

# absolute india

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**NATION** > 02  
SC issues contempt notice against CPWD, DDA officials for...



**HOLYWOOD** > 06  
Rebel Wilson made no money on 'Bridesmaids', even bought her...



**SPORTS** > 07  
Only KL Rahul will lead LSG, everything is fine between team...



## Debate over Hindu-Muslim count between 1950 & 2015: How politicians and experts reacted

# CRUTCH FOR ELECTION

According to the EAC-PM, the share of the majority Hindu population declined by 7.82 per cent from 84.68 per cent to 78.06 per cent between 1950 and 2015 while that of Muslim population rose by 43.15 per cent to 14.09 per cent from 9.84 per cent during the period.

The paper said the Christian population share rose 5.38 per cent from 2.24 per cent to 2.36 per cent during the period.

The share of Sikh population increased by 6.58 per cent from 1.24 per cent in 1950 to 1.85 per cent in 2015.

Even the share of the Buddhist population witnessed a noticeable increase from 0.05 per cent to 0.81 per cent.



Union Minister and firebrand BJP leader Giriraj Singh said that the drastic rise in the Muslim population was a matter of concern and if not addressed timely, will have serious ramifications. Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya blamed the Congress for unhindered growth of one community at the cost of other.

BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi told correspondent that in 1950s, the population of Muslims was comparatively less while the number of learned Muslims was higher. Congress leader Udit Raj, replying to query on the EAC-PM report, slammed the current dispensation for not conducting Census in 2021. "Census is due for long. This government is deliberately delaying it. Unless, there is a detailed survey, we won't get to know the real demography," he said.

Former Congress veteran Acharya Pramod Krishnam hit out at the INDIA bloc for plunging numbers of Hindus. He said that the Opposition wants to divide the majority, so that it succeeds in pushing its dangerous agenda. Manu Gaur, the TAXAB president also raised concerns over the changing demography and said that an effective population policy was the need to time to arrest this disparity.

"The rise in their population resulted in their degradation. Muslim community should introspect into this rather than reacting with anger over findings."

**Sudhanshu Trivedi, Spokesperson, BJP**

"Every community has seen growth in their numbers, over the years. It's understood that those belonging to poor and deprived sections will have bigger families but this can't be seen through a religious prism."

**Mufti Shahabuddin Barelvi, AIMJ Chief**

"The report cites the period between 1950 and 2015. Why does it not talk about the period after that? Moreover, the EAC report is bound to be tailored to suit the ruling party's convenience"

**Surendra Rajput, Spokesperson, Congress**

"We have been demanding a caste census but they are turning a blind eye to this demand because it will not fetch them votes. The Hindu-Muslim population ratio will now make them scare Hindus and derive political mileage. We do not accept such reports."

**Shivpal Yadav, Leader, SP**



## Furore over SS-UBT MP's 'Mera Baap Gaddar Hai' jibe against Maha CM, son

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha MP Priyanka Chaturvedi's 'Mera Baap Gaddar Hai' remark targeting Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his son Shrikant Shinde ignited a massive in the state row on Thursday with the rival Shiv Sena slamming her for the 'filmy' jibe.

Canvassing for Shiv Sena (UBT) nominee from the Mumbai North East Lok Sabha seat, Sanjay D. Patil, in Ghatkopar late on Wednesday, Chaturvedi slammed CM Shinde and his son Shrikant Shinde, who is eyeing a hat-trick from the Kalyan Lok Sabha seat in the adjoining Thane district.

"Who are you Eknath Shinde? What are you? You are nothing but a 'gaddar' (traitor)," Chaturvedi said, reminding the gathering of the split in the undivided Shiv Sena in June 2022. Chaturvedi continued: "Whatever you do, you cannot escape the 'gaddar' taint... It will haunt even your family, as in the film 'Deewar' (1975)." She was referring to the famous dialogue by Amitabh Bachchan to his brother Shashi Kapoor in the film, pointing out how some goons had tattooed 'Mera Baap Chor Hai' on his arm. "In the same manner, the CM's son, Shrikant Shinde, will always carry the burden."



'Mera Baap Gaddar Hai' is written on his forehead and he cannot escape the consequences," Chaturvedi said amid thunderous applause. The reference was to the unprecedented revolt in June 2022 when the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by then CM Uddhav Thackeray was toppled and Eknath Shinde hopped onto the CM's seat with BJP's support. Taking more potshots, she said the MVA is poised for a huge victory all over Maharashtra and it's the "people's fight versus the ruling MahaJhoothi alliance". The MahaYuti alliance hit back on Thursday with Shiv Sena deputy leader Sanjay Nirupam, spokespersons Sheetal Mhatre and Sanjay Shirsat, and BJP's Nitesh Rane attacking her for the filmy jibe. Calling it a highly inappropriate statement coming from a woman MP of the SS (UBT), Nirupam claimed it was Uddhav Thackeray who became a 'Maha Gaddar' after he betrayed the BJP to join the MVA partners Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (in October 2019).

## Air India Express row: 85 flights cancelled as cabin crew members continue strike

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Over 80 flights were cancelled on Thursday following the mass sick leave taken by the cabin crew members of Air India Express, said an official. "We will be operating 283 flights today. We have mobilised all resources and Air India will support us by operating on 20 of our routes. However, 85 of our flights stand cancelled and we urge our guests booked to fly with us to check if their flight is affected by the disruption before heading to the airport," said the Air India Express spokesperson. "If their flight is cancelled, or delayed beyond 3 hours, they may opt for a full refund or reschedule to a later date without any fees on Tia on WhatsApp (+91 6360012345) or airindiaexpress.com," the spokesperson added. Since Tuesday, over 300 cabin crew members have gone on mass sick leave alleging that despite assur-



ances of job security, salary preservation, and recognition of seniority and expertise, there has been a visible departure from these commitments during the transition from AirAsia to Air India Express. In 2023, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) gave its go-ahead to the Tata Group's initiative to merge the budget airline AIX Connect (previously known as AirAsia India) with Air India Express.

"Since last (Tuesday) evening, over 100 of our cabin crew colleagues have reported sick prior to their rostered flight duty, at the last minute, severely disrupting our operations. Because this action was mostly by colleagues assigned L1 role, the impact was disproportionate, disrupting 90+ flights even though other colleagues reported for duty", read the letter by CEO Alok Singh on Wednesday.

## EIGHT KILLED IN BLAST AT FIREWORKS FACTORY IN TN'S SIVAKASI

Chennai: Eight people, including two women, were killed in a blast at a fireworks factory in Sivakasi in Tamil Nadu's Virudhunagar district on Thursday, while several others were injured, officials said.

Police and fire personnel reached the spot for rescue operations and the injured, which include two in serious condition, were being taken to the Virudhunagar government medical college and hospital.

Further details were awaited. Sivakasi is the "fireworks capital" of India with an annual turnover of Rs 6,000 crore and employing more than 1 lakh people directly and around two and half lakh people indirectly.

## US trying to 'complicate' Lok Sabha elections: Russia

Moscow | Agencies

Targeting the US for interfering in India's internal affairs, Russia has said that Washington is trying to "complicate" the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, including by making "regular unfounded accusations" on threats to religious freedom in the country.

Reacting strongly to the recent report released by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said Washington not only "groundlessly" accuses India, but also many other states. "Regular unfounded accusations by the United States against New Delhi - we see that they groundlessly accuse not only India, but also many other states - of violating religious freedoms are a reflection of the United States' misunderstanding of the national mentality, the historical context of the development of the Indian state and disrespect for India as a state," Zakharova told mediapersons in Moscow on Wednesday. "I am sure that this also



comes from the neocolonial mentality, the mentality of the colonial period, the period of the slave trade, and imperialism... This does not only apply to India. The reason is the desire to unbalance the internal political situation in India in order to

complicate the general parliamentary elections taking place in the country. Of course, this is part of interference in India's internal affairs," added the Russian MFA spokesperson. During the regular media briefing, Zakharova was also asked about a report published in a US newspaper that accused an Indian official of a "foiled assassination" plot on foreign soil. "According to the information we have, Washington has not yet provided any reliable evidence of the involvement of Indian citizens in the preparation of the murder of a certain G.S. Pannun. Speculation on this topic in the absence of evidence is unacceptable," stated Zakharova. Last week, India slammed the USCIRF report, saying that the agency's efforts to interfere in India's ongoing elections will never succeed.

## 'Right to campaign not fundamental'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Day before the Supreme Court is set to pronounce its order on the interim bail plea moved by incarcerated Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the excise policy case, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday opposed the grant of interim relief saying that a politician can claim no "special status" higher than that of an ordinary citizen and is as much liable to be arrested and detained for committing offences as any other citizen. The affidavit filed by ED's Deputy Director stated that there is no principle that justifies giving differential treatment to a politician for campaigning over a farmer or a businessman who wishes to pursue his vocation. "If the right to campaign is treated as a basis for grant of interim bail, it would breach



the principles of Article 14 for the reason that harvesting for a farmer would be an equally important factor for seeking interim bail as would a board meeting or an annual general meeting for a director of a company who commits a crime, as these are their respective vocations or professions," read the affidavit. The agency said that the right to campaign for elections is neither a fundamental right nor a constitutional right and not even a legal right.

## K'TAKA SEX SCANDAL NCW says three men claiming to be cops forced one 'victim' to lodge false complaint

Bengaluru | Agencies

In a twist to the sex video scandal in Karnataka involving Prajwal Revanna -- the sitting JD-S MP who has been renominated from Hassan -- the National Commission for Women (NCW) said on Thursday that one of the woman complainants in the case has claimed that she was forced by a group of people to lodge a false complaint after being threatened with harassment. The NCW said in a statement, "One woman complainant came to the Commission to register a complaint against three individuals dressed in civil uniform, allegedly introducing themselves as Karnataka Police officials and forcing her to give a false complaint in this case.



