

# absolute india

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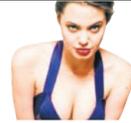
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## SUPREME COURT SAYS CAN'T FORCE ANYONE FOR DNA TEST

# 'IMPINGES ON LIBERTY, PRIVACY'

**A bench of Justices R. Subhash Reddy and Hrishikesh Roy said: "When the plaintiff is unwilling to subject himself to the DNA test, forcing him to undergo one would impinge on his personal liberty and his right to privacy." It added that the court's decision, on the aspect of DNA test, should be rendered only after balancing the interests of the parties -- the quest for truth, and the social and cultural implications involved.**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday said forcing a person to undergo a DNA test, would impinge on his personal liberty and his right to privacy, as it emphasised that Indian law leans towards legitimacy and frowns upon bastardy.

The bench noted that in circumstances where other evidence is available to prove or dispute the relationship, the court should ordinarily refrain from ordering blood tests. It further added that the presumption in law of legitimacy of a child cannot be lightly repelled. Against the backdrop of these observations, the top court set aside a high court judgment, directing a plaintiff in a suit to undergo DNA test.

The plaintiff had filed a suit seeking declaration of ownership of property, which was left behind by Trilok Chand Gupta and Sona Devi. He claimed to be the couple's son and arrayed their daughters as the defendants in the suit, who disputed his claim and denied his being son of their parents.



### SC SLAMS FARMERS' GROUP

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Friday pulled the farmers' organisation, Kisan Mahapanchayat, for seeking permission to stage a Satyagraha at Jantar Mantar against the farm laws. The top court said after blocking highways and strangulating the city, the demonstrators now want to come inside to protest. The plea sought directions to allow the staging of the Satyagraha as it was permitted to the Sanyukt Kisan Morcha farmers. The bench told the council that the demonstrators have right to protest, but cannot destroy property, adding that this business should stop. The bench ordered to serve the copy of the petition to the office of AG and listed the matter for further hearing on October 4.

### WAS THINKING OF PANEL FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST OFFICIALS, ESPECIALLY POLICE: CJI

**New Delhi:** Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Friday orally observed that he had thought of creating a panel to examine atrocities and complaints against bureaucrats, particularly police officers, headed by the Chief Justice of the high court concerned. "I have lot of reservations at the way, how bureaucracy particularly, how police officers are behaving in this country. I was at one time thinking of creating a standing committee to examine atrocities and complaints against bureaucrats, particularly police officers, headed by the Chief Justice of the high court. I want to reserve that. Don't want to do now," he said. A bench also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli was hearing a plea filed by suspended Additional Director General of Police of Chhattisgarh Gurjinder Pal Singh seeking protection from arrest in criminal cases - sedition, extortion, and owning disproportionate assets - against him.



## India slaps reciprocal restrictions on visiting UK nationals

**According to sources, the new regulations will come into effect from October 4 - the same day as the UK's new rules, and will be applicable to all UK nationals arriving from the UK.**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India on Friday decided to impose reciprocal Covid-19 restrictions on UK nationals arriving in the country.

Citing the restrictions, a source said that from October 4 onwards, all UK nationals arriving in India from the UK, irrespective of their vaccination status, will have to undertake mandatory measures, such as carrying the report of pre-departure Covid-19 RT-PCR test taken within 72 hours before travel, and undergo Covid-19 RT-PCR test on arrival at any airport in India.



They are also expected to go for mandatory quarantine at home or at the destination address for 10 days after arrival in India, and on the 8th day after their arrival, will have to take a second RT-PCR test.

The row between the two countries started when the UK government placed Indians, who have been

vaccinated with Covishield - the Indian-made AstraZeneca Covid vaccine - in the category of "unvaccinated" and prescribed testing and quarantine measures but after India hinted that this might be reciprocated, the UK accepted Covishield but did not change the testing and quarantine rules.

## AMARINDER SINGH TO FORM 'PUNJAB VIKAS PARTY'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh is soon going to announce a new party. According to sources, the name of Captain's new party will be 'Punjab Vikas Party'. According to sources, Amarinder Singh will convene a meeting of leaders close to him in a few days to consider the formation of his new party, which will include all the leaders of the anti-Sidhu faction.

Meanwhile, Singh will also contact all the farmers' leaders of Punjab. He will also get in touch with small parties, sources said. It is not the first time that Amarinder Singh has announced to quit the Congress party. In 1980 he won the Lok Sabha elections on the Congress symbol, but after the Operation Blue Star in 1984, he left the Congress to join the Akali Dal. He rejoined the Congress in 1998.



## MP Chief Minister welcomes DRDO Chairman and investors

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that full cooperation will be given to small scale industries in the state. Chouhan said that MSME Department, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) together can play an important role in the work of product enhancement, employment generation and progress of the state. The joint efforts of MSME and DRDO will prove to be a milestone in innovation and realisation of the original ideas and projects of youth power.

Chief Minister Chouhan welcomed the industrialists and investors invited to the investors' meeting held in Indore today and extended his best wishes to them. Chouhan in his message said that Madhya Pradesh is the heart state of the country, our state is the heart of the country. The region is full of natural resources. We have such youth, who have ideas, innovative ideas, if their ideas are supported by DRDO and MSME together, then they will con-



tribute significantly in product growth, employment generation and progress of Madhya Pradesh.

Chouhan said that I would like to request DRDO Chairman Sateesh Reddy and Minister of MSME Omprakash Sakhlecha to make serious efforts in this direction. Madhya Pradesh government will provide all possible support to the investors.

## RUMOURS IN BIHAR: EAT PARLE-G BISCUITS FOR A SAFE FUTURE

**Patna:** Rumours in Bihar always spread like wildfire whether it comes to shortage of salt or cutting off boys' ponytail incidents. The latest rumour is related to the Jeeutiya festival wherein if children (male) would not eat Parle-G biscuits on Jeeutiya, they could face untoward incidents in future. The Jeeutiya festival is celebrated in Bihar every year where mothers fast for 24 hours for a long, healthy and prosperous life of their kids. Har Kishore Rai, the SP of Sitamarhi, confirmed the rumours. Following the rumours, people turned out in large numbers outside the grocery shops, paan shops and any other shops having stocks to purchase at least one packet of Parle-G biscuits. As a result, the stocks of Parle-G flew off the shelves quickly. Many of the shopowners were allegedly involved in black marketing. A Rs 5 packet of Parle-G biscuits was sold for Rs 50 in Sitamarhi district.

