

# absolute india

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## China, Pakistan change military commanders overlooking Indian borders

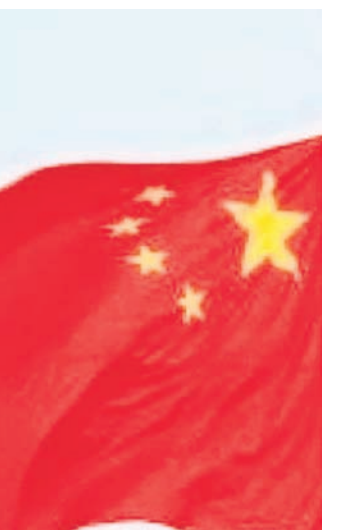
**Team Absolute | New Delhi**  
China and Pakistan have changed their military commanders overlooking the borders with India after the Taliban completely took over Afghanistan. Top sources said that threats along the borders with China and Pakistan have also increased manifold as foreign terrorists would make attempts to enter into India to unleash unrest. Interestingly, China has thrice changed its military commander for the Western Theatre Command, which is responsible for borders with India, in the last nine months. "These moves are definitely a matter of concern for India," said a senior government official, adding that the resolution of disputes along the borders with these two countries would be nowhere in near future. On Tuesday, Pakistan appointed Lieutenant General Azhar Abbas, who was responsible for the security of the Line of Control (LoC) with India, as the next Chief of General Staff. The post is considered the most influential position within the army after the Pakistan Army chief. Chief of General Staff looks after operational and intelligence matters at the General Headquarters with the directorates of Military Operations and Military Intelligence.



Lieutenant General Sahir Shamshad Mirza has been posted as the Commander of Rawalpindi Corps and Lieutenant General Muhammad Chiragh Haider has been given the responsibility of the Commander of Multan Corps, which is one of the main strike Corps of the Pakistan Army. Rawalpindi Corps looks after the Line of Control (LoC). The changes took place after Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed met Taliban leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar recently. Baradar, the co-founder of



Taliban, has been made the Deputy Prime Minister of the Taliban government in Afghanistan. On Monday, Chinese President Xi Jinping appointed General Wang Haijiang as the Commander of the Western Theatre Command of the People's Liberation Army. The Western Theatre Command oversees the Xinjiang and the Tibet Autonomous Regions, as well as the borders with India. General Wang Haijiang, 58, replaced General Xu Qiling, 59, who was only promoted in July this year to head the Western Theatre Command.



Earlier, General Xu replaced General Zhang Xudong, 59, in July who was appointed around mid-December last year to head the command, replacing 65-year-old Gen Zhao Zongqi who retired from the PLA. It is not yet clear what will be the new role of General Xu Qiling and General Zhang Xudong, both still in service, after being relieved from the Western Command. Seeing a change of guard on northern and western borders, the Indian military has enhanced security apparatus along the borders apart are making strategic changes.

### 'GOOD NEWS':

## WOMEN CAN BE INDUCTED INTO ARMED FORCES THROUGH NDA, SC TOLD

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**

Nudged by the Supreme Court, the Centre on Wednesday informed the apex court that it has taken a decision to allow women into the National Defence Academy (NDA). Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, representing the Centre, submitted before a bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul that there is "good news", as a decision has been taken at the highest level that women will be inducted into the NDA, and the chiefs of three Armed Forces have also agreed. "A decision has been taken at the highest level of forces and the government that girls will be inducted into the National Defence Academy," she said, adding that the decision had been taken late Tuesday evening. However, the government informed the bench also comprising Justice M.M. Sundresh that it needs some time to frame guidelines to pave the way for women to take NDA courses and sought exemption for the exam this year. Justice Kaul said that the court has been periodically nudging the authorities to do it themselves, and sometimes things only move when the court steps in. "Armed forces are respected forces of this



country. But on gender equality, they have to do more", he said. "We are extremely glad to know that the armed forces themselves took the decision to induct women into the NDA. We know that reforms cannot happen in a day... The government will place time-lines of the process and the course of action," he said. Bhati said it will be path-breaking and generational reform. However, the top court emphasised that it is important for it to take a stand on these issues. "We want them to take a proactive approach themselves in ensuring gender equality rather than waiting for courts to intervene," the bench noted. The top court also asked the Centre to inform "What it is doing now? What is it planning to do in the future?" Bhati submitted that Centre will place a detailed affidavit. "On June 24, the exam was postponed to November this year. Please grant status quo in these exams as this needs procedural and infrastructural changes," she added. The top court was hearing a PIL filed by advocate Kush Kalra, seeking the NDA to open its doors for women aspiring to join the Armed Forces. The plea was argued by senior advocate Chinmoy Pradip Sharma. The plea also sought a direction from the court to allow women to get trained in the Indian Naval Academy as well. On August 18, the Supreme Court had said the mindset is not changing and emphasised why judicial orders are required to allow women candidates to take the entrance exam for the NDA, even after the top court's judgment expanding the horizons and extending the permanent commission in the Army to women.

## DGCI APPROVES TRUENAT TEST KIT FOR DIAGNOSIS OF NIPAH

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**  
The Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI) has granted emergency use authorisation to Truenat, a real-time PCR platform manufactured by Goa-based Molbio Diagnostics, for testing people infected with Nipah virus. This is the first kit in India to receive regulatory approval to conduct tests for Nipah. Truenat is an indigenous portable, battery-operated, Internet of Things-enabled RT-PCR platform developed and manufactured in India. It can test for nearly 30 diseases, and results take less than an hour. Truenat is already playing a critical role in the management of infectious diseases such as TB, Covid-19, dengue, chikungunya, hepatitis, and HPV in the country. "Covid-19 has brought out the importance of early and accurate testing for better disease management. Truenat is the first platform to be authorised by the DGCI for Nipah virus testing. We are proud to support our country in fighting Nipah Virus," Molbio Diagnostics Director and CEO Sriram Natarajan said in a statement. Nipah virus is an emerging zoonotic disease that causes severe disease in humans. Signs and symptoms range from asymptomatic to acute respiratory infection and fatal encephalitis.



Last week, it claimed the life of a 12-year-old boy in Kerala amid Covid surge. Previously, India has seen three outbreaks: Siliguri in 2001 and Nadia in 2007 (both West Bengal), and Kozhikode and Malappuram in Kerala in 2018. Molbio first started R&D work on the Truenat test for Nipah virus in 2018 in collaboration with the National Institute of Virology, Pune. "The ability to quickly deploy the platform to the point of need and the rapid testing capability makes it a powerful tool in diagnosis and containment of the Nipah Virus. This collaboration with NIV allows us to react quickly in times of need such emergencies," Molbio Diagnostics Director and CTO, Dr Chandrasekhar Nair, said in the statement. Truenat is also approved by the World Health Organisation for TB diagnosis and approved by the ICMR for TB, Covid-19 and other diseases.

## Cabinet nod to MSP hike for Rabi crops, rise highest for oilseeds, pulses

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**  
The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Wednesday approved increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for all mandated Rabi crops for Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2022-23 with an aim to realigning the MSPs in favour of oilseeds, pulses, and coarse cereals over wheat. This has been done to encourage farmers shift to a larger area for these crops and adopt best technologies and farm practices, to correct demand-supply imbalance, a Cabinet communique said. The government has increased the MSP of Rabi crops for RMS 2022-23, to ensure remunerative prices to the growers for their produce. The highest absolute increase in MSP over the previous year has been recommended for lentil (masur) and rapeseeds and mustard (Rs 400 per quintal each) followed by gram (Rs 130 per quintal). In case of safflower, there has been an increase of Rs 114 per quintal, in comparison to last year. The differential remuneration is aimed at encouraging crop diversification. For wheat, there has been an increase of Rs 40 per quintal while for barley, it is Rs 35 per quintal, over last year. The MSP for RMS 2022-23 for wheat has been announced as Rs 2,015 per quintal considering the



cost of production for 2022-23 as Rs 1,008, for barley, it is Rs 1,635 against Rs 1,019, MSP for gram has been announced as Rs 5,230 against the cost of production of Rs 3,004, for lentil, it is Rs 5,500 against Rs 3,079, for rapeseed and mustard at Rs 5,050 against Rs 2,523 and the MSP for safflower has been announced as Rs 5,441 against the cost of production of Rs 3,627. The cost of production as calculated refers to the comprehensive cost which includes all paid out costs such as those incurred on account of hired human labour, bullock labour/machine labour, rent paid for leased in land, expenses incurred on use of material inputs like seeds, fertilisers, manure, irri-

gation charges, depreciation on implements and farm buildings, interest on working capital, diesel/electricity for operation of pump sets etc, miscellaneous expenses and imputed value of family labour. The increase in MSP for Rabi Crops for RMS 2022-23 is in line with the Union Budget 2018-19 announcement of fixing the MSPs at a level of at least 1.5 times of the all-India weighted average cost of production, aiming a reasonably fair remuneration for the farmers, the statement said. "The expected returns to farmers over their cost of production are estimated to be highest in case of wheat and rapeseed & mustard (100 per cent each), followed by lentil (79 per cent), gram (74 per cent), barley (60 per cent) and safflower (50 per cent), it said. Additionally, the National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), the centrally sponsored scheme recently announced by the government, will help in increasing the domestic production of edible oils and reduce import dependency. The umbrella scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshana Abhiyan' (PM-AASHA), announced by the government in 2018, will aid in providing remunerative return to farmers for their produce. It consists of three sub-schemes i.e. Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PPDS) and Private Procurement & Stockiest Scheme (PPSS) on a pilot basis, the release added.

## Centre approves procurement of 56 transport aircraft from Airbus Defence

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**  
The Indian government on Wednesday approved the procurement of 56 transport aircraft from the Airbus Defence and Space SA of which 16 aircraft will be delivered in flyaway condition from Spain, while the remaining 40 will be manufactured in India. These 56 C-295MW transport aircraft of Airbus will replace the ageing Avro aircraft of the Indian Air Force. The Cabinet Committee on Security approved the procurement of 56 C-295MW transport aircraft from Airbus Defence for the Indian Air Force. The C-295MW aircraft is a transport aircraft of five to 10 tonne capacity with contemporary technology. The aircraft has a rear ramp door for quick reaction and para dropping of troops and cargo.

**These 56 C-295MW transport aircraft of Airbus will replace the ageing Avro aircraft of the Indian Air Force. The Cabinet Committee on Security approved the procurement of 56 C-295MW transport aircraft from Airbus Defence for the Indian Air Force.**

Sixteen aircraft will be delivered in flyaway condition from Spain within 48 months of signing of the contract, and 40 aircraft will be manufactured in India by the TATA Consortium within 10 years of signing of the contract. "This is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private company," the Defence Ministry said in a statement. All the 56 aircraft will be installed with indigenous Electronic Warfare Suite. "The project will give a boost to the aerospace ecosystem in India wherein several MSMEs spread over the country will be involved in manufacturing of parts of the aircraft," the ministry said. The programme will provide a major boost to the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' mission of the government as it offers a unique opportunity for the Indian private sector to enter into the technology intensive and highly competitive aviation industry. The project will augment domestic aviation manufacturing, resulting in reduced import dependence and expected increase in exports. A large number of detail parts,

and taxiway. During the process of manufacturing in India, it is expected that all the suppliers of TATA Consortium who will be involved in special processes will gain and maintain globally recognised National Aerospace and Defence Contractors Accreditation Programme (NADCAP) accreditation. "Before completion of deliveries, a 'D' Level servicing facility (MRO) for C-295MW aircraft is scheduled to be set up in India. It is expected that this facility will act as a regional MRO hub for various variants of C-295 aircraft," the ministry said. In addition, the original equipment manufacturer will also discharge its offset obligations through direct purchase of eligible products and services from Indian offset partners, giving further

## COVID CASES CROSS 30,000K AGAIN IN KERALA



**Thiruvananthapuram:** After a few days, Kerala on Wednesday again recorded over 30,000 cases, with 30,196 new Covid cases after 1,71,295 samples were tested in the past 24 hours, and the test positivity rate rising to 17.63 per cent. A statement issued here by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said 27,579 people turned negative, taking the total active cases in the state to 2,39,480. It has been a few weeks since Kerala has been leading the rest of the country in the daily new cases, total active cases, and also daily deaths. The day saw 181 Covid deaths taking the death toll to 22,001. Thrissur district recorded the highest number cases, at 3,832, followed by Ernakulam with 3,611, and Kozhikode with 3,058. With regards to vaccination, 77.16 per cent of the Kerala population, or 2.21 crore, have been given one dose of vaccine, while 29.47 per cent, or 84 lakh, have been given both the doses.





