

# absolute india



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## MY FATHER INHERITED MARTYRDOM, NOT WEALTH": PRIYANKA GANDHI

## Non-bailable warrants cannot be issued in a routine manner: SC

**MP - CONGRESS'S PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA TODAY SAID HER FATHER, FORMER PRIME MINISTER RAJIV GANDHI, HAD NOT INHERITED WEALTH BUT MARTYRDOM FROM HIS MOTHER INDIA. "THIS IS A FEELING THAT NARENDRA MODI WOULD NEVER UNDERSTAND," SHE SAID, SHREDDING THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON DYNASTIC POLITICS AND INHERITANCE TAX.**



Team Absolute | Morena

PM Modi had said last week that Rajiv Gandhi had abolished inheritance tax after coming to power so that the wealth he had inherited from his mother would not be taxed.

stands on the dais and calls my father a traitor, when he says he changed a law to take his inheritance from his mother... he would

not understand that my father did not get any wealth by way inheritance, he only got the thoughts of martyrdom".

"At the age of 19, when I brought home the mangled remains of my father, I was upset with this country. I thought, 'I had sent my father. It was your job to ensure his safety. I placed him in your care, but you returned me his remains wrapped in the national flag'. I had misgivings. I know what is the meaning of martyrdom. Today I am 52 and this is the first time I'm talking about it in public," she said.

She said when 40 soldiers died in Pulwama in 2029, she had visited some of their families in Uttar Pradesh.

There, the children of the martyrs told her that they want to join the army. "There was one girl whose brother was in the Air force. She said 'Didi I want to join the air force and become a pilot!'," Ms Gandhi Vadra said.

"This is the feeling of martyrdom. Modi-ji will never understand this. Modi-ji says whatever he likes about a martyr like Indira-ji. He only sees dynastic politics, he never sees patriotism, service to the nation. He would never understand this," she added.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In the latest judgment, the Supreme Court has said that non-bailable warrants not be issued in a routine manner unless the accused is charged with a heinous crime and is likely to evade the process of law or destroy/tamper evidence.

A bench presided over by Justice Sanjiv Khanna said that while there is no comprehensive set of guidelines for the issuance of non-bailable warrants, the apex court has observed on several occasions that non-bailable warrants should not be issued, unless the accused is charged with a heinous crime, and is likely to evade the process of law or tamper/destroy evidence. Quashing the summoning order, the Bench, also comprising Justice SVN Bhatti, said, "It is a settled position of law that non-bailable warrants cannot be issued in a routine manner and that the liberty of an individual cannot be curtailed unless necessitated by the larger interest of public and the State." In 2021, the Special Chief Judicial Magistrate, Lucknow issued non-bailable warrants against one Manager Singh noting that there was no provision for granting exemption from personal appearance prior to obtaining bail. Another order recorded that as the accused remained absent despite the issuance of bailable warrants, non-bailable warrants were issued to ensure his personal appearance.

"The observation that there is no provision



for granting exemption from personal appearance prior to obtaining bail, is not correct, as the power to grant exemption from personal appearance under the Code (of Criminal Procedure) should not be read in a restrictive manner as applicable only after the accused has been granted bail. This Court in Maneka Sanjay Gandhi and Another v. Rani Jethmalani held that the power to grant exemption from personal appearance should be exercised liberally when facts and circumstances require such exemption," the top court said. It asked the trial court to re-examine the entire matter in terms of the observations made in its judgment and thereupon proceed in accordance with the law.

In the exercise of power under Article 142 read with Article 136 of the Constitution of India, the Supreme Court ordered that the accused, Manager Singh, will be released on bail by the arresting officer, investigating officer or trial court on the terms and conditions to be fixed by the trial court.

## Congress manifesto most impressive since Independence : Ashok Gehlot

Ahmedabad | Agencies

Former Chief Minister of Rajasthan Ashok Gehlot said on Thursday that the Congress has prepared the most impressive manifesto since Independence.

Gehlot was in Ahmedabad campaigning for Congress and expressed concern over the current political discourse. He criticized Prime Minister Narendra Modi for allegedly making "unfounded comments about the Congress manifesto without having read it."

"The Congress has prepared the most impressive manifesto since Independence, and the Prime Minister has no right to criticize it without fully understanding it," Gehlot said. He commended Rahul Gandhi's efforts, which he said were reflected in the manifesto, to address the needs of every class.

Highlighting the broader implications of the government's actions, Gehlot pointed to the misuse of enforcement agencies, claiming, "In the country, the ED and CBI are working illegally, which is



a risk to our democracy." He also referred to international concerns, noting, "The UN has spoken about what is happening in India."

Gehlot said in a direct attack on the BJP's electoral promises, "Promises were made but not fulfilled. Modi's guarantee was there in 2014 about black money, Rs 15 lakh in accounts, and doubling farmers' income, but whose guarantee was that?" Gehlot's speech ended on

a critical note regarding the recently introduced Agniveer scheme, questioning the prospects for the youth involved after four years.

Earlier, while leaving for Gujarat, Ashok Gehlot said in Jaipur that Congress will win the LS polls with a double-digit score in Rajasthan.

"I went to 22 constituencies during the LS polls and hence am aware that Congress will win with a double-digit score in Rajasthan

## LS polls: MVA, VBA candidates in Maharashtra file nomination

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Amid a huge show of strength and support, the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) and Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) candidates from Mumbai Metropolitan Region filed their nomination papers for the Lok Sabha elections, here on Thursday.

They included INDIA-MVA alliance's -- Bhusan Patil (Congress) from Mumbai North; Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Amol G. Kirtikar for Mumbai North West LS constituencies.

Besides, Nationalist Congress Party (SP)'s Suresh Balyamama Mhatre submitted his nomination papers for Bhiwandi (Thane); and Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Bharati Kamdi filed her papers from Palghar (ST) seat.

From the Prakash Ambedkar-led VBA which is contesting independent of any alliances, the candidates who submitted their nomination papers are -- Adv. Sonal Gondane (Mumbai North), Santosh Ambulge (Mumbai North Central) and Parmeshwar Ranshur (Mumbai North West) constituencies.

All the candidates in Mumbai,



Thane and Palghar came out in massive processions of their supporters and top party leaders, with showers of flowers, banners, posters, full-throated slogans and enthusiasm among the party activists.

Kirtikar visited and prayed at the private chamber of the late Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray and sought blessings for his upcoming electoral battle in Mumbai North West.

Kamdi, who is a long-time grassroots worker hailing from a tribal background, was seen doing a traditional dance with her community members before going to file her nomination papers.

Patil and Mhatre also led their own armies of supporters in colourful processions to submit their nomination papers to the Mumbai and Thane Collectorate offices. Top MVA leaders

like Aditya Thackeray, Prof. Varsha Gaikwad, Dr. Jitendra Awhad, accompanied the official party candidates representing the INDIA-MVA alliances for the May 20 polling.

Similarly, VBA's state President Rekha Thakur, Mumbai chief Hasan Khan, and others took out big rallies of their supporters who accompanied the three candidates to file their nominations for Mumbai.

## BJP TRYING TO DIVIDE PEOPLE ON RELIGIOUS LINES: OMAR ABDULLAH

Srinagar: Former J&K Chief Minister and National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah on Thursday accused the BJP of trying to divide the people on religious lines thereby violating the model code of conduct. Speaking to the media after filing his nomination papers for the Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency, Omar Abdullah said, "It is the habit of the BJP to try and divide people in the name of religion. They are trying to create division between the 14 per cent (Muslim) population of the country and the majority community. Model code of conduct is enforced on us and we are asked not to violate it while this directive is not enforced on the BJP," he alleged. Speaking about his message to Baramulla constituency voters, he said, "I have responsibilities towards this constituency and also towards Srinagar and Anantnag constituency. With Allah's blessings, I will fulfil all these to the best of my capacity." "People of Kupwara (One voting district of the Baramulla constituency) know my way of working. The other day when I came to meet the people affected by floods in Kupwara district, my opponent, about whom a lot of noise is being created, was forced to come out in the night suit after hearing that I had reached Kupwara," he said.



## Congress partnership with Pakistan exposed: PM Modi

Anand (Gujarat) | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched a scathing attack on Congress, saying that the grand old party's partnership with Pakistan has been exposed.

Addressing an election rally at Shastri Ground in Gujarat's Anand, PM Modi said, "Today, when Congress is weakening in India ... the Pakistan leaders are praying for Congress to revive. Pakistan and Congress have a partnership and it is now completely exposed. Pakistan wants a weak government, not a strong one -- a weak government like it was during the Mumbai blast. 'Modi ki majboot sarkar Pakistan ko chubhti hain (Modi's strong government hurts Pakistan)'. He criticized the past dealings of the Congress with Pakistan, stating, "Congress government gave the dossier to Pakistan but Modi government does not waste time in the dossier. We kill terrorists in their homes."



The Prime Minister mentioned the international stature of India, saying that the Indian passport has become a symbol of safety and respect worldwide. "If there are conflicts in the world, then India is considered an ally, someone who can solve problems. During the Russia-Ukraine war, the only way to get out of the conflict zone was to show an Indian passport. This is the power of the Indian flag. Our passport is very

powerful. Tell me, do you feel proud or not? Amidst all of these, Congress just wants to curse me. They want to divide people," PM Modi said.

The PM also accused Congress of neglecting and betraying backward communities, while highlighting his government's contributions to their upliftment.

"Over 25 crore people are now living above the poverty line. We gave them homes. Now, when the

poor get homes, they get a new life and dreams. Congress even betrayed the SC/ST/OBC people. They never cared for them. During their government, they rejected every development proposal for the OBC. Congress didn't even acknowledge the Adivasi community. BJP government allotted budgets for Adivasis. Today, in my cabinet, over 60 per cent of members are from the ST/SC/OBC community," he elaborated.

The rally also saw PM Modi challenge Congress from the land of Sardar Patel, demanding the grand old party to commit to three things: first, not divide people, second to preserve reservations for SC/ST/OBC communities, and third to refrain from vote-bank politics.

"Congress has become a fake factory today. When Congress released its manifesto, I said its manifesto was a reflection of the Muslim League. They have surrendered to the Muslim League," PM Modi said.

## Sex scandal: SIT rejects Prajwal Revanna's request; lookout notice issued

Bengaluru | Agencies

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the sex video scandal involving former Prime Minister, HD Deve Gowda's grandson Prajwal Revanna on Thursday rejected his request to appear before it after 7 days and the authorities issued a lookout notice against him. This happened on a day another victim came forward and filed a complaint.

Prajwal Revanna's obscene video showing sexual harassment and abuse of women has taken the political circles in Karnataka by storm. Sources confirmed that Prajwal Revanna will be taken into custody as soon as he lands in India.