## Zydus ZyCoV-D vax soon to be part of India's inoculation drive: Centre



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Zydus Cadila's ZyCoV-D vaccine against Covid-19 will soon be a part of under India's mass inoculation drive, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan announced, adding that talks were underway with the manufacturer on pricing issues.

Addressing a press briefing on the Covid situation across country, Bhushan on Thursday said the price of the job, which is needle-less and requires three doses, would be different from the existing vaccines. "As far as the price of the vaccine at which it will be procured is

concerned, we are in conversations with the manufacturer. Since it is a three-dose vaccine and comes with a needle-less delivery system, it would have a differential pricing than the existing vaccines that are being used in the vaccination drive."

Without giving any timeline for the roll-out, he said that the Zydus Cadila vaccine will not be brought in the market in the short run, but will be part of India's Covid-19 vaccination programme.

The ZyCoV-D vaccine was approved by India's regulatory authority on August 20. The three dose DNA built vaccine has 66.6 per cent efficacy against Covid, according to the the manufacturer.

## Covid: Merck's oral pill shows promise against hospitalisation, death

WASHINGTON | Agencies

Merck on Friday announced its anti-viral drug has shown "compelling results" in clinical trials -- halving the risk of hospitalisation or death for patients with mild or moderate cases of Covid.

Molnupiravir, co-developed with Ridgeback Biotherapeutics, is administered orally and works by inhibiting the replication of the coronavirus inside the body. The companies plan to seek emergency authorisation for the drug in the US as soon as possible, the company said in a statement.

An interim analysis of a Phase-3 study, based on 775 trial participants, found that 7.3 per cent of patients treated with molnupiravir were hospitalised within 29 days. Of the patients who received a placebo, 14.1 per cent were hospitalised or died by day 29. No deaths were reported in patients



who were given molnupiravir within the 29-day period, while eight deaths were reported in placebo-treated patients.

The drug's efficacy was not affected by timing of symptom onset or underlying risk factor. In addition, based on the participants with available viral sequencing data (approximately 40 per cent of participants), molnupiravir demonstrated consistent efficacy across viral variants Gamma, Delta, and Mu.

## AIR INDIA'S NEW OWNER TO BE DECIDED IN NEXT FEW DAYS

▶ TATA SONS BACKED SPV AND INDUSTRIALIST AJAY SINGH, IN HIS PERSONAL CAPACITY HAD SENT IN THEIR FINANCIAL BIDS.  
▶ ACCORDINGLY, SOURCES SAID THAT THE TWO BIDS ARE BEING SCRUTINISED AGAINST A RESERVE PRICE SET FOR THE AIRLINE.  
▶ THE PROCESS WILL NOT GO AHEAD IF THE BIDS COME IN SHORT OF THE RESERVE PRICE.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The new owners of Air India will be decided in the next few days as the financial bids for the flag carrier are being scrutinised, sources said on Friday. Besides, conglomerate Tata Sons, which is one of the bidders, is touted to be the frontrunner to get hold of the carrier.

Furthermore, sources said that at present senior government officials are conducting separate meetings with the two bidders regarding other aspects of the sale such as the indemnity clause and carry over debt levels of the airline.

More or less, the final decision can be made within the next few days by the AISAM (Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism). The AISAM headed by Home Minister Amit Shah is an empow-

"Media reports indicating approval of financial bids by Government of India in the AI disinvestment case are incorrect. Media will be informed of the Government decision as and when it is taken."

Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary, DIPAM

ered GoM, which has the authority to take the final call on the matter, without the need of a Cabinet approval. The AISAM is scheduled to meet after all its members are back in the country.

After the announcement of the winning bid is made, the process of a complete handover is expected to take place within three-four



months time. The Centre on September 15 had received multiple financial bids for divestment of Air India. The government has of late taken several steps to fast-track the much-delayed privatisation of the national carrier.

Recently, the Centre decided to waive taxes on the transfer of assets from the national carrier to Air India Assets Holding Ltd, a special purpose vehicle (SPV). During the Budget speech for FY22, Finance Minister Nirmala

This is the second attempt of the current Central government to divest its stake in the airline. In the pre-pandemic era, the airline, on a standalone basis, operated over 50 domestic and more than 40 international destinations. Besides, it operated over 120 aircraft prior to the Covid pandemic. During that period, the airline had over 9,000 permanent and 4,000 contractual employees.

Sitharaman had said that all the proposed privatisation process would be completed by the end of the fiscal, including the much-delayed strategic divestment of Air India.



## GOAL OF 'SWACHH BHARAT MISSION-URBAN 2.0' IS TO MAKE CITIES GARBAGE-FREE: MODI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the goal of 'Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0' is to make the cities garbage-free. He was speaking after launching the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0.

"In 2014, the countrymen took a pledge to make India open defecation free - ODF and they fulfilled this pledge with the construction of more than 10 crore toilets. Now the goal of 'Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0' is to make the city garbage-free, completely free of garbage," the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister underlined the scope of the country's target in the next phase of Mission AMRUT as 'Improving sewage and septic management, making our cities water safe and ensuring that no sewage drains anywhere in our rivers'.

The Prime Minister dedicated the successes of transformation in urban regeneration and cleanliness



to Mahatma Gandhi. "These missions are the result of inspiration by Mahatma Gandhi and are being realized through his ideals only," he said.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the ease for mothers and

daughters due to the construction of toilets. Saluting the spirit of the nation, the Prime Minister said that the journey of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and AMRUT Mission so far makes every countryman proud. "In this, there is a mission, there is

respect, there is dignity, there is also the ambition of a country and there is also the unmatched love for the motherland," he said.

Noting that today's event was taking place in the Ambedkar International Centre, the Prime Minister said that Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar believed in urban development as a great means of removing inequality and many people from villages come to cities with an aspiration for a better life.

"They get employment but their standard of living remains in a difficult situation even compared to their lives in the villages. This is like double jeopardy of staying away from home, and after that to stay in such a difficult situation. Babasaheb's emphasis was on changing this situation by removing this inequality. The next phase of Swachh Bharat Mission and Mission Amrit is an important step towards fulfilling the dreams of Babasaheb," said the Prime Minister.

He said, along with Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas are critical for the campaign of cleanliness.

## Massive traffic snarls on Delhi-Jaipur Expressway



Bengaluru | Agencies

Commuters on the Delhi-Jaipur Expressway were stuck in heavy traffic for hours on Friday evening.

During the busy evening hours, the traffic was completely choked on most major crossings on the National Highway.

Thousands of commuters on the stretch, travelling between the Delhi-

Gurugram border to enter Delhi took hours to cross the border. Commuters hit the snarl as soon as they entered the Sarhau border and moved bumper to bumper till Rajokri flyover in Delhi.