# NO GATHERING, PROCESSIONS ON GANESH CHATURTHI IN DELHI: DDMA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Apprehending a possible third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Wednesday decided to ban public celebrations of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival. Any procession or gathering in connection with Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations will be prohibited, it said. The festival starts on Friday, and concludes on September 21.



"All District Magistrates and their counterparts, Deputy Commissioners of Police and all authorities concerned shall ensure strict compliance of this order and shall adequately inform and sensitise the field functionaries about these instructions for strict compliance in letter and spirit,"

the order read. Every year, over 100 committees seek permission for community celebration of Ganesh festival in Delhi. "It is also directed that the District Magistrates and district DCPs shall convene meetings with religious/community leaders/Ganesh

festival committees before the festival to get their cooperation to maintain law and order and harmony and also to sensitise public for compliance of guidelines/instructions issued for combating Covid-19 by the government from time to time," the order added.

# Odisha oppn besieges Speaker for rejecting adjournment notice

Bhubaneswar | Agencies

Opposition BJP and Congress stalled the proceedings of the Odisha Assembly and virtually confined the Speaker in his chamber for rejecting an adjournment notice on the "mining scam" in the state. The Congress had moved the notice for a discussion on the "mining scam," but Speaker SN Patro has rejected it.

As soon as the House assembled for the day at 10.30 am, Congress members rushed towards the Speaker's podium to protest. BJP members also stood up on their seats and created ruckus, forcing the Speaker to adjourn the proceedings till 11.30 am.

The opposition party members then surrounded the chamber of the Speaker and did not allow him to come to the House to conduct the business. At this, Deputy Speaker RK Singh adjourned the House till 4 pm. The situation remained



the same in the post-lunch session too. The Opposition members continued their protest and did not allow the Speaker to come to his chair in the House, and the Deputy Speaker conducted the businesses. Amid uproar, several reports were tabled and four Bills passed.

BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi alleged that the state government has a nexus with the owners of mines and is equally involved in the scam. Therefore, the Speaker rejected the notice citing it doesn't have any relevance at present, he said. Joining Majhi, Congress

legislator SS Saluja alleged that the government is so neck-deep in the mining scam that it is scared to even discuss the issue. Therefore, the government is avoiding discussion on mining irregularities in the State, he said.

The Speaker said the Congress members led by party leader Narasingha Mishra and BJP members had come to his chamber to inquire about the reason for rejecting the adjournment notice. Patro said he informed them about the reason for rejecting the notice and had told them to raise the issue during the zero hour.

# Against muzzling of press but can't create separate avenues: SC

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it does not want freedom of the press to be muzzled, but it also cannot create a separate avenue for journalists to approach it directly in connection with quashing of FIRs against them.

The apex court made this observation while hearing a plea filed by Foundation for Independent Journalism, which runs news portal The Wire, and three of its journalists seeking quashing of three FIRs lodged against them in Uttar Pradesh over some news reports. A bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao, B.R. Gavai and B.V. Nagarathna granted two months protection to news portal and three of its journalists -- Seraj Ali, Mukul Singh Chauhan and Ismat Ara -- in three FIRs. The bench told the peti-



tioners' counsel that they have to go to the high court and argue for quashing the FIRs. "We will protect you in the interim," it noted. "We are aware of fundamental rights and don't want freedom of press to be muzzled," it said, but also added that if the petitioners' plea is allowed, then it would "open a Pandora's box." "We cannot create a separate avenue for journalists to directly come to this court

under Article 32 for quashing of FIRs," noted the bench. As Nitya Ramakrishnan, counsel appearing for petitioners, sought the court's permission to withdraw the petition to pursue other remedies available under the law, the bench ordered: "No coercive steps shall be taken against the petitioners for a period of two months from today. Writ petition is, accordingly, dismissed as withdrawn."

# Mother of 3 elopes 25 times in 10 years, husband says he loves her

Team Absolute | Guwahati

A middle aged Muslim woman in Assam 'eloped 25 times with different men while her husband and in-laws accepted her back every time with no serious complaint.

The 40-year-old woman 'eloped' 25 times in 10 years with different men after she tied the knot with Mafizuddin, a driver by profession, at remote Dhing Lahkar village in Central Assam's Nagaon district.

"In ten years, my wife fled with others around 25 times after we married in 2011. Every time, after coming back to the family, she promised that she would not do it again but so far she has failed to maintain her commitment.

"Sometimes my wife claimed that she went to her relatives' houses, some times she said she went to see her ailing relatives. "We have three children. Considering the care of the kids we



accepted her back everytime," Mafizuddin, husband of the woman, told the media.

He said: "On Saturday (September 4), when I returned home from work (driving a vehicle), I learned from my

father that she had run away after leaving my 3-month-old son at a neighbour's house."

"She told a woman in the neighbour's house that she was going to collect some feed for the goats. I do

not know when she will come back."

The husband said that before leaving on Saturday, his wife took Rs 22,000 and other material from the house. He is also unaware with whom she 'eloped' on Saturday.

"I would accept her as I genuinely love her and we also have three small children. Who will take care of them if I do not accept my wife? I did not lodge any complaint with the police to avoid legal and other troubles," Mafizuddin added.

The woman has two minor sons and a daughter. The age of her youngest son is just 3 months and the eldest child is a girl who is 6 years old. Her other son is 3 years old.

According to the neighbours of the fully Muslim dominated remote Dhing Lahkar village, the woman has illicit relations with many young men in the village and has run away with different lovers. After a few weeks or months she returned to her in-laws family.

# 1 Dead As Two Boats Collide In Brahmaputra In Assam, Several Missing

Sources said at least a 100 passengers were onboard the boats when they crashed into each other at Nimati Ghat in Jorhat, around 350 km from Guwahati.

Team Absolute | Guwahati

A woman has died and around 30 people are missing after two passenger boats collided with each other in the Brahmaputra River in Assam's Jorhat today. Sources said nearly 200 passengers were onboard the boats when they crashed into each other at Nimati Ghat in Jorhat, around 350 km from Guwahati, around 4 pm today.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said "all possible efforts are being made to rescue the passengers."

One of the boats, a government passenger ferry of the Inland Water Transport department, was coming from Majuli (a river island district in Assam) to Nimati Ghat with around 120 passengers on board while the other boat was going in the opposite direction. Videos from the accident showed the

boat capsizing after the collision, as some passengers tried to hold on to it while others jumped into the water to save themselves. The passengers' luggage along with motorbikes and cars on the boats also washed away in the river.

State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Force officials reached the spot and started rescue operations. Around 42 people, including a baby, have been rescued till now from which many have been sent to hospitals. A woman who was rescued and sent to a hospital for treatment has died, government sources said late in the evening.

The state government has suspended three officials of inland water transport department after the accident.

Soon after the incident, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma directed the district administration of Majuli and Jorhat districts to carry out the rescue mission expeditiously with the help of the NDRF and SDRF.

He said Home Minister Amit Shah has promised all possible help. "HM Sri Amit Shah had kindly called to enquire about the accident in Nimati Ghat and took an update on the rescue operations

and conditions of those rescued so far. He said the Central Government is ready to lend all possible help. Grateful to him," he tweeted.

"I am pained at the tragic boat accident near Nimati Ghat, Jorhat," the chief minister wrote. He directed state minister Bimal Bora to immediately travel to Majuli and take stock of the situation, and asked principal secretary to the chief minister Samir Kumar Sinha to monitor the developments. The chief minister said he will visit Nimati Ghat tomorrow to evaluate the situation. Union Minister and former Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, who represents Majuli in the state assembly, said he has directed the ministry of ports, shipping and waterways to provide all necessary support.

"Anguished to learn of the ferry accident in Majuli. I have talked with Assam CM Himanta Biswa regarding the accident and he has informed me of ongoing rescue and relief operations. I have directed @shipmin\_india to provide all necessary support to help the victims," he wrote on Twitter.

The army is also on stand-by to provide help with rescue operations.

# SC RECOMMENDS 10 JUDGES FOR KARNATAKA HC, TWO FOR KERALA HC

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court Collegium has approved the proposal for appointment of 10 additional judges of the Karnataka High Court and two additional judges of the Kerala High Court as permanent judges. According to a statement published on the top court website, the collegium, on September 7, approved the proposal for appointment of following additional judges of the Kerala High Court as permanent judges: Justice MR Anitha and Justice K Nair Hariपाल. The collegium also approved the proposal for appointment of following additional judges of the Karnataka High Court as permanent judges: Justice Shivshankar Amarannavar, Justice M Ganeshiah Uma,



Justice Vedavyasachar Srishananda, Justice Hanchate Sanjeevkumar, Justice Padmaraj Nemachandra Desai, and Justice P Krishna Bhat.

In a separate statement, the top court collegium also approved the proposal for appointment of following additional judges of the Karnataka High Court as permanent judges: Justice Maralur Indrakumar Arun, Justice Engalaguppe Seetharamaiah Indresh, Justice Ravi Venkappa Hosmani, and Justice Savanur Vishwajith Shetty.

# BJP IS BACKING ITS TWO AGENTS - KEJRIWAL & OWASI, SAYS SANDEEP DIKSHIT



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Launching a scathing attack on the BJP, AAP and MIM, former Congress MP Sandeep Dikshit has alleged that the three parties are hand in glove to weaken the Congress. Dikshit speaking to IANS said, there has been no case of ED and Income Tax or no raids on the leaders of these political parties and while every opposition leader is summoned by ED or raided, he gave the examples of Maharashtra and West Bengal.

Later in a tweet Sandeep Dikshit added that he was told by a BJP MLA of Madhya Pradesh that, "the Modi-Shah have two point agenda, one to strengthen their own party and second, to strengthen agents like Kejriwal and Owaisi, the evidence that he gave was amazing."

Dikshit who is two time Lok Sabha MP and son of former Chief Minister of Delhi, the late Sheila Dikshit, questioned why the government is not taking any action on them because they are helping BJP wherever they want and dent votes of other secular parties. The AAP is contesting elections in Goa, Punjab, Uttarakhand and UP.

The Congress is in direct contest with BJP in Goa Uttarakhand and Manipur, but AAP is posing a threat to eat into the votes of the Congress in Goa and Uttarakhand while in Punjab it has become main challenger. The AIMIM which was instrumental in upsetting the chances of the grand alliance in Bihar could not do anything in West Bengal and is contesting elections in UP with much fanfare. NCP leader and Congress ally in Maharashtra Sharad Pawar also attacked the Union government on Tuesday and alleged that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) was being used as a tool by the Centre to suppress opponents. He said that it's an attempt to infringe upon the State government's rights and to put down opponents, he also said that political cycles change in due course and he will raise the issue in Parliament.

# FARMERS, KARNAL ADMIN 4TH MEETING INCONCLUSIVE; PROTEST TO CONTINUE

Team Absolute | Karnal

The fourth-round meeting between farmers and the administration of Karnal district in Haryana ended inconclusively on Wednesday. After coming out of the meeting, the farmers leaders said the administration has refused to take any action against SDM Ayush Sinha.

The farmers leaders said the protest will continue until their demands are met. Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait said a parallel protest will run in Karnal, but they will not disrupt the administration's functioning.