"The woman claimed that she received calls from random numbers threatening her to lodge a complaint. It has come to light that this complainant was forced by a group of individuals to file a complaint under the threat of potential harassment and false implications. The complainant has sought protection for her family, underscoring the seriousness of the situation, the NCW said, adding that it has asked Karnataka DGP Alok Mohan to provide appropriate security to the woman. Prajwal Revanna is the grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, and son of JD-S MLA H.D. Revanna, who has been arrested for his alleged role in the kidnapping of a victim of the sex scandal involving his

## Key reasons why Sensex fell over 2,600 points in last 5 sessions

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian stock market has been in deep red for the last five sessions with the Sensex going down by more than 2,600 points -- from 75,095 points to 72,404 points on Thursday. The Nifty has also nosedived nearly 850 points, from 22,794 points to 21,957 points, in the last five trading sessions. According to industry experts, muted cues from Q4 earnings of largecap companies have dampened investor sentiment and triggered profit booking. Also, the volatility index, India VIX, has risen 70 per cent from its lows, which too is creating some uncertainty among traders and investors. On Thursday, it was up by 6.96 per cent at 18.20 points. Another reason, according to experts, is that till now, FIIs investors have been selling in the market and domestic investors have been buying, but due to big events like



elections, the purchases by domestic investors have also reduced, leading to a decline in the markets. In the trading sessions so far in May, FIIs have sold Rs 15,863 crore. Meanwhile, the US Fed gave hawkish commentary about interest rates that subdued sentiment. As per market experts, uncertainty over Lok Sabha election results can be another key reason behind the fall in the markets.



## SC ISSUES CONTEMPT NOTICE AGAINST CPWD, DDA OFFICIALS FOR FELLING OF TREES IN DELHI'S RIDGE AREA



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday set in motion contempt proceedings against the officials of the Central

Public Works Department (CPWD) and the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) for felling of trees in Delhi's Ridge area in violation of its orders.

Issuing notice in the contempt petitions, a bench, headed by Justice Abhay S. Oka summoned the Director General of the CPWD and DDA Vice Chairperson, in person, on the

next date of listing.

"We direct that the respondents shall not indulge in any further tree felling and status quo as of today shall be maintained in respect of the property subject matter of these contempt petitions," the bench, also comprising Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, ordered.

The contempt petitions alleged that a large number of trees in the ridge had been felled there by the DDA to construct an approach road between the Chhattarpur Road and the SAARC University near Maidan Garhi.

In an earlier order, the top court had said that other areas having morphological ridges were required to be protected and no permission for construction should be given there. Further, it had directed the Ministry of Environment and Forest to set up a committee to work out modalities to identify areas of the Ridge which are not notified but also have the same ridge-like features.

## PM losing confidence, MVA to get 30-35 LS seats in Maha: Sharad Pawar



Satara | Agencies

Claiming that the country wants a "change", Nationalist Congress Party-SP President Sharad Pawar on Thursday predicted that the INDIA-Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance candidates will bag between 30-35 seats of the 48 Lok Sabha constituencies in Maharashtra. Addressing media persons here, Pawar said that in the 2019 LS elections, the

Opposition parties had got just 6 seats, but this time the figures would be at least five to six times higher, touching 30-35. "The first three phases of polling in the country seem to have unnerved Prime Minister Narendra Modi. That's why after the second phase, he changed his political strategy by directly naming the Muslim community. He apparently feels that now something can be done by invoking such religious

issues...," he claimed. In his assessment, the octogenarian leader pointed out that as the elections progress, PM Modi's supporters are apprehensive that his position (as PM) is under threat. He reiterated that the alliance of NCP-SP, the Congress, and the Shiv Sena-UBT is expected to get a good response as the people of the state support their policies and are desirous of a "change" in power in the country.

### Neha Sharma murder case

## Allahabad HC grants bail to accused, cites lengthy detention period

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Allahabad High Court has granted bail to Uday Sarup, accused of murdering 23-year-old PhD student Neha Sharma in the zoology lab of the Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra, in March 2013.

Without going into the merits of the case, Justice Sanjay Kumar Singh cited the long incarceration period of the accused for granting bail.

"This court is also of the view that though detailed discussion on merit is not required but at least, order rejecting or granting bail must reflect basic reason for the same."

Sarup was arrested a month after the incident and charged under Sections 302 (murder), 376 (rape), and 511 (attempting to commit offences punishable with imprisonment for life) of the IPC.

After police filed a charge sheet, the case was transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

In 2014, the court granted bail to the accused under the aforementioned sections. However, after the CBI filed a supplementary charge sheet in 2015 under Sections 302, 376 and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence



of offence), Sarup was again taken into custody in 2016.

Meanwhile, the father of the victim had moved the Supreme Court against the court order granting bail to the accused. The plea was disposed of in 2019 since the accused had been taken into custody again.

The CBI alleged that Sarup, whose advances had previously been rebuffed by the victim, meticulously orchestrated the murder. In its charge sheet, it said that Sarup had raped and killed the young woman after finding her alone in the lab.

### Molestation Case

## CCTV footage of Raj Bhavan shown to 'common people', Governor not spotted in single frame

Kolkata | Agencies

Amid allegations of molestation against West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose, the Governor's House on Thursday showed 69-minute CCTV footage of the Raj Bhavan premises dated May 2 to around 100 'common people'.

On May 2, a temporary female staff at the Raj Bhavan filed a police complaint accusing the Governor of 'outraging her modesty', triggering a political storm in the state.

Denying the charge vehemently from the beginning, the Governor on Wednesday announced that the CCTV footage of the Raj Bhavan will be screened at the Governor's House for the common people, barring Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and members of the police force, on Thursday.

In the CCTV footage screened in three parts, the Governor could not



be seen in any frame. The footage from May 2 showed

recordings of two CCTV cameras installed in the North Gate of the Raj

Bhavan from 5.32 p.m. to 6.41 p.m. The screening event was titled 'Sach Ka Samna'.

Although the Governor was not spotted in the footage, the complainant was seen twice -- once entering the police post inside the Raj Bhavan premises, and then coming out of it and entering an adjacent room.

Heavy deployment of police was seen in the footage on account of the arrival of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Raj Bhavan on the night of May 2.

Since the announcement of the screening on Wednesday, the Governor's office received hundreds of applications from the common people seeking to attend the event.

The CCTV cameras inside the Governor's House are maintained by the Public Works Department, while the monitoring is done by the Kolkata Police.

## Chautala seeks floor test after Independents withdraw support to Haryana's Saini govt

Chandigarh | Agencies

J.P. leader and Former Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala on Thursday asked Governor Bandaru Dattatreya to order a floor test after three Independent MLAs withdrew support to the BJP government, while the Congress demanded that it should resign on moral grounds as it was now "in the minority".

Chautala, in a letter to the Governor, sought his intervention under Article 174 as the Nayab Singh Saini government does not command a majority.

"The Nayab Saini government was formed with the support of six Independents. While three have withdrawn support, one Independent MLA resigned from the House and his resignation was accepted on April 30. The government no longer has the numbers, necessitating a floor test," it read.

The Congress demanded the President's rule in the state and sought time to meet the Governor on Friday. Leader of Opposition and two-time



Chief Minister Bhupinder Hooda said the government should resign on moral grounds as "it's in the minority".

Talking to the media in Bhiwani town, Hooda said the Congress delegation of 30 legislators would be reaching Chandigarh. He said 45 of the 88 legisla-

tors in the Assembly - 30 of the Congress, 10 of the JJP, three Independent legislators, who have switched sides to the Congress, Independent MLA from Meham, Balraj Kundu, and INLD MLA Abhey Chautala were against the government.

### FOUR DIE WHILE CLEANING SEPTIC TANK IN UP

Chandauli: At least four people, including three labourers, died after inhaling toxic gas while cleaning a 15-year-old septic tank in the New Mahal area of Chandauli district on Thursday.

SDM Viraj Pandey said, "The cleaning of sewer was ongoing at the residence of one Bharat Jaiswal."

"Three labourers and the house owner's son died. District administration will provide Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia to each of the deceased." Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also took cognisance of the incident and expressed his condolences to the bereaved families.

He has directed officials to expedite relief measures.

## Rajasthan teen freed from shackles of child marriage on Akshaya Tithiya eve

Jaipur | Agencies

On the eve of Akshaya Tithiya, which is also associated with child marriage in Rajasthan, a 17-year-old girl was freed from the shackles of the evil practice as her child marriage was annulled before she attained adulthood on Thursday. Sugandha (name changed) was married at the tender age of 10 and sent to her in-law's place at 16, before being freed from the bondage at the age of 17.

Daughter of a daily wageer at a village in Jodhpur district, she bore the brunt of child marriage for seven long years.

Under societal pressure, her 'Gauna' -- a custom in North India associated with the consummation of marriage -- was performed fol-



lowing which she was sent to her in-law's house at the age of 16, where her husband and in-laws reportedly subjected her to verbal abuse.

The family court in Jodhpur has now finally annulled the child marriage of Sugandha and freed her from the shackles of the evil practice.

Sugandha got information from the women's police station about the campaign against child marriage run by Kriti Bharti, Managing Trustee of Jodhpur's Saarthi Trust, who is also a rehabilitation psychologist and child & women's rights advocate.

After she met Bharti and narrated her ordeal, the latter filed a case about five months ago for the annulment of Sugandha's child marriage.

Annulling Sugandha's child marriage, the judge of Family Court No. 2, Pradeep Kumar Modi, said that everyone must take responsibility for eradicating this evil practice from the society.

## Islam does not permit live-in relationship for a married Muslim: Allahabad HC

Lucknow | Agencies

The Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court has said that a follower of Islam cannot be in a live-in relationship, particularly if the spouse is alive.

"The Islamic tenets do not permit live-in relationships during the subsisting marriage. The position may be different if the two persons are unmarried and the parties being adults choose to lead their lives in a way of their own," said the bench on Wednesday. With this observation, a bench of Justice A.R. Masoodi and Justice A.K. Srivastava refused to provide police protection to petitioners Sneha Devi and Mohd Shadab Khan, both natives of Bahraich district. The petitioners claimed they were in a live-in relationship but the woman's parents lodged an FIR against Khan for kidnapping and inducing their daughter to marry him.