The reason behind the massive jam was the evening rush hours which slowed down vehicle movement.

Gurugram police personnel were present on the spot trying to smoothen traffic

movement. Traffic jams started from the Delhi-Gurugram border from 6.15 p.m. and kept on growing from Shankar Chowk in Gurugram till Rajokri flyover in Delhi as office goers started returning to Delhi from Gurugram.

The Gurugram police has deployed inspector-rank officers in the Delhi-Gurugram border area on the Expressway for smooth traffic movement.

## Racket busted: 4 held for illegally terminating Pak calls in India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a major bust, the Cyber Cell of Delhi Police has arrested four persons on charges of illegally terminating foreign calls, including from Pakistan, in India, bypassing the legal international and national gateways of Indian telecom service providers.

The accused persons, identified as Irfan Ali, Zulfikar Ali, Arib Ali and Mohd Irfan, all residents of Delhi, were arrested for setting up illegal international GSM termination exchanges in the Chawri Bazar area.

Calls from the US, the UAE, Canada, Nepal, Australia, Pakistan and many other foreign countries were being

terminated illegally to Indian mobile numbers.

"The arrested persons were masterminds of the syndicate and mostly calls were generated from the Gulf countries," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central), Shweta Chauhan, said. The illegal international GSM termination exchanges were set up using SIP trunk, internet, and server-based technologies. The setups were illegally terminating foreign calls in India, bypassing the legal international and national gateways of Indian telecom service providers.

The Caller Line Identification (CLI) is used to display Indian numbers for internationally landed calls. In this manner, a huge num-

ber of calls, around 1,47,000 calls per day and call duration around 14,400 hours per day via CLI number +91-1135035487, and 1,43,000 calls per day and call duration of around 13,000 hours per day via CLI number +91-1135041003, went unregulated, causing massive loss of revenues and compromising the national security of India.

Notably, international calls can only be terminated in India through DoT licensed operators. The accused persons were bypassing the legal international gateways, thus incurring a 'massive financial loss of Rs 103 crore to the government exchequer, ILD licensees, NLD licensees, and access service licensees.

## BENGAL BJP MLA KRISHNA KALYANI STEPS DOWN FROM PARTY

Kolkata: A day after Bengal BJP show-caused the party's MLA from Raiganj, Krishna Kalyani, for speaking against the party's Raiganj MP and former Union minister Debasree Choudhuri, Kalyani resigned from the party on Friday.

However, Kalyani did not resign from the legislative Assembly, nor did he say anything about joining any other party. Terming Raiganj MP Debasree Chowdhury as a traitor, the BJP MLA said, "I have come here to give service to the people. I cannot work with people who are more interested in other things and so I resigned. More specifically, I resigned because of Debasree Chowdhury. She has backstabbed me. I cannot work with people like her."

However, Trinamool Congress MP Sougata Roy said, "There are more in the queue. The film is yet not over. No right-thinking people can stay with them (BJP)."

Kalyani is the fifth MLA after Mukul Roy to leave the party after the Assembly election results were declared earlier this year. Kalyani, however, didn't divulge the details of his future plan of action, but sources said that he is likely to join the Trinamool.

## SC seeks Centre's reply plea against Maternity Benefit Act proviso

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday sought response from the Centre on a plea challenging the constitutional validity of a provision of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.

Section 5(4) of the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 entitles maternity period benefits for a period of 12 weeks to only those mothers who are adopting a child below the age of three months. The plea contended that the provision was contrary not only to the scheme and object of the Maternity Benefit Act, but also in conflict with the letter and spirit of the Juvenile



Justice Care and Protection of Children Act, 2015.

After hearing arguments, a bench of Justices S.A. Nazeer and Krishna Murari issued notices to the Ministry of Law and Justice, and the Ministry of Women & Child Development.

The plea claimed that Section 5(4) apart from being discriminatory and arbitrary towards the adoptive mothers, also arbitrarily discriminates against orphaned, abandoned or surrendered children above the age of three months.

## TERRORIST KILLED IN KASHMIR ENCOUNTER REFUSED TO SURRENDER

Srinagar: The terrorist killed in a gunfight with the security forces at Rakhama in South Kashmir's Shopian district on Friday refused to surrender and instead opened fire which triggered the encounter, officials said.

The Army said on receiving specific intelligence from the police about the presence of a terrorist in the vicinity of village Rakhama, a joint operation was launched by the Army and police at 11.30 p.m. on September 30. As per police, the terrorist has been identified as Mujeeb Amin Lone, a resident of Redwani in Kulgam district. He had joined the terrorist ranks in early September 2021.

## UP: Woman held for luring girl for husband to rape

LUCKNOW | Agencies

In a shocking incident, a woman has been arrested for luring a 19-year-old girl to her house, tying her up and allowing her husband to rape the girl.

The girl was also beaten up and her tongue was chopped off so that she may not be able to reveal the incident.

According to police reports, the accused woman, 40, first lured the girl to her house in Indira Nagar under Ghazipur police circle, where she tied her up after which her 45-year-old husband raped her several times in seven days. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP), North, Prachi Singh, said, "The couple chopped the survivor's tongue to ensure she is unable to speak and tell anyone about her sufferings. Somehow, the girl fled from the clutches of the husband-wife duo and reached home. When her wounds started healing, she told her family about her ordeal through signs and a case was lodged."

"A 19-year-old girl of another locality had lost her way and met the accused Arti who



took her to her home instead on September 21. Station House Officer (SHO) Ghazipur Anil Singh said that the girl was raped and also thrashed badly, tortured and subjected to unnatural sexual intercourse. Her tongue was also chopped off. "When she got better, she wrote about her ordeal on a paper and told her parents about the sufferings and savagery she had faced through signs and actions," the station house officer added. The girl's father informed the police and filed a complaint. Police lodged an FIR and arrested the accused woman Arti on Thursday, while her husband Jeetu Soni is absconding.

## Another man beaten to death in Gorakhpur

Gorakhpur | Agencies

Nearly 72 hours after the murder of a Kanpur businessman in Gorakhpur, a 25-year-old man working at a model liquor shop was beaten to death by drunk customers.

The incident was captured on CCTV installed in the shop.

According to reports, the incident took place late on Thursday night, about half a kilometre from the Ramgarh Tal police station.

Manish Prajapati, the victim, was a native of Madhya Pradesh and was working in this model shop since the past few months.