"A peaceful protest will continue here at Karnal until the government takes action against the IAS officer. However, the administration will be allowed to function for daily services, so that the people

are not affected," Tikait said. He said they will hold a meeting after one or two days and will decide on the strategies for the protest. "We have clearly told the administration that invite us (farmers) for a meeting only if they have got instructions from the higher authorities to take action against the SDM, otherwise don't call us for a meeting," Tikait added.

It was the fourth meeting between the farmers leaders and the Karnal administration since the protest began early on Tuesday. A delegation of 13 farmers led by Tikait attended the meeting with the administration officials and insisted on action against SDM Ayush Sinha and an independent inquiry into the matter.

Before going for the meeting, Tikait had accused Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar of

conspiring to confine the farmers agitation to one district (Karnal). "Ongoing farm protests at borders of Delhi will remain the main centre of the protest. No matter how much the governments try to suppress us we will not waste energy in the protest at Karnal but would like to solve this issue as soon as possible," he added.

The decision for the fourth round of talks with the district administration was taken in a meeting held among the representatives of the farmers unions on Wednesday. It was the fourth meeting in the last 24 hours, since scores of farmers sat on a protest against the August 28 lathicharge. Three meetings on the same issue were held on Tuesday, however, all those meetings were inconclusive.

They also alleged that the Haryana police have banned the

entry of farmers coming to join the protest. "All entry points to the mini-secretariat have been sealed. Farmers sitting here on protest would need water, food and other things but we are not allowed to enter. The more the government will harass the farmers the more this protest will intensify. The government must understand that farmers will not leave the place until our demands are met," said Chetan Singh, one of the protesters.

The agitating farmers said it has been more than 24 hours that they have been demanding action against the IAS officer who on August 28 ordered a lathicharge.

Firm on their demand for action against the IAS officer who has been transferred to Chandigarh, the farmers said they would not call off their protest until the gov-

ernment takes action against him. The protest which began at Anaj Mandi early on Tuesday shifted to the mini-secretariat at Karnal on Wednesday.

To intensify the protest, the farmers have set up tents outside the DC office. Some farmers said that the protest in front of the district administration office will be extended if their demands are not met.

Apart from action against the IAS officer, the farmers have also demanded compensation of Rs 25 lakh and a government job to the next of kin of Sushil Kajal, a farmer from Gharanda who received head injuries in the lathicharge on August 28 and died later due to a heart attack. They also demanded a compensation of Rs 2 lakh to all those who received injuries in the lathicharge.



# Political parties eyeing tribal vote banks in MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Tribal voters have their own political significance in Madhya Pradesh, hence, both major parties ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and the opposition Congress have started calling upon their biggest benefactors from among the tribals. Out of the total 230 assembly seats, a total of 47 are reserved for this category and victory or defeat on these seats are crucial for political players. That's why both the political parties have stepped up efforts for these seats. Congress has resorted to Adivasi Adhikar Yatra. Former Chief Minister Kamal Nath took part in this yatra in Barwani and attacked the BJP fiercely, showing no hesitation in calling it anti-tribal. He also attacked Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan saying that he only makes announcements. On the other hand, the BJP during the 75th Amrit Mahotsav of Independence in Jabalpur on September 18



will remember tribal heroes Shankar Shah and Raghunath Shah. Union Home Minister Amit Shah will also be present at the event. BJP's state spokesperson and MLA Yashpal Singh Sisodia said that Kamal Nath was "in power for 15 months in the state, if he had worked for the interests of the tribals, today he would not have needed to take out the 'Adhikar Yatra'. The Chief Minister has always been concerned about the rights of tribals. Kamal Nath is shedding crocodile tears for the tribals today." Sisodia added that the Congress in its 15 months in

power did not do any work for the tribals or for Lord Birsa Munda, Shankar Shah, Raghunath Shah and Veerangana Durgavati. "Today the tribal vote bank is slipping out of the hands of Congress, as such it is drawing the line of division in the society with the help of foreign forces. By taking out the Kamal Nath Yatra, they are only doing misleading the tribals," Sisodia said. Political analysts believe that bye-elections are coming up in one Lok Sabha and three assembly constituencies, so both the parties have intensified efforts to woo the tribals.

# COVID -19 SITUATION IN STATE 'UNDER CONTROL' HEALTH MINISTER

The minister says that Covid-19 cases are growing in Kerala and Maharashtra but they are still very low in MP. "Today, for instance, only 16 cases have been reported," he said.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Health minister Dr Prabhuram Choudhary claimed that the Covid-19 situation in Madhya Pradesh is 'under control.' "The government is trying its best to ensure that the third wave of the pandemic does not strike the state," said the minister. "We are focusing on vaccination and are making the people aware of the need to get themselves vaccinated," he said. The minister was talking to media persons on the sidelines of a function at Nour-Us-Sabah Palace in the city on Wednesday for the launch of a new campaign 'MANCH' for bettering MMR and IMR in the tribal-dominated Shahdol district. HCL Foundation will conduct the campaign. The minister says that Covid-19 cases are growing in Kerala and Maharashtra but they are still very low in MP. "Today, for instance, only 16 cases have been reported," he said. In his speech at the event, Dr

Choudhary says that Madhya Pradesh has set an example before the country in managing the Covid pandemic. "We could achieve it through people's participation right from the village to the district levels," he said. He said, "We are praying that the third wave should never come but are preparing for the worst situation. The production capacity of medical oxygen has been increased and arrangements have been made for setting up of temporary hospitals in case of need."

The minister said that reducing IMR and MMR was a big challenge in the state. Early detection of pregnant women at risk of developing complications at the time of delivery was the key to bringing down MMR and IMR both. Dr Choudhary said that the government had expanded the child and infant health facilities in the state by establishing PICUs (Paediatric Intensive Care Units) in district and civil hospitals. Besides, the minister also launched

digital kits and a mini skill lab on the occasion. Director, HCL Foundation, Nidhi Pundhir said the foundation works in the fields of environment, health and education. She said that the MMR and Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) were unusually high in Shahdol. The foundation would be training grassroots-level health workers (ANMs, Anganwadi workers and ASHA workers) in three Community Health Centre (CHC) areas - Jaisinghnagar, Budhar and Sohagpur - of the district.

## SPEED UP WORK OF SMART KRISHI MANDI OF INDORE: CM

### Public representatives of Indore discuss development project with Chief Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that every effort should be made to make proposed krishi mandi in Indore a smart mandi of Asia. He directed that shifting and construction work of the mandi should be completed at the earliest after discussing with the mandi traders. The Chief Minister said that a presentation should be made soon in Bhopal regarding construction of the proposed Smart Krishi Mandi.

Chouhan was discussing with public representatives at the airport during his short stay in Indore today. Member of Parliament Shankar Lalwani discussed about the proposed construction of Asia's fully equipped Smart Krishi Mandi in Indore district. He said that an action plan is being prepared to shift the Cantonment Krishi Upaj Mandi of the district to about 100 acres of land in Kailod village near the bypass. During this, MLAs Akash Vijayvargiya, Gaurav Ranadive, Sudarshan Gupta and public representatives were also present.

Lalwani also discussed with Chief Minister about allotment of 12.875 hectare army land adjoining Polo Ground Road of village Bhagirathpura tehsil Malharganj for the development works of the district and public use of general public. He said that in lieu of the said land, a proposal has been sent to the government to give 12.875 hectares of land behind BSF shooting range in village Revati of Malharganj tehsil by the district administration as army land. Chief Minister said that he would discuss this issue with the Union Defence Minister.

## Dreams of Late Nandu Bhaiya will be realised: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that we will continue to make the state prosperous and developed by following the path shown by MP Late Nand Kumar Singh Chouhan. Nandu Bhaiya was a rare personality. Today he may not be with us physically, but his thoughts and ideals are with us. Never thought that he would leave us so soon. Chouhan said that Late Nandu Bhaiya has written a new script for the expansion and development of basic facilities including irrigation, construction of roads, health, education, agriculture and medical colleges in the Nimar region. Chouhan was addressing a memorial programme organised on the anniversary of MP Late Nand Kumar Singh Chouhan at Shahpur in Burhanpur district on Wednesday. Chouhan said that we are sad that Nandu Bhaiya is not among us. He had promised to stay together, but left early leaving us



alone. His dreams will be realised. Will develop, will give full love to the public according to his wish. Chouhan said that I take responsibility that the dreams of Late Nandu Bhaiya will be realised. As a result of the strong will power of a skilled mass leader like Nandu Bhaiya, development has taken place in the area. He made a significant contribution in making the Nimar region ideal. Chief Minister said that the farmers of Burhanpur are hardworking. From food processing to farming, there will be no shortage in making agriculture a profitable business.

Efforts will continue to develop the means of employment in the district, to pursue industry development and to do better work even in this period of crisis. MP VD Sharma, who participated virtually in the programme, said that he can't believe that Nandu Bhaiya is not among us. He was a man devoted to development. He was a symbol of ease and simplicity and was associated with the masses. Got to learn a lot from him in life. Together we will complete his unfinished tasks. Khandwa MLA Devendra Verma said that SNandu Bhaiya was not a person but an institution. He worked tirelessly throughout his life for development. Chouhan reached the samadhi site of Late Nandu Bhaiya and paid his floral tributes and consoled the family members. The Chief Minister also planted a sapling in the memory of Late Nandu Bhaiya and visited the blood donation camp and exhibition organised in memory of Late Nandu Bhaiya.

## New MP Bhawan will manifest States splendour



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday inspected the under-construction building of New Madhya Pradesh Bhawan in Delhi and directed that efforts should be made to manifest the state's capital splendour in the new building. Shri Chouhan said that not just modern facilities but also the values, traditions, beliefs, architecture, natural beauty and ideals of great personalities of Madhya Pradesh should be incorporated in the New Bhawan. Chouhan directed that the traditions and beliefs of Madhya Pradesh as expressed in Mahakaleshwar and Omkareshwar Jyotirlingas, Amarkantak, Mitawali Temple, Sandipani Ashram and Ram Raja Temple of Orchha as well as architectural marvels like Sanchi, Khajuraho, Asirgarh and Mandu should be included in the new building in some or the other form. There should also be

### Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inspects the under-construction Madhya Pradesh Bhawan in Delhi

a glimpse of the ideals of freedom fighters and revolutionaries of the state like Raghunath Shah, Shankar Shah, Tanta Bhai, Bhimanayak and Rani Lakshmi Bai. The landscaping of the building should include the natural beauty of the national parks and tribal art of the state. Chouhan said that the facilities of the New Bhawan should be such that the Govt. meetings and business meetings can be conducted there and there is an requirement for meeting space for such events. He told that efforts should be made to construct such a building which has a glimpse of culture of Madhya Pradesh on one hand and ease of conducting administrative work on the other hand. Earlier senior officers of NBCC apprised Chouhan about the progress of the construction of Madhya Pradesh Bhawan and made a presentation through drawings and also obtained necessary instructions from the Chief Minister. Residential Commissioner, Additional Residential Commissioner and other Officers of Madhya Pradesh Government were also present during the event.