Karnataka Home Minister, Dr G Parameshwara stated on Thursday that a 'Lookout Notice' has been sent to all airports of the country.

The sitting MP and NDA candidate for the Hassan Lok Sabha seat had sought seven days, but as per law it is not possible to grant him time for appearance before



the authorities. In spite of this, the officers are taking the opinion of legal experts over the matter.

In case there is no scope for giving him time, the SIT officers will go wherever Prajwal Revanna is, arrest him and bring him back to India. Home Minister Parameshwara maintained that another victim had come forward and lodged a complaint against Prajwal Revanna in Hassan.

"The details cannot be made public," he stated.

Meanwhile, JD(S) MLC Suraj Revanna, brother of Prajwal Revanna speaking on Thursday maintained that his brother will win the Hassan seat despite the leak of the obscene videos.

"I will not speak about Prajwal. The SIT formed by the government is probing the case. I can only comment that it is a conspiracy.





# BJP DROPS BRIJ BHUSHAN, FIELDS SON KARAN FROM KAISERGANJ

Lucknow | Agencies

The BJP on Thursday finally announced its candidates for the Kaiserganj and Raebareli Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh. In Kaiserganj, the BJP dropped sitting MP and former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, and gave the ticket to his son Karan Bhushan Singh.

A six-term MP, Brij Bhushan suffered a massive political setback due to the allegations of sexual harassment levelled against him that saw some of the country's top women wrestlers hit the streets.

As per sources, Brij Bhushan had been taken into confidence by the party leaders about the development, and his son Karan was seen receiving congratulatory messages at his residence since Thursday morning.

Karan Bhushan is the youngest son of Brij Bhushan.

Born in 1990, Karan Bhushan is a national-level double-trap shooter. He holds a law degree besides doing a business management course in Australia. He will be making his debut



in electoral politics this time.

In Raebareli, the BJP has fielded Dinesh Pratap Singh, without waiting for the Congress to name its nominee,

Dinesh Singh began his political career with the Congress and was once considered close to Sonia Gandhi switching sides to the BJP. He was elected as a member of the

Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council thrice between 2010 and 2022, besides unsuccessfully contesting the Lok Sabha elections against Sonia Gandhi from Raebareli in 2019.

# SC orders bar association to reserve minimum 1/3rd posts for women

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) to reserve at least 1/3rd posts for women in its executive committee.

Asking SCBA to implement the quota henceforth, a bench presided over by Justice Surya Kant said that the post of treasurer will be reserved for women in the ensuing 2024-25 elections.

The Bench, also comprising Justice KV Viswanathan, added that one post of the office-bearers will be reserved for women on a rotation basis.

It clarified that the directions issued by the apex court would not exclude women from contesting other SCBA posts. In effect, one post of the office-bearers, two senior executive members and three executive members will be mandatorily reserved for women.

Earlier in February this year, the Delhi High Court



was apprised by SCBA that the General Body Meeting (GBM) will be convened within two months to discuss the nomination of women advocates as Executive Members.

A bench of Justice Sudhir Kumar Jain was dealing with a plea filed by advocate Yogamaya MG seeking to convene the meeting to address the issue of gender representation within the SCBA. The petitioner had urged the SCBA to consider a representation signed by 270 members addressing the

issue of lack of female representation in the executive committee.

The representation proposed amending the SCBA rules and regulations to ensure at least two positions for women executive members. The petition stressed the importance of women's representation in decision-making bodies like the SCBA, stating that it is fundamental to creating a workplace culture that prioritises the prevention of sexual harassment and addresses issues unique to women lawyers.

# BJP declares candidates for six more Assembly seats in Odisha

Bhubaneswar | Agencies

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday announced a list of six candidates for the upcoming elections to the 147-member Odisha Assembly, including some changes.

With this, the party has announced 146 names and only the candidate for the Nilgiri Assembly seat in the Balasore district remains to be finalised.

The party has fielded renowned gynaecologist Dr Purna Chandra Mohapatra from the Barabati-Cuttack constituency of Cuttack district, replacing senior party leader Sameer Dey, and Shambhunath Rout from Ghasipura seat in Keonjhar district, in place of Prithviraj Kumar.



The party has also nominated Prakash Chandra Ranabijuli, Umesh Chandra Jena, Sudhanshu Nayak, and Ashish Patra from Begunia in Khorda district, Bari in Jajpur district, Bhandaripokhari in Bhadrak district, and Bhogarai constituency in Balasore district, respectively.

The ruling Biju Janata Dal has already declared its final list of candidates for the 147 Assembly constituencies.

Assembly and Lok Sabha elections will be held simultaneously in Odisha in four phases from May 13 to June 1 and vote counting will be held on June 4.

# Ahead of Akshaya Tritiya, Raj HC directs state govt to step up action against child marriage

Jaipur | Agencies

Terming the trend of child marriages in the state as alarming, the Rajasthan High Court directed the state government in an urgent order to ensure that no child marriages are solemnised during the upcoming Akshaya Tritiya festival (May 10).

The court also directed to make the Panchs and Sarpanchs (village heads) accountable if they fail to prevent child marriage.

Given that many child marriages are solemnised on Akshaya Tritiya in Rajasthan, the court direction came on a PIL filed by Just Rights For Children Alliance, a coalition of multiple NGOs, seeking urgent intervention by the authorities to prevent child marriages during the auspicious occasion.

A division bench comprising Justices Shubha Mehta and Pankaj Bhandari also directed the authorities to keep a 'hawk's eye' on a masked list provided by the petitioners, listing 54 child marriages that have been



held or will be held on Akshaya Tritiya. While 46 of the child marriages are yet to take place, the remaining have already been solemnised. "A report should be sought from the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO) about the child marriages which have taken place in his

jurisdiction, and the efforts taken by him in preventing the same," the court order said.

The high court also directed the state government to ensure that the scheduled marriages of 46 children mentioned in the list do not take place. While the bench noted that the

efforts of the state authorities have been instrumental in bringing down the number of child marriages in the state, a lot is still required to be done.

As per the National Health Family Survey (2019-21), 25.4 per cent of women in the age group 20-24 years were married before 18 in Rajasthan against the national rate of 23.3 per cent.

Bhuwan Ribhu, the Founder of Just Rights for Children Alliance, said, "Child marriage is the most pervasive and heinous crime that is socially acceptable here. It is a landmark step by the Rajasthan High Court to affix the responsibility of reporting such marriages on the Panchs and Sarpanchs, as it is the only way to bring about a behavioural change on the issue. The way India has been taking steps to end child marriage is a lesson for the entire world, and the Rajasthan High Court's order is yet another significant stride in this direction."

The order came at a crucial time as incidents of child marriage witness a sharp spike during Akshaya Tritiya.

# Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister slams Kharge's statement on Lord Ram and Shiva

Lucknow | Agencies

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, slammed Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge for his statement on Lord Ram and Shiva and said that the Congress party is now resorting to insulting the beliefs of the Hindu community to vent its frustration over impending defeat in the Lok Sabha elections 2024.

Yogi Adityanath said that in the Sanatan Dharma, Lord Ram and Lord Shiva hold great reverence. He pointed out that in the epic Ramcharitmanas, there are instances where Lord Ram worships Lord Shiva and vice versa, illustrating their mutual respect and complementarity.

The chief minister condemned the attempt to pit Lord Ram against Lord Shiva in speeches of Congress leaders.

He further said, "Our scriptures bear testimony to the fact that betrayal of either Lord Shiva or



Lord Ram inevitably leads to defeat and downfall."

He remarked the Congress president's recent derogatory remarks

are a "new beginning of the party's downfall."

Addressing the media at his official residence, he said, "The

Congress history is replete with such actions. Yet, during elections, such tactless behaviour becomes conspicuous. By bringing up such issues, the Congress is not only disrespecting the faith of India, but also hurting the sentiments of the majority community."

He further said, "The Congress carries forward the British legacy of 'Divide and Rule'. It sows the seeds of discord in society based on caste, region, and language for petty political gains. The party will continue its divisive agenda in future also to stay relevant in Indian politics."

Yogi Adityanath highlighted the pledge made by the Congress in its manifesto to include Muslims also among the beneficiaries of the reservation meant for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes.

The CM criticised the party leader for not only undermining the Hindu faith but also steering Congress towards oblivion through such divisive actions.

Lucknow | Agencies

The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has announced six more candidates for the Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh.

The party has declared Saurabh Mishra as its candidate for the Gonda Lok Sabha seat and Mohd Nadeem Misra from the Dumarianganj seat.

In the Kaiserganj Lok Sabha seat, the BSP candidate will be Narendra Pandey while in Sant Kabir Nagar, Nadeem Ashraf will contest on party symbol.

The BSP has fielded Shiv Kumar Dohre from the Barabanki Lok Sabha seat and Mashoor Ahmad from Azamgarh. So far the BSP has announced around 50 candidates in Uttar Pradesh. The party, however, has changed candidates in over



a dozen seats in the state. Uttar Pradesh, which sends the maximum number of MPs, 80, to Parliament, is voting in all

seven phases. Voting for phases one and two have been completed and the third phase is on

May 7.

# ELECTION COMMISSION WARNS AKALI DAL, AAP OVER MODEL CODE VIOLATIONS

Chandigarh | Agencies

The Chief Electoral Officer of Punjab has issued warnings to the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for violations of the Model Code of Conduct during the Lok Sabha elections, a statement said on Thursday.

The SAD had used the phrase "Delhi ke Dalal" in a video against AAP's state convener and Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and AAP candidates, which is in violation of the guidelines of the model code.

The party later deleted the video. Furthermore, using children in an election rally of SAD President Sukhbir Badal has been deemed to be a violation of the model code, the Chief Electoral Officer said in a statement.

The District Election Officer of Ludhiana also submitted a report that children were used during an



election campaign.

There are clear guidelines from the Election Commission that children should not be used in election rallies and campaigns.

The Akali Dal has been warned for violating the directions and directed it not to repeat such mistakes in the future and strictly follow the guidelines of the model code.

Likewise, the AAP has been refrained from uploading posts or videos like "Unsacred Games of Punjab". Also, the casteist remarks used by Cabinet minister Laljit Singh Bhullar for his political opponents have also been considered a violation of the model code. The District Election Officer of Tarn Taran also submitted a report that the use of casteist remarks was in violation of the Election Commission instructions.

Punjab will go to the polls for all 13 parliamentary seats on June 1.





# Shrikant Shinde will break previous records; win by margin of 5 lakh votes: Eknath Shinde

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena chief leader Eknath Shinde on Thursday said that his son and the party nominee from Kalyan-Dombivli constituency, Dr Shrikant Shinde will break previous records in the forthcoming elections and win by a record margin of five lakh votes.