On Thursday, a few men came into the shop and ordered drinks. The customers apparently got angry over the delay in getting the order and this led to a verbal spat with Manish.

The argument soon turned into an ugly fight and the customers allegedly attacked Manish and another staff member, Raghu.

The customers called in a few more of



their friends who also joined the assault, which continued for nearly 20 minutes.

By the time the police came, the attackers had fled.

Both injured persons were taken to hospital where Manish was declared brought dead. Raghu is still admitted in the hospital where his condition is critical. Police have registered a case and are

currently trying to identify the accused persons.

The Gorakhpur police tweeted that one of the accused has been arrested and a search is on for the remaining accused whose identity is being established through the CCTV footage.

The police tweeted that the accused will be booked under the National

# Not the first time that Congress is on the verge of a split

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress has now become a divided house after the fresh attack launched by Kapil Sibal and the Congress workers protesting at Sibal's residence which many leaders termed as hooliganism.

This is not the first time there is a rift in the party. During Indira Gandhi's time the Congress was split into two on November 12, 1969 over differences with K Kamaraj. Indira Gandhi was expelled from the Congress party for violating party discipline. She then formed the Congress (R) and a majority of the AICC members walked over to her side.

A similar situation arose in March 1998 when in a CWC meeting Sitaram Kesri was removed and Sonia Gandhi was appointed president. Sharad Pawar, Tariq Anwar and PA Sangma walked out from the party and formed the NCP.

Apart from this there was the revolt by VP Singh against Rajiv Gandhi and he became Prime Minister with the help of the BJP in 1989, then when Narasimha Rao became party president Madhav Rao

Scindia formed the MP Congress, GK Moopanar the Tamil Manila Congress and ND Tiwari, Arjun Singh and Sheila Dikshit formed the Tiwari Congress only to merge when Sonia Gandhi became the party president.

Mamata Banerjee formed the Trinamool Congress which is now the ruling party in West Bengal. The YSRCP is also a Congress off-shoot which is at the helm in Andhra Pradesh, as is the NR Congress in



Puducherry.

Once again the party is on the verge of a split with the G-23 calling for action on the Sibal incident. But there is silence on the issue by the top leadership, which means it is unlikely that any action will be taken.

The leaders have reminded the workers of Sibal's contribution to the party in the courts and in parliament. Senior leader Ghulam Nabi Azad termed the incident orchestrated. "I strongly condemn the orchestrated hooliganism

@KapilSibal's residence last night. He is a loyal Congressman fighting for the party both inside and outside the Parliament. Any suggestion from any quarter should be welcomed instead of suppressing, hooliganism is unacceptable," he said.

Likewise Manish Tewari and Vivek Tankha have also expressed their displeasure while Anand Sharma said he is shocked. Former Chief Minister of Punjab Amarinder Singh who showed his intent to leave the party alleged that seniors are insulted. Now the rift between former party president Rahul Gandhi's loyalists and those who want reforms has widened with no sign of a truce, the reason being there is nobody who can bring both the factions to the table. A leader pointed out that, "its ironic that Rahul Gandhi has himself become a party in the entire crisis rather he should have been the solution provider." The leader said that due to bad advice and bad decisions of a coterie the party has reached such a low. Rahul Gandhi loyalists Ajay Maken and Randeep Singh Surjewala have attacked the leaders who are questioning the leadership.



SHIVPURI PLANT RUN BY WOMEN WILL BECOME AN EXAMPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY - CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN

The key of "Take Home Ration Plant" handed over to the Women Livelihood Industrial Cooperative Society

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday handed over the key of "Take Home Ration Plant" costing Rs.17.35 crore to Women Livelihood Industrial Cooperative Society in Shivpuri in Jan Kalyan and Suraj Abhiyan. Chief Minister Chouhan said that this plant, run by women of Gwalior-Chambal division, would become a big example for women self-help groups across the country. The profits of the plant will be given to women self-help groups.



ed by MP Agro. Now it will be operated by Mahila Aajeevika Sahkari Sanstha, from which women will get its direct benefit and their standard of living will change. Along with this, women empowerment will also get a boost. Chief Minister Chouhan also inspected the plant. Sports and Youth Welfare

Minister Yashodhara Rajee Scindia, in-charge of Shivpuri district, Panchayat and Rural Development Minister Mahendra Singh Sisodia and Minister of State for Public Works Suresh Dhakad were present along with public representatives. Mahila Aajeevika Sahkari Sanstha Shivpuri Maryadit was

formed in the year 2018 under the State Rural Livelihood Mission, which is made up of women groups of 8 districts of Gwalior-Chambal division. This committee includes all 5 districts of Gwalior division and all 3 districts of Chambal division. This committee will now operate the "Take Home Ration Plant".

Expand education to sections deprived of distance education: Governor Patel

Distance education is important in implementation of the new education policy, University should conduct skill based courses for Divyangjan, Governor attends the foundation day celebrations of Bhoj Open University



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that distance education has an important role in making the new education policy a ground reality. Universities should bring the latest knowledge, science and innovations by expanding education to remote areas and disadvantaged sections. Help them to join the mainstream of the development of the nation.

Governor Patel was addressing the foundation day programme organised for the first time in the 29th

year of the establishment of Bhoj Open University in Minto Hall.

Governor said that to make education universal, it is necessary to make it simple, accessible and less expensive. He has asked to make education free from hindrances, to provide education to the students as per their wish and requirement and to eliminate linguistic barriers in education. He

spoke of the need to increase the access of education to differently-abled people and online skill based courses. He asked to give information to the students about the courses before admission and arrange for career guidance. Along with making education student-oriented, the need for combination of courses according to the needs of science, industry and academic sectors was mentioned.

Digvijaya Singh showers praise on Amit Shah in Jaipur

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union Home Minister Amit Shah found special praise from an unusual quarter on Friday -- senior Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh, who was addressing the media here.

Singh said, "Amit Shah had made comprehensive arrangements for food and lodging when I undertook the Narmada Parikrama." "It was election time there. We were passing through jungles when a forest department official came to me and said that you are passing through forests, so we have been told by Amit Shah to make roads and provide food and lodging. As Amit Shah cooperated, I thanked him," he said. While praising Shah on the one hand, Singh also took a dig at the RSS, saying that it is not a registered body. "Till date it (RSS) has not been registered. When it is not registered, it can't have its own account. So where does the entire 'Dakshina'



(donations) get deposited," he asked.

In Jaipur, Singh held several political meetings, besides addressing the media at the party's state headquarters here.

He held meetings with Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Sachin Pilot and also participated in a programme to mark the birthday of state Congress chief Govind Singh Dotasra.