## CRUCIAL FOR MP AND UP, KEN-BETWA RIVER LINK PROJECT TO BE INAUGURATED IN NOVEMBER

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The ambitious Rs 45,000 crore Ken-Betwa river link project, which has been pending for the last 16 years, will be inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi in November, Madhya Pradesh water resources minister Tulsiram Silawat told media persons in Bhopal on Wednesday. The Centre, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh governments have reached a consensus on the project, said Silawat. He, however, said linking the project to UP assembly polls slated to be held next year was not appropriate as the inauguration was only aimed to address water needs of the two states. Silawat further said since there were no more pending issues between the two states, the link project work will resume from November. The Ken-Betwa project was mooted in 2005 to meet the water needs of the parched Bundelkhand region, which is spread

### Madhya Pradesh water resources minister Tulsiram Silawat told News18 that PM Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Ken-Betwa river link project in November.

across MP and UP borders. The scheme though has been embroiled in several issues for the last 16 years. After lengthy negotiations on several issues, including water-sharing ratio, the two states and the Centre had signed the MoU on March 22 this year. As part of the project, surplus water of river Ken in MP will be transferred to river Betwa in UP for irrigating 3.64 lakh hectares in Bundelkhand. The projects involved construction of a 77 metre-tall and 2 km-wide Dhaudhan dam and a 230 km canal. The project had drawn public ire as it is expected to submerge parts of Panna Tiger Reserve, which will hamper the habitat of wild animals. The National Board for Wildlife cleared

## One District One Product Scheme

### Action plan made for 6 districts for collection of minor forest produce

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Forest Minister Kunwar Vijay Shah informed that action plan has been prepared for six districts for collection of minor forest produce under 'One District-One Product' scheme in the state. It includes Alirajpur, Singrauli, Umaria, Betul, Mandla and Anuppur districts. Shah informed that due to availability of sufficient quantity of Mahua flower and Safed Musli in Alirajpur, special efforts would be made to set up machines in 2 Van Dhan Kendras for marketing and processing. In Singrauli district, 7 Van Dhan Kendras will be used for processing Mahua flower. A plan has been prepared to make Mahua Laddu, Biscuit and Cake as well as extract oil from Mahua seeds through 6 Van Dhan Centers set up for processing and marketing of Mahua flowers in Umaria district. Mahua saplings have also been planted at 6 places under the local tree plantation scheme. Shah informed that Van Dhan Vikas Kendras are being set up in Betul district for processing and marketing of Mahua flowers and pickle kernels. Similarly, farmers will also be trained for the purpose of encouraging the cultivation of medicinal plants on private land. The finished product at these centres will be sold through local market, TRIFED and Sanjeevani Kendras. Shah informed that a plan has been prepared for processing of Amla, Arjun bark, honey and Mahua in Mandla district. In Anuppur district, special efforts will be made under the action plan for the conservation and production of Gulbakavali, including plantation. This will strengthen the economic condition of the local villagers.

## GOTMAR FAIR: OVER 400 INJURED IN ANNUAL STONE PELTING RITUAL

District Collector Saurabh Kumar Suman said on Tuesday that the Gotmar fair passed off peacefully this year and lesser people were injured when compared to previous year, adding that he had appealed to people to organise such events only in a symbolic manner.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

More than 400 people were injured in traditional stone pelting in Madhya Pradesh during the annual 'Gotmar' fair on Tuesday. The fair was organised on the banks of river Jaam in Chhindwara district. The district administration had

deployed 1,000 policemen and a team of 35 doctors at the site of the fair, news agency PTI reported. The event was monitored by drones, PTI added. "During the Gotmar fair on Tuesday, over 400 people sustained injuries. Two people with severe injuries have been referred to Nagpur in neighbouring Maharashtra for further treatment,"

Chief Medical Health Officer (CMHO) Dr GC Chourasia said. It is a centuries-old and one of the bloodiest fairs in the world. People of two villages - Savargaon and Pandhurna - through either sides of river Jaam during the fair where a tree is erected in the middle of the river with a flag on top. Both the sides approach the tree

to remove the flag by pelting stones (called Got) at each other and those who remove the flag first, are declared winners. When is the fair organised? The Gotmar fair is organised in the month of September. The whole activity happens amidst the chanting of the sacred name of Maa Durga. District Collector Saurabh Kumar Suman said on Tuesday that the fair passed off peacefully this year and lesser people were injured when compared to previous year, adding that he had appealed to people to organise such events only in a symbolic manner. As per local legend, about 300 years ago, a boy from Pandhurna eloped with a girl from Savargaon and people from the latter threw stones to stop him from crossing the river with her, while his village folk retaliated in the same manner to bring the couple home safely.

## Tigress gives birth to 2 cubs in Panna reserve

Currently, there are about 70 tigers in the PTR, including 45 to 50 felines above one year of age and around 20 cubs, he said.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

An eight-year-old tigress has given birth to two cubs in Panna Tiger Reserve, a senior forest official said. The tiger reserve management had the information about the birth of the cubs of tigress named T-234, but they were captured on cameras for the first time last week, Panna Tiger Reserve's (PTR) field director Uttam Kumar Sharma told reporters on Tuesday. Currently, there are about 70 tigers in the PTR, including 45 to 50 felines above one year of age and around 20 cubs, he said. "About a week back, this tigress was captured on cameras with the two cubs. The cubs seemed to be about three months old," the official said. In 2009, not a single tiger



was left in the PTR due to various reasons, including poaching. Later, two tigresses and a tiger were brought to the PTR from Pench Tiger Reserve as part of the Panna tiger reintroduction programme. According to the 2018 tiger census, Madhya Pradesh is home to highest number of tigers in the country, an official earlier said. The state has a number of tiger reserves, including Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Satpura and Panna.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Signs of recovery

In a sign of a sharp economic recovery, credit profiles of companies has seen a marked improvement in the five month period of current fiscal as compared to Covid affected April-August period of 2020.

NO CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION: INDIAN MUSLIMS AND THE TALIBAN TAKEOVER OF AFGHANISTAN

Salma Kouser-Asif

Taliban prides itself in following Islam according to the scriptures and yearns to establish an Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan.

Their narrow vision rests on the claim that the foremost objective of maintaining law and order in the society is possible by following Islamic principles.

In the previous regime which lasted from 1996 to 2001, the Taliban meted out strict punishments to anyone who went against their interpretation of Shariah rules that were to be followed.

The Hazaras in particular have been subject to some of the most violent attacks for their ethnicity and Shia faith.

It's important to remember that in its thirst to gain control over Afghanistan, Taliban is killing the Muslims in Afghanistan.

In their fight against the Soviet Union, it were the US and Pakistan that began pushing the Islamic agenda in Afghanistan.

And still the Taliban claims to establish an Islamic Emirate. In reality, the brand of Islam that the Taliban practices and wants an ordinary Afghani to follow is merely a means to have absolute control over Afghanistan.

The Deoband School in India has condemned the violent practices that are followed by the Taliban. There is definitely no need to draw a connection between the Afghan Taliban and the Deoband seminary of the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) commended the Taliban for taking over Afghanistan.

Harrowing visuals of people desperate to flee the clutches of Taliban having been doing rounds on the internet, social media and television channels for which the Taliban need a strong condemnation from the international community; the onus should not be on the Indian



Muslims alone. Muslims constitute roughly 14 per cent of India's population and are the third largest Muslim population in the world.

The whole narrative of drawing a connection of Indian Muslims to the Taliban is flawed. When isolated people like Maulana Sajjad Nomani of the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) commended the Taliban for taking over Afghanistan, the AIMPLB immediately dissociated itself from this opinion.

Everyone knows very well the harm their medieval practices in the name of Islam are doing, is more to the religion than the practitioners themselves.

as representative of the whole Muslim community in India. India has long been a pluralistic society from the start and a lot of it is due to the social movements like the Bhakti and Sufi movements etc.

So, we see a cultural balance and this has been the foundation of Indian Muslims. In India, Islam is also driven by culture, tradition along with theology.

For a Bengali-speaking Muslim or an Assamese-speaking Muslim, their ethnic identity is as important to them as their religious identity.

Everyone knows very well the harm their medieval practices in the name of Islam are doing, is more to the religion than the practitioners themselves.

Some Muslims in India believe that Islam as a religion involves syncretism and others believe in a Puritan Islam with no scope for heterogeneity.

And Indian Muslims respect these differences and opinions that have existed since time immemorial and do not believe in forcefully enforcing the ideologies like the way the Taliban does.

(The views expressed are personal)

international

IS-KP WILL CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR MORE ATTACKS ON WESTERN, INDIAN TARGETS IN THE REGION SOON

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Islamic State Khorasan Province (IS-KP) is also a Pakistani proxy that is thriving under Islamabad's patronage.

There is a strong likelihood that IS-KP will claim responsibility for more attacks on Western and Indian targets in the region soon.



Most of ISKP's cadres include disgruntled elements from the Taliban, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, and Pakistan's other proxy groups like Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

now is that IS-KP has replaced Al Qaeda and the Taliban as America's latest antagonist.

In the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, there are numerous heavy-weight proxies that are supported by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) like the Haqqani Network (HQN), JeM, LeT, and the Taliban.

tim of terror, and to make the Taliban more acceptable to international actors," it added.

Reportedly, since its formation in 2015, the ISI has infiltrated the IS-KP with a sizable number of its cadres from LeT, JeM, and HQN.

There is no reason to believe that IS-KP and the Taliban are sworn enemies due to perceived ideological differences.

smuggling. "Interviews I had with informed interlocutors in Pakistan suggest that key figures in IS-KP have had links with individuals and entities associated with the Pakistani ISI since the group's inception.

Reportedly, they also assisted them in moving to the IS-KP stronghold in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region through third countries," the author said.

Having discussed the interconnected and overlapping nature of terror groups in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, it becomes clear that the ISI is the common denominator among all of them, Pandya added.

PAK PROMOTING 'CULTURE OF VIOLENCE': INDIA



Arul Louis | United Nations

India has accused Pakistan of promoting a "culture of violence" and using the high-level UN meeting on the culture of peace for hate speech.

"We have witnessed yet another attempt today by the delegation of Pakistan to exploit a UN platform for hate speech against India, even as it continues to foment a 'culture of violence' at home and across its borders," Vidisha Maitra, a First Secretary at India's UN mission told the General Assembly on Tuesday.

"We dismiss and condemn all such efforts," she said in her address to the high-level forum on culture of peace while making a passive reference to Pakistan's Permanent Representative Munir Akram's remarks.

41 KILLED, DOZENS INJURED IN PRISON FIRE NEAR JAKARTA



Jakarta | Agencies

At least 41 people were killed and about 80 others injured as fire broke out at a prison in Tangerang town near the Indonesian capital Jakarta early on Wednesday, officials said.

according to Jakarta police chief Inspector General Fadil Imran, Xinhua news agency reported.

block, which was designed for holding 40 prisoners, accommodates 122, said Rika Aprianti, a spokesperson for the prison department at Indonesia's Law and Human Rights Ministry.

HOUSEHOLD GAS BLAST KILLS 2 NEAR MOSCOW

Moscow: At least two people were killed and five injured in a household gas blast in a Moscow suburb on Wednesday, RIA Novosti news agency reported.

The second, third and part of the fourth floors of a nine-storey residential building collapsed during the explosion in the town of Noginsk, the Moscow Region, and 24 apartments were damaged.

More than 170 people have been evacuated. It is not known yet if there are still people under the rubble.

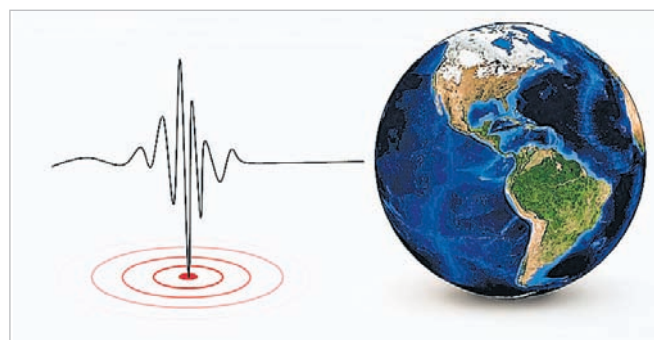
One killed as 7.1-magnitude quake shakes S Mexico

Mexico City | Agencies

At least one person was killed after a 7.1-magnitude earthquake hit the southern Mexican coastal city of Acapulco in Guerrero state on Tuesday night, officials said.

Tremors were felt hundreds of kilometres away in the Mexican capital as buildings rocked and swayed in Mexico City, Xinhua news agency reported on Wednesday.

The National Seismological Service reported via Twitter that the earthquake occurred at 8.47 p.m. local time (0147 GMT Wednesday) 11 km southwest of Acapulco, with a depth of 10 km.



Governor Hector Astudillo Flores told local television. The Civil Protection Agency of the state said the quake has led to rock falls and landslides on roads.

Mexico City, people rushed to the streets as the quake was felt strongly, followed by power outages.

ing shelter outside a shop. The city's mayor Claudia Sheinbaum asked residents to stay calm via her social networks.