The petitioners sought police protection saying they are adults and as per a Supreme Court order, they were free to stay in a live-in relationship. On enquiry, the bench found that Khan was already married (to one Farida Khatoun in 2020) and even had a daughter. Considering this fact, the court declined to provide him police protection on the grounds of the SC verdict which permits a live-in relationship. The bench instead said that Islam does not permit such a relationship, especially under the circumstances of the present case.

### CHAR DHAM YATRA

## Kedarnath shrine adorned with 20 quintals of flowers, portals to open on Friday

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The portals of the holy Kedarnath Dham are set to open on Friday. While the preparations for the ceremonial opening of the temple are in full swing, the devotees have started assembling in large numbers in adjacent Sonprayag and Gaurikund, for the first darshan of the deity.

The first portals will be thrown open for devotees at 7 AM morning on Friday (May 10).

One major highlight of this year's opening ceremony is that the temple is being decorated with 20 quintals of flowers. The pictures of the decorated temple, as it surfaced on social media gave a mesmerising look.

Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) President Ajendra Ajay told newsmen that the flowers reached the holy temple via helicopters and the devotees are



ecstatic and elated over such arrangements. Earlier in the day, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami took to his X handle and welcomed the devotees to Kedarnath Dham. "Hearty welcome and greetings to all the devotees in

Shri Kedarnath Dham in Chardham Yatra-2024... Hail Lord Kedar!" the CM wrote. Meanwhile, Lord Kedarnath's Panchmukhi Doli left for Kedarnath Dham today while devotees and school children chanted mantras and showered flower petals.

## The Mother-Son Duo who are achieving success at Amazon

Bangalore | Agencies

Mother's Day is a special occasion to honour mothers, and those who play a significant role in shaping their young ones. Many moms balance the demands of a career and running a household in this fast-paced world. They are able to raise and take care of their families in addition to bringing their best selves to work. Among these inspiring mothers is M R Anupama, who is rewriting the narrative of 'leading by example'. She shares a unique bond with her son, Akash, who is also an Amazonian. Hailing from Bangalore, Anupama's journey at Amazon began in 2013 as an Executive Assistant and in 2023, her role evolved and got expanded to Program Manager for Employee Experience. With over two decades of administrative experience, she brings a wealth of knowledge and



expertise to her current role. Her tenure at Amazon has been marked by continuous growth and learning opportunities. To her, every day feels like "Day 1," a testament to Amazon's culture of innovation and reinvention. Adding to the uniqueness of her Amazon experience is the presence of her son, Akash, who joined the company three years ago in 2021 as an Application Engineer. Together, they share the rare opportunity to work for the same company, creating moments of connection and collaboration that are truly special.



# Video shows Mumbai blasts convict campaigning for SS (UBT) nominee; sparks row

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena (UBT) on Thursday found itself in an embarrassing situation after a purported video showed a March 1993 Mumbai serial blasts convict allegedly roaming around and campaigning for its Mumbai North West Lok Sabha seat candidate.

The video, which has gone viral on social media, shows Ibrahim Musa, also known as Baba Chouhan, seeking votes for the SS (UBT) Mumbai North West nominee Amol G. Kirtikar -- son of Gajanan Kirtikar, who belongs to Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena. This has attracted strong reactions and comments accusing the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA)



candidates of supporting terrorists who killed Mumbaikars, and hence, "this (electoral) battle is not only a fight between nationalist forces and divisive gangs but also between

India-Pakistan". Taking strong umbrage at the alleged developments, ruling MahaYuti ally Shiv Sena spokesperson Raju Waghmare said "seeing all

this would have tormented the heart of HinduFridaySamrat Balasaheb Thackeray" and warned that the people of Mumbai will teach a lesson to those who hobnob with traitors.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Andheri MLA Ameet Satam also flayed the development contending that the terror accused had campaigned for Kirtikar in Andheri West on Wednesday evening.

Ibrahim Musa was arrested, found guilty and was convicted for supplying weapons to Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt during the December 1992-January1993 Mumbai riots and the subsequent terror blasts of March 12, 1993. The SS (UBT) has not yet reacted to the serious accusations and allegations on social media and in rival political circles.

# Yoga teacher duped of Rs 3.36 lakh by man she met on tinder

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 46-year-old yoga teacher from Mumbai has allegedly been duped of ? 3.36 lakh by a man whom she met on a dating app, police said.

The man, Amit Kumar, claimed to be a doctor staying in Manchester, England, an official said on Wednesday.

The woman, resident of Churchgate area in south Mumbai, got acquainted with the man on the dating app Tinder recently and interacted with him, he said.

After being in touch for a couple of days, both of them exchanged phone numbers and started chatting on



WhatsApp.

On April 25, the man told the victim that he has sent her a gift which she has to collect, the official said.

After some days, a woman claiming to be from a courier company in Delhi called the victim and said there was a gift for her from Manchester.

The caller demanded money from the victim to complete formalities for sending her the gift, the official said.

The victim allegedly deposited Rs 3.36 lakh into various accounts specified by the caller, he said.

She later realised that she was being cheated, following which she approached the Marine Drive police on Tuesday and filed a complaint.

Based on the complaint, a case was registered against the man and the caller under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Information Technology Act and a probe was on into it, the official said.

# Ajit Pawar campaigns in Shirur, urges voters elect person who can actually work

Team Absolute | Ghodegaon (Maharashtra)

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has slammed NCP-Sharadchandra Pawar nominee Amol Kolhe for "wasting five years as an MP" and urged voters to support Shivajirao Adhalrao, the MahaYuti candidate for Shirur Lok Sabha seat, to ensure progress.

"Kolhe was only busy shooting and wasted five years. In order to address pending issues like roads, railways, and dams, assistance from the Centre and state government is required. Therefore, elect a person who can actually work," Pawar said at a campaign meeting in Ghodegaon of Shirur Lok Sabha seat on Wednesday. The Deputy CM said after his party (NCP) joined the MahaYuti government, "it carried out works worth Rs 600 crore in Ambegaon".

"Compensation of Rs 17 crore was paid for the loss of Hirda Vanaspati within eight days. Through district planning, Rs 68 crore funds were allocated for Ambegaon. Had we not been in power, would we be able to do all this work?" he



said, adding, "We solved the issue of onion export ban. We will soon resolve the issue of milk prices as well. More infrastructural work can be done if we remain in power. Bear this in mind and vote for Adhalrao."

Adhalrao in his speech said that he raked up issues of bullock cart racing and railway works. "It took Madhu Dandavate 28 years to bring Konkan Railway. I have also been pursuing for Pune-Nashik railway for the last 13 years. I have been striving for bullock

cart racing for the last 25-30 years. I took on three cases, fought cases in the High Court and Supreme Court, spent money, and eventually won... What did the incumbent MP do?" he said.

Adhalrao further said, "I ensured roads in Banakarfata-Ghodegaon-Bhimashankar-Taleghar-Rajgurunagar by urging Union Minister Nitin Gadkari. I spent funds of Rs 2.5 crore for the Wada-Ghoda road. The work on the monument of Sambhaji Maharaj worth Rs 190 crore is underway in Vadhu. Kolhe adopted Kopri village where women still used to walk down 2 km to fetch water. My people have ensured that tankers reach them for the last two months. The one who has never worked... needs to be shown his true place by the people." Kolhe and Adhalrao are pitted against each other once again after the 2019 elections. It was Kolhe as the nominee of NCP (united) who had defeated Adhalrao, who contested as the Shiv Sena (united) candidate in the last elections. Adhalrao had won from the Shirur constituency as the Shiv Sena (united) nominee in the 2004, 2009 and 2014 elections.

# SS (UBT) MP cites film scene to poke Maha CM, his son in Mumbai poll rally

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The ongoing shrill campaign for the Lok Sabha polls turned a shade bitter with popular film dialogues entering the poll scene to embarrass political rivals and entertain the gathering.

Canvassing for Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Mumbai North East LS candidate Sanjay D. Patil in Ghatkopar, the party Rajya Sabha MP Priyanka Chaturvedi launched a virulent attack on the rival BJP-Shiv Sena nominee.

At one point, she slammed Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his son Shrikant Shinde, who is making his hat-trick bid for LS from the neighbouring Kalyan LS seat in adjoining Thane district.

"Who are you... Eknath Shinde... What are you... Eknath Shinde? You are nothing but a 'gaddar' (traitor)...," said Chaturvedi, reminding the people of the (undivided) Shiv Sena split of June 2022.

Following an unprecedented mass revolt, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government led by the then CM Uddhav Thackeray was toppled and Shinde hopped onto the 'CM gaddi' with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s prop.

"Whatever you do, you cannot escape that 'gaddar' taint" and it will haunt even your family, as in the "Deewar" film dialogue, to target the ruling MahaYuti alliance," Chaturvedi said.

She referred to the famed dialogue by Amitabh Bachchan to his brother Shashi Kapoor, saying how some goons had tattooed on his left arm 'Mera Baap Chor Hai'.



"In a similar fashion, the CM's son, Shrikant Shinde will carry the burden always, that 'Mera Baap Gaddar Hain' and cannot escape the consequences," Chaturvedi amid a thunderous applause.

She said the MVA is poised for a huge victory all over Maharashtra and it's the "peoples fight versus ruling Mahajhoothi alliance" at the INDIA-MVA bloc joint rally.

Incidentally, Patil, an ex-MP is pitted against the MahaYuti-BJP's newcomer, Mihir C. Kotecha, after the party dropped its sitting MP Manoj K. Kotak following adverse reports.

# After Sharad Pawar's "smaller parties" remark, Uddhav Thackeray's counter

Team Absolute | Pune

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Wednesday said his outfit was not a "small party", and hit out at Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis over their reactions to NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar's 'merger' remark.

Earlier, in an interview to The Indian Express, Sharad Pawar predicted that in the next couple of years, several regional parties will associate more closely with the Congress, or even merge with it. While chief minister Shinde latched on to Sharad Pawar's comment to target



Uddhav Thackeray saying he had already become "Congress-minded", Fadnavis said it showed how difficult it was for Sharad Pawar himself to manage his party. Speaking at an election rally in Pune district, Uddhav Thackeray said Eknath Shinde and Devendra

Fadnavis were speaking as if they were high on 'bhaang' (cannabis).