7 killed in bus-container collision in Bhind

Team Absolute | Bhind/Bhopal

A passenger bus going from Gwalior to Bareilly collided with a container in Bhind district of Madhya Pradesh. Seven passengers have died in this accident, while 15 have been injured. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, BJP State President Vishnu Dutt Sharma and former Chief Minister Kamal Nath have expressed grief over this accident. According to the information received from the police, a passenger bus going from Gwalior to Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh collided with a container in the Gohad police station area. The container overturned after the accident. A total of seven passengers have died in this accident, while 15 passengers have been injured in this accident. Most of the passengers killed and injured in the accident are said to be from Uttar Pradesh. Transport and Revenue Minister



Govind Singh Rajput has informed that according to the discussion and instructions with Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, financial assistance of Rs. Four lakh to deceased and fifty thousand to injured have been announced. The dead included six men and one woman. Expressing grief over this accident, Chief Minister Chouhan tweeted, "Sad news of untimely

demise of many precious lives in a collision between a bus and a dumper at Gohad Square, Bhind. My condolences to the family. I pray to God for peace to the departed souls and speedy recovery of the injured.

Expressing grief over the Bhind accident, former Chief Minister Kamal Nath said, "Many casualties have also been received in this horrific accident. Condolences to the fami-

lies of the victims. BJP State President and MP Vishnudutt Sharma, State Organization General Secretary Suhas Bhagat and State Co-Organization General Secretary Hatanand expressed grief over the loss of many people in the bus accident on Gwalior-Bhind Highway and wished for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Illegal construction of three bars and one restaurant demolished in Indore

Team Absolute | Indore

Demolition of illegal constructions is going on in different parts of Madhya Pradesh. In this sequence, a major action was taken in Indore, in which the illegal construction of three bars and a restaurant was demolished. State Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has given strict action against the mafia. Under the same, three bars and restaurants were removed by the district administration, municipal corporation and police administration, taking strict action against those building illegal constructions and operating the bar illegally. Municipal Commissioner



Pratibha Pal said that while taking action under the Anti Mafia Campaign by the District Administration, Corporation Administration and Police Administration, Devendra Pratap Singh, Happy Saluja's VIP Bar and Restaurant built on about ten thousand square feet near

Regional Park, Rubal Bhatia's The illegal construction of Punjabi By Nature built on about ten thousand square feet in front of Bypass SEZ University and the Paradise Bar built on about eight thousand square feet near Chhota Bangarda Road, Sanwaria Nagar, of Lucky Father Roshan

Yadav, was completely removed. According to the information given officially, all these bars and restaurants were built illegally without permission and illegal liquor is also sold here, which mainly affects the youth and society. Keeping this situation in mind, removal action was taken at the above three places under the anti-mafia campaign. It is to be known that earlier the buildings built by encroachment by the miscreants in the base of Gohalpur area of Jabalpur were demolished by the administrative staff. Similarly, the process of landfilling of encroachments is going on in other parts including the state capital.

CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN PLANTS KACHNAR SAPLING



Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan today planted a sapling of Kachnar in Smart City Park. Kachnar is a beautiful flowering tree. Small or medium height trees of Kachnar are found everywhere in India. Nature has created many trees and plants that are full of medicinal properties, Kachnar is one of them. The leaves, stem and flowers of this tree, which is laden with flowers after mid-March, are all useful. Kachnar is counted among beautiful and useful trees. It has many species.

Chief Minister Chouhan will provide letter of intent for plots to 133 industries on October 2

Bhumi-pujan of infrastructure development works in 7 industrial areas

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will provide letters of intent of industrial plots in various industrial areas of the state to 133 industries of the Micro, Small, Medium and Industrial Policy and Investment Department on Saturday, October 2, in the Jan Kalyan and Suraj Abhiyan, from Jawad in Neemuch district through virtual medium. Chief Minister Chouhan will also perform bhumi-pujan of the infrastructure development works in 7 industrial areas and dedicate the Atulya IT Park of Indore from Jawad itself. Industries Commissioner and

Secretary MSME P. Narhari informed that with the industrial development as the aim Chief Minister Chouhan, under the Jan Kalyan and Suraj programme, will on this day distribute 133 letters of intent being allotted to the industries in the industrial areas by the Department of Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion along with MSME. He told that the MPIDC offices of Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Gwalior would also be virtually connected to Jawad in the programme. Chief Minister Chouhan will also interact with industrialists and new entrepreneurs from Jawad and will meet entrepreneurs who have come from Bhillwara.

Chief Minister Chouhan extends greetings on Day of Elderly People

Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has greeted the people of the state on the Day of Elderly People and informed that many welfare programmes are being run by the Central and State Governments in the interest of senior citizens and elderly people. Elderly people are the heritage of the society. Everyone should make efforts for their health, safety and respect. Chief Minister Chouhan said that apart from developing necessary facilities for the elderly, the efforts made by the government and society to take proper care of their respect are commendable. Chief Minister Chouhan said that Madhya Pradesh government is committed for the welfare of all the elderly people. The Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu has dedicated the Helpline for Seniors - Eldeline (Toll Free No. 14567) to the nation. This helpline is operational in Madhya

37% population of MP fully vaccinated

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Collective efforts are being made in Madhya Pradesh to stop the corona epidemic, efforts are being made to make vaccination a big weapon to overcome this epidemic. So far, four major campaigns have been run in the state, as a result of this, about 37 percent of the population of the state has been fully vaccinated, which means that both the corona vaccines have been given to about one and a half crore population. The second wave of Corona has weakened and the possibility of a third wave remains. To prevent the third wave from showing its effect, special emphasis is being given on vaccination in the state. While the campaign is going on by the government to make every section aware, on the other hand it is being made aware. The effect of telling the benefits of vaccination is that the percentage of vaccination is much higher in the state as compared to other states.

According to the information given officially, more than one and a half crore second doses of corona vaccine have been administered to the citizens in the state in the Covid Vaccination Maha Abhiyan. Efforts have been expedited to administer both doses of the vaccine to all citizens. So far 4 crore 82 lakh 2646 first doses of vaccine have been administered in the state.

NHM (Vaccination) Director Dr. Santosh Shukla informed that 6 crore 32 lakh 51 thousand 229 corona vaccines have been administered in the state. Of these, 4 crore 82 lakh 2646 first dose and 1 crore 50



lakh 48 thousand 583 second dose have been administered.

He said that against the total estimated target of 5 crore 49 lakh, the second dose has been applied to 37 percent. The campaign to impose corona vaccines is going on continuously.

State Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is appealing to every section of the society, including

religious leaders, public representatives, members of Crisis Management Committee, social organizations, voluntary organizations to come forward for 100% vaccination in the state. Along with this, a call is also being made to find the remaining people from the vaccine and motivate them to get vaccinated, so that 100% population of the state can be vaccinated.

Chinnaur rice of Balaghat got GI tag, Shivraj expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister

Bhopal | Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on behalf of the farmers of the state for the achievement of rice of Chinnaur in Balaghat district of Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Chouhan said that the farmers of the state have not only got their due, but the way for their economic empowerment has also been paved.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that Madhya Pradesh is making efforts with full dedication and ability to achieve Prime Minister Modi's goal of doubling the income of farmers. Undoubtedly, the achievement of this goal will get further impetus by getting GI tag for Chinnaur rice of Balaghat. While expressing thanks to Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, Chief Minister Chouhan said that this would definitely pave the way for prosperity of Madhya Pradesh along with increase in the income of farmers. Chief Minister Chouhan said that this GI tag will bring a new light in the lives of farmers of Madhya Pradesh involved in Pragati Yatra by providing them a global market.



2ND OCTOBER: MAHATMA GANDHI'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

HAPPY KHADI DAY

Renu Nayak



fabric it is a way of life...khadi sirf kapda nahi hai balki ek vichardhara hai...Gandhi ji began promoting the spinning of khadi for rural self employment and self reliance, thus making khadi an integral part and an icon of the SWADESHI movement...

Coming to the present scenario Prime Minister Narendra Modi's urge to be Vocal For Local has again made khadi...a focus of attraction...I started my designing work in 1996 from my home with small orders from friends and relatives...then shifted to shop in 1998. My sole aim was to promote the staple clothes of the then Madhya Pradesh ie Cotton, Khadi, Chanderi, Maheshwari and Kosa. Different weaving and block printing techniques has always fascinated me...so when I started my work I was working with these clothes only...it took time to convince customers about the benefits of natural fiber and colours but now people are ready to experi-

ment with them as with the time the typical khadi Kurta pajama which were once synonyms with the politics only has now become a fashion statement today. We are associated with many organisations where we are supplying khadi garments and also home furnishings made up of Khadi...I must tell you when we wear a Handloom product we support...a farmer...a spinner...a weaver...a dyer...a printer...a tailor...and finally a sales personal...ie we support 7 to 8 families by buying one khadi product...Designers like me are now making products to suit the choices of young generation. Making fashion more affordable and sustainable is my moto. Sustainable means economically, socially and environment friendly.



Today is Gandhi Jayanti...or in other words it's Khadi Day today...but what is Khadi? In simple words it is a hand spun and hand woven natural fiber cloth usually from cotton. However it may also include silk or wool, which are all spun into yarn on a spinning wheel called Charkhas. It is a versatile fabric, cool in summer and warm in winter. Weaving skill existed in India since ages...but after the first war of independence in 1857, domestic

textile production by mill or by traditional methods declined to its lowest levels and then Khadi emerged as silent economic revolution by an outcome of a long and laborious evolutionary process. Mahatma Gandhi, touched by the plight of farmers, focused the Swadeshi movement on hand spinning. In 1922 Gandhi ji asserted Indian National Congress to start Khadi Department for spinning and in 1925 All India Spinner Association (AISA) was formed. Thus we can say khadi is not only a

Doha agreement boosts Taliban!

Top US defence officials have said the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan can be traced back to a deal between the group and the Trump administration, BBC reported. The so-called Doha agreement was signed in February 2020 and set a date for the US to withdraw its troops. Gen Frank McKenzie said the deal had a "really pernicious effect" on the Afghan government and military. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin agreed, saying the agreement had helped the Taliban get "stronger". Gen McKenzie told the committee the Doha agreement had a strong psychological effect on the Afghan government because it set a date for "when they could expect all assistance to end", the report said. He said he had believed "for quite a while" that if the US reduced the number of its military advisers in Afghanistan below 2,500, the Afghan government and military would inevitably collapse. After the Doha agreement, he said the troop reduction ordered by President Biden in April was "the other nail in the coffin". Austin said that by committing the US to ending air strikes against the Taliban, the Doha agreement meant the Islamist group "got stronger, they increased their offensive operations against Afghan security forces, and the Afghans were losing a lot of people on a weekly basis". The defence officials previously spoke to the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday, where Gen Milley and Gen McKenzie said they had recommended keeping a force of 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, ahead of the full US withdrawal in August. Gen Milley also said the Taliban takeover would make it harder to protect Americans from terrorist attacks, as he described the group as a terrorist organisation that "still has not broken ties with al-Qaeda".

COMMUNIST CHINA'S DEBT TRAP: AN EMPIRE OF LIES AND DECEIT

N. C. BIPINDRA

China's latest investment of an estimated \$1.4 billion in Sri Lanka's Colombo Port City project is the largest single foreign investment in the island nation's history. Dubbed as a public-private partnership (PPP) between the Government of Sri Lanka (or its representative agencies) and the CHEC Port City Colombo (CPC) Private Limited, the project has been much publicised for the employment opportunities and huge revenues, which it would generate for the Sri Lankans. What is seldom spoken about is the fact that of the 269 hectares of reclaimed land, 43 per cent will be controlled by the CPC through a 99-year lease agreement. This is reminiscent of the not too long ago takeover of the Hambantota port on a 99-year lease by China Merchant Port Holdings (CMPH). The port is now operated 'jointly' by the Sri Lanka Ports Authority and CMPH, with the latter holding 80 per cent stake in the port and exercising near

total control over its operations. Even more interesting, however, is the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill passed by the Sri Lankan parliament in May this year. This law provides special overarching powers of taxation and new projects and investments to the 'Commission', which itself could possibly be composed of foreign nationals. Recently, there were reports of Chinese personnel in military uniforms being employed in infrastructure work in Hambantota. Sri Lanka is just one example of how China uses its economic power to ensnare unsuspecting, and sometimes complicit governments, in an intricate web of debt and dependencies. The larger effort of China's debt-trap diplomacy is visible in Africa. It is reported that one-in-five infrastructure projects in Africa are funded by China and one-in-three are built by Chinese companies. Often these projects are taken up without appropriate studies on their socio-economic and environmental impact and even their commercial viability. One of the countries which is already reeling under its conse-