Fresh curbs, lockdown will depend on oxygen demands: Maha govt

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As Maharashtra grapples with a renewed surge in Covid-19 cases, the state government on Wednesday clarified that fresh curbs or lockdown-like measures would be considered only if the demands for liquid medical oxygen (LMO) crosses 700 tonnes daily. The fresh spike has raised apprehensions of more restrictions, especially with major festivals like the 10-day Ganeshotsav and Navratni round the corner.



Official said that during the second wave which peaked in April-May 2021, the state LMO production of around 1,200 tonnes daily has now been significantly increased to around 1,700 tonnes. Currently, the state is reporting a LMO demand of over 200 tonnes for Covid patients and 150 tonnes for other patients, but during the expected third wave, the LMO requirements could shoot up drastically.

NO VISITING MANDALS DURING GANESH CHATURTHI, ONLY ONLINE DARSHAN ALLOWED: MAHARASHTRA GOVT

Team Absolute | Mumbai

People would not be allowed to visit Ganesh pandals during the coming festival in view of the coronavirus pandemic, the Maharashtra government said on Wednesday. Only online 'darshan' or telecast from pandals would be allowed, said the state home department. Earlier, it had said in a circular that social distancing should be followed strictly inside the pandals during the Ganesh festival.



He said that no processions will be allowed and mandals must deposit idols at collection points assigned by ward offices. Following this, BMC staff will carry out the immersion of the idols in natural water bodies.

BMC has banned welcome as well as visarjan processions in the wake of the pandemic. Mandal volunteers will not be allowed anywhere near Chowpatty or other waterfronts and will have to hand over the idols to the BMC volunteers or civic staff who will take over from that point.

zens and mandals to give preference to the artificial ponds in each of the 24 wards. The BMC and the state government in June had issued general guidelines on the festival, mandating residents and sarvajanik mandals to have smaller idols (2ft-high for households and 4ft-high for sarvajanik mandals), similar to last year.

MONSOON DOWNPOUR CONTINUES TO BATTER MAHARASHTRA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Wet weather conditions with intermittent heavy showers have characterised weather in Mumbai and other parts of coastal Maharashtra this week. As per forecasts, active monsoon downpours will prevail over parts of Maharashtra for the next few days. With 79 mm rainfall over the last 24 hours till Wednesday morning, Mumbai's Santacruz monitoring station has recorded a 2,732 mm rainfall so far this monsoon season.



west-north-westwards during the next 4-5 days. Heavy showers are also expected along the west coast as the system attracts moist winds from the Arabian Sea. Under the influence of this system, fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy showers have been forecast over Madhya Maharashtra from September 8 to 11. Subdivisions Madhya Maharashtra may face the brunt of isolated extremely heavy rainfall on Wednesday. Similar rough conditions are expected to batter adjoining state Gujarat on Wednesday and Thursday.

Red warnings-IMD's highest weather warning level-instruct residents and authorities to 'take action' during inclement weather. Meanwhile, on Wednesday, Madhya Maharashtra has been placed under an orange alert, which urges residents to 'be prepared' for the rough weather conditions. The other surrounding subdivision, Marathwada has been kept under a yellow watch that instructs people to 'be updated' on September 8's weather situation.

HEAVY RAINS LASH RAIGAD

Alibaug: Teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed in Maharashtra's Raigad district, as heavy rains continued to batter the coastal region since the last 24 hours, an official said on Wednesday. Rains lashed large parts of the district, which has recorded 98.89 per cent of its average annual rainfall, the official said. An incident of landslide occurred at Salav in Murud taluka on Tuesday, affecting vehicular movement on Alibaug-Murud and Roha-Murud routes, he said.

Pune tops in Covid-19 vaccination chart in Maha, Mumbai stands second

Team Absolute | Pune

With vaccinations getting generated from Co-Win, Pune has set another milestone of administering most Covid vaccine shots on Tuesday. A total of 1.82 lakh beneficiaries got their vaccines on Tuesday till 8:00 pm. On the other hand, Mumbai recorded the second-highest vaccination figures in the state, with beneficiaries reaching 52,314 and vaccine doses, 79,000 in Ahmednagar on Tuesday.

Pune sets another record for administering most Covid doses in a day.

Hospital, after being alerted about the mega vaccination drive, alone vaccinated around 692 beneficiaries in a short span. Ayush Prasad, the Pune Zilla Parishad chief executive officer (CEO), told TOI that the number of people getting vaccinated in the rural areas has increased only after local communities' involvement at the gram-panchayat level.

Maharashtra Cabinet approves solar capacity addition of 577 mw

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a bid to increase the share of solar power projects in the state's total generation capacity, the Maharashtra Cabinet on Wednesday approved establishment of solar power projects by the state-run Maharashtra State Power Generation Company (MahaGenco) at various places. The government has cleared two proposals comprising solar power projects of total capacity of 187 mw and another of 390 mw.

internal resources or debt. MahaGenco will repay the loan borrowed from the KfW Bank Germany. As far as 390 mw of solar power projects are concerned, 130 mw capacity (90 mw, 30 mw and 40 mw) will come up at different sites in Washim district on EPC model. Under Washim-1 category, two projects with 20 mw each and another with 40 mw will be developed. Further under Washim 2 category, 145 mw in Chandrapur district and three projects with 25 mw capacity each will come up in Yavatmal district.

Maharashtra govt mulls 'nodal centres' at smaller cities for IT workers as WFH continues

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With work from home (WFH) continuing for employees in the information technology sector, Maharashtra is mulling to create 'nodal centres' on the lines of co-working spaces in smaller cities and towns, from where software professionals can work for their respective companies, a minister has said.

The state, which is home to the IT hub in Pune and also has a presence of enterprises in other pockets like Mumbai, Nagpur and Nashik, has invited suggestions from the industry for an 'inclusive IT policy', Minister of State for IT Satej Patil said.

A lot of the work done by IT professionals is for critical sectors like finance, where privacy concerns and data confidentiality are important which also forced a few of the professionals to continue working from offices even during the lockdowns.

have co-working spaces like WeWork since before the pandemic as well which typically help workers from diverse companies and sectors to help from dedicated spaces. Patil said the government is trying its best to promote IT in Tier-2 and -3 cities. He appealed to industry lobby groups Nasscom and the Software Export Association Pune (SEAP) to come forward with help on creating district-wise databases suggested by Deshpande.

NIA: HOW VAZE & CO DIABOLICALLY 'SILENCED' HIRAN - BOLLYWOOD STYLE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Chilling details have emerged of how Thane businessman Mansukh Hiran paid with his life for refusing to implicate himself in the planting of his own SUV near Antilia, the home of businessman Mukesh Ambani, and was finally eliminated by several former cops and others in a cold-blooded Bollywood-style operation. In its 290-page charge sheet, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has disclosed the investigations into the sensational SUV abandonment followed by Hiran's killing in a meticulously calculated conspiracy. The main players in the SUV and Hiran's killing cases are the 10

prime accused - Sachin H Vaze, Vinayak B. Shinde, Hisamuddin Kazi, Sunil D Mane, Pradeep R Sharma (all ex-cops), Naresh R Gor, Santosh A Shelar, Manish V Soni, Anand P Jadhav and Satish T Mothkuri, all slapped with murder and terror charges. After the SUV planting case erupted in a big way and it was transferred to the crack Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU), the then Investigating Officer (IO) Vaze pressurized Hiran, on a promise of immediate bail, to own up the crime. When he flatly refused, Vaze was worried of the ramifications since Hiran was the only person who knew the entire sequence of events but was a 'weak link' who could 'spill the beans' on them and

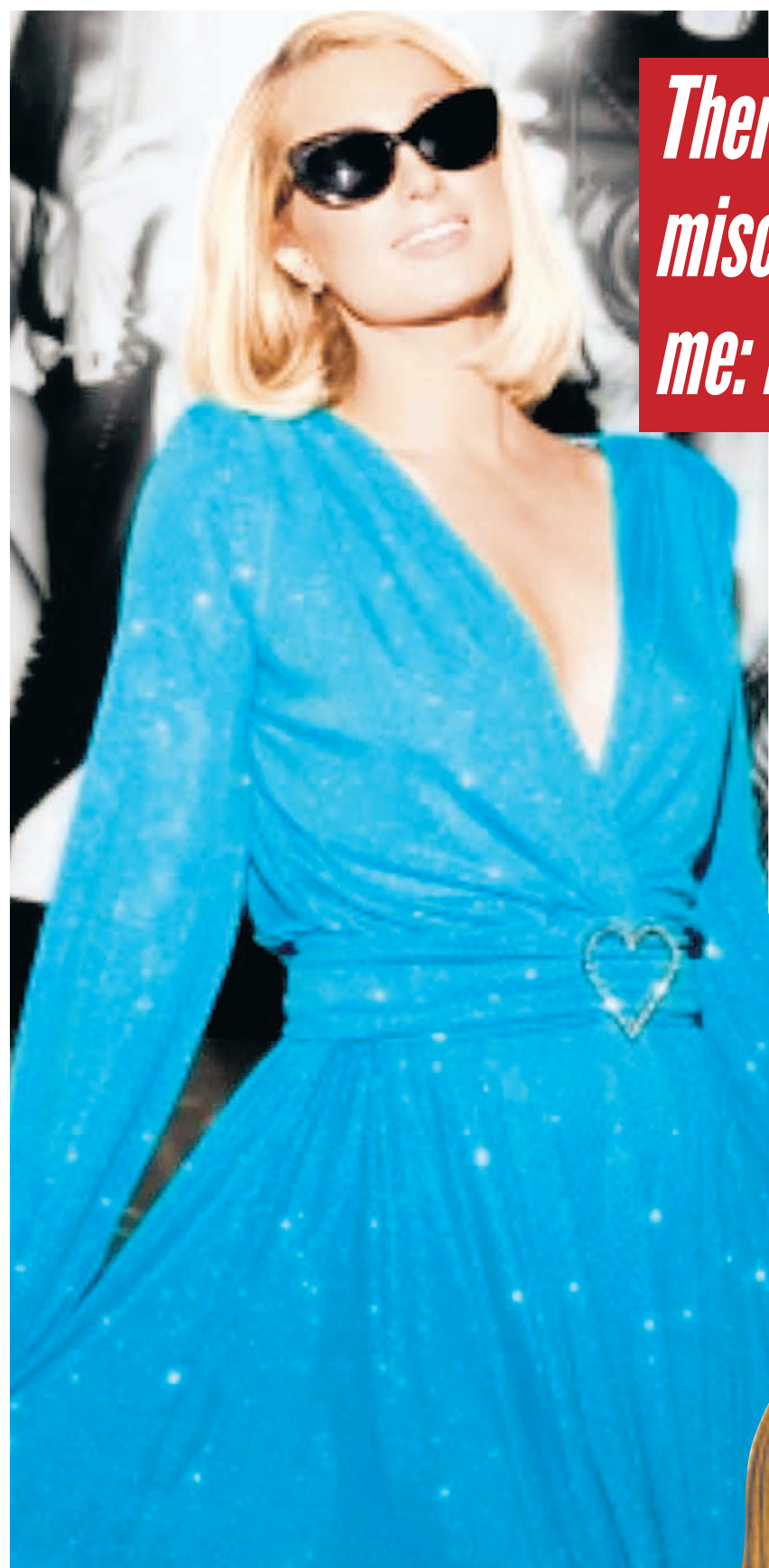
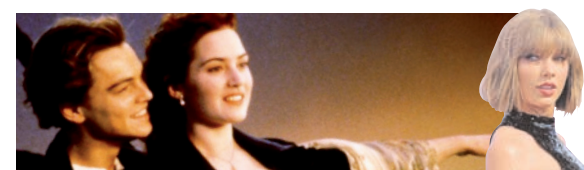
get all the conspirators trapped in the crime. Vaze and Sharma discussed the implications and decided to 'eliminate' Hiran, and the latter hired a contract killer Shelar, who along with the other accused met on March 2, and Hiran's presence was ensured to identify him before the prospective killers. The next day, Vaze met Sharma at his NGO, 'P.S. Foundation' office in Andheri west, and handed over a large bag containing bundles of Rs 500 notes. Thereafter, Sharma called Shelar to finalise a red-coloured vehicle Chevrolet Tavera and Vaze asked Hiran, oblivious of the ongoing diabolic plot to bump him off, to meet Mane at a particular location in Thane on March 4.

