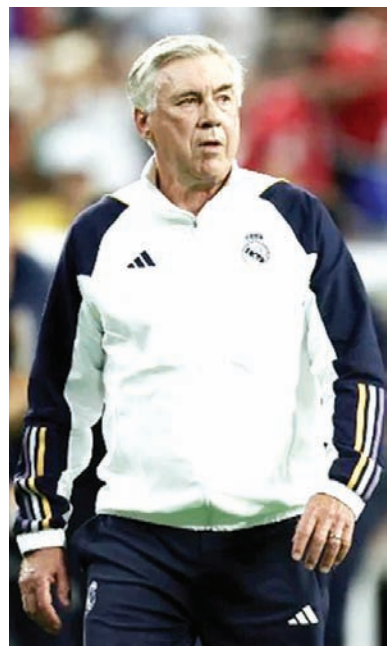
With Pool A boasting powerhouse teams like the Netherlands, Spain, and Germany, the competition promises to be fierce from start to finish.

## Real Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti facing five-year prison sentence over alleged tax fraud; reports

Madrid | Agencies

Real Madrid's head coach Carlo Ancelotti has been accused of defrauding the Treasury of over 1 million euros during his tenure between 2014 and 2015 as Real Madrid manager, says a report. According to Relevo (Spanish sports website), Ancelotti now faces the grim prospect of a jail sentence of four years and nine months and the ignominy of a tainted reputation. "The charges stem from allegations that Ancelotti failed to declare income from his image rights in his tax returns, instead channeling the funds through a company named Vapia Limited. Prosecutors contend that Ancelotti orchestrated a scheme to conceal his earnings, transferring his image rights to Vapia for a substantial sum and subsequently omitting the corresponding income from his tax filings.

"The amounts relate to 386,361 euros in 2014 and 675,718 euros in 2015. If



found guilty, one of the most decorated managers in footballing history could see his career end in disgrace," the report stated. Amidst the accusations, details have emerged of a purportedly elaborate network of trusts and companies set up by Ancelotti to shield his image rights earnings from Spanish jurisdiction. The complexity of these arrangements has drawn scrutiny from legal authorities, painting a picture of a manager entangled in a web of financial subterfuge. "Prosecutors claim that in July 2013, Ancelotti paid 21 million pounds (25 million euros) to Vapia for the ten-year transfer of his image rights. He then reportedly established himself as the company's CEO, shortened the term to three years, and reduced the sale price to 854,000 pounds (1.06 million dollars). Ancelotti omitted any income linked to the use of his image rights" to the tune of 1.1m pounds (1.4m dollars) in 2014 and 2.5m pounds (3.1m dollars) in 2015."





## Neha Kakkar to perform 'India Ki Jai Ho' at Miss World finale, challenges contestants

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After dropping a hint Wednesday morning that she was working on something that "may create history", Neha Kakkar has now shared a sneak peek into her new song titled 'India Ki Jai Ho'.

She has also thrown a challenge to Miss World participants to do the hook steps to the accompaniment of the track.

Neha will also perform live for the first time at the 71st Miss World finale in Mumbai, which is sched-

uled for March 9.

Taking to Instagram, Neha shared a Reel where the singer, who acquired a fan following with her hit number 'Baleciaga', is seen wearing a red crop top and matching velvet pajamas. Her hair is styled in soft curls and she accessorised the look with bangles and jhumkas.

She can be seen grooving to 'India Ki Jai Ho'. The caption to the video reads: "Hello, Miss World participants! I have a challenge for you and every Indian music lover: I want to see you all doing the dance steps for my new song, #Indiakijaiho, which I

will perform live for the first time at the Miss World finale with all of you! @missworld #nehakakkaratmissworld #missworld #71missworld #beautywithapurpose #nehakakkar."

Earlier in the day, Neha had taken to her Instagram stories and shared a picture of the sun and some trees.

For the caption, Neha wrote, "Shooting for something that may create history," along with a time stamp.

## Kangana's message to Anupam Kher on b'day eve: 'All sexy people born in March'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Kangana Ranaut, who was last seen in the theatrical film 'Tejas', has opined that all "sexy" people are born in the month of March.

On Wednesday, veteran actor Anupam Kher, who celebrates his birthday on March 7, took to his Instagram, and shared a video. In the video, he can be seen promising his followers, a big news on the occasion of his birthday.

Kangana, who also celebrates her birthday in March, took to the comments section and dropped a comment complimenting both the senior actor and herself.

She wrote, "Sare sexy log March mein paida hue hain."

Anupam, who has collaborated with Kangana in her upcoming second directorial 'Emergency', responded to the actress as he wrote, "Hahahaha. But you are sexiest and rarest. Love and prayers always."

'Emergency', which is based on the former Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, is set to release on June 14, 2024.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Kajol on Wednesday dropped a quirky picture with a bottle of wine, saying though she doesn't drink, she can get a good laugh.

Taking to Instagram, Kajol, who enjoys 16.3 million followers, shared a fun picture of herself, wherein she can be seen wearing a black blazer and a white formal shirt.

With minimal makeup and her hair tied in a ponytail, Kajol is seen smiling while holding a bottle of wine close to her face.