"Pawar saheb said while replying to a question that some small regional parties may merge with Congress. Please tell me, is Shiv Sena a small party?" he asked.

Uddhav Thackeray also took swipes at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stating that unlike in 2014 and 2019, he has no issues left during the ongoing elections.

"I had heard in my childhood that if someone is scared of ghosts, he should chant 'Ram, Ram'. Since he is scared of defeat, he is going around the country chanting the name of Ram," alleged Thackeray.

# All the candidates of Sharad Pawar's party are losing: Bawankule

Team Absolute | Pune

Maharashtra BJP President Chandrashekhar Bawankule on Wednesday said "all the candidates of Sharad Pawar's party are losing the Lok Sabha elections 2024", reported news agency. Amid ongoing Lok Sabha elections 2024, while speaking to agency, Bawankule said, "The opposition leader Supriya Sule is going to lose too." Pertinent to note that Supriya Sule is contesting from the Baramati seat, which comprises 6 Assembly seats: Indapur, Baramati, Purandar, Bhor, Khadakwasla, and



Daund. The contest in Baramati is between Pawar versus Pawar as Sharad Pawar's nephew Ajit Pawar, who split from the Sharad Pawar-led NCP to form his party has fielded his wife

Sunetra Pawar against Supriya Sule. Sule has been a three-time MP from the same constituency and is eyeing a fourth term from Baramati. She had won from here by defeating BJP candi-

date Kanchan Rahul Kul in 2019. The Sharad Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) broke into two factions, on July 2, 2023, after Ajit Pawar took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister along with seven NCP MLAs.

The state, with its 48 Lok Sabha seats, is the second-largest contributor to the lower house of Parliament after Uttar Pradesh known for its political diversity and significant electoral influence. Maharashtra plays a crucial role in shaping national politics. In the 2019 elections, the BJP emerged as the largest party with 23 seats, followed by the Shiv Sena with 18 seats.

# Uddhav Thackeray has lost mental balance, says Devendra Fadnavis



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday said that Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray had lost his mental balance.

Devendra Fadnavis was reacting to his former ally's diatribe.

According to the a news agency, Uddhav Thackeray, at a Lok Sabha elections 2024 campaign rally, had said that Devendra adnavis and Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde were "intoxicated monkeys" speaking on the instructions of those sitting in Delhi.

"Uddhav Thackeray has lost his mental balance. He needs treatment by a psychiatrist. He is talking like this because he can see

defeat in the elections clearly," Devendra Fadnavis told reporters in Mumbai.

The people have rejected the Shiv Sena (UBT) chief, therefore he was using foul language, the BJP leader further said.

Uddhav Thackeray parted ways with the old ally BJP after the 2019 assembly elections and joined hands with the undivided NCP and Congress to form a government.

Renaming of Ahmednagar as Ahilyanagar to be completed in PM Modi's 3rd term, says Devendra Fadnavis.

Ahead of Lok Sabha elections 2024, Devendra Fadnavis had on Tuesday said that the process to rename Ahmednagar district as Ahilyanagar will be completed in the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reported news agency.

# Police register FIR against 3 persons over video on Hemant Karkare

Team Absolute | Thane

The Navi Mumbai police have registered an FIR against three persons on charges of promoting enmity between different groups through a video on former Maharashtra ATS chief Hemant Karkare, an official said on Thursday, reported news agency.

The complainant, Suresh Rama Gaikwad (49) from Turbhe in Navi Mumbai, told the police that the accused made the video, 'Salute to Hemant Karkare (Based on true Event)', and posted it on YouTube which he saw on April 22.

The accused presented the video as if it was a true story while it was allegedly based on wrong information and showed that Brahmins resort to terrorist attacks and involve Muslims in false cases, the official from Turbhe police station said quoting the complaint filed on Wednesday.

Based on the complaint, the FIR was registered on Wednesday against three persons and their unnamed team members.

The case was registered under Indian Penal Code sections 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups), 295-A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs), 298 (uttering, words, etc, with deliberate intent to wound the religious feelings of any person) and 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention), the Navi Mumbai police police said.

Karkare was killed during the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

# Parts of South Mumbai to face an 8-hour water cut on May 11

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) announced on Friday that certain areas in South Mumbai will experience a water cut on Saturday, May 11. "Repair of a 1200 mm diameter water channel on Jeevan Bima Road in A Ward is scheduled for Saturday, May 11, 2024, from 3:30 PM to 11:30 PM. During the eight-hour repair period, water supply to Colaba, Koliwada, and the Naval area will be temporarily interrupted," said the civic body.

As per the BMC, a 1200 mm diameter main water line has developed a leak during the ongoing Metro 3 work on Jeevan Bima Road, Churchgate in the A Ward. Repair of this water channel is slated for Saturday, May 11, 2024, from 3:30 PM to 11:30 PM. Consequently, the water supply to Colaba, Koliwada, and the Naval area will be interrupted during this period. "Night supply to the Naval area will be delayed due to the repair work. We kindly request the cooperation of residents in the affected areas," stated the civic body.

"The 1200 mm diameter water pipe, utilised from Cross Maidan Tunnel to supply water to A Ward of the BMC, underwent inspection following reports of low pressure and reduced quantity of supply. It was discovered that the water channel had developed a leak during Metro 3 construction work near the Mantralaya Building on Jeevan Bima Road. The BMC's emergency repair department promptly assessed the situation. Immediate repair of the leak is necessary to prevent water wastage and potential road flooding. The repair work is estimated to take approximately 7 to 8 hours," added the BMC.

The civic body further stated that recognising the significance of the Mantralaya and Marine Drive areas, the BMC has collaborated with the Marine Drive Traffic Police and secured necessary permissions to



minimise traffic disruptions. "The Marine Drive Traffic Police has approved the repair of the water channel on Saturday. The Emergency Repair Department (ERC) will commence repair works from 9:00 AM, with excavation starting at that time. Following the pumping out of water from the channel, the actual repair work will begin at 3:30 PM. Water supply will resume during the morning and afternoon sessions for the respective areas," said the civic body.

"During the repair period from 3:30 PM to 11:30 PM, regular water supply to Colaba (4:30 PM to 6:30 PM), additional special water supply to Koliwada (6:30 PM to 6:45 PM), and extra special water supply to the Naval area will be completely suspended from 6:50 PM to 7:05 PM," added the civic body. The BMC has advised residents of Colaba, Koliwada, and the Naval area to store sufficient water in anticipation of the interrup-



EDITOR'S SPECS

Loyalties, like the fragrance of Ittar, last long in Kannauj

'Ittar', a non-alcohol based perfume, is known for being long-lasting and loyalties in Kannauj, the nation's Ittar hub, also last long. People here develop loyalties with leaders and parties and do not change them every five years. For the SP and BJP candidates in Kannauj, this is a major advantage. The Lok Sabha elections in Kannauj that goes to polls on May 13, turned high profile after SP President Akhilesh Yadav threw his hat into the ring here. Former Uttar Pradesh (UP) CM, Akhilesh Yadav is contesting against Subrat Pathak, the sitting BJP MP, who defeated Dimple Yadav in 2019. He is confident that the work done by the double engine governments will ensure a smooth victory for the BJP. SP chief Akhilesh's presence in the fray, meanwhile, has enthused the party cadres. The SP office in Sadar area is buzzing with activity as motorcycles whizz in and out. The constituency has over 19 lakh voters, with Muslims accounting for around 3 lakh and Brahmins and Yadavs being slightly more than 2.5 lakh each. Dalits, who constitute the biggest chunk with a population of over 4 lakh, may play a decisive role. Rajputs, Vaishyas, Lodhs, and Kurmis are also present in significant numbers. The winners from this constituency include Dr Ram Manohar Lohia in 1967, Sheila Dikshit in 1984 and Mulayam Singh Yadav in 1999. The biggest problem in Kannauj relates to unemployment. Though the district has more than 100 cold storages and over 400 small 'ittar' manufacturing units, besides 23 private distilleries, there are many who find it tough to make ends meet. Most Muslims and Dalits work as daily wagers, who may not find work for months together. The ittar industry, however, has learnt to sustain itself over the years and remains unaffected by political churning.

Why don't general masses' woes become Election Issue?

Lalit Garg

The third phase of Lok Sabha elections has been completed; as the elections are progressing, the layers of tainted character of politicians and poll candidates are being exposed, in the process. There was a time when people used to follow the conduct of country's leaders in public life. Leaders were also concerned about their image and reputation in the society. But in recent years, leaders of many satraps' families have also entered the politics, who in their pursuit of power, kept aside all the morals and decorum. Recently, the serious allegations made against Prajwal Revanna, MP of Janata Dal (Secular) from Hassan seat in Karnataka, of misconduct with hundreds of women, have shown the nadir point of degradation in politics. Moreover, the Enforcement Department, which is investigating an old case in Ranchi, has recovered Rs 39 crore in cash from the house of a servant working at the house of private secretary of Jharkhand government minister Alamgir Alam. This election involving leaders and tainted candidates tainted with sexual harassment, misconduct, corruption and treason is a serious question on democracy. Our politics is becoming a tragedy. The politicians started doing everything for power and in this race they forgot the ideals of politics, this is why the poison of inequalities and inconsistencies is mixed in the atmosphere of the country, and there is no hope of light from anywhere. We are afraid of the politically corrupt, of those who glorify crime, of those who misuse power, of those who put the unity and integrity of the country at stake, and of those who tear down women's dignity through sexual harassment and misconduct. The country is faced with a complex mix of sorrow, pain and insensitivity; problems are scary and horrifying in new masks. A lot has changed in the society, including-values, thoughts, life-style, architecture, and a lot more. The election process is increasingly becoming very expensive. Being honest is a vice in today's politics. Taking action against crime has become a sin. Taking interest in religion and spirituality has come to be considered communal. Exposing any irregularity is considered prejudice. Speaking the truth falls into the category of ego-feeding. Candor is impractical. Not supporting corruption is not recognizing the time. It is necessary to discuss these and such basic questions in the context of elections. After all, for how long will these new definitions being coined in the name of political interests continue to push the



society and nation in deplorable directions? How long will our country and our society remain forgotten in the name of the strong storm of evolution? In this grand show of elections, the talk of reform, morality, values and principles is not being heard anywhere? There is no light visible anywhere. It is a very dark and dense night. There is neither self-confidence, nor moral strength. This great sacrifice of elections organized for building a great and strong India is today becoming 'Mahabharata'. How this undertaking of establishing values and standards is becoming a medium to hollow out democracy is a matter of deep concern and contemplation. A naked dance of character devaluation, economic anomalies and giving support to disparities has started taking place in the elections and every party is displaying its strength in it with great enthusiasm. It is not only about election donations, but also about donations received from foreign countries. Today the question is very big, and that is how to protect Indian politics from direct foreign influence. The allegations against Aam Aadmi Party of taking huge sums of money from alleged anti-India foreign powers are a challenge to our entire electoral system. Have the people associated with the ruling party, or the opposition parties, or the newly emerging political contenders, and those who talk about ideals, ever given any feeling through their actions that they should be considered as politicians who have risen above limited vested interests? Here the names of the leaders are not that important, nor is the political party important, what is important is the fact that this kind of