quences is Angola, which is repaying multibillion-dollar debt to China with crude oil, creating major problems for its economy. Another glaring example of this unviability is Kenya's 'railroad to nowhere', as captioned in a recent report. The Kenyan government, realising the enormity of the debt that was required to be serviced on account of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project from Mombasa to Nairobi and further inland, attempted to renegotiate the terms of loan payments. The result was a 'freeze' on fresh instalments by China's Exim Bank for other infrastructure projects in Kenya. Worse, the threat of takeover of Mombasa's hugely profitable port is now looming large -- a la Hambantota -- given Nairobi's apparent inability to service the debt. Similar stories emerge from Central Asia, where China has made economic inroads to hedge against its own political and security vulnerabilities. As of today, all Central Asian countries are economically dependent on China for both exports and imports of goods, espe-

cially medical equipment and pharmaceuticals where Beijing is a world leader; and the debt is growing. Although, the Central Asian countries initially tried to balance their trade with Beijing by exporting gas -- Chinese imports from Central Asia grew 1,000 per cent in the last ten years -- these measures have proven to be insufficient. On the contrary, Beijing has seized several concessions from these nations, notably the ceding of 1,158 square km of territory in the Pamir mountains by Tajikistan and the increasing presence of China's Private Military Companies (PMCs) to provide security to infrastructure projects in Central Asia. To gauge the extent of China's increasing stranglehold across the globe, one only needs to look beyond Asia and Africa. In Europe, Montenegro is struggling to repay a multi-billion-dollar loan to China for a highway constructed by China Road and Bridge Corporation from 'nowhere to nowhere'. Only the

first 25-mile section of the proposed 270-mile road has been completed and the host country cannot afford to pay for the rest of project. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that China tries to elaborately gift wrap its ulterior motives in seemingly benign outreach to unsuspecting partners. In 2018, the Center for Global Development named Djibouti, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, the Maldives, Mongolia, Montenegro, Pakistan, and Tajikistan as "highly vulnerable to debt distress" due to China's Belt and Road Initiative. This should serve as a warning to these nations and to those which run the risk of eventual bankruptcy in this dangerous game of geopolitics. (N. C. Bipindra is Chairman, Law and Society Alliance, which recently published a Research Report 'Mapping Chinese Footprints and Influence Operations in India'. The views expressed are personal)



TAJIK TROOPS DEPLOYED ON BORDER AS TENSION ERUPTS WITH TALIBAN

Moscow | Agencies

The Russian Foreign Ministry claimed to have reports indicating troop deployments by Tajikistan and Afghanistan along the two countries' shared border amid tensions with the Taliban, DW reported.

"We observe with concern growing tensions in Tajik-Afghan relations against the background of mutual harsh statements by the leaders of the two countries. Reports have appeared about the deployment of armed forces by both sides to the common border. According to information from the Taliban, tens of thousands of special forces units have been deployed in the bordering (northern) Afghan province Takhar alone," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexei Zaitsev.

Moscow, said Zaitsev, calls on Dushanbe and Kabul "to search for mutually acceptable solutions" to de-escalate the current situation.



Tajik President Emomali Rahmon has refused to recognize the Taliban government, accusing the group of human rights abuses, the report said. The Taliban leadership has harshly rejected such sentiments, demanding that Tajikistan stay out of Afghanistan's domestic affairs. On Thursday, long-time Tajik ruler Rahmon presided over a military parade

near the border. The show of force followed a similar parade near another section of the border a day earlier.

Tajikistan is the only neighbouring country of Afghanistan which is emerging as the toughest critic of the Taliban.

Earlier, Tajik authorities have taken a different position and that has raised questions about why Rahmon and his government continue to make clear their strong opposition to a Taliban government in Afghanistan, Bruce Pannier wrote in the Qishloq Ovozi blog.

Pakistan, a long backer of the Taliban, clearly welcomed the group's success in Afghanistan.

China, Iran, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan all conceded there was nothing they could do about Afghan internal politics and held out hope that some form of cooperation with the Taliban might be possible, he adds.

Tajikistan's government is no doubt saying what many governments are thinking.

JAPAN LIFTS COVID STATE OF EMERGENCY AS SCHEDULED

Tokyo: Japan on Friday fully lifted the Covid-19 state of emergency covering Tokyo and another 18 prefectures, as well as the quasi-state of emergency in other regions as scheduled.

It is the first time since April 4 that none of Japan's 47 prefectures is under either a state of emergency or a quasi-state of emergency, reports Xinhua news agency. The Japanese government plans to ease restrictions in phases to resume social and economic activities while preventing another wave of coronavirus infections. With the state of emergency being gradually lifted, the tourism sector saw a rise in reservations for domestic tours, and businesses such as restaurants and theme parks were preparing for an expected increase in customers.

N.Korea test-fires new anti-aircraft missile

Seoul | Agencies

North Korea said on Friday that it has test-fired a new type of anti-aircraft missile capable of downing air targets at longer distances with enhanced accuracy.

The North's Academy of Defence Science carried out the test aimed at "confirming the practicality of operation of the launcher, radar and comprehensive battle command vehicle as well as the comprehensive combat performance of the missile", Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

The Academy verified the "remarkable" combat performance of the new missile that features rapid response and guided accuracy with a missile control system as it introduced new technologies that included "twin-rudder control technology" and a "double-impulse flight engine", Yonhap News Agency quoted KCNA as saying. The North has also been successful in substantially increasing the effective range of the missile, it added.

The twin-rudder control technology appears to be aimed at increasing mobility by



attaching variable wings to the warhead and the middle of the missile.

Pak Jong-chon, a member of the Presidium of the Politburo of the ruling Workers' Party, guided the launch, while leader Kim Jong-un did not attend the firing, according to the KCNA. South Korea's Unification Ministry said it will continue efforts to restart inter-Korean talks while keeping a close watch on the North's next move. North Korea has recently ratcheted up tensions by conducting its first test-launch of a hypersonic missile earlier this week, just two weeks after test-firing two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea.

Global Covid-19 caseload tops 233.7 mn Flu pandemic still more deadly to humans than Covid

Washington | Agencies

The global coronavirus caseload has topped 233.7 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 4.78 million and vaccinations soared to over 6.22 billion, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

In its latest update on Friday morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload and death toll stood at 233,703,468 and 4,782,043 respectively, while the total vaccine doses administered were 6,227,425,133.

The US continues to be the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 43,459,200 and 697,840 respectively, according to the CSSE.

In terms of infections, India follows in the second place with 33,739,980 cases.