CM Shinde was speaking at the rally which witnessed a massive turnout of Shiv Sena, BJP, NCP and RPI cadres at the time of filing of nomination by Dr Shinde. He is pitted against the Shiv Sena (UBT) nominee Vaishali Darekar.

Dr Shinde was accompanied by Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis, Public Works Minister Ravindra Chavan, MNS Legislator Raju Patil and former NCP MP Anand Paranjape.

"In the last 10 years, Dr Shrikant Shinde has left his mark through his



work. Today's rally is a victory rally. With the hard work of the activists and the blessings of the voters, all the previous records will be broken in the

upcoming elections as he will win by a margin of five lakh votes," said CM Shinde, adding that his son was set to score a hat-trick.

"There has been a strong wave in favour of the Mahayuti in the entire state. Even in the scorching heat of Vidarbha, activists took to the streets in large numbers. Today's rush in Kalyan-Dombivli is a testimony to that. The work done by Dr Shinde in his two terms (2014 and 2019) has been acknowledged in today's rally," said CM Shinde.

He further stated that funds won't be a problem in further pushing the development in the constituency.

CM Shinde exhorted the Mahayuti workers to reach out to the voters and bring them to the polling station, especially amid the ongoing wedding season and vacations.

"A vote for Shrikant Shinde means a vote for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a vote for 'bow and arrow' means a vote for Modi and a vote for the grand alliance means a vote for Modi, so everyone should work hard till May 20. The MP will serve you for the next five years," said CM Shinde.

# Sanjay Raut questions increase in Maha voting percentage after 11 days

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut on Thursday questioned the Election Commission of India (ECI) about the increase in the voting percentages of Phase I and Phase 2 Lok Sabha elections, and asked how it suddenly shot up after so many days.

Speaking to the media here, he said that the hourly and daily voting percentages in all the Lok Sabha constituencies that have voted so far, provided on the Maharashtra Chief Electoral Officer and ECI websites were the latest current data.

"However, after 11 days from the Phase I (April 19) and a week after the Phase 2 (April 26) polling, the ECI has released the voting percentages which are much higher than the live data given on the polling dates. Where did the extra votes come from?" demanded Raut.

He pointed out that the voting percentages have changed by 7-10 per cent in many constituencies, though in Nagpur it has reportedly reduced by some points, and the low turnout had rattled the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Pointing a needle of suspicion, he said that after the low voter turnout, many people had taken note and expressed concerns over the considerable drop in the voting percent-



ages as compared with the 2019 polling data.

The very same people are now surprised that the low percentage has shot up in 11 days and has nearly equalled the 2019 poll tally, raising questions.

"This is the digital era in a digital India... Does it take them 11 days to give the voting percentages? We can understand a difference of half or one per cent in the final calculations, but such a huge gap of 7 or 10 per cent or more is difficult to digest," said Raut.

# Salman Khan returns from London, leaves airport with beefed up security

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan returned to Mumbai after his trip from London amid tight security. Salman was spotted at the Kalina airport in Mumbai, where he was seen being escorted out with his bodyguard Shera and several other security members. The 'Dabangg' star, dressed in a dark-hued jacket and a baseball cap, headed straight to his car. The shutterbugs could be heard calling out his name as his car made



its way out of the airport, followed by another car full of security personnel. During his time in London, a picture of Salman posing with a UK MP from Brent North constituency, Barry Gardiner, at the Wembley Stadium circulated on social media. This return comes just a few weeks after a firing incident occurred outside his home in Bandra. On May 1, it was reported that one of the prime accused in the firing at the star's home, Anuj Thapan, died after an alleged suicide attempt in a Mumbai Police lockup.

# Denied sexual favours, man rapes woman at Hotel

Team Absolute | Thane

A 26-year-old man from Madhya Pradesh has been arrested for allegedly raping a woman residing in Navi Mumbai, police said on Thursday. A spokesman of the Panvel town police station in Navi Mumbai said the accused was arrested after the woman (35), a housewife residing in

a village near Uran coastal town in Raigad district, lodged a complaint against him. Based on the complaint, the police on Tuesday registered an FIR (first information report) under IPC section 376 (rape) against the accused, who hails from Morena district of Madhya Pradesh. The survivor and the accused were known to each other, said the police

spokesman. The police, quoting the complaint, said on April 29, the accused called the woman to Panvel railway station at around 8.55 am and took her to a hotel under the pretext of returning the loan and ornaments he had taken from her. The man sought sexual favours from the survivor and when she refused, he raped her, according to the complaint.

# The great family divide splits Baramati as 'Bhabhi-Nanad' battle for uncle-nephew supremacy



Quaid Najmi | Pune

After ruling the roost for nearly six decades in Baramati, NCP(SP) President, Sharad Pawar is facing the first major challenge to his supremacy in state politics, that too, from within the family, through his nephew Ajit Pawar. The NCP(SP) Working President Supriya Sule (54) is locked in a rare battle with Sunetra A Pawar (61), the wife of her cousin brother and rival NCP President Ajit Pawar.

Considered an ideal, close-knit family, with politics always kept at the doorstep, an unusual and bitter fight between the Pawar 'bhabhi-nanad' slugging it out in the summer heat for the Baramati Lok Sabha seat, is spilling onto the streets.

The average Baramati voter is torn between loyalty to the uncle, Sharad Pawar, 83, who founded the (undivided) NCP in 1999, and his nephew Ajit Pawar who split the party in July 2023 to walk out and join the 'enemy', ideologically shunned by almost the entire Pawar clan. There are instances of entire families of the local population living divided in their homes, with an invisible 'Sharad Pawar' or 'Ajit Pawar' looming in the shadows, tugging at their heart-strings for votes, catapulting Baramati among the top 10 most watched and unpredictable Lok Sabha constituencies in the 2024 elections.

In fact, the first battle for conquering Baramati started when Ajit Pawar split the (undivided) NCP to join the ruling Mahayuti government of Shiv Sena-BJP as a second Deputy Chief Minister, holding the post for a record 6th time, just a rung below his unabashed ambition to be the Chief Minister.

A NCP(SP) leader explained how Ajit Pawar had joined the two-man regime headed by BJP's Devendra Fadnis in November 2019

and had unceremoniously crashed in barely 80 hours, "but thereafter Pawar Saheb, Supriya tai, the entire family and the party had forgiven him", but warned that this time "there is deep angst against Ajit Pawar and nobody will show mercy."

On the other hand, an Ajit Pawar supporter claims that "Dada (elder brother) was wronged many times, the party lost opportunities to make him the CM, and faced humiliation on several occasions", and it's now up to the people of Baramati to give him justice.

Conscious of what is in store in 'the big fight for supremacy', Ajit Pawar has launched a campaign for his wife utilising the age-old ingredients of "saam, daam, dand, bhed (persuade, tempt, punish, secret)."

Ajit Pawar gently goaded the people to vote with their heads and not with their hearts and avoid sentiments for Sharad Pawar and his daughter Supriya. Then he made emotional appeals to give an opportunity to a new family member Sunetra, as they had done with Sharad Pawar and Supriya in the past.

Later, he sternly warned of repercussions like not releasing development funds if they failed to vote for his wife. Ajit Pawar subsequently attempted ideological schisms by securing the support of certain organisations that were earlier treated as persona-nongrata, by him and his uncle.

Earlier, Ajit Pawar took rude potshots at his 83-year-old uncle, virtually pushing him to the 'margdarshak mandal', and exploiting a stray 'outsider' remark of Sharad Pawar, that had few takers in the constituency.

However, an unruffled Sharad Pawar said that he is "fit, fine and healthy" and had many more years to serve the people, and urged the masses to give an opportunity for a 4th Lok Sabha term to Supriya, rather than some 'outsider' or 'opportunists'.

# It's Shiv Sena vs Shiv Sena In 3 Out Of 6 Lok Sabha Seats In Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Battle lines have been drawn in six parliamentary constituencies in Mumbai, where Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the Uddhav Thackeray led outfit will battle it out in three seats.

While two seats will witness fights between the traditional rivals - the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress, in one seat the Shiv Sena (UBT) and BJP will fight it out.

The six constituencies in Mumbai are Mumbai South, Mumbai South-Central, Mumbai North, Mumbai North-Central, Mumbai North-East, Mumbai North-West. These are among the 13 seats in Maharashtra that will go to polls in the fifth and final phase on May 20.

Mumbai South, Mumbai South-Central and Mumbai North-West will see a fight between the two Senas, while Mumbai North-East will be a BJP versus Shiv Sena (UBT) face-off.

In Mumbai South, sitting MP Arvind Sawant of the Uddhav Thackeray will take on Yamini Jadhav of the Shinde-led Sena. Jadhav represents the Byculla assembly constituency in Mumbai.

Sena (UBT) leader Anil Desai is pitted against Rahul Shewale of the Shinde-led Sena in Mumbai South-Central. While Desai was a Rajya Sabha member till recently, Shewale is the sitting Lok Sabha member.

Amol Kirtikar of the Thackeray camp will take on Ravindra Waikar of the ruling Sena in Mumbai North-West. Waikar who was earlier with the Sena (UBT), joined the Shinde camp recently. He currently represents Jogeshwari East assembly constituency in Mumbai.

Congress MLA Varsha Gaikwad, who is the party's Mumbai unit president will fight it out



against noted lawyer Ujjwal Nikam fielded by the BJP in Mumbai North-Central, while Union minister and BJP veteran Piyush Goyal will take on Bhushan Patil of the Congress in Mumbai North. While Gaikwad represents the Dharavi assembly segment in Mumbai, Goyal is a Rajya Sabha member.

In Mumbai North-East, BJP's Mihir Kotecha will fight against Sena UBT's Sanjay Dina Patil. Kotecha is the MLA from Mulund assembly constituency in Mumbai.

After filing her nomination form, Gaikwad called on Uddhav Thackeray, who promised his support to her, saying she will be sent to Delhi as an MP. It will be for the first time that Thackeray will vote for a Congress candidate as his residence in Bandra comes under the Mumbai North-Central constituency.

Congress and Shiv Sena have traditionally been political opponents in Mumbai till 2019.

"Despite being opponents, the two parties have been in tactical understanding on many occasions to get positions of power, especially in the Mumbai civic body," senior journalist Prakash Akolkar said. As per the picture emerging on ground, the Shiv

Sena (UBT) and the Congress cadre have gelled well on the ground.

Gaikwad visited all Shiv Sena shakhas in Mumbai North-Central constituency, seeking "blessings" of the Uddhav Thackeray-led cadre and in turn promising to be always available to them and fight for issues related to the city. She was warmly welcomed everywhere.

Since 2014, the Congress has lost all the Lok Sabha seats in Mumbai, while in the 2019 assembly elections, it could win only five of the 36 seats.