Mane picked up the Tavera, bought half a dozen handkerchiefs and a hood, while Vaze hatched out a raid in the Tippy Bar at Grant Road, to create an alibi that he was far away from the crime scene of Hiran's murder. Simultaneously, Vaze lured Hiran out from Thane to Kandivali to meet Mane, who used an alias of 'Inspector Tawde' on the pretext of transporting him (Hiran) safely to another location in a white Volkswagen Polo. Hiran complied, informed his wife that he was going to meet the so-called 'Tawde' in Kandivali, travelled by auto near Suraj Waterpark on Ghodbunder Road and met Mane in the white Polo, around 8.30 p.m. on March 4.

By 9.30 p.m., Mane reached a spot near the Fountain Hotel where the Tavera was waiting, asked Hiran to hand over his mobile phone, and ordered him to step into the vehicle which would take him to a secure spot. The Tavera was already quite crowded and Hiran was made to sit between Shelar and Jadhav, while Mothkuri grabbed his head from the rear seat, and gagged him with the handkerchiefs. As Hiran struggled for his life, the trio held onto him and smothered the 'weak link' to death on the car seat - ending the potential threat to all emmeshed in the mega-conspiracy. Then, Shelar asked Soni to drive the Tavera to Ksheli Bridge on the Thane

Creek where they reached after around 45 minutes. Halting the vehicle, the killer trio of Shelar, Jadhav and Mothkuri dragged Hiran's body, hoisted it up and threw it into the darkness of the Thane Creek below. The following day, Hiran's body - washed away by the currents - was found stuck in the marshlands around a km away from the Ksheli Bridge, creating a fresh hullabaloo - barely a week after the SUV planting incident outside Antilia. In between, the NIA detailed how Vaze and Co used and destroyed various evidences related to the twin cases, most of it were later either detected or recovered by the sleuths.





*There are so many misconceptions about me: Paris Hilton*

Los Angeles | Agencies

**S**ocialite and entrepreneur Paris Hilton feels that there are many misconceptions about her. Paris was seen talking about her life in "The Drew Barrymore Show", which airs on Zee Cafe in India.

The show's host and actress Drew Barrymore asked Paris: "I want to talk to you. I've had people take me away and I've been locked up in solitary confinement."

She added: "I haven't seen a kind of story like yours which really reflected out there very often. That's one I recognize. So, why did you decide to do this now?"

Paris replied: "I wanted to do a film to show the businesswoman I am and all I've accomplished. I feel like there are so many misconceptions about me. During shooting, I was so close to the director.

"Without naming the director, Paris said it was like a "sisterly relationship and that she could open up about anything."

Paris added: "This is so important that you tell your story to other survivors, and people want to come forward with theirs. It was very difficult for me because it wasn't something I ever wanted to talk about publicly."

Priyanka unveils 'The Matrix: Resurrections'

Los Angeles | Agencies



**I**ndian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas has announced that the trailer of her upcoming Hollywood film 'The Matrix: Resurrections' will drop on Thursday. Priyanka took to Instagram to announce the release date of 'Matrix 4'. The caption of the post read, "Yep! it's almost time to take that pill... Trailer Thursday at 6 AM PT (6:30pm IST) Go ahead and click the link in my bio to experience it yourself. The choice is yours! #TheMatrixMovie @thematrixmovie"

Priyanka even shared a link to a website [www.whatisthematrix.com](http://www.whatisthematrix.com), where she asked fans to pick one from two pills -- a blue and a red one. After clicking on the pills, it redirects the user to two different realities. Clicking on the red pill, it leads to a voiceover by Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, where he is heard saying: "This is the moment for you to show us what is real but that couldn't be further from the truth. Could be this is the first day of the rest of your life but if you want it, you gotta fight for it." Pressing on the blue pill, a voiceover by Neil Patrick Harris starts where he says that one is having difficulties in distinguishing reality from fiction. The film also stars Keanu Reeves in prominent roles along with Carrie-Anne Moss, Jada Pinkett Smith, Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Jonathan Groff, and Neil Patrick Harris.

KYLIE EXPECTING SECOND CHILD WITH TRAVIS

Los Angeles | Agencies

**R**eality TV star and beauty mogul Kylie Jenner has confirmed that she is expecting her second child with partner Travis Scott. Kylie announced on Instagram on Tuesday that she and Scott are expecting their second child together, reports people.com. In a video announcing the news, Kylie holds up a positive pregnancy test before the clip cuts to Scott, hugging her belly. Next, the proud parents get in the car with their 3-year-old daughter Stormi for an OBGYN appointment. Kylie and Scott beam as the doctor tells them that the baby is "a couple of days away from a heartbeat." The 90-second clip also features the moment that Kylie (with the help of Stormi) tell her mother Kris Jenner that she is once again expecting. As soon as Stormi hands Kris an envelope with some ultrasound photos, Kris said: "Wait a second...are you pregnant? Stormi, we're gonna have a baby! This is one of the happiest days of my life!" Later in the video, Kylie celebrates her 24th birthday with her family and finally hears her baby's heartbeat at another ultrasound. The video concludes with an adorable shot of Stormi kissing her mom's growing baby bump. Kylie kept the caption of her post simple, opting for just a white heart and a pregnant woman emoji. She also tagged Scott. Her sisters shared their excitement for the newest addition to the Kardashian-Jenner clan in the comments. "Crying this is so beautiful my blessed angel sister," wrote Kourtney Kardashian. "Crying!!!!" Kim Kardashian added. While Kendall Jenner said: "I can't handle it"

Halle Berry was terrified about directing debut 'Bruised'

Los Angeles | Agencies

**'B**ruised' filmmaker and actress Halle Berry was "scared" as she stepped behind the camera for the first time as director. The 55-year-old actress is at the helm of the upcoming Netflix movie, in which she also stars as mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter Jackie Jackie Justice, who is chasing one last comeback, reports femalefirst.co.uk. Berry told the Daily Express newspaper: "As an actor I always show up and do my part, and I can only do what I can do. Being the director, I have a part in the totality of every department. I get to have a voice. That was different, and I really loved that." (I was scared s\*\*\*less). Any director will tell you that they're scared, going in. Fear and worry are healthy -- it means you want to do your best." The actress, who suffered two broken ribs during the filming, wasn't actually initially set to either act in or direct the movie. Actress Blake Lively originally got offered the role, but dropped out six months later and Berry told producers: "I can't let it go. I've been thinking of how I can reimagine it for someone like me, a black woman in middle age -- not starting life -- who's looking for a last chance." Studio officials agreed, but there was another big decision to be made as she helped them in a fruitless search for directors with none sharing her vision. She told producers: "This is going to sound really crazy, because it's crazy for me to even think it, but I think I should direct this."

They agreed, and while she wants to direct again, Berry is glad she's finally seeing roles available for older actresses. Berry added: "It used to be when you were 40 your career was done. Or you had to wait until you were old enough to play a grandma. I couldn't think that I'd be playing an MMA fighter at 55, yet I did, so it's got to be changing. I'm proof of that."



Ryan Reynolds: Something wonderful about playing a character who's 'naive'

Los Angeles | Agencies

**R**yan Reynolds' upcoming sci-fi comedy film 'Free Guy' is all set to release theatrically in India on September 17. The Hollywood star has spoken about his character and said that there is something wonderful about playing a character who's "naive and innocent". Reynolds was asked during a global press conference: "Ryan, as far as heroes go, we kind of know and love you as 'Deadpool' in recent years. What has it been like stepping into a very different type of hero, this wholesome, blue shirt guy?"

Known for his great sense of humour, Reynolds replied: "Well, um, you know, my-my-my-my default is just pure trash in, you know, on the inside."

He added: "So, for this, it's just slightly new for me. Um, I like, I sort of like that guy is, you know, there's a movie that I love called 'Being There' starring Peter Sellers. And that was, like, the first kind of, uh, uh, foothold I had into this character and this world."



"And, you know, there's something really wonderful about playing a character who's kind of naive and innocent, and really like, and I mean, it's even said in the movie, he's, in a sense, he's kind of like, he's a four-year-old adult."

The actor, who is married to actress Blake Lively, had fun exploring. "I think, really fun about exploring, you know, everything with new eyes, which is what this character gets to do, and sort of filtering that through the prism of, you know, comedy and occasionally cynicism, and all sorts of other things," he said.

'THE CROODS: A NEW AGE'

Nicholas Cage, Emma Stone lend their voices for the film

Los Angeles | Agencies

**A**nimated movie 'The Croods: A New Age' is all set to hit cinemas on September 10.

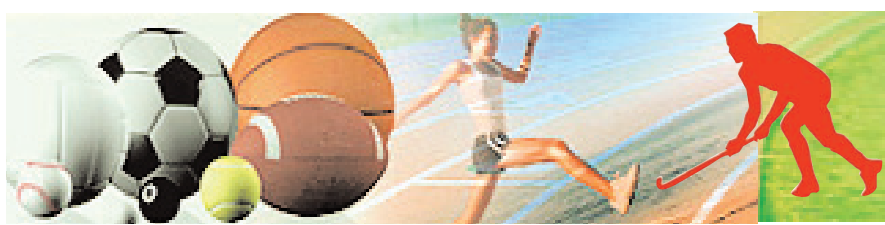
In 'The Croods: A New Age', the main protagonists venture off into the unknown in search of 'tomorrow'. Alongside their friend Guy, the cave family settles on a piece

of land and learns that it's owned by Phil and Hope Betterman.

The main cast returns for the film and includes several names such as Nicholas Cage, Emma Stone, Ryan Reynolds, Catherine Keener reprising their roles from the previous edition. In supporting roles, 'Game of Thrones' star Peter Dinklage joins the cast, along with Star Wars veteran Kelly Marie Tran, one of America's most

endearing actresses. Directed by Joel Crawford, the movie releases in English and Hindi.





## DURAND CUP:

# INDIAN NAVY BEAT DELHI FC IN FIRST MATCH

Team Absolute | Kolkata

Indian Navy outplayed second division side Delhi FC 2-1 in their opening Group C match of the 130th Durand Cup football tournament at the Mohun Bagan ground here on Wednesday.

Central defender Dalraj Singh scored the winner late in the second half off a towering header from a flag-kick. Earlier Trinidadian Willis Plaza had put the Delhi side ahead in the 21st minute of the first half, only for the sailors to equalise through V. Shreyas four minutes later.

The game was fought on an even keel with the Navy finishing as the stronger side. The Delhi team had four foreigners, Brazilian Sergio Barbosa Junior, Nigerian Ekomo Philips, and Gambian Dawda Cessay giving Plaza company on the field, but in the end, they were of no avail against a spirited Navy performance.

Prolific goal scorer in the top divisions of Indian football, Willis Deon



Plaza of Trinidad and Tobago scored his first Durand Cup goal to give Delhi the lead, 21 minutes into

the game. He got at the end of a floating ball inside the box off a very pleasing attacking move by

Reinreithan Shaiza and Dawda Cessay, to drive it past the Navy keeper Bhaskar Roy.

Navy, however, hit back almost immediately when a cross from the right by Nihal Sudeesh saw Shreyas, who had a fantastic game overall, swoop in between Delhi defenders inside the six-yard box for a clinical finish.

The goal boosted the Navy side no end and coach Abhilash Nair also affected early changes bringing in Sarabjit Singh for Jijo in midfield. Willis Plaza, however, did have a golden chance to put his team back ahead just before half-time, but his shot from close range after a lovely through from Brazilian Barbosa had set him away, was thwarted by keeper Roy.