Kupmandu leadership can overall make the politics of the country shallow. The kind of moral integrity that is required for positive politics and the kind of maturity that is required from politicians for this, the lack of it in the entire opposition parties is creating a painful situation. And we are the ones who are engaged in creating such leaders! Elections are considered the beginning of the democratic process, but today elections have become a mockery of democracy. The methods adopted in elections are contrary to the basic idea of democracy. Faced with these conditions, Indian democracy, which is said to be the world's best, is today at the crossroads of anarchy; where no path leading from here appears to be safe. The fault of putting it at the crossroads lies much more with the political parties and leaders than with the public, who have weakened it greatly by making it a medium to fulfill personal and party interests. Today these parties, these people have lost the ability to take it out of the current quagmire. Only Kauravas and Pandavas were not affected in the battle of Mahabharata. The sparks of that war had reached far and wide. It is clearly visible that even in this Mahabharata, the so-called anarchist political and economic forces are trying to show their influence, which will have far-reaching consequences. In these circumstances, such an effort is now necessary in which intentions of those who wrote the new story of 'Mahabharata' in the name of 'Great India' are identified. India needs leaders with Arjun's concentration. If neces-

sary, it is not wrong to attack the top leadership for wrong conduct. It is true that today there is no dearth of such parties in the country, which are formed not on the basis of policy, but on the sick ambitions of the individual, but such parties also talk about policies. The discrepancy between words and actions should be a matter of concern for a democratic system. Although, in reaching the golden age of independence, our political parties have not presented such examples of policies and ideals which indicate that the democratic system is strong and healthy, yet there has always been an expectation that policies and morality will be there somewhere near; will play any role in deciding the direction of our politics. Even though it was a misunderstanding, it was true. Now there doesn't even seem to be a chance to maintain such a happy understanding. But today is the opportunity to ask the question: when will policies become the basis of our politics? It is also important to ask- when will opportunism be considered a crime in politics? It is an irony in itself that talking about politics based on principles and policies seems strange today. It is true that a person's thoughts can change at any time, but on what basis can it be said that changing thoughts like clothes every day is right? The truth is that today in our politics the very definition of right and wrong has changed - everything that serves political interests becomes right and everything that is related to the interests of the common man becomes wrong. What kind of democracy is being created in which the 'people' themselves are disappearing? Narsi Mehta's bhajan "Vaishnav Jan to Tene Kahiye, Je Peer Parai Jaane Re" had become the life thread of Gandhiji, but why does it not become the life thread of today's leaders? Why don't today's politicians accept someone else's pain and sorrow as their own? Why not connect your thoughts with the pain and feelings of the people? Any person, event or opportunity is important if it makes the nation hopeful even for a day. But here one day's ignorance is a preparation to hand over five years i.e. eighteen hundred and twenty-five days to darkness. What kind of responsibility are we fulfilling as voters and what kind of political leadership is being created? (Lalit Garg is Writer, journalist, columnist based in Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)

international

30 killed during Israel's continuing ground assault in Rafah



**Jerusalem** | Agencies Israel's army has announced that it is continuing its ground assault on Gaza's Rafah, reporting approximately 30 casualties since the offensive began on Monday night. According to an army statement issued on Wednesday, the 30 casualties were mili-

attacked about 100 "targets" in the region, including militant infrastructure and "suspicious buildings" from which Hamas fighters fired at Israeli soldiers, the army said. Israel launched the ground assault on Rafah overnight between Monday and Tuesday, citing its aim to eliminate four Hamas battalions that remain in the southern city. Troops gained "operational control" over the Gaza side of the Rafah crossing on Tuesday, a key entry point for humanitarian aid from Egypt to the famine-stricken Gaza, and shut it down.

US won't supply Israel with weapons for Rafah offensive: Biden

US President Joe Biden has threatened Israel with further restrictions on the supply of military equipment were Israel to carry out a major military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah. "I made it clear that if they (Israel) go into Rafah... I'm not supplying the weapons that have been used historically to deal with Rafah, to deal with the cities - that deal with that problem," Biden told broadcaster CNN in an interview, stressing "they haven't gone in Rafah yet". On Wednesday, the US said it paused a large shipment of weapons to Israel amid ongoing concerns in Washington about military operations in the southern Gaza city. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said it had been clearly communicated to Israel that the US government did not support Israel's long-threatened all-out offensive in Rafah, the southern city in the Gaza Strip that is seen as the last place of refuge for civilians in the territory.

Deadly storms claim 100 lives, damage 100,000 homes in Brazil



**Sao Paulo** | Agencies At least 100 people have died and nearly 100,000 homes have been destroyed or significantly damaged from more than a week of record rainfall and flooding in south Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul state, local authorities have said. The National Confederation of Municipalities said in an update on Wednesday that overflowing rivers and floods in the state have affected around 1.45 million people and forced some 200,000 residents to flee their homes, Xinhua news agency reported. Based on data from the Civil Defense agency, some 99,800 residences of all types have sustained either total or partial damage since the state's worst weather-related disaster hit on April 29, according to the confederation. As many as 414 of 497 towns in the state, a top agricultural and livestock producer that borders Argentina and Uruguay, have suffered from the storms and declared emergencies. The confederation estimates the economic losses at 4.6 billion reals (about \$904 million), taking into account the damage to housing and public infrastructure, as well as agriculture, livestock, industry, commerce and services. In just one week, Rio Grande do Sul saw five months' worth of rain, sparking unprecedented flooding.

Israeli police raid Al Jazeera offices in Nazareth



**Tel Aviv** | Agencies Israeli police have raided the offices of broadcaster Al Jazeera in the city of Nazareth, confiscating equipment belonging to the Arabic-language TV channel. The raid comes several days after the Israeli government banned Al Jazeera, both blocking access to Al Jazeera's content in Israel and banning the broadcaster from operating. Israel's communications minister signed a closure order for the broadcaster on Sunday, and Al Jazeera's office in the Ambassador Hotel in East Jerusalem was raided that same day. Israel accuses the channel of biased reporting in the Gaza war. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had already announced his intention to close the TV network's facilities operating in Israel more than a month ago. Israel's parliament had previously approved a measure widely known as the Al Jazeera law that enables the government to shut down and ban foreign broadcasters if they are classified as a risk to state security. The broadcaster has categorically rejected the Israeli accusations and described the ban as a "criminal act" that violated human rights and the fundamental right of access to information. Al Jazeera said it would take all possible action against the move and defend the rights of the broadcaster and its employees.

New dispute looms between Rome and German NGOs helping migrants

**Rome** | Agencies A new dispute is brewing between Italy and private German aid organisations over the handling of boat refugees in the Mediterranean. Despite a ban by the right-wing government of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, the German non-governmental organisation (NGO) Sea-Watch said it was continuing its flights to spot refugee boats. A video posted by Sea-Watch showed a small private plane taking off from the island of Lampedusa towards the central Mediterranean, one of the most important routes for refugees from Africa to Europe. At the beginning of this week, Italy's aviation authority, which reports to the transport ministry of right-wing Prime Minister Matteo Salvini, issued several decrees. Accordingly, no more flights of this kind are allowed to take off from Lampedusa and three other airports in the south. This is also justified on the grounds that it would jeopardise the safety of migrants. Violations could result in the confiscation of aircraft and heavy fines. Sea-Watch has said that it intends to defy the ban. "The flight ban is politically motivated and legally untenable," a spokesman said. "In the middle of the European election campaign, Italy is trying to get rid of the last witnesses to European crimes in the Mediterranean. We will not be intimidated by this."



There has been a dispute between the aid organisations and Rome for many years. Salvini - formerly Italy's interior minister - has already suffered several defeats in court.

Seven killed in terrorist attack in Pakistan: Police



**Islamabad** | Agencies Gunmen in southwestern Pakistan executed at least seven people in their sleep, in what police on Thursday said was the second incident of ethnic terrorism in the same region within a month. The attack occurred in the volatile coastal town of Gwadar where Pakistan's political ally China is building a deep-sea port, a project opposed by the West and locals alike. The victims were from the central province of Punjab and were running a barber shop in the town, local police

saying the agents of spy agencies were targeted. No group has so far claimed responsibility for Thursday's attack, but police said they suspect the BLA. Much of the violence in the region is seen against the Chinese projects to connect its Muslim-dominated region of Xinjiang with the Arabian Sea through Pakistan to reach markets in the Middle East, Europe, Africa and beyond. Baloch militant and political groups accuse China of stealing their land and resources including several hundred kilometres of shores. and killed them in an execution-style shooting. The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), a nationalist militant group that opposes Chinese investments in the province, claimed the previous attack, off-loaded nine bus passengers



## BJP IS A MISGUIDED PARTY, HAS NEITHER POLICY NOR INTENTIONS: KAMAL NATH

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Kamal Nath has described BJP as a misguided party and said that BJP has neither any policy nor intention for different sections.

Kamal Nath wrote on Twitter on Thursday, "The BJP leadership is not able to clarify any policy or intention regarding the country's farmers, youth, women, government employees, Dalits, backward classes, tribals, minorities or any other class. The citizens of India are ready to defend the country from the misguided party."