With former Mumbai South MP Milind Deora defecting to the Shiv Sena and former Mumbai North-Central MP Priya Dutt declining to contest again, the Congress had no candidates to field.

Party leader Sanjay Nirupam was shown the door for his criticism of the Congress leadership on its inability to get equal seat-sharing in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA).

This will be the first major electoral test after the political realignment that emerged in 2019.

Earlier, the Andheri East assembly byelection took place, but Shinde-led Sena or the BJP did not field any candidate.

The BJP has replaced all three sitting MPs while Shinde's Shiv Sena has renominated only Rahul Shewale (Mumbai South-Central) and replaced Gajanan Kirtikar in Mumbai North-West.

Mumbai is divided into Mumbai city and Mumbai suburban district.

Mumbai South and Mumbai South-Central constituencies are in Mumbai city, while rest of the constituencies are in Mumbai suburban. The nomination process is underway. Last date of filing of nominations is May 3.

Mumbai city has over 24 lakh voters, while suburban has 74 lakh voters.

# Uddhav Thackeray "Apologises" To Voters For Backing PM Modi In The Past

Team Absolute | Kolhapur

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray has claimed that the Narendra Modi government has betrayed Maharashtra, and he apologised to the people for seeking votes for the Prime Minister in earlier elections. Uddhav Thackeray and his Maha Vikas Aghadi ally and NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar spoke at a rally at Ichalkaranji in Kolhapur district of western Maharashtra in support of Shiv Sena (UBT) candidate from Hatkanangale constituency, Satyajit Patil.

Talking about the circumstances in which his government fell in 2019, Thackeray said the Supreme Court had not delivered its verdict on whose Shiv Sena was the real one, but the "Election Commission and the arbitrator (Maharashtra Speaker Rahul Narwekar) who were working as their (BJP's) servants, gave their verdicts."

"Now when PM Modi calls us fake Shiv Sena, he is putting pressure on the court," Thackeray said.

Sharad Pawar said that PM Modi, during visits to Maharashtra, only criticises him (Pawar) and Uddhav Thackeray instead of speaking about his plans for the state. Pawar also accused the Centre of misusing central agencies and pointed to the arrests of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren in alleged corruption cases.

Thackeray said when no one was willing to join hands with the BJP, the Shiv Sena formed an alliance with it. The saffron party, however, brought down the government of a man whose family had given it everything, he said, referring to the fall of his government in June 2022.

"I apologise for seeking votes for Narendra Modi (in the past) because his government has betrayed Maharashtra," the Sena (UBT) chief added.

He also accused the BJP of using the Shiv Sena in the Lok Sabha elections but scheming to defeat its candidates in assembly polls.

"You used Shiv Sainiks (in Lok Sabha polls) but defeated our candidates (in



assembly polls). I have come to avenge it," said Mr Thackeray who parted ways with the BJP in 2019.

Thackeray and Pawar also shared the stage at a rally in Kolhapur city for Congress candidate Shahu Chhatrapati.

Pawar said on the occasion that prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru spoke about the country when he visited the states, while Indira Gandhi would talk about poverty alleviation.

"But this PM can not rest till he targets Uddhav Thackeray and Sharad Pawar. I want to tell Modi ji, however may you criticise us and bypass important issues facing the state and the country, the people of Maharashtra will teach you a lesson," he said. Hitting out at PM Modi for calling Mr Pawar "bhakti aatma," Thackeray in his speech recalled that Atal Bihari Vajpayee had praised Mr Pawar's disaster management skills.





EDITOR'S SPECS

BJP in UP is confident in the midst of elections

The Ram Temple, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's charisma, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's magic, organisational skills, the loyalty of 'labharthis' (beneficiaries of government schemes), focus on OBCs and bulldozer politics -- the BJP's recipe for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in UP seems to be working perfectly. Even as PM Modi's charisma and CM Adityanath's popularity continue to be the BJP's mainstay in politics, the BJP is adding on factors to ensure that it maintains its successful run in UP in the General Elections. The party knows that with 80 seats, UP will play a crucial role in the formation of the next government at the Centre. BJP cadres are confident that CM Adityanath's growing stature as a Hindu leader, his tough image as an administrator and his all-pervasive charisma will ensure a resounding victory for the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. After the 2022 Assembly win, it is the 'Yogi factor' that has been working overtime in bye-elections and the recent municipal polls, to ensure a sweeping win for the BJP. The BJP in UP, so far, has only one strategy and that is to keep the cadres mobilised for elections and to revisit each booth with regular frequency - especially after the dip in the polling percentage in the first two phases. A fragmented Opposition, with the BSP forcing a triangular contest, is making things easier for a saffron wave. The BJP is focusing on the 'labharthi' vote bank, of which the minorities and Dalits form a large chunk. For the middle class and the upper castes, CM Adityanath's bulldozer campaign against the mafia is also a part of the party's election strategy. The BJP, despite the factors weighing in its favour, is not allowing complacency to creep in.

With April series having expired, expect markets to turn volatile

Arun Kejriwal

Markets have a mind of their own and the five trading sessions last week were of a different kind. How markets change colour almost every day, just beats me. On Monday and Tuesday, markets opened with an upside gap and closed upwards but the difference between the opening and the closing was very small. Effectively, volatility saw intraday movement drop many notches. Wednesday was a quiet day. Thursday was April futures expiry day. It began like any other day of the previous week, on a quiet day and then saw very sharp upward movement in the last hour of the day. NIFTY on Thursday gained 168 points on a net basis and 265 points from the low of the day. Friday was the complete opposite, where markets lost through the day and were down 151 points on a net basis and were down 235 points from the high of the day to the close. At the end of five different days of the week, BSESENSEX gained on four of the five trading sessions and lost on one. BSESENSEX was up 641.83 points or 0.88 per cent to close at 73,790.16 points, while NIFTY gained 272.95 points or 1.23 per cent to close at 22,419.95 points. The broader markets saw BSE100, BSE200 and BSE500 gain 1.53 per cent, 1.85 per cent and 2.10 per cent respectively. BSEMIDCAP was up 3.96 per cent while BSESMALLCAP was up 3.97 per cent. The India Rupee gained 13 paise or 0.016 per cent to close at 83.34 to the US Dollar. Dow Jones gained on three of the five sessions and lost on two. At the end of the week, Dow was up 253.26 points or 0.67 per cent to close at 39,239.66 points. The 18,000 crore follow-on offer from Vodafone Idea Limited was well received by investors and was oversubscribed. The QIB portion was subscribed 19.31 times, the HNI portion was subscribed 4.54 times and the Retail portion was subscribed 1.01 times. Overall, the issue was subscribed 6.56 times. Shares issued through the FPO listed on Thursday, April 25. The previous day's close (Wednesday) was Rs 13.09. The discovered price was Rs 12 and the closing price was Rs 13.89 on listing day. The share gained Rs 2.89 from the issue price or 26.27 per cent. The share gained a tad on Friday and closed at Rs 14.01, up 3.01 or 27.36 per cent. There is a roadshow of Indegene Limited which will tap the capital markets with its fresh issue for Rs 760 crore and an offer for sale of 3,62,91,497 shares as per DRHP. The price band, date of issue opening and closing and the size of the OFS would be announced through a newspaper advertisement. The roadshow will be held in Mumbai on Monday, April 29. Results season is on and we have not had spectacular results from the few that have declared results so far. One is waiting for it to happen so that leads can be taken and investors look at opportunities that exist in the marketplace. Two of the seven rounds of voting for the general elections have been completed. The third round will be held on May 7. Results will be declared on June 4. April futures expired on Thursday, April 25 on a very buoyant and positive note. The NIFTY April series gained 243.45 points or 1.09 per cent to close at 21,570.35 points. To put things in perspective, the gains on Thursday, which was expiry day, were at 167 points. The first day of the new series of May, saw NIFTY lose 151 points on the very first day. Call it by any



name, the Bulls won the war and the series on Thursday and lost it on Friday. Coming to the markets in the week ahead, we have a trading holiday on Wednesday, May 1. There would be a holiday in most of the global markets as well. However, the week would be divided into two equal halves of two days duration each, making markets that much more volatile. Levels of 75,124 points, which was the previous tops and 22,775 would be very strong resistances. On the support side, lows made last week at 71,816 points and 21,777 points would act as strong supports. If these are violated, then one could see markets slipping to 71,100 and 21,550 points respectively.

The trading strategy for the week ahead would be to trade on the long side with extreme caution on account of the mid-week holiday. Buy on strong dip and sell on any strong rallies would be the order of the day. Markets are yet trying to establish a comfortable trading zone for themselves. Trade cautiously. (Arun Kejriwal is the founder of Kejriwal Research and Investment Services. The views expressed are personal)

international

10,000 London cabbies sue Uber for millions over taxi-booking rules

London | Agencies A group of more than 10,000 black cab drivers is suing Uber after accusing it of breaching taxi-booking rules in London, in a move which could cost the ride-hailing giant more than \$313 million. A group action claim has been filed in the High Court over Uber's operations in the capital between May 2012 and March 2018. The cab drivers claim that Uber misled Transport for London (TfL) over how it operated its ride-booking system and therefore breached private hire licensing rules. They allege that the company allowed its drivers to accept bookings directly from customers, rather than going through a central system like minicab services. The legal claim says that this booking system was "unlawful" because it did not comply with private hire rules, and that Uber deliberately misled TfL about how the system worked in order to get its licence. The cab drivers say that during this time they suffered losses as a result of having fewer customers or having to work



longer hours to compete with the popular app. RGL Management has filed the group action, known as BULIT21, on behalf of the London cabbies, who are being instructed by solicitors at law firm Mishcon de Reya. It is anticipated that the total claim value could be more than £250 million, with each cab driver's claim worth up to £25,000. A spokesman for Uber said: "These old claims are completely unfounded. "Uber operates lawfully in London, is fully licensed by TfL, and is proud to serve millions of passengers and drivers

across the capital." It is understood there has been no communication between Uber and RGL Management since the claims were first raised in 2019. RGL Management said it thinks up to 30,000 cab drivers who operate in London could be eligible to join the group and make a claim against Uber. It is appealing for more drivers to join the action in the coming weeks. Michael Green, the director of RGL Management, said: "RGL is pleased to file this claim form today on behalf of over 10,500 London cabbies, a

major legal milestone in holding Uber to account for its failure to comply with the relevant legislation in the UK's capital. "There are still thousands of cabbies eligible to join who have not yet done so. A cut-off date is fast approaching. "RGL, therefore, urges drivers to register with the BULIT21 legal action as soon as possible to join with thousands of fellow cabbies in the pursuit of losses suffered at the hands of Uber." Garry White, a black cab driver for 36 years, said the claim seeks "justice and fair compensation" on behalf of London drivers. "Uber seems to believe it is above the law and cabbies across London have suffered loss of earnings because of it," he said. Uber has previously faced issues over its licence to operate private hire vehicles in London. It was denied a licence by TfL in 2019, over concerns that passenger safety had been breached and there were issues around transparency. But it was allowed to continue operating and then in 2022, it was granted a two-and-a-half-year licence in London.