The other worst countries with over 3 million cases are Brazil (21,427,073), the UK (7,843,887), Russia (7,401,104), France (7,106,028), Turkey (7,124,654), Iran (5,587,040), Argentina (5,256,902), Colombia (4,957,277), Spain (4,959,091), Italy (4,672,355), Indonesia (4,215,104), Germany (4,239,773) and

Mexico (3,655,395), the CSSE figures showed. Nations with a death toll of over 100,000 are Brazil (596,749), India (448,062), Mexico (276,973), Peru (199,367), Russia (203,549), Indonesia (141,939), the UK (137,043), Italy (130,921), Colombia (126,299), Iran (120,428), France (117,474) and Argentina (115,179).

New York | Agencies

A global flu outbreak continues to be a "serious and real" risk to human beings more than the ongoing Covid-19, according to infectious disease experts.

According to Professor Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, a global influenza outbreak could be far worse than the Covid pandemic, with models suggesting that it could kill up to 33 million people in the first six months, The Telegraph reported.

"Prior to Covid-19, influenza pandemics were the number one biological risk to humans and this hasn't changed," Osterholm was quoted as saying.

"During the 100 years between 1918 and 2018, we had four influenza pandemics. This clearly illustrates that the risk of pandemic influenza is a serious and real threat. The question is not if we will have another influenza pandemic, but when," he said.

Osterholm was speaking at the launch of a roadmap to develop vaccines against both seasonal flu -- expected to rise this year -- as well as pandemic influenza, by the World



Health Organisation along with several other organisations.

Influenza kills 290,000 to 650,000 people per year, disproportionately affecting those in lower- and middle-income countries. The world has historically experienced an influenza pandemic once every 25 years.

The roadmap sets out what is needed for the development of new vaccines from better understanding of the immune response to flu to

ensuring sustainable funding.

According to the experts, current flu vaccines are based on technology first developed in the 1940s and need to be formulated every year depending on what strains of the disease are circulating.

While there has been "incremental" improvement in vaccine development in the last 10 years, "we still do not have a vaccine that protects against stronger strains for a longer

amount of time", Dr Martin Friede, vaccines expert at the WHO, was quoted as saying.

The ultimate goal is for a universal flu vaccine that would not have to be administered every year, was effective against many different strains and could be used in low and middle income countries. There is also an urgent need for vaccines against pandemic influenza and experts hope that the lessons of the Covid.



# HAS MUMBAI EX-TOP COP PARAM BIR SINGH SNEAKED OUT OF INDIA?

Team Absolute | Mumbai

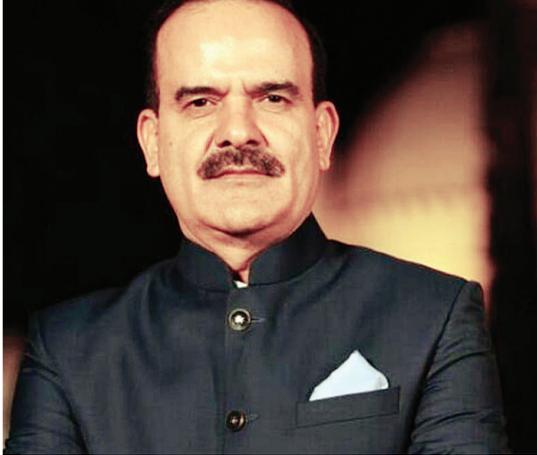
Five days before he is summoned to appear before the government-appointed Justice (retired) K.U. Chandival Commission of enquiry, the political circles in Maharashtra are agog with speculation that the former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh, now Commandant-General of Home Guards, may have fled the country.

Maharashtra Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil has said that neither the state nor the Central government's investigating agencies have any inkling of Singh's whereabouts and are searching for him.

"A lookout circular (LOC) has been issued against him along with the Ministry of Home Affairs (New Delhi), we are also looking out for him," Walse-Patil said.

Admitting that while he has also heard the IPS officer could have left the country, pointed out that as a government officer, Singh cannot travel abroad without official sanction.

After Singh failed to repeatedly honour his summonses, the Justice Chandival Commission slapped him with fines thrice, and issued a



bailable warrant against him twice with the State CID failing to locate him at his known addresses in Mumbai, Chandigarh and Rohtak.

If the untraceable Singh fails to appear before the Commission's next hearing on October 6, he faces the prospects of a non-bailable warrant.

The ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi

(MVA) government ally Congress on Friday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party of "a definite role in giving a safe passage" to Singh.

"If Singh has fled India, then there has to be a definite role of BJP in giving a safe passage to him. Quite clear that saving Singh supports the agenda of BJP," state

Congress spokesperson Sachin

Sawant said here.

He pointed out how the National Investigating Agency (NIA) had probed the Antilia terror threat case first and its chargesheet clearly mentions that dismissed cop Sachin Vaze was reporting to Singh, who paid Rs 5 lakhs to a cyber expert to create an alibi.

"Still if Singh flees, then its a failure of the NIA. What was the chowkidar government doing? How often do we find chowkidar government napping when people like Nirav Modi, (Mehul) Choksi, (Vijay) Mallya and Singh elope?" Sawant pointedly asked.

In April, Singh created a sensation by firing a 'letter-missile' to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray alleging corruption by the then Nationalist Congress Party's Home Minister Anil Deshmukh.

Soon afterwards, the Bombay High Court ordered a preliminary enquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation leading to Deshmukh's resignation, while Singh proceeded on leave in May.

In June, the MVA hit back by registering cases of alleged extortion, cheating, forgery, and set up a one-man enquiry commission to probe the charges against Singh.

# Champions of Change Maharashtra edition 2021 honoured

Mumbai's Hotel Taj Mahal Palace witnessed the award ceremony of 'Champions of Change Maharashtra' on 30th September 2021. Governor of Maharashtra Bhagat Singh Koshiyari was the Chief Guest of the award ceremony while Dr. Ved Pratap Vaidik (Veteran Journalist) presided over the ceremony.



social welfare.

Chief Guest Bhagat Singh Koshiyari offered his greeting to the jury members of the award ceremony and all the dignitaries present during the function including Dr Ved Pratap Vaidik. He also thanked Nandan Jha and his organization for organizing such a prestigious event.

"Last time when I felicitated the awardees from across the country for the highly coveted Champions of Change National Awards held in Goa, it was a memorable experience to honor many other great personalities who brought about change like Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant himself, Union Minister Shripad Naik and

Sonu Nigam. Although all the work of change is commendable, whether it is done by a top political figure or by the emerging youth power, all the work done is a testament of the development in Maharashtra", he said. Senior Journalist Dr Ved PratapVaidik heaped high praises on the Chief Guest BS Koshiyari for all