He further said, BJP was trying to divert this election from the issues from the beginning but by diverting it, it itself has got lost. The public mind has now become clear in this Lok Sabha elec-



tion. The people of India are going to hand over the keys of power to the Indian Alliance.

Earlier on Wednesday, Kamal Nath had said that reservation has become a big issue in the Lok Sabha elec-

tions. He had accused BJP of snatching reservation by changing the Constitution.

### Fire broke out during summer camp in private school of Gwalior, children safe

Gwalior: A sudden fire broke out during the summer camp in a private school located in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. All the children present in the school were evacuated safely. According to the information received, a summer camp is going on these days in a private school located in Kanti Nagar of Padav police station area. A large number of children are participating in this camp.

Meanwhile, on Thursday, a sudden fire broke out in the school, leading to a stampede. The teachers and children present in the school premises took everyone out safely. The cause of the fire is said to be an electric scooter which was being charged and during this time it caught fire.

The fire spread to a large part of the school. The fire brigade vehicle reached the school and brought the fire under control. There has been no casualty in this accident.

## Rahul Gandhi's roots in Italy: Shivraj Singh Chauhan

Team Absolute | Khandwa

Former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chauhan has targeted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and said that his roots are not in India but in Italy. That is why he is making absurd statements.

Shivraj Singh Chauhan, who reached Mundi in Khandwa parliamentary constituency, said that he has strong objection to the statements of Congress, because Congress wants to destroy the idea of India, India's land, India's soil, India's tradition, India's life values. Rahul Gandhi's land, his roots are not in India, his roots are in Italy. They don't even know India. That's why they are talking nonsense. Congress has become dangerous. This is the reason why people like Suresh Pachauri left Congress and joined Bharatiya Janata Party.

He further said that one Sam Pitroda of Congress is saying what every day. Once said that inheritance tax should be imposed. After that he said that the people of North East look like Chinese. People from the South look like Africans. He said that Manthara has taken over the intelligence of Congress. When the idol of Lord Ram was consecrated in Ayodhya,



the country was happy. Sisters lit lamps, youth hoisted flags. But, one party was crying. Ansari family fought the battle of Babri. But, he also participated in the consecration of Ram Lalla. Congress was also called. But, he refused in writing started saying that the time is bad. As long as the earth, sun and moon exist, it will remain written that Congress rejected the invitation.

## After killing the mother in Sheopur, the body was buried in the wall

Team Absolute | Sheopur

A heart-wrenching incident has come to light in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh. Here a son, out of greed for property, murdered his widowed mother and got her body buried in the wall.

According to information received from the police, a youth from Kotwali police station area had complained about his mother's disappearance on May 6. When the police investigated the matter and interrogated the complainant's son, the matter came to light.

According to the police, accused Deepak was interrogated on Wednesday night on the basis of suspicion.



Initially he kept misleading the police but after strict interrogation he confessed to the murder of his mother.

Why he brutalized his mother has also been revealed. He murdered his

mother out of greed for property and then buried the body in the wall.

The son has confessed to his crime. The police is trying to recover the body.

## FIR against Bhopal district panchayat member who got his minor son to vote

### ENTIRE POLLING PARTY INCLUDING PRESIDING OFFICER SUSPENDED

Team Absolute | Bhopal

An FIR has been registered against Bhopal District Panchayat member Vinay Mehar, who got his minor son to cast his vote. Meanwhile, booth presiding officer Sandeep Saini, his assistants CR Batham, Manoj Kumar Maurya and Madan Gopal Patel have been suspended. Line has been attached to Head Constable Santosh posted at the booth.

Actually, on May 7, voting was going on in all the polling stations of Bhopal. Selfie points were also made at all places so that anyone can take a selfie if they wish. But no one can even imagine what a BJP leader did. In Bhopal, BJP's District Panchayat member Vinay Mehar has been accused of having sex with his minor son. These allegations have not been made by anyone but Vinay himself has made



a video in which he is seen getting his minor son to cast his vote. Vinay Mehar also posted this video on his Facebook. After which there is panic in the administration. People are raising questions on the election process. Bhopal Collector Kaushalendra Vikram Singh has expressed strictness in this mat-

ter and said that this matter is being thoroughly investigated. Any action will be taken only after the investigation report comes out. Kaushalendra Vikram Singh said that the investigation has been handed over to Berasia SDM and Berasia SDOP. If the investigation is found correct, strict action will be taken by registering an FIR against the concerned. And the presiding officer will be suspended.

According to the officials of the Election Commission, the voter himself can cast his vote. Apart from him, no other person can vote. Mobile phones are not allowed inside the polling booth. In such a situation, when BJP leaders enter inside with mobile phones, people are raising questions on the electoral process. In this case, serious questions arise about the role of the presiding officer and other officers engaged in election duty.

## 2 accused arrested for hunting and smuggling of rare wild animal Pangolin, absconding for two years

Team Absolute | Bhopal

State Tiger Strike Force Madhya Pradesh Regional Unit Jabalpur, Forest Division South Seoni, Forest Division South Balaghat and Police Station Lanji jointly cordoned off and arrested Aamir Hussain, resident of Silchar District Cachar Assam and Amulya Mandal District Cooch Behar West Bengal from Kachari Chowk Seoni.

A case was registered against the said accused under various sections of Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 in Forest Division South Balaghat, Forest Crime Case No. 11614/20 dated 20 September 2014, in relation to hunting of wild animal pangolin and smuggling of its parts. The said accused were absconding for the last 2 years and a permanent arrest warrant was issued against them by the Honorable Judicial Magistrate First Class Lanji District Balaghat. Continuous efforts were being made to catch them by the State Tiger Strike Force. State Tiger Strike Force Madhya Pradesh received information from the informer on 8 May 2014 that the above two accused had



come to Madhya Pradesh around Seoni.

The joint team cordoned off the area near Kachari Chowk and as per

the above description, the suspicious person was stopped and interrogated. He revealed his name as Aamir Hussain and Amulya Mandal, who were arrested and handed over to the local police. The accused will be produced before the Honorable Judicial Magistrate First Class, Lanji, District Balaghat.

Pangolin scales are purchased by these smugglers mainly from Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and sold to traders from Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, where the traders send them to China via Myanmar (Burma).

STSF has exposed an inter-state and international gang involved in smuggling of parts of rare species of wild animal, Pangolin. In this, 197 accused have been arrested from 15 states of the country.

Interpol has named the pangolin the most trafficked mammal in the world. Parts of the wild animal pangolin are smuggled from many countries in Asia and Africa. Its demand is mainly in countries like China, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Vietnam etc.

## 4 thousand 555 complaints of violation received on "C-Vigil App"

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan has said that the Model Code of Conduct is in force from March 16 for the Lok Sabha elections 2024 in the state. Complaints of violation of Model Code of Conduct are being received from citizens on "C-Vigil App". From March 16 to May 9, 4 thousand 555 complaints of violation of the code of conduct have been received on the C-Vigil app. All these complaints have been resolved promptly.

Rajan said that mostly 525 complaints have been received in Gwalior, 349 in Sagar, 306 in Damoh, 273 in Ujjain, 239 in Morena, 198 in Rajgarh, 211 in Indore, 168 in Rewa, 152 in Katni, 127 in Kargone, 120 in Sehore, 135 in

Bhopal, 114 in Chhatarpur, 110 in Narsinghpur, and 105 complaints have been received in Satna district. Similar complaints have been received from other districts of the state also.

Rajan has urged the citizens of the state that if they want to make any direct complaint related to violation of Model Code of Conduct in elections, then they can do so through "C-Vigil App". For this, the concerned citizen will have to go to Google Play Store and download "C-Vigil App".

Action will be taken within 100 minutes

Shri Rajan said that if a citizen has information about any incident related to violation of the code of conduct, he will have to upload the photo or video on the "C-Vigil App". On receiving the complaint,

action will be taken within the next 100 minutes.

It is noteworthy that "C-Vigil App" has been prepared by the Election Commission of India for redressal of complaints regarding violation of Model Code of Conduct. Through this app, people can prevent political parties or candidates from distributing money, goods, clothes, jewellery, etc. in any way to vote voters, threatening voters to vote in their favour, transporting voters in their own vehicle and can make other types of complaints including pasting or putting up election campaign material on the building or walls or premises of any building owner or getting election advertisements written on the walls without the permission of the building owner.

## VD Sharma called Akshay Bam a Counterfeit coin...?

Team Absolute | Indore

State BJP President VD Sharma attacked Congress without taking the name of Akshay Kanti bomb in Indore and said that if your coin turns out to be Counterfeit then why should people vote on NOTA? Congress is going towards the ground. Jitu Patwari is taking Congress towards closure.

Sharma said that the people of Madhya Pradesh and the country are no longer going to vote for the Congress Party, the party which could not even field its candidates on many seats in the country including Khajuraho and Indore, is talking about pressing the NOTA button. After the independence of the country, Mahatma Gandhi had talked about abolishing the Congress. Jitu Patwari is bent upon fulfilling that dream of Gandhiji.

It is very unfortunate that there is no opposition in the country. All the opposition parties in the country are doing politics for their families. Jitu Patwari's statement is an insult to the 8.5 crore people of Madhya Pradesh.

Sharma further said in the discussion with the media that there is an atmosphere of extreme disappointment and frustration in the Congress leadership of the country



including Madhya Pradesh. Congress has betrayed the people of Indore. Congress left the field in Khajuraho, supported Samajwadi Party. He also changed the candidate, then the other candidate filled the wrong form and left the field. Congress could not field candidates on many seats in the country, which makes it clear that Congress will not get even a single seat, it will not even be able to open its account here. He said that appealing to vote for NOTA is weakening democracy. Your one vote will strengthen India's democracy.

## RGPV: NEW REVELATION IN THE SCAM OF RS 19.50 CRORE

### 1.34 crore distributed among traders and 9.50 crore transferred to the account of Dalit Sangh

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A new revelation has come to light in the Rajiv Gandhi Technological University (RGTV) scam case. Out of the Rs 9.50 crore transferred from the account of RGPV to the account of Dalit Sangh Sohagpur, about Rs 1.25 crore was distributed to the traders. Dalit Sangh Secretary Ratan Umre has delivered this amount to the traders.