Israel releases 64 Palestinians arrested in Gaza

Gaza | Agencies Israel released on Thursday 64 Palestinians who were arrested during the military operations in the Gaza Strip, said the General Authority for Crossings and Borders in Gaza. The Authority said in a press statement that the Israeli authorities released 64 Palestinians, including one dead and one seriously injured, through the Kerem Shalom crossing in the southern Gaza Strip, Xinhua news agency reported. During the ongoing Israeli ground operation in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army arrested hundreds of Palestinians, according to Palestinian human rights organisations. The released prisoners were transferred to a hospital to check on their health status, according to Palestinian security sources. Israel launched a large-scale



offensive against Hamas in Gaza to retaliate against a Hamas rampage through the southern Israeli border on October 7, 2023, during which about 1,200 people were killed and more than 200 were taken hostage. The ongoing Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip have resulted in extensive casualties and damages, with the Palestinian death toll rising to over 34,000 since the conflict started, according to the Gaza health authorities.

Hamas not for temporary ceasefire, wants permanent end to war

Tel Aviv | Agencies As the indirect mediatory talks between Hamas and Israel are progressing in Cairo, Hamas has expressed concern at temporary ceasefire and have informed the mediators that it wants a permanent end to the war. According to Egyptian sources, Hamas have informed them that they want a total end to the war and rehabilitation of Palestinians who are displaced from north Gaza to southern Gaza region after the war broke out. Sources in Israel's Prime Minister's Office told reporter that they have received information that Hamas is not inclined for a temporary ceasefire. Mediators had pushed for a six-week ceasefire and releasing a minimum of 33 Israeli hostages in exchange of around 600 Palestinian prisoners in Israel's jails. The Israeli officials said that



they came down from their demands based on the request from the mediating nations including Qatar and Egypt. Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, has clearly told visiting American Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday that Israel would attack Rafah and that they have already deployed the IDF unit in the region. According to Israel's Defense Ministry sources, Hamas will have to provide a response to the mediators on Thursday, on its position regarding the hostages.

US imposes further sanctions against Russia

Washington | Agencies The US government is targeting Russia's weapons production with new sanctions, the US Treasury Department said. Nearly 200 companies and 80 individuals in third countries such as China, Belgium, and Slovakia, which allegedly support Russia in the procurement of materials for its weapons programme, are affected, it added on Wednesday. The sanctions are also aimed at Russia's production of chemical and biological weapons. "Today's actions will further disrupt and degrade Russia's war efforts by going after its military-industrial base and the evasion networks that help supply it," US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said. On Wednesday, the US State Department accused Moscow of using various irritant gases during its all-out war against Ukraine, which violates the United Nations' Chemical Weapons Convention. Three people who are reportedly linked to the death of Alexei Navalny are also being sanctioned. The Kremlin critic died in Russian custody in February. Navalny, a long-standing and staunch opponent of Putin, died in a prison camp



in the Arctic Circle in Siberia in February. It has not been independently established whether the 47-year-old died naturally, as his death certificate says. However, his supporters say he was murdered. As a result of the new sanctions, any assets of those affected in the US will be

frozen. US citizens or people who are in the US are prohibited from doing business with sanctioned companies and individuals. The sanctions also make international business much more difficult for those affected.

Death toll in China road collapse mounts to 48

Guangzhou | Agencies The death toll from the collapse of a portion of a road in China's Guangdong province has risen to 48, authorities said. Thirty injured people are receiving hospital treatment, and none are in life-threatening condition, according to authorities of Meizhou City, Xinhua news agency reported. The collapse happened around 2.10 a.m. on the Meizhou-Dabu Expressway in Meizhou. The collapsed section measures 17.9 meters in length and covers an area of 184.3 square meters, officials said. Aerial photos show one side of the expressway had caved in, causing vehicles to roll down a slope. The Ministry of Emergency Management has dispatched a team to the



The Ministry of Emergency Management has dispatched a team to the

scene to guide rescue work and has urged local efforts to accelerate search and rescue work, treat those who sustained injuries, minimize casualties, and determine the cause of the incident. More than 500 personnel from local emergency response teams, mine rescue teams and the fire brigade have joined on-site rescue work, which is ongoing. The ministry has said that safety risks are relatively high on transportation, at tourist attractions and in densely populated areas during the May Day holiday, as the number of people traveling has increased. The ministry will make further efforts to improve emergency plans, investigate potential risks, and strengthen safety precautions.





## CHIEF MINISTER MOHAN YADAV DONATES CHUNARI TO KSHIPRA RIVER IN UJJAIN

Team Absolute | Ujjain

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav reached Ujjain and took bath in the Kshipra river and after worshipping while chanting mantras, offered Chunari. Also targeted those people who are raising questions on Kshipra by raising the issue of pollution for electoral politics.

Lok Sabha elections are at its peak. Voting has taken place in 12 parliamentary constituencies in the state in two phases and voting is to be held in 17 parliamentary constituencies in the next two phases.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister worshiped Kshipra and offered Chunari.

After bathing, Chief Minister Yadav said that Ujjain is identified with Mother Kshipra, 33 crore Gods and Goddesses reside in this city of Baba Mahakal. It is our tradition to take bath on the holy banks of Maa Kshipra and also to increase the importance of the pilgrimage.

Recently, the government and administration were attacked over the



increasing pollution in the Kshipra river. On this matter, Dr. Yadav said

that it is very sad that sometimes people question Maa Kshipra, we all

know that this is the shore of Maa, its sanctity should be maintained.

## Second accused of molesting children in Ujjain's ashram also in custody

Team Absolute | Ujjain

The police has also arrested the second accused of molesting children in the Gurukul of Dandi Seva Ashram in the religious city of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh.

According to the information received from the police, Sevadar Ajay Thakur, the second accused of misdeeds with children in the Gurukul of Dandi Seva Ashram located on Badnagar Road, has been detained by the police from Ashta in Sehore district.

Another accused Acharya Rahul Sharma was caught by the police on Wednesday itself.

It may be noted that three children of the Gurukul run in Dandi Seva Ashram had lodged a complaint of sexual exploitation, on which three separate cases were registered against both the Acharya and the Sevadar. Police had taken Acharya



Rahul Sharma into custody in this case on Wednesday itself and late night, Sevadar

Ajay Thakur was taken into custody from Ashta in Sehore district.

## Women are giving money and wheat to Shivraj for election campaign

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In Vidisha parliamentary constituency of Madhya Pradesh, women are coming forward to help former Chief Minister and BJP candidate Shivraj Singh Chouhan to contest the elections. Some are giving wheat fields and some are giving cash to Chauhan.

Former Chief Minister Chauhan was in the rural areas of Sehore district on Wednesday, where women gave him sacks of wheat along with cash and said that they were giving all this for campaigning in the elections. On this occasion, the former CM said emotionally that the sisters have given a sack of wheat today, when the sister was asked why she was giving it, the sister said that brother, this wheat is for your election expenses.

He said that he will keep the sack of wheat here and after winning the elections, a banquet will be held here, in which I will also come. My sisters are taking out money from their pallu and giving it to me and saying, brother, this is 10 rupees for your election



campaign. Usually, when a leader contests elections, they ask for money, but I am such a lucky brother, who has for this, the sisters are collecting money from their hard-earned money and donating it to contest the elections.

## Kamal Nath has accepted that Congress is defeated: Vishnudatt Sharma

Team Absolute | Bhopal

State President of Bharatiya Janata Party and Khajuraho MP Vishnudatt Sharma, while addressing the meeting of Lok Sabha Election Management Team at the BJP State Office on Thursday, said that the Election Management Team including BJP workers, regarding the completion of two phases of Lok Sabha voting in the state, Have done better work. We have to do better work in the two phases of Lok Sabha elections on 7th and 13th May. He said that by winning all the 29 Lok Sabha seats of the state with an overwhelming majority, we have to strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi by making him the Prime Minister for the third



time. Panna Pramukhs will play a big role in getting maximum number of votes in the upcoming two phases of elections.

While discussing with the media, State President Vishnudatt Sharma said that even today the genes of the British are still left in the Congress.

Congress has always been following the policy of divide and rule. Now Congress will not succeed. It will not make any difference if Priyanka Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi or any other big leader of Congress campaigns in the state. Congress has always promoted appeasement and the public has now understood Congress very well. Wherever Rahul Gandhi has set foot in Madhya Pradesh, Congress is divided. Kamal Nath has also made sure by giving statements regarding voting that Congress is going to be defeated. The people of the state have decided to make Prime Minister Narendra Modi the Prime Minister for the third time by making Bharatiya Janata Party candidates win on all 29 seats, so that India can become a world leader by 2047.

## Congress's confidential feedback on Indore 'Bam incident', PCC Chief Jitu Patwari under the scanner

Team Absolute | Indore

The echo of Akshay Bam incident in Indore has reached Delhi. Congress state president Jitu Patwari is under the scanner.

Meanwhile, the Congress high command has called for the complete report. The news is coming from inside that instead of forming an investigation committee or sending an observer, the Congress headquarters has sought feedback on the Indore case from trusted leaders of the state.

Taking advantage of the investigation started from Indore, many candidates have also sent complaints to Delhi. In this, it has also been said that there is no support from the state organization. Due to the withdrawal of nomination of the authorized candidate of Congress in Indore and defection, Congress is getting disgraced in the entire state. In Indore, this is the first time in history when Congress has disappeared from the election field itself.

According to sources, in the preliminary information sent by Congress leaders to Delhi, State President Jitu Patwari has been directly held



responsible for the failure of the organization. It is being told that the Congressmen have also told the central leadership that the Patwari was not serious about the elections in his home area. Meanwhile, many candidates contesting elections on Congress tickets in the state have also sent complaints to Delhi regarding the organization.

Candidate selection and nomination are also wrong. State leaders have put the organization in the dock in the Indore case. Feedback has been sent to Delhi that after the rejection of the nomination of the alliance candidate in Khajuraho,

there was a possibility of the same happening elsewhere in the state. After this it was decided that Congress would not only field strong candidates but would also field equally strong candidates as dummy candidates. In the matter of defection, Congress State President Jitu Patwari is still avoiding making sharp attacks on Akshay Bam. The entire story behind the withdrawal of nomination is still under wraps. Meanwhile, the Congressmen themselves have sent the news to Delhi that if Jitu Patwari had wanted, he would have himself contested the elections from Indore like Digvijay Singh. However, he withdrew from the candidature.