The post is captioned: "I may not drink but nothing says I can't get a good laugh out of it. #winwednesday #goatfather." Fans took to the comment section and said: "Funniest per-

son ever".

One user wrote: "Simran Singh rocking".

Another said: "fantastic". Meanwhile, on the professional front, Kajol was last seen as Devyani in 'Lust Stories 2', and Nyonika Sengupta in the web series 'The Trial'.

## On Women's Day eve, TV stars speak out in favour of self-acceptance



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actors Karuna Pandey, Pariva Pranati, Ayushi Khurana, Neetha Shetty, and Isha Sharma, who play strong women characters on screen, have reflected upon Women's Day, advocating for change, and voiced for embracing one's awesome self.

Karuna, who plays Pushpa in 'Pushpa Impossible' said: "As we celebrate Women's Day, let's reflect on the importance of empowering women in both urban and rural areas, ensuring they have the freedom to make their own choices and shape their destinies. Education is crucial, but so is liberation -- women should have the freedom to follow their hearts."

The actress shared that true empowerment means having the power to decide independently, without being controlled by family members or societal expecta-

tions.

"My hope is for a future where women everywhere are bold, courageous, and free to make their own choices," added Karuna.

Pariva essays the role of Vandana in 'Wagle Ki Duniya'.

For Pariva, Women's Day is not just about celebrating each woman's stand for herself and embracing who they are, but also about recognising the silent struggles many women face in today's modern world.

"Despite the progress and modern lifestyles, countless women continue to compromise their desires and dreams. It's our collective responsibility to inspire, support, and become cheerleaders for these women, empowering them to carve out a brighter tomorrow for themselves," she said.

Ayushi, who plays Pallavi in 'Aangan Aapno Kaa', said: "Today is all about embracing your awe-

some self. Whether it's chasing dreams, achieving financial independence, or pursuing your passion - just go for it. As you navigate your journey, may you find the confidence to not only shape your own destiny but also contribute to a world where every woman stands financially strong."

"Remember, your voice matters, your dreams are valid, and your potential is limitless. Happy Women's Day to every trailblazer, dreamer, and force of nature. You have the power to shape your story. So, here's to being fierce, free, and fabulous," added Ayushi.

Neetha plays Deepika in 'Aangan Aapno Kaa'.

The actress said: "I believe women should be celebrated every day. It's not just about honouring the iconic figures, who have changed history but also about encouraging our new generations to dream big and understand that anything is possible. On this day, we celebrate the strength, determination, and resilience of women everywhere."

Isha, who plays the titular character in 'Pashmina - Dhaage Mohabbat Ke', said: "As women, we are born with the innate ability to conquer challenges and excel in every aspect of life. Just trust your instincts and fearlessly pursue your dreams."

"Rather than viewing imperfections as obstacles, we should embrace them as opportunities for personal growth. This Women's Day, let's celebrate the strength that resides within each of us and follow the path that our hearts truly desire," she added.

## Sonakshi reflects on her career, says she learnt 'everything from scratch'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Sonakshi Sinha opened up about her career at the film industry trade show FICCI Frames here on Wednesday.

She remembered how, despite being Shatrughan Sinha's daughter, she had no experience of being on a film's set and no formal training in acting or dancing, starting off "completely from scratch".

Speaking at the 24th edition of FICCI Frames, the actress, most recently seen in 'Double XL', said: "Throughout my career, I have learnt through experience. I started off completely from scratch. I had no experience of being on a film's set. I never visited my dad on sets when I was a child and I had no training in acting or dancing. I was not groomed for the profession. I was literally thrown into the deep end of the pool and was told to swim. That's how I learnt." Sinha went on to talk about how experiences have steered her professional career arc. "Every experience for me is something to be cherished. Every person I have worked I have learnt a lot from, which has got me to a point that where Sanjay Leela Bhansali (SLB) comes to me, he has the confidence in me to offer me a role like that of Fareedan, who is very very complex," Sinha said.

Sinha will soon be seen in SLB's

upcoming period drama series 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar'. She made her Bollywood debut in 2010 with the Salman Khan-starrer action comedy film 'Dabangg'.

Speaking about her journey as an actor, she said: "I have been working for the past 14 years

and I have done all sorts of roles. I started off with these commercial masala sort of films, where it was always about the 'hero, hero and hero', which I am not complaining about because it really gave me an audience and a wide reach." She added: "So, when SLB sir came to me with 'Heeramandi', I was like 'Thank you for imagining me like this'. It is really an honour when a director envisions you in a way that nobody has ever thought of you as. So, that is something that every actor craves for." Looking back at her career, Sinha said with a sense of satisfaction: "As a journey I wouldn't change a thing. Every experience has counted and put me to where I am today. I wouldn't have it any other way. I have seen my ups and downs. For me, it was eventful, fruitful, a lovely learning experience more than anything else."

Sonakshi ended by saying: "Every film set I go to I approach it like it is my first day on set. And that's what keeps me going. I want to be a different person with every film. It keeps me excited about my job till today."

KAJOL DROPS PIC WITH WINE BOTTLE, SAYS 'I MAY NOT DRINK BUT CAN GET A GOOD LAUGH'

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Manushi Chiller