The second half did not rise to the competitive levels of the first for most parts before Dalraj ensured a grandstand finish. Rising above the crowd off a Navy corner in the 86th minute, he blasted a header past a hapless Manvir Singh in the Delhi goal.

## ICC TEST RANKINGS

# THAKUR AND WOAKES GAIN BIG, BUMRAH MOVES UP A SPOT

Dubai | Agencies

All-rounders Shardul Thakur and Chris Woakes have made big gains in the ICC Test Player Rankings updated on Wednesday. Pacer Jasprit Bumrah also moved a spot up in the bowlers' rankings after India's 157-run win in the fourth Test at The Oval on Monday.

Thakur scored 57 and 60 in both innings of the Test. The twin half-centuries see him jump 59 places to 79th position in batsmen rankings. He has also moved up seven places to 49th in the bowlers ranking after finishing with three wickets in the match.

Woakes, back in an England Test eleven after a year, has also made progress in the rankings. Scoring 50 and 18 in both innings of the Test sees him gain seven places to reach 87th among batsmen. He also jumps three places to 23rd among bowlers after finishing with seven wickets at The Oval. Woakes has also made a re-entry into the all-rounders rankings, jumping two places to be at seventh place.

Bumrah climbed to ninth from tenth in the bowlers' rankings. Bumrah picked up four wickets at The Oval, especially taking out Ollie Pope and Jonny Bairstow, breaking the back



of England's chase in the final day of the Test. Bumrah now has 18 wickets in the series, just three behind England pacer Ollie Robinson, who moved three places to 33rd in the rankings.

Rohit Sharma, who was adjudged as the Player of the Match at The Oval for his match-winning 127 in the second innings, remains at fifth place but has extended the lead over Virat Kohli from seven to 30 rating points in the batsmen rankings. At 813 rating points, Sharma has achieved his best-ever position and rating points in Test rankings.

England batsman Ollie Pope's first innings knock of 82 has helped him advance nine slots to 49th position in batsmen rankings. Pacer James Anderson has dropped two places to be seventh in bowlers rankings.

Ravichandran Ashwin continues to be at second spot on the bowlers rankings. But Ashwin, who is yet to feature in the Test series against England, has dropped from fourth to fifth in the all-rounder rankings. The fifth Test between England and India will take place at the Old Trafford Cricket Ground in Manchester from September 10. India are leading the five-match Test series 2-1.

## MS Dhoni to join India team as mentor for T20 World Cup

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former India skipper MS Dhoni is to join the national team as mentor for the T20 World Cup to be held in UAE and Oman in October-November. He will work with India team head coach Ravi Shastri and coaching staff, says BCCI secretary Jay Shah in a team selection press conference.

Off-spinner R Ashwin has also returned to the T20I squad.

"Mahendra Singh

Dhoni will be joining Team India as mentor for the upcoming T20 World Cup. I am glad that MS has accepted BCCI's offer and he is keen to contribute to the national team once again. MS will work closely with Ravi Shastri as well as other support staff to provide support and direction to Team India," said Jay Shah, secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to the media in a virtual interaction.



**India squad:** Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma (vice-captain), K.L. Rahul, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (wk), Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Jasprit Bumrah, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mohammed Shami, R Ashwin, Axar Patel, Ishan Kishan, Rahul Chahar and Varun Chakravathy. Standbys: Shreyas Iyer, Deepak Chahar and Shardul Thakur.

## US OPEN

New York | Agencies

Russian second seed Daniil Medvedev further cemented his title credentials overcoming qualifier Botanic van de Zandschulp of the Netherlands 6-3, 6-0, 4-6, 7-5 to reach his third consecutive US Open semifinal here.

Djokovic will next face 12th seed Canadian Auger-Aliassime, who made his first major semifinal at the US Open after Spanish giant-killer Carlos Alcaraz retired due to an injury trailing 6-3, 3-1. The Russian, who captured his 200th career win in the first-round victory against Richard Gasquet of France, had not dropped a set before Tuesday.

The world No. 2 played with confidence against van de Zandschulp, firing 36 winners and winning 83 per cent (54/65) of first-serve points as

## Medvedev on course for title showdown against Djokovic



he raised his level in the fourth set to advance after two hours and 22 minutes. Chasing his maiden Major title, Medvedev remains on course for a potential blockbuster final against world No.

1 Novak Djokovic, who is aiming to capture the Grand Slam at the US Open. The 25-year-old will first have to overcome a tricky test against either 12th seed Felix Auger-Aliassime in the last four.

## Leylah Fernandez secures semifinal berth

Leylah Fernandez of Canada gave herself a perfect present a day after she turned 19, defeating No.5 seed Elina Svitolina of Ukraine 6-3, 3-6, 7-6(5) in a thrilling tie to secure a place in her first Grand Slam semifinal at the US Open. Fernandez's self-belief was on full display in a tough third set on Tuesday evening even as the tenacious Svitolina fought back from 2-5 down to force a deciding tiebreak, and therein came from 1-4 down to level at 5-5, but the Canadian teenager stood resolute. It was the first time she had won a third-set tiebreak at Tour level. Meanwhile, Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus breezed into her second Grand Slam semifinal in a row by defeating No.8 seed Barbora Krejickova of the Czech Republic, 6-1, 6-4, under lights at the Arthur Ashe Stadium at the US Open.

World No.2 Sabalenka, who made her first major semifinal at Wimbledon earlier in the summer, dispatched this year's French Open champion Krejickova, guaranteeing a first-time Grand Slam champion at this year's US Open.



## NEVER LET PANDEMIC AFFECT OUR MORALE: DILPREET SINGH

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Star Indian striker Dilpreet Singh said on Wednesday that the reason behind the team's Tokyo Olympic Games bronze-medal success was that the boys never let any difficulties during the pandemic affect their morale.

Dilpreet has had a dream run so far with the team ever since his debut outing in the Sultan of Johor Cup in 2017 where the India Colts won bronze. He was called-up for the senior camp and soon became part of the team in almost every major tournament since 2018 including the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games as well as the World Cup in Bhubaneswar.

Now, having been part of India's historic feat at the Tokyo Olympics where they won the bronze, a feat India

has been waiting for 41 years, Dilpreet feels fortunate to be part of this team.

"We all worked so hard to achieve this feat. We never let any difficulties during the pandemic affect our morale. The seniors played a big part in encouraging us constantly and making us feel like we can do this. I feel so fortunate to be part of this incredible group and yes, I do believe I have been lucky to have had such a great start to my international career," said the young forward from Punjab.

The 21-years-old Dilpreet said the support he received from Hockey India and the support staff particularly when he was dropped from the senior team following the 2018 FIH Men's World Cup where the team was knocked out in the quarters became the turning point of his career.

## ASIAN YOUTH GAMES POSTPONED UNTIL DECEMBER 2022

**Guangzhou:** The 2021 Asian Youth Games will be postponed until December 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Chinese Olympic Committee (COC) said in an announcement on Wednesday. The 3rd Asian Youth Games was originally scheduled to be held in Shantou, south China's Guangdong province from November 20-28, 2021. The new schedule will be December 20-28, 2022, according to the COC statement. "The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), the COC and the local organizing committee had an in-depth discus-



sion and made the decision together, in order to protect the interests of every national/regional Olympic committee and ensure the safety and health of all athletes," the statement said. Shantou won the right to host the 3rd Asian Youth Games in 2019. The Asian Youth Games are among the top five multi-sport events in Asia.

## England to play white-ball series against India at home in July next year

London | Agencies

The England men's team will begin their 2022 home summer with a three-match LV= Insurance Test series against world champions New Zealand, said the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) while announcing the international schedule on Wednesday, which also includes home series against India and South Africa.

Joe Root's Test team will begin their series against New Zealand at Lord's on June 2 before the series heads to Trent Bridge (June 10-14) and Emerald Headingley (June 23-27). New Zealand won the first-ever World



Test Championship final at the Ageas Bowl in June when they defeated India. England men then will play all of their home white-ball matches in July. "A three-match Vitality IT20 Series against India will begin at Emirates Old Trafford on July 1 before matches at Trent Bridge (July 3) and the Ageas Bowl (July 6). A

three-match Royal London Series follows with matches at Edgbaston (July 9), the Kia Oval (July 12) and Lord's (July 14)," ECB said.

South Africa's tour will begin with a three-match Royal London Series in the north of England. The series will be staged at Emirates Riverside (July 19), Emirates Old Trafford (July 22) and Emerald Headingley (July 24).

A three-match LV= Insurance Test Series against South Africa will conclude the men's international summer. Lord's will host the first LV= Insurance Test (August 17-21) before the series moves to Edgbaston (August 25-29) and the Kia Oval (September 8-12).

## Mahmudullah's 43 not out leads Bangladesh to 6-wicket win over NZ

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Dhaka: Bangladesh captain Mahmudullah hit an unbeaten 43 to lead his team to a six-wicket victory over New Zealand in the fourth T20I in Dhaka on Wednesday. The victory now gives Bangladesh an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match T20I series. It is their first-ever series win over New Zealand in T20Is.

Opting to bat first, New Zealand were bowled out for 93 in 19.3 overs. Bangladesh overhauled the target with five balls to spare and six wickets in hand.

Left-arm spinner Nasum Ahmed dismissed Rachin Ravindra (0) in the very first over of New Zealand's innings. Finn Allen (12) tried to be creative with the bat with a switch hit, but spooned a catch to point.

Captain Tom Latham (21) and Will Young (46) tried to resurrect the New Zealand innings with a 35-run partnership. Latham danced down the pitch, only to be beaten by Mahedi Hasan's turn and was stumped by keeper Nurul Hasan.

Henry Nicholls (1) and Colin de Grandhomme (0) were



dismissed on consecutive deliveries by Ahmed, making this difficult for the tourists. Bangladesh kept striking at regular intervals to keep New Zealand on a tight leash. Ahmed and Mustafizur Rahman were the standout performers with the ball, grabbing four wickets each. Ahmed ran through the top and middle order while Rahman took out Young and the tail

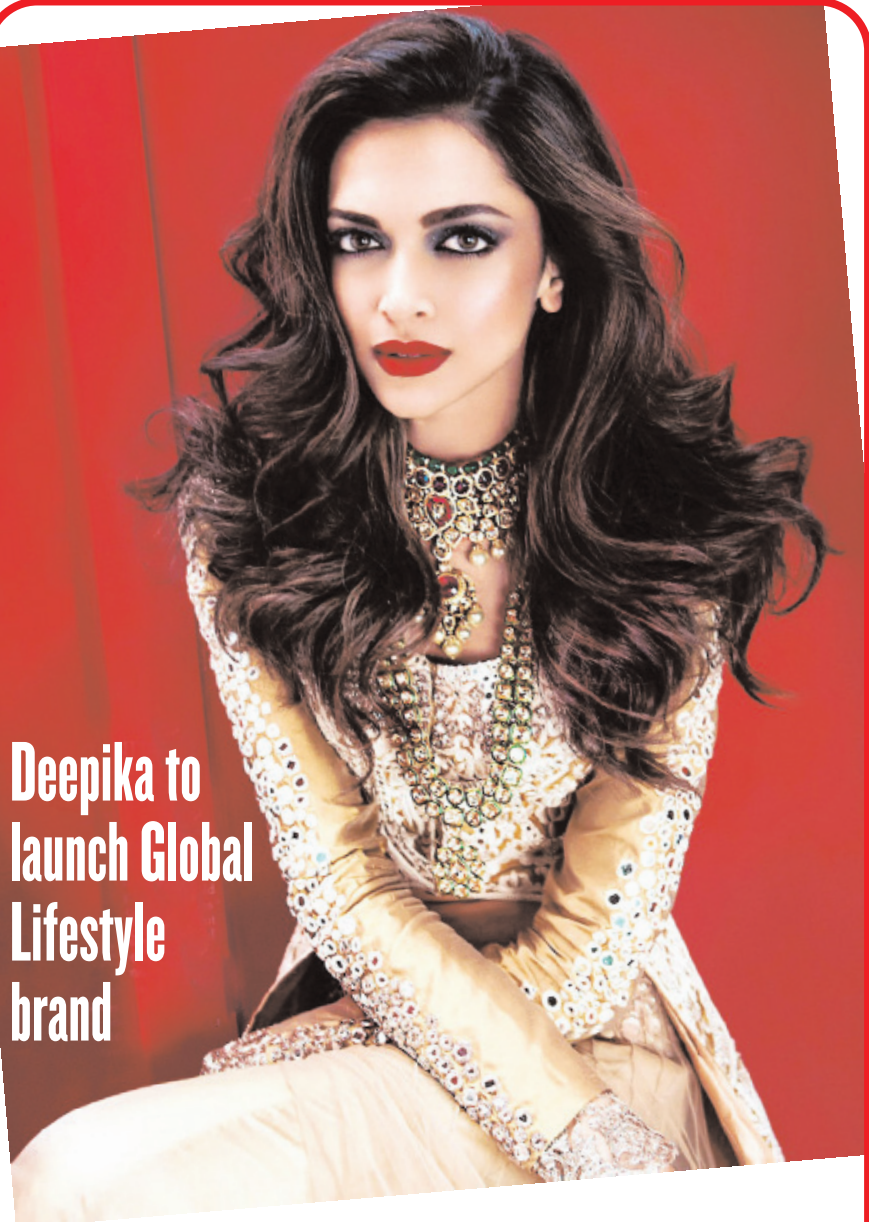
to end New Zealand's misery at 93 in 19.3 overs.