Such a candidate was selected, who had already faced pressure from some party in a matter before the assembly elections. In such a situation, there was a possibility of that matter arising again in the future. Ignoring this entire issue and choosing the bomb is careless. After this, a person was also selected as a dummy candidate on whom expulsion action was taken in the assembly elections itself for working against the organization.

## Sonia is still the queen and Rahul is the prince: Uma Bharti

Team Absolute | Shivpuri

Former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and BJP's fire brand leader Uma Bharti attacked Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi and said that Sonia still considers herself a queen and Rahul a prince.

In a public meeting held in Pichhore, Shivpuri in presence of Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, BJP candidate from Guna parliamentary constituency of Madhya Pradesh, Uma Bharti said, the country has become independent, but Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi still consider themselves queen and prince. Both of them are on bail in the corruption case. Congress has committed such mistakes and misdeeds in the past that now it is not even worth saying anything about it. Former Chief Minister Uma Bharti said that Congress has taken the country into the trough during its rule. Congress imposed emergency in the country and divided the country to gain power. Sikhs created riots in the country. All these are the actions of Congress. Congress has committed so many



mistakes and misdeeds in the past that today there is nothing left to say about Congress. The people of the country know everything about Congress. At the same time, Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is doing the work of establishing India as a world leader and accelerating the development of the country. To strengthen their hands, every voter from every house has to come to cast their vote on May 7 and provide their blessings to the Bharatiya Janata Party.

## Patients Benefited from Unani Cupping and Leech Therapy at AIIMS Bhopal

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Under the able guidance of Executive Director of AIIMS Bhopal, Prof. (Dr.) Ajai Singh, the institute has been benefiting the patients with the facilities of cupping and leech therapy from the Unani system of medicine in the AYUSH department for the last 2 months.

These ancient therapeutic techniques have been practiced for centuries and are now gaining recognition for their holistic approach towards treatment. Cupping therapy involves placing cups on the skin to create suction, promote blood flow, and reduce muscle tension. This therapy treats joint pain, arthritis, skin diseases like; Effective in ringworm, eczema, and acne. Similarly, leech therapy is used to treat various diseases like; Psoriasis, Varicose Veins, Non-healing ulcers, Alopecia etc. This medical system uses medicinal leeches to remove



impurities from the blood. Emphasizing the benefits of these traditional treatments, the Unani Medical Officer at AIIMS Bhopal said, "Cupping and leech therapy provide natural and effective solutions to many health problems including pain management, inflammation and detoxification."

By adopting these time-honored practices, AIIMS Bhopal aims to provide

patients with comprehensive care that integrates modern medical advances with traditional wisdom. This initiative underlines the institute's commitment towards holistic health care and its dedication towards exploring diverse treatment modalities.

Dr. Barkati MD.Tariq can be contacted in the Department of AYUSH, AIIMS Bhopal for the above therapy benefits.

## SI disappeared after FIR, police preparing for identification parade

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The SIT has started its investigation in the case of cruelty to an 8 year old innocent girl in the hostel of a private boarding school located in the Misrod police station area of the capital. At the same time, the police is also searching for that SI Prakash Rajput, on whom the mother of the victim girl has alleged that he had put pressure on the school director to compromise by asking her not to come to the hospital and get the girl's medical examination done.

SI Rajput, currently posted at Arera Hills police station, has gone missing since the FIR was registered. The mother of the victim girl alleges that when she reached JP Hospital for the medical examination of the girl, the SI Prakash Rajput who came there told her that Modi (school director) had made a mistake under the influence of alcohol, he should understand the matter. Do not take the matter further. School director Priyanka Modi has given her statement in front of the media regarding the issue. She said that the reputation of his school is being harmed by mak-



ing such allegations. She also demanded investigation into the role of the woman and the SI. The school management also says that the woman who complained had come to the school with SI Rajput on April 19 to get the girl admitted. SI Prakash Rajput has been embroiled in controversies many times. Earlier, he had come into conflict with a woman at Bairagarh police station for getting her cake cut. Apart from this, while posted at Misrod police station, Lokayukta police had also caught him while taking bribe. In which he was also reinstated.

Apart from this, he was also in the news for calling a builder from Arera

Hills police station. According to sources, since the case is high profile, the SIT is investigating every aspect in detail and is also investigating the role of the school director, warden, SI Rajput and the victim's mother. This investigation is being done under the supervision of ACP Misrod Division Rajneesh Kaul. In which Misrod police station in-charge Manish Raj Singh Bhadauria, SI Shweta Sharma and Rash Bihari Sharma are continuously engaged in the investigation.

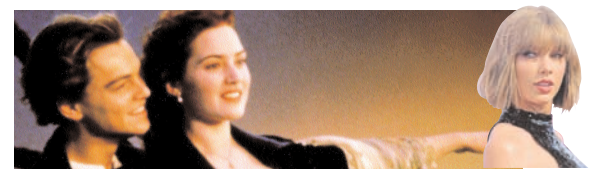
The investigation team reached the school and investigated the hostel room where the innocent girl lived. The police have also interrogated the warden and the team is also talking to

the girl. The magisterial statement of the victim has also been recorded. The victim's mother is continuously raising questions on the police action as the accused have not been arrested yet along with the absence of a named FIR.

According to the information, this school is jointly run by two real brothers, Miniraj Modi and Vinayraj Modi. In such a situation, according to inside sources, the police is preparing to organize an identification parade in front of the victim to identify the people whom the woman has accused, so that the accused can be named in the FIR. After the medical report confirmed molestation of private parts, Misrod police registered a case against three unknown accused late on Tuesday night and seized the DVR of the hostel's CCTV.

Karni Sena and Bajrang Dal organizations protested and burnt a bridge in front of the school regarding the Havanian incident. The organizations have warned that if strict action is not taken within three days and the administration does not bulldoze the school, then the organization workers themselves will vandalize it.





# Sofia Vergara reveals why she can't be too picky about men

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Sofia Vergara feels she can't be too "picky" about who she dates, as it is already hard for women over 50 to find someone. Vergara, who parted ways with Joe Manganiello last year, remains open to the idea of dating another celebrity.

"I mean, it's already hard for a 50-something-year-old woman to find someone. I'm not going to be now picky about, 'Oh, he can only be a doctor. Oh, he can only be an astronaut.' No, I mean, I'm not that picky," the actress told people.com, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The actress has learned that love can be a "tricky" thing.

The Hollywood star, who married Joe in 2015, said: "You never know what the future is going to bring."

"You need to always give the best that you can, be the best person to the other person. Be there for them when they need you, when they're going through the hardest time. Hopefully that will one day come back to you," she said.

Looking ahead, Vergara anticipates the joy of becoming a grandmother one day. "I already kind of like what he does with me. Manolo has a dog, and on the weekends he just drops the dog at my house. And I used to drop him at my mom's house during the weekend so that I could at least go out every once in a while."



**How Taylor Swift Reacted to Boyfriend Travis Kelce Singing**

Los Angeles | Agencies

Travis Kelce knows his girlfriend, Taylor Swift, is the best singer out of the two of them, but that hasn't stopped him from practicing. The 34-year-old football tight end was seen attending Patrick Mahomes' gala, The 15 and Mahomes Foundation Golf Classic, with the 34-year-old pop star, where Travis reportedly grabbed the microphone to belt out a tune.

According to Daily Mail, the Kansas City Chiefs player belted out "Viva Las Vegas" on stage — similar to what he did after winning the Super Bowl earlier this year. A viral Instagram clip taken at the gala also captured Taylor sitting in the audience, lightly shaking her head back and forth in response. In other social media videos, Taylor and Travis were seen sharing some PDA at the event, which took place last weekend. In one X clip, they were spotted holding hands, whereas another revealed he kissed her shoulder. For the evening, the Tortured Poets Department artist wore an olive green gown, and the athlete wore a dark blue suit.



## Jeff Goldblum to financially cut off kids, teach them to be self-sufficient

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Jeff Goldblum has revealed his unconventional parenting philosophy aimed at making his children more "self-sufficient".

The actor emphasised the importance of teaching them the value of hard work and independence.

In a podcast "Table for Two with Bruce Bozzi", Goldblum said: "Hey, you know, you've got to row your own boat."

He underscored his belief in the merit of learning to navigate life's challenges without a safety net. Goldblum's approach to parenting is rooted in a desire for his children to find their passion and pursue what they love, a path he's gratefully been able to follow in his own career, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The actor, married to Canadian dancer Emilie Livingston, became a father later in life and regards this timing as beneficial, allowing him to impart meaningful wisdom and values to his sons.

# Cher reveals Las Vegas residency saved her after she lost all her money

Los Angeles | Agencies

Legendary singer-songwriter Cher has opened up on how she turned her fortunes around. The singer, 77, recently appeared on 'The Jennifer Hudson Show' and shared that she did something many artists didn't do in the 1980s -- begin a residency in Las Vegas -- in order to make some money to support her family.

"I lost all the money I had worked for at some point. So I had to start at ground zero, and I didn't know what I was gonna actually do to make a living for my kids", she was quoted as saying by 'People' magazine.

"I decided to go to Caesar's Palace, which was -- you know, people didn't go there. I was like, 'What's Elvis (Presley) doing here?' But people didn't go to Las Vegas. It really was the elephant's graveyard," she added.

As per 'People', the residency took place at the Circus Maximus Showroom at Caesars Palace and was dubbed, "A Celebration at Caesars Palace". Cher performed songs like 'Lookin for Love', 'Take It to the Limit' and 'Out Here on My Own'.

She also noted during her interview with host Jennifer Hudson that being in the music industry wasn't always easy and she had to overcome several obstacles in order to remain on the stage.

"There was one writer who kept saying every year, 'This is her last year. This is finally her last year. She is so over', And I said, 'You know what buddy, I'll be here when you're gone'. And I think I am."



## Alec Baldwin talks about his plan to have another baby with wife Hilaria

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Alec Baldwin has revealed his potential plans for having another baby with his wife Hilaria. The actor, who appeared on the Our Way with Paul Anka and Skip Bronson podcast, is father to daughters Carmen Gabriela, 10, Maria Lucia Victoria, 3, and Ilaria Catalina Irena, 16 months, as well as sons Rafael Thomas, 8, Leonardo "Leo" Angel, 7, Romeo Alejandro, 5, and Eduardo "Edu" Pao Lucas, 3, with Hilaria. He also has a daughter named Ireland, 28, with former wife Kim Basinger, 70.

"I'm the only person I know who drops four kids off at school in the morning and comes home, and I still have three kids waiting for me when I get home," Baldwin said.

Reflecting on his family size, Baldwin humorously added, "I have eight children. I got my oldest daughter. She has a baby, and she and her boyfriend are living in Oregon. I met my wife, and we got married and had seven kids in nine years. It's crazy."