This disclosure has been made by the Gandhinagar Police of Bhopal, which is investigating the case of transfer of Rs 9.50 crore from the account of RGPV to the account of Dalit Sangh. Also, the police have made union secretary Ratan Umre and treasurer Ashok Chaurasia accused in this case. It is noteworthy that this amount was deposited by the students in the university account as fees for examination, enrolment, registration and other processes.

According to the investigation report of Gandhinagar Police, Rs 9 crore 50 lakh was transferred from the account of the University to the account of Dalit Sangh Sohagpur on January 23, 2023. A few hours after the money was credited to the account, Dalit Sangh Secretary Ratan Umre withdrew Rs 3 crore 20 lakh. Whereas Rs 55 lakh 73 thousand 500 were withdrawn through cheque. Apart from this, Secretary Ratan Umre had transferred Rs 25 lakh 65 thousand to his own State Bank



of India account.

Out of Rs 9.50 crore deposited from the account of RGPV to the account of Dalit Sangh, Rs 3 crore 75 lakh were withdrawn through separate checks by Secretary Ratan Umre and Treasurer Ashok

Chaurasia. This has been confirmed by Pipariya-based branch manager of ICICI Bank Sumit Jharia and Axis Bank manager Vinay Verma in their statements given to Gandhi Nagar Police. Ratan Umre transferred a huge amount to his own account.





## ONLY KL RAHUL WILL LEAD LSG, EVERYTHING IS FINE BETWEEN TEAM AND OWNER!

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The animated chat on-field between Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) owner Sanjiv Goenka and skipper K.L. Rahul following their humiliating 10-wicket defeat to Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) has triggered speculation that the Karnataka batter might quit captaincy. However, LSG sources on Thursday were quick to dispel all such reports, claiming that "everything is fine between the team and the owner".

Lucknow Super Giants had slumped to an embarrassing defeat in their IPL 2024 match at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad on Wednesday night after which the official broadcaster showed footage of Goenka publicly giving a talking down to skipper Rahul, which has generated a lot of heat on social media with fans taking umbrage to the owner taking on the skipper in front of the cameras.

Some media reports on Thursday claimed that Goenka reportedly apologised to Rahul after getting thrashed on social media. Some reports also



claimed that Rahul might be relieved of captaincy captain and vice-captain Nicholas Pooran put in charge instead. Reports also suggested that Rahul won't be picked in the auction to be held at the end of the year.

However, sources close to LSG refuted these rumours and said, "Everything is fine between the two" and "only Rahul will be leading the team this season".

"It's all rumours that Rahul will be displaced from the captaincy and won't be picked in the auction. The last match didn't go our way, but everything is fine now between the team and owners.

Rahul is in good space and taking rest before the game against DC," sources close to LSG told IANS. Another source also confirmed that Rahul will be heading to Mumbai to spend some time with his family and will join the team two days before the next match.

SRH stormed through to a 10-wicket victory over LSG, courtesy of an explosive batting show from opening duo Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma.

## MI senior players unhappy with Hardik's leadership style: Reports

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Sunrisers Hyderabad's (SRH) demolition of Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) on Wednesday saw the tied-record five-time IPL Champions, Mumbai Indians become the first team to be officially eliminated from the contention for the playoffs race.

According to reports, some of the senior members of the team have expressed their concern regarding Hardik Pandya's style of captaincy which has seen the team's morale falter through the course of the IPL season.

Senior players in the likes of Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah and Suryakumar Yadav held a meeting following a loss in which the players expressed what they believe is the underlying problem and individual meetings were also held to determine the problem, an Indian Express report stated. Mumbai Indians have been under the leadership of Rohit Sharma for the past decade and with a new captain coming into a set hierarchy is bound to ruffle feathers around the dressing room.



A Mumbai Indian official attributed the team's struggles this season to the transitional phase that they are in. "These are regular teething problems for a team that sees leadership change. This happens in sports all the time," the official was quoted as saying in the report.

Following MI's loss against the Delhi Capitals, Pandya spoke about how he believed Tilak Varma could have targeted Axar Patel more and blamed the loss on game awareness. This particular incident did not sit well with

the team considering Varma played a great innings scoring 63 off 32 deliveries on the night and is also the top scorer for the team this season.

Mumbai India currently sits in ninth place in the points table having played a game more than the Gujarat Titans. With all hopes of qualification to the playoffs now behind the franchise, it is of utmost importance for the management to iron out all possible wrinkles before the next season to maximise their chances of winning their sixth IPL trophy next season.

## ISSF World Cup: Anant Jeet Naruka finishes 15th in skeet in Baku

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Anant Jeet Singh Naruka needed two perfect rounds to be in contention to reach the final, but missed one target in both, to bow out in 15th place in the skeet competition of the ongoing International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun in Baku.

Anant Jeet, a Paris quota holder in the event, shot rounds of 24 each on Day Two of qualifications to finish with a score of 120, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) informed in a release on Thursday.

The seasoned Federico Gil of Argentina took the sixth and final qualifying spot in the final at 122 while Great Britain's Ben Llewellyn topped the charts with 124.

Among the other Indians in the fray, Sheeraz Sheikh shot 115 to finish 54th while Mairaj Ahmad Khan shot 105 to finish in 76th spot.

In women's skeet, Raiza Dhillon (27th) was best placed Indian with a score of 114. Maheshwari Chauhan (20th) shot 113 while



Ganemat Sekhon (25th) was further back with a score of 111.

## 'Anything's possible in Paris Olympics': Neeraj Chopra expects three Indians to be in medal contention in javelin

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The defending champion in Olympic Games javelin throw competition, Neeraj Chopra anticipates that three Indians will be in contention for medals in the upcoming Paris 2024. He emphasized the need for India to carry forward the belief from the World Championships in Budapest, where Indian throwers held three out of the top six in the final.

India's javelin stars will kick off the outdoor season in the Doha leg of the Diamond League season on May 10. Leading the challenge will be reigning world champion Chopra and his comrade-in-arm, Kishore Jena.

The events, including the Federation Cup in Bhubaneswar on May 14-15, leading to Paris 2024 will also evaluate the returns from some intense overseas training under top coaches.

Chopra and Jena, who produced a historic gold-silver finish at the Hangzhou Asian Games, have both qualified for the upcoming Summer Olympics in July-August, but Chopra believes a third javelin thrower, DP Manu, should make the Paris cut as well. "There was a time when I was not even sure of qualifying for a World Championship but see how times have changed. In Budapest last year, we had three Indians (out of the top six) in the finals and that has made us believe we are no less than the Europeans who have dominated world javelin for so long. We have to take this Budapest belief forward and in Paris anything is possible," Chopra told SAI Media. Manu is in line to join Chopra and Jena in Paris 2024. Manu is yet to breach the qualifying standard of 85.50 metres but is placed comfortably in the 11th spot in the Road to Paris rankings. That should be enough to earn him a ticket to

Paris unless several others pass him and he is unable to improve his own distance.

At the Indian Grand Prix I in Bengaluru recently, Manu won the men's javelin throw competition with an effort of 81.91m, adrift of the Paris Olympics qualification mark of 85.50m and his personal best of 84.35. He had been training in Potchefstroom, South Africa with his coach Kashinath Naik, a former Commonwealth Games bronze medalist. Leading up to the new outdoor season and until the Olympics, proper and intense training has been a top priority for the javelin throwers and all three - Chopra, Jena and Manu - have benefited from the government's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) that funds athletes to prepare and peak at global events, especially the Summer Games.

In the current Paris Olympics cycle, Government has spent more than Rs



4.87 cr on these three javelin throwers with Chopra receiving close to Rs 4 cr alone. The major expenses include training and competition related, equipment, coach's salary and out-of-pocket allowances.

## Real Madrid complete dramatic comeback over Bayern Munich to book 18th Champions League final

Madrid | Agencies

Real Madrid, the undisputed kings of Europe took a step towards their 15th Champions League trophy after reaching its 18th final after beating Bayern Munich in a game filled with drama, late goals and controversy.

Substitute Joselu's late double took Real Madrid into their 18th final with an aggregate 4-3 win over Bayern Munich.

The 14-time winners produced memorable semifinal turnaround at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu to set up a final against Borussia Dortmund at Wembley on June 1.

Two years ago, Real beat Manchester City, thanks to two late goals by Rodrygo, in what many deemed to be the greatest CL semifinals of all time and the Los Blancos have only gone ahead and done it again.

Unlike the first leg at the Allianz Arena, Madrid were on the front foot from the starting whistle try-



ing to carve their way past a valiant Bayern Munich defense. Vinicius Jr was once again lighting up the Bernabeu, keeping Joshua Kimmich very busy. Real's first big chance of the game came near the 13th minute mark when Vinicius Jr's attempt was pushed onto the post by Neuer who made an excellent double save, denying the rebound attempt by Rodrygo. After a cagey first half that ended 0-0, Santiago Bernabeu came alive in the second half. The LaLiga winners put on a flurry of attacks not

giving the German giants any breathing space. It looked as if the first goal was imminent but it was Bayern Munich's Alphonso Davies, who added his name to the scoresheet in the 68th minute thanks to a brilliant curling effort from the edge of the box that nestled into the back of Lunin's net.

Madrid answered back almost instantly scoring a goal from a corner in the 72nd minute but the goal was disallowed after a VAR check as Nacho, who was involved in the goal, could be seen fouling Kimmich during the build up.

Real Madrid is a club of dreams and it was an unlikely hero in Joselu, who made all the difference on the night. The former Stoke City man was subbed on in the 81st minute in a desperate attempt by Carlo Ancelotti to try and regain control in the game. It was not until the 88th minute when Manuel Neuer, who was having a world class game up until this moment spilled a shot by Vinicius Jr with Joselu smashing the rebound in the back of the net.

## WTT Saudi Smash: Manika Batra knocked out in quarterfinals

Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) | Agencies

The brilliant campaign of top Indian woman paddler Manika Batra at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Saudi Smash came to an end after she lost to World No.5 Hina Hayata of Japan in the quarterfinals, here on Thursday.