Chasing a small total of 94, Bangladesh lost Liton Das (6), Shakib Al Hasan (8) and Mushfiqur Rahim (0) quickly with scorecard reading 32/3 in 6 overs. A brief 35-run partnership Mohammad Naim (29) and Mahmudullah resurrected the chase before the former was run-out while running for the second run.

But Mahmudullah made sure his team crossed the finish line in the final over. The experienced batsman survived a stumping chance in the 17th over as Latham couldn't gather the ball. After a powerful six over cow corner off Blair Tickle in the 19th over, Mahmudullah closed the chase with a slog sweep through mid-wicket on the first ball of the final over off Cole McConchie.

The final match of the T20I series will be played on Friday. Brief scores: Bangladesh 96/4 in 19.1 overs (Mahmudullah 43 not out, Mohammad Naim 29, Ajaz Patel 2/9, Cole McConchie 1/34) beat New Zealand 93 all out in 19.3 overs (Will Young 46, Tom Latham 21, Nasum Ahmed 4/10, Mustafizur Rahman 4/12) by six wickets.

## Deepika to launch Global Lifestyle brand



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The first category of launch will focus on Beauty and Skin Care Global Indian icon Deepika Padukone announced today that she has founded and is set to launch a lifestyle brand that is rooted in India but will have indispensable global reach and appeal; much like her own professional and personal journey.

The first category of launch will focus on beauty and skin care. This category specifically, while rooted in India, will be backed by science. Padukone is one of the most admired and acclaimed actors in the world and her achievements have made her one of the most influential voices amongst global audiences and consumers in recent times. Time Magazine named her one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World in 2018. A year later, she received the prestigious World Economic Forum Crystal

Award for her leadership in raising mental health awareness. In 2018 and 2021, she featured in VARIETY'S 'International Women's Impact Report' which celebrates the achievements of women in entertainment around the world.

One of the biggest brands on social media, Padukone enjoys an enormous digital footprint of more than 100 million users.

"India, I believe, has always been positioned uniquely. While we have tremendous access to the rest of the world, we are a country that is rich in values, culture and heritage; something we are extremely proud of. Therefore, our endeavour is to build a brand that is rooted in India yet global in its reach and appeal" said Padukone. The brand is expected to roll out in 2022.

## Manushi Chhillar initiates social media campaign

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood debutante and former beauty queen Manushi Chhillar has launched a social media campaign to discuss the benefits of eating right during this World Nutrition Week.

Manushi, who won the Miss World crown 17 years after Priyanka Chopra won it for India, has joined hands with Miss World 2014, Rolene Strauss, to share their thoughts on how paying attention to nutrition can help everyone lead a balanced lifestyle.

Manushi said: "As I have grown up, I have realised the need to pay attention to nutrition. Our daily life throws up innumerable challenges and the least we can do to take care of ourselves is to pay attention to what we eat."

"Nutrition is the main pillar of fitness and wellness and I have tried to incorporate as much of this learning into my daily life. I have unlocked the results that I have aimed for and I want to share my thoughts to as

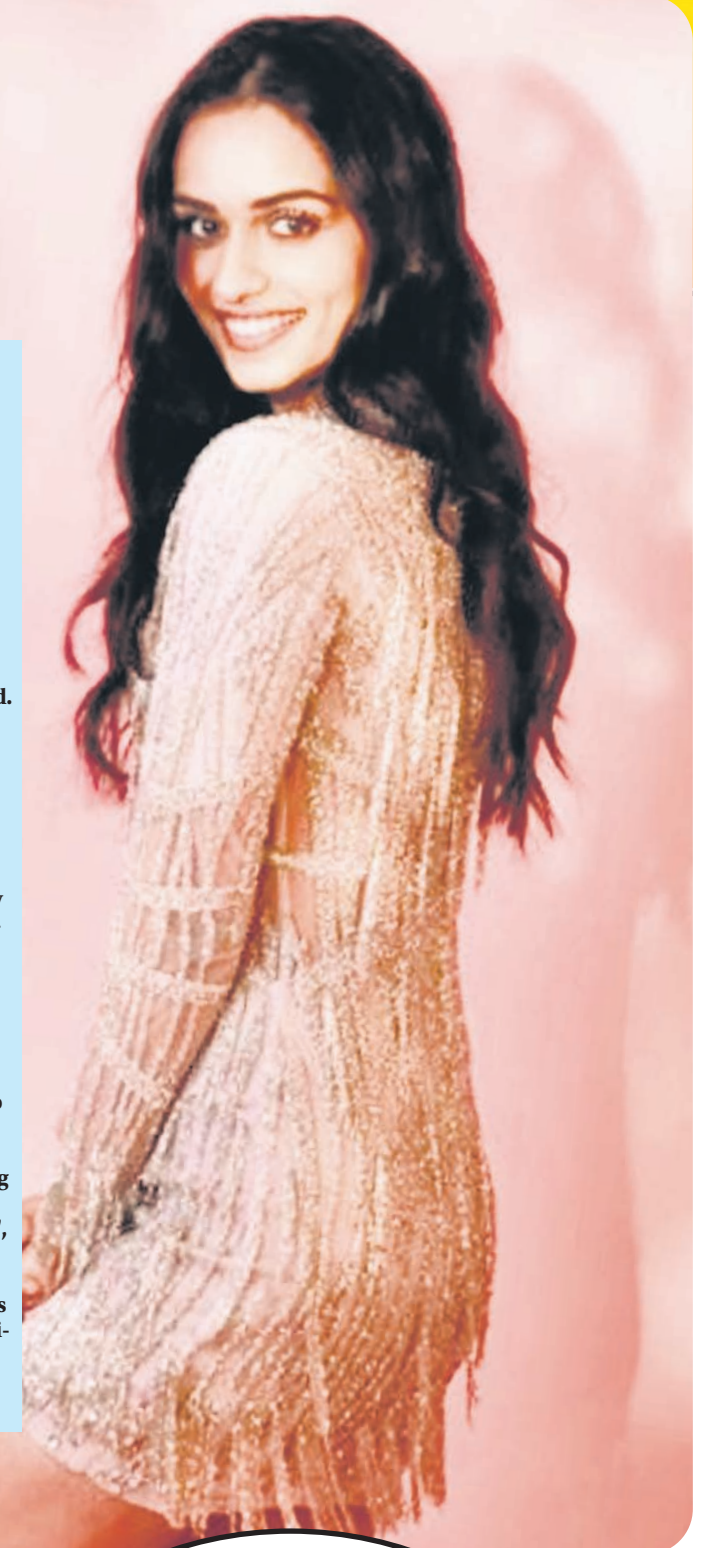
many people as possible," she added. Manushi shared that nutrition is extremely subjective and that one has to customise their own diet regime to get maximum benefits.

"I have always maintained that health and fitness is very personal and everyone has their subjective take on the same. Nutrition is highly customisable depending on an individual's health and history and I respect that."

She added: "This is why, I'm discussing how nutrition can be tailor made for different individuals with Miss World 2014, Rolene Strauss, who is not just a dear friend but also someone who is deeply invested in nutrition and health."

Manushi, who will be seen sharing screen space with actor Akshay Kumar in the period film 'Prithviraj', said Strauss is someone she could count on.

She shared: "I can't wait to discuss our individual learnings about nutrition and hope that it will resonate with people who want to lead a balanced lifestyle."



## Sonakshi collaborates with BMC for Beach makeover

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Sonakshi Sinha and her brothers Luv Sinha and Kuss Sinha, who recently launched House of Creativity (HOC), have been brought on board to create the beautiful wall art at Mumbai's Mahim Beach. The wall art was created by Shabbu Painter also known as Akhlaq Ahmed. Maharashtra Environment and Tourism Minister Aadiya Thackeray was also present for the inaugural. Sonakshi said, "Art is very important for our society and we at House of Creativity are glad to associate with BMC for the beautification of Mahim Beach. The amazing wall art created by painter Shabbu adds to the visual aesthetics." The actress said that through this initiative, "we want to pay tribute to all the wonderful artists and are hopeful this is just a start for more good work." Luv Sinha, co-founder of HOC added: "We got in touch with Shabbu painter and brainstormed on the artwork. It was a collaborative effort and we are happy with the way it turned out. At HOC we believe in giving the platform to artists to showcase their talent and we are glad to have achieved it with this project."

## AJAY DEVGAN LAUNCHES MUSIC LABEL

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Panorama Studios, makers such acclaimed movies as 'Raid', 'Omkaara', 'Khuda Haafiz' and 'Drishyam', have diversified into music. Actor-filmmaker Ajay Devgn launched Panorama Music on Tuesday. The label, to be led by the well-established music industry executive, Rajesh Menon, will create original singles, film music, independent music, and regional content. Established with the intention to provide a platform to budding musicians and artists, the label will focus on regional content and its offerings in Hindi will include devotional and Sufi music, and ghazals. Launching the label, Devgn said, "Music has always been a space that has held my interest. With the digital medium touching our lives in so many ways, the possibilities for music are endless." He added that facets of India's rich musical culture remain unexplored, a gap, he hoped, the newborn music label would fill up.

Devgn's manager and film producer Kumar Mangat Pathak and producer-director Abhishek Pathak are the music label's frontmen. Stating the music label's objectives, Abhishek said: "We want to create music that matters and establish a unique sonic space for India." And Menon added: "We hope to create quality music and touch the hearts of people." Just like Panorama's films did.



## 27th Lions Gold Awards

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actors Bobby Deol and Debina Bonnerjee have been felicitated by the Governor of Maharashtra Bhagat Singh Koshyari at the 27th Lions Gold Awards 2021. While Bobby Deol was honoured with the Best Actor OTT Star award for his web series 'Aashram', Debina was bestowed with the Social Media Influencer Award.

Talking about the award, Bobby said: "It's an honour to receive the Best Actor OTT Star award for my web series 'Aashram' at the 27th Sol Lions Gold Awards 2021. I would like to thank the makers of the show for their amazing work, gripping story line and their belief in me for playing the character of

Baba Nirala! All I can say is that it is only onwards and upwards from here so thank you to the team of Lions Club Of Mumbai for this award."

Expressing her gratitude, Debina shared: "I thank everyone for giving me this honour. Most importantly, I thank my social media family who have always been there for me and this one is for them. Your followers are your family and I am blessed to have so many of them across the globe who are always ready to help. I thank the prestigious jury for giving me this award."

The awards function on Tuesday evening at the Raj Bhavan in Mumbai was attended by Army officials, dignitaries and notable Bollywood personalities.



## Bobby Deol wins Best Actor for 'Aashram'

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Shivani Singh