When asked if he is done having children, Baldwin jokingly responded, "Oh man, how dare you ask me that question?" before admitting, "I think I'm done."

"I found that as I got older, work became less interesting to me. I'm interested, you know, I wanna work and I like to work. But they just don't make that many films anymore that I think are interesting," Baldwin continued, reports people.com.

"Plus, we're all older. Whatever I've done in the past, I try not to be duplicative of that."

"Then all of a sudden I met my wife, who I love dearly. And every time the (youngest) baby would get to be two years old, we go, 'Maybe it's time for one more baby - just one more baby...' So we have seven kids."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Joy Corrigan

## LUKE NEWTON REVEALS TIPS HE GOT FROM PAST 'BRIDGERTON' LEADING MEN

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Bridgerton' star Luke Newton took advice from his leading predecessors, including Rege-Jean Page and Jonathan Bailey, to prepare for his role.

Ahead of the third season, where his character, Colin Bridgerton, becomes the lover of Penelope Featherington (Nicola Coughlan), Newton took the advice.

Speaking to InStyle, Newton revealed that Page, who portrayed the series' first leading man, Simon, the Duke of Hastings, advised him to go on a "big holiday before all the madness starts."

"(Page) sort of grabbed me, gave me a big hug, and was like, 'Are you ready for this, bro?'" Newton said, reports deadline.com.

Page departed 'Bridgerton' following season 1 and has never reprised his role as Simon, husband to Daphne Bridgerton (Phoebe Dynevor).

Bailey had a different path. He became a mainstay and led season 2, where his character found love with Kate Sharma (Simone Ashley). Newton told the outlet that Bailey



has "been there kind of the whole way for me." "We talk all the time, and it was really nice in season 2 seeing how he conducted himself on set, knowing that I'd be next. It was nice to see someone do it so well," Newton added.







## Chess: Gukesh takes a giant leap in World ranking and ratings

Chennai | Agencies

Teenaged Grandmaster D Gukesh has entered the top ten chess players' club in the World with an ELO rating of 2,763.

Gukesh, now ranked sixth in the open category, is ahead of the seventh-ranked World Chess Champion Chinese GM Ding Liren with a rating of 2,762.

What is further interesting is that another Indian chess sensation GM Arjun Erigaisi is ranked eighth in the world with a rating of 2,761.

According to the International Chess Federation (FIDE), Gukesh gained twenty points after winning the FIDE Candidates Tournament that concluded in Canada recently.

By virtue of winning the Candidates Tournament, Gukesh has become the challenger for the world title now held by Liren.

It was a huge jump for Gukesh to be ranked sixth now as he was



ranked 16th before the Candidates Tournament.

"I believe Gukesh will be the slight favourite against Ding Liren. The world champion is a very good player. However, he has not been very active and his form is not at its peak," GM Susan Polgar former women's world champion (1996-99) told IANS when queried about the Indian's chances of becoming a world champion.

On his part, Erigaisi gained five points, as per the rating list issued by the FIDE.

Perhaps this is also for the time in the FIDE list, two Indians figure in the top ten chess clubs in the world.

According to FIDE, two Indian Woman Grandmasters (WGM), Priyanka Nutakki (rating 2,357) and P.V. Nandhidhaa (2,359) gained 83 and 81 points last month in different rating tournaments while GM R.Vaishali gained 14 points at the Women's Candidates Tournament.

## Jadumani, Ajay shine as four Indians advance to semis at Asian U-22

Astana (Kazakhstan) | Agencies

Indian boxers Mandengbam Jadumani Singh, Nikhil, Ajay Kumar and Ankush registered impressive victories to move into the men's U-22 semi-finals at the Asian U-22 & Youth Boxing Championships 2024, here on Thursday.

Jadumani led India's charge with a convincing 5-0 over Bhutan's Phuntsho Kinley in the 51kg quarter-finals bout. Nikhil (57kg) put up a similar display of dominance, securing a 4-0 win over Uzbekistan's Bakhtiyorov Ayubkhon to continue India's winning momentum. Ajay (63.5kg) and Ankush (71kg) won their respective bouts with a referee stop the contest (RSC) decisions. Ajay won the bout in the first round itself against Mongolia's Damdindorj P while Ankush wrapped up his match in the third round against Korea's Lee Ju Sang.

Meanwhile, Ashish went down fighting 2-3 against Oyun Erdene E of Mongolia in the men's 54g quarter-finals

The U-22 semi-finals will be played on Saturday. Dhruv Singh (80kg), Guddi (48kg) and Poonam (57kg) will be in action later tonight in the U-22 quarter-finals.

Late on Wednesday, Aryan (92kg), Nisha (52kg), Akansha Phalasal (70kg) and Rudrika (75kg) won their respective quarter-finals in the youth category.

Friday will see the 22 youth Indian boxers,



including 10 men, competing in the semi-finals. Brijesh Tamta (48kg), Aryan (51kg), Sagar Jakhar (60kg), Yashwardhan Singh (63.5kg), Sumit (67kg), Priyanshu (71kg), Rahul Kundu (75kg), Sahil (80kg), Aryan (92kg) and Lakshay Rathi (+92kg) will fight in the men's section while Annu (48kg), Laxmi (50kg), Nisha (52kg), Tamanna (54kg), Yatri Patel (57kg), Nikita Chand (60kg), Shrushti Sathe (63kg), Parthavi Grewal (66kg), Akansha (70kg), Rudrika (75kg), Khushi Pooniya (81kg) and Nirjhara Bana (+81kg) will be in action in the women's section.

The prestigious tournament has been witnessing high-voltage action with the presence of 390-plus boxers from more than 24 countries, fighting for the medals across 25 weight categories.

The finals for the youth and U-22 category will be played on May 6 and 7 respectively.

## TUC 2024: Indian women finish campaign in QF after losing to Japan

Chengdu (China) | Agencies

Indian women's badminton team finished their BWF Thomas and Uber Cup 2024 campaign in the quarterfinals after losing to former champions Japan 0-3 on Thursday, despite a splendid effort by the singles players.

In the absence of all the experienced campaigners, yet making it to the last eight stage with two convincing wins over Canada and Singapore is a huge shot in the arm for the young contingent.

In the opening singles, Ashmita Chaliha saved a match point against World no. 11 Aya Ohori and led 11-9 at the interval in the decider. But Ohori used all her experience to raise the tempo immediately after to take five straight points and then went on to wrap the match 21-10, 22-24, 21-15 in an hour and seven minutes.

Speaking about her performance Ashmita said, "I had lost to her pretty badly in Syed Modi international and I came into the match with a



mindset that I have to play my best... In the third game, I made some silly errors after 11-9 and that cost me the match."

The world no. 4 combination of Nami Matsuyama and Chiharu Shida then doubled Japan's lead with a 21-8, 21-9 victory over national champions Priya Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra.

Isharani Baruah then gave a good account of her abilities as she kept pace with former world champion Nozomi Okuhara and even lead 14-11 in the opening game before the experienced Japanese turned the tables by winning 10 of the next 11

points. The second game went identical to the first as both players stayed neck and neck till 9-9 before Okuhara marched ahead for a 21-15, 21-12 win to seal the quarterfinals in Japan's favour.

The Indian men's team, which is defending the Thomas Cup title, will face China in a quarterfinal clash.

Result: India lost to Japan 0-3 (Ashmita Chaliha lost to Aya Ohori 10-21, 22-20, 15-21; Priya Konjengbam/Shruti Mishra lost to Nami Matsuyama/Chiharu Shida 8-21, 9-21; Isharani Baruah lost to Nozomi Okuhara 15-21, 12-21)

## KL Rahul was ignored because there was no spot, he did not fit the combinations : Ajit Agarkar

Mumbai | Agencies

The national selectors left out wicketkeeper-batter K.L. Rahul from the 15-member squad for the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup because there was no spot for him and he did not fit the combination, said Ajit Agarkar, chairman of the national selection committee on Thursday.

As the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced the 15-member squad for the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup, set to start in the United States and the Caribbean on June 1, the decisions taken by the selection committee raised many questions.

The main question was related to the non-selection of K.L. Rahul, the Lucknow Super Giants captain who is currently among the top five scorers in the Indian Premier League with 406 runs to his name. Rahul is quite experienced and has been a consistent performer in the format as captain of Lucknow Super Giants.

Though Rishabh Pant was considered a sure-shot selection after he made an impressive return from a 15-month injury break at the IPL. The selectors, however, opted for Kerala batter Sanju Samson as the second option ahead of Rahul.

Ajit Agarkar said they could not find a place for K.L. Rahul in the mid-



dle-order because of the presence of Rishabh Pant, Shivam Dube and Hardik Pandya.

"We feel that Rishabh Pant and Sanju Samson were more suited for the World Cup. KL Rahul was not fitting in the combination, there was no slot for him," said Ajit Agarkar on Thursday.

Skipper Rohit Sharma said the previous selection committee had deliberated a lot on the need to concentrate on selecting players based on the upcoming ICC tournament. He said that they had decided to concentrate on players needed for the specific format and decided to give chances to players based on that rationale. He

said that they had picked up Shivam Dube based on his performance in the IPL. Ravindra Jadeja, Hardik Pandya as allrounders and Suryakumar Yadav as the fulcrum of the middle-order, hence there was no spot for Rahul.

## Haris Rauf returns as Pakistan name T20I squad for Ireland, England tours



Lahore | Agencies

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Thursday announced its 18-player squad for the upcoming T20I series against Ireland (from May 10-14) and England (from May 22-30) with the fast bowler Haris Rauf returning to action after recovering from a shoulder injury.

The squad will be reduced to 15 players for next month's ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 after the first T20I at Leeds on May 22 to meet the ICC's May 24 deadline, PCB said in a statement.

Babar Azam will lead the side after being reinstated as white-ball captain ahead of the five-match T20I series at home against New Zealand, which ended

in a 2-2 stalemate after the first game was washed out.

Rauf has been recalled to the set-up along with all-rounders Hasan Ali and Salman Ali Agha in the 18-player squad.

Rauf and wicketkeeper-batter Azam Khan were sidelined for the New Zealand T20Is due to injuries, while middle-order batter Muhammad Irfan Khan and wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan were rested from the two T20Is in Lahore due to niggles.

Spinner Usama Mir and fast bowler Zaman Khan are two players who did not make the cut from the original 17-player squad that faced New Zealand.

"The four cricketers underwent fitness assessments at the National Cricket

Academy on Tuesday afternoon, showing significant improvement. This progress has provided confidence and encouragement to the PCB Medical Panel and the team management regarding their potential availability during the seven T20Is," it said. The team is scheduled to depart for Dublin on May 7 following a three-day training camp in Lahore from May 4 to 6.