Japan's Hayata beat World No.39 Manika 4-1 (7-11, 11-6, 11-4, 13-11, 11-2) in 39 minutes to reach the semifinals.

The 28-year-old Indian had started her campaign in Saudi Smash with a 3-0 (11-6, 13-11, 11-8) win over Andreea Dragoman of Spain



in the first round.

In the round of 32 Manika came back after losing the first game to win the next three to stun the top Chinese player and Olympic medalist World No. 2, Wang Manyu and won the match 6-11, 11-5, 11-7, 12-10 in 38 minutes.

Manika is expected to regain her status as the top-ranked Indian female in the ITTF World Rankings after a successful run in Jeddah.

## IPL 2024: I DON'T THINK WE COULD HAVE EVER EXPECTED CHASING IT LIKE THAT, SAYS TRAVIS HEAD

Hyderabad | Agencies

Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) batting star Travis Head 'never expected' the way he and along with fellow opener Abhishek Sharma chased down the total of 166 in 9.4 overs in the IPL 2024 match against Lucknow Super Giants (SRH) on Wednesday night at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium.

Head smashed a 16-ball half-century with some astonishing display of cricketing shots and remained unbeaten on 89 off just 33 deliveries to guide his team home. He along with his opening duo Abhishek Sharma stitched up 166 runs opening partnership and hammered 107 runs in the powerplay in comparison to LSG's 27.

"I don't think we could have ever expected chasing it like that," acknowledged Head at the post-match press conference. "It looked like a tough wicket in the first innings, it looked like it was holding and a slow pitch. I guess, knowing that as a batter, you know that the powerplay is important. (We were) trying to maximise that and we played beautifully, we were able to get ahead of the rate, which is nice. And once we got going in the first two or three overs, it was just about trying to maximise that as much as we can and I felt we picked our targets and played very well," he said.

SRH obliterated LSG's challenge by first stifling them with the new ball and then launching a sensational chase of 166 in just 9.4 overs, the highest 10-over score in any T20. In all T20 cricket, only seven times 100 or more been scored in the powerplay, SRH have the two top scores, both in IPL 2024.

"You always want to perform, you always want to be con-



sistent, you always want to try and be doing the job; it's not going to always happen in T20 cricket (but) I felt the way we have been playing is great. We're going to have ups and downs, we've had that. Nice to be able to chase a score tonight after being put under pressure by them batting (first).

"A couple of times we've chased throughout the season, we've been put under pressure. To be able to do the job tonight, and chasing, (it feels great). Looking forward to the next two games being at home as well," said Head.

Head and Abhishek have combined for three century stands in the IPL with two of the, coming in the powerplay. SRH is the only side with more than one century opening stand in the IPL 2024.

"It's nice to just come here and contribute. I wasn't sure if I was going to play. Nice to get a go, nice to be performing, and the partnership with Abhi has been fantastic. He's such an exciting talent for Indian cricket, he's exceptional. We complement each other well and he's very, very enjoyable to be around. He's so excited and thinks about the game, he's got loads of energy, so he's a great partnership to be involved in," Head said of the opening stand before he added that the middle order has also played a key role for SRH. "I guess the Kings game (against Punjab Kings) is a blueprint for us in the way we're able to go about the game. It's not always going to work at the top of the order, we are going to lose wickets, but we want to be brave through the whole middle. Nitish [Reddy] has played some unbelievable innings, obviously we've got Klassy (Heinrich Klaasen) and (Abdul) Samad tops it off for us..."



## A sane person will never make negative remarks about your caste : Manoj Bajpayee



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Manoj Bajpayee, who comes from Bihar, opened up at a media interaction on Thursday on how people from his state, UP and "even Chhattisgarh" were treated with contempt elsewhere in the country. The actor spoke about how

some people still have a stereotypical view of their counterparts from Bihar, whom they consider to be less intelligent. Without mincing words, he said those with a regional mindset only expose their narrowness and it shows that something is wrong with them. Pulling the media person's leg, Manoj said,

"Kuch na kuch vivaad toh hona hi chaahiye, hai na (We need to have some argument or the other, don't we)? See, whenever someone tells you something negative with regards to your background or your ethnicity, it means that the problem is with the other person, not with you."

He added: "A sane per-

son will never make negative remarks about your caste, your religion or the region where you come from."

"Mazaak mat udaao izzat do, aadar do, people from UP, Bihar and even Chhattisgarh are addressed as 'Bhaiyya' jokingly, which should not be the case," the actor noted.

## During my school days, I experienced all the petty politics : Zakir Khan

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Comedian and actor Zakir Khan reminisced about his school days, revealing how participating in elections helped shape his understanding and maturity.

Zakir, who is back as Ronny with the third season of 'Chacha Vidhayak Hain Humare', shared about the inspiration behind the series, saying: "As I saw or heard other stories, they didn't quite resonate with my own experiences. Surprisingly, when I recounted my college days and life experiences to my friends, they were all astonished. It left me wondering, why not share these tales with the world? That's what inspired me to work on this story."

"When I moved from a boys' school to a coed school, we had elections for house captains. During my school days, I experienced all the campaigning and petty politics that people typically encounter later in life. I believe my maturity comes from this early exposure," he added.

Zakir said: "Now, when I observe others engaging in similar behaviours, I sense that they may not have had the opportunity to experience this aspect during their own school days."



## Fashion is something that comes from within you : Aditi Rao Hydari

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actress Aditi Rao Hydari, who oozes elegance in every outfit that she wears, feels that fashion should be effortless and there shouldn't be any burden.

With 10.9 million followers on Instagram, Aditi's social media feed is full of pictures of her wearing Indian outfits, traditional wear, gowns, co-ord sets, pantsuits and floral dresses.

Speaking about what fashion means to her, Aditi told: "Fashion is something that comes from within you. You can play with fashion, but I believe fashion can be created from my cupboard, your cupboard, my sister's cupboard or my brother's cupboard also. Fashion is fun. And sometimes fashion ends up costing a lot, but sometimes you can create from your own thing. It's about being creative."

She went on to say, "When I started in 2011-12, that time I didn't care, but after a few years it became a burden for me that I have to look glamorous, wear heels, put on makeup. But I was always like I don't want to do all these things. I used to say that I will do this on screen but not in real life." "But in the last 4-5 years I feel like I am what I am, I am who I am. I will sit for an interview without makeup, with my hair all tied up. I feel my heart has to con-



nect to you. And if this connects everything else works. Fashion, face, skin everything else also falls into place. And, I think fashion should be effortless. There shouldn't be any burden. Maybe some people will like it, some will not. If you feel good, then do

it," shared Aditi, she follow any Gen-Z trends? Aditi said she doesn't know about any trends but wears whatever she feels like.

"Sometimes things that are in trend are 'behuda'. If I don't like things which are in trend I don't wear them. But

in my everyday clothes, I decide it myself. I take it out from my cupboard and wear it. For me, fashion should be effortless, and it should be authentically you. If you are going for an event, then you can do all the 'taam jhaam'," she said.

## Janhvi Kapoor wears outfit inspired by red cricket ball

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Janhvi Kapoor hit a six with her fashion game for the promotions of her upcoming film. The actress elevated her fashion game by donning a red dress inspired by a cricket leather ball. The dress featured white stitches resembling the stitch marks on a cricket ball, lending a sporty touch to her ensemble.

Adding to the theme, small leather balls were attached to the back of the dress, further enhancing the cricket-inspired look.

Janhvi was accompanied by her co-star Rajkumar Rao at the promotions.

The film narrates the story of an imperfectly perfect partnership between a couple with a shared love for cricket.



## Rashmika Mandanna will be female lead with Salman Khan in 'Sikandar'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who is currently experiencing a dream run in the movies, will be portraying the female lead in the upcoming Salman Khan-starrer film 'Sikandar'.

This marks the first collaboration between Salman and Rashmika. 'Sikandar' is directed by A.R.

Murugadoss, who is known for films like 'Ghajini' and 'Holiday: A Soldier Is Never Off Duty'.

On Thursday, the makers of the film made the announcement about Rashmika joining the cast.

They posted on X: "Welcoming the fabulous @rashmika\_mandanna to star opposite @beingsalmankhan in #Sikandar! Can't wait for their on-screen magic to unfold on Eid 2025! #SajidNadiadwala's #Sikandar Directed by @a.r.murugadoss Releasing in cinemas Eid 2025." The film is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala of Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, marking the reunion of Salman with Sajid after 'Kick', which was released in 2014. The film, which is currently in pre-production, will soon go on floors and is scheduled for release on Eid 2025.



Meanwhile, Rashmika, who last appeared in the blockbuster 'Animal' alongside Ranbir Kapoor, also has the

Allu Arjun-starrer 'Pushpa 2: The Rule' in which she will reprise her role of Srivalli.

## Neha Kakkar shared her childhood memory, her mom used to console her with aloo paranthas



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The super judge of the kids singing reality show 'Superstar Singer 3', Neha Kakkar, gets emotional about her mother in the new episode, reminiscing about her childhood memory of how her mom used to console her.

The upcoming episode is titled 'Thank You Maa', and it will celebrate mothers, their boundless love, and their sacrifices with some heartwarming performances delivered by the contestants. Amid multiple captivating performances, 11-year-old Diya Hegde from Sagara, Karnataka, captivated everyone with her beautiful rendition of the song 'Tu Kitni Achhi Hai' from the film 'Raja Aur Runk'.

Dedicating this performance to her mother, Aparna, Diya read her a heartfelt letter expressing gratitude that

promises to leave everyone emotional.

Amazed by the performance, Neha said: "Diya, your performance today brought back memories of when I sang this song for my mother. Your performance was truly beautiful, and I felt joy hearing the heartfelt words you shared for your mother. Aparna, your words about Diya being talented and caring resonate deeply. Diya, you're incredibly sweet, and your singing is amazing."

The singer then shared her childhood memory of how her mother used to console her with her favourite 'aloo paratha' when she used to get upset. Captain Arunika added: "I'm at a loss for words. This episode holds such significance, and all the children are singing beautifully. We're all feeling emotional and missing our parents. Diya, your performance was melodious."

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Tara Sutaria