Pakistan squad: Babar Azam (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Azam Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Muhammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Rizwan, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Usman Khan.

## O'Sullivan bow out in Snooker World Championship quarterfinals

London: World No.1 Ronnie O'Sullivan's chances of an eighth title, which would move him one ahead of Stephen Hendry's total, are over for another year, as he lost to Stuart Bingham 10-13 in the quarterfinal of the World Championships.

The seven-time world champion O'Sullivan had been on course for a career-best season, having won five titles including the UK Championship and the Masters. But his hopes of landing all three events in the same season for the first time are over.

He also lost the world number one ranking which he had held since April 2022, world snooker reports.

Mark Allen will climb to the top of the official list for the first time in his career and become the 12th player ever to hold that status.

In a high-quality start to the concluding session, O'Sullivan took the first frame with a break of 136 to go 9-8 ahead, then Bingham levelled with a 63. In frame 19, O'Sullivan missed a difficult red to a centre pocket on 39, and his opponent punished him with a fine 67 clearance.

Bingham had first chance in frame 20 and made 35 before rattling a tough red in the jaws of a baulk corner. O'Sullivan replied with 62 before missing the final yellow, but later converted a long brown for 10-10. Leading 39-18 in frame 21, Bingham failed to pot a difficult pink to a top corner, but O'Sullivan's attempted clearance ended when he missed the last red along the side cushion, and his opponent capitalised to edge ahead.

Another error from 48-year-old O'Sullivan, missing the black when trying to split the pack on 23, let Bingham in for a superb 104, his third century of the match and fourth of the tournament, for 12-10. At 52-0 in frame 23, Bingham missed the pink to a centre pocket, and O'Sullivan's response ended on 48 when he failed to pot an awkward yellow. This time there was no mistake from Bingham as he took the colours to beat O'Sullivan for only the fourth time in 22 career meetings.

"I enjoyed it, and the number one thing for me is to enjoy the game. For the first time in two years I feel like I want to play. I look forward to getting my cue out and the sound of the balls. That's nothing to do with winning titles. You can't win them all," O'Sullivan said.



## SALIMA TO CAPTAIN WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM IN FIH PRO LEAGUE'S BELGIUM, ENGLAND LEGS

New Delhi | Agencies

Hockey India on Thursday announced the 24-member women's team that will participate in the Belgium and England legs of the FIH Pro League 2023-24.

Salima Tete, who was recently honoured with the prestigious Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of The Year 2023, will lead the charge. Meanwhile, midfielder Navneet Kaur has been named her deputy.

The Belgium leg will begin on May 22 and end on May 26. The England leg will commence on June 1 and conclude on June 9. India will play against Argentina, Belgium, Spain, Great Britain and Germany twice each across both legs, beginning their campaign against Argentina on May 22. India are currently placed in 6th place, having eight points from eight matches.



The goalkeeping responsibilities will rest with Savita and Bichu Devi Kharibam, while the defensive line-up includes Nikki Pradhan, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary, Monika, Jyoti Chhatri and Mahima Chaudhary.

The midfield section will be marshalled by dynamic players such as Salima Tete, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Navneet Kaur, Neha, Jyoti, Baljeet Kaur, Manisha Chauhan and Lalremsiami. The

forward line have Mumtaz Khan, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Sharmila Devi, Preeti Dubey, Vandana Katariya, Sunelita Toppo and Deepika Soreng.

Speaking on the team selection and on being appointed as the captain, dynamic midfielder Salima said, "I am happy that I have been appointed to lead the team. It is a big responsibility, and I am looking forward to this new role. We have a strong squad, and it's a mix of experi-

enced and young players. In the upcoming Belgium and England legs of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2023-2024, we look to put our strong foot forward.

"We have been training rigorously in the camp. We have worked on areas where we needed to improve. I am sure that we will put up good performances and get the results we desire."

Meanwhile, vice-captain Navneet said, "It feels surreal to be named as the Vice-Captain of the Indian Women's Hockey Team. I am quite excited to get on with this team in the FIH Hockey Pro League 2023-24, where we will play quality teams. We have a good team and we are confident that we will do well in the Europe leg of the Pro League. I am also looking to work on my game and improve. We had a camp in SAL, Bengaluru, where we underwent high-intensity training. I am looking forward to the upcoming games.





## "Sridevi's Chennai home" symbolises such a special chapter in my mother's legacy : Janhvi Kapoor

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Gen-Z diva Janhvi Kapoor, who has turned a host for her childhood home in Chennai, owned by her mother, the late actress Sridevi, shared sweet memories of the residence, describing it as a special chapter in her mother's legacy.

Speaking at the launch event, Janhvi said: "I think this house symbolises such a special chapter in my mother's legacy and in all of our lives. It was her first major purchase once she started work-

ing and her 'prized possession' really."

The actress went on to narrate the sweetest memories of her childhood home, saying, "Growing up it was always like a theme in our lives, alright we are going to Chennai, and we have a city house. My mother loved the beach."

At her family's Chennai holiday home, Janhvi will be hosting two guests, providing access to one bedroom and bathroom.

"So what you can expect is very good energy, we have made a lot of special memories in that house,

an amazing view, access to the beach, and just a nice place to relax and be with yourself," she added.

## Childhood friendships stay forever : Anupam Kher

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Veteran actor Anupam Kher shared that today, he considers himself rich not because of owning a car or fame, but rather because of the quality of friends he has. Taking to X, Anupam shared a video featuring him-

self alongside his friends, reminiscing about their bond. The actor revealed that 53 years ago, on May 2, 1971, he and his childhood buddies made a pact in Shimla to meet annually on the same date: "53 years ago, on May 2, 1971, me and my friends Vijay Sehgal and Satish Malhotra made a pact in Shimla that every year on this date we will celebrate 'dosti divas'. One of us reminds the other two that it's May 2," he captioned. Anupam talked about how childhood friendships stay forever because relationships made at an early age are full of innocence: "Agar aesa dost ho toh insaan har takleef, pareshaani, dukh, baichani, khushi khushi bardasht kar sakta hai. Main aaj ameer isiliye nahi hun ki mere paas gaadi hai, shauharat hai, safalta hai balki isiliye safal hun kiunki mere paas aesa dost hai (If you have friends like these, one can endure all pain, distress, sorrow, joy with a smile. Today, I am not rich because I have a car, fame, or success, but because I have such friends)," he expressed.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

On their 44th wedding anniversary, actress-politician Hema Malini shared some glimpses from the celebration at home with veteran actor Dharmendra.

Taking to social media platform X, Hema Malini shared a string of pictures featuring her and Dharmendra from their home.

In one image, the star couple are seen wearing a garland. In another picture, they are seen posing. The third picture looks

**44 YEARS OF TOGETHERNESS HEMA MALINI SHARES GLIMPSES WITH DHARMENDRA**

adorable as they strike a pose and smile. For the caption, she wrote: "Photos from today at home."

Earlier in the day, Hema Malini had penned a heartfelt note for Dharmendra and captioned it: "Our wedding anniversary today! 44 years of togetherness, 2 beautiful girls, lovely gchildren surrounding us & drowning us with their love!"

Hema Malini added: "Our fans & their limitless adulation! What more can I ask of life? Our eternal gratitude to the Almighty for this gift of happiness. Video by a fan."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Divyanka Tripathi Dahiya, who recently suffered a forearm fracture, on Thursday shared happy pictures of herself, saying that her alone time feels so good.

The 'Yeh Hai Mohabbatein' fame actress took to Instagram and dropped a string of pictures, where she can be seen wearing a black kurta with white embroidery on it. She was sitting on a couch and posing for the lenses. Divyanka has kept her makeup minimal and her hair straight open. The post was captioned: "My alone time feels so good. If you are in my inner circle, you are definitely sweeter than my solitude!"

The actress is also known for her roles in 'Banoo Main Teri Dulhann', and 'Cold Lassi Aur Chicken Masala'. She was also the first runner-up in 'Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 11'.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sonam Bajwa

## Rajinikanth biopic, Sajid Nadiadwala bags rights

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Filmmaker Sajid Nadiadwala has reportedly bagged the rights for star Rajinikanth's biopic, which will depict his humble beginnings to becoming a superstar. According to a media report, Nadiadwala, who has bankrolled films such as the 'Housefull' franchise, 'Satyaprem Ki Katha', 'Judwaa 2', and 'Kick', among many others, signed a contract for the rights for the biopic.

Quoting a source close to the development, the media report said that Nadiadwala believes "Rajinikanth's story deserves to be seen by the world - from a bus conductor to a superstar".

The media report also stated that Nadiadwala has been in constant touch with the star and his family to maintain authenticity in telling the story and claimed that it is the "greatest rags to riches story, and will focus more on Rajinikanth the human."



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The star cast of the upcoming film 'Jolly LLB 3' has started its shooting. On Thursday, Bollywood superstar Akshay Kumar, and actor Arshad Warsi took to their social media handles to share the update with their followers. The actors shared a video, in which they were seen engaging in a 'tiff' over the original Jolly. While Arshad says in the video that he is the real Jolly - Advocate Jagdish Tyagi and that people should be wary of the duplicates in the market, Akshay Kumar says that he is the real Jolly - Advocate Jagdishwar 'Jolly' Mishra.

Senior actor Saurabh Shukla, who essays the role of Judge Sunderlal Tripathi in the film franchise, then makes an appearance in the video holding a board which says, "Jolly LLB3' shoot begins".

The 'Jolly LLB' franchise, which started with the Arshad Warsi-starrer 'Jolly LLB' in 2013, is a series of Indian Hindi-language courtroom black comedy-drama films, written and directed by Subhash Kapoor.

The first film saw Arshad essaying the titular role as he locks horns with a senior lawyer over a hit-and-run case involving the son of a big-shot guy.

The second film, headlined by Akshay Kumar, was released in 2017. It followed the case of an extra-killing in the form of a manufactured encounter by a corrupt cop essayed by Kumud Mishra. Akshay Kumar's character of Jagdishwar Mishra fights the court to bring justice to those wronged.



## My alone time feels so good : Divyanka Tripathi Dahiya

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Divyanka Tripathi Dahiya, who recently suffered a forearm fracture, on Thursday shared happy pictures of herself, saying that her alone time feels so good.

The 'Yeh Hai Mohabbatein' fame actress took to Instagram and dropped a string of pictures, where she can be seen wearing a black kurta with white embroidery on it. She was sitting on a couch and posing for the lenses. Divyanka has kept her makeup minimal and her hair straight open. The post was captioned: "My alone time feels so good. If you are in my inner circle, you are definitely sweeter than my solitude!"

The actress is also known for her roles in 'Banoo Main Teri Dulhann', and 'Cold Lassi Aur Chicken Masala'. She was also the first runner-up in 'Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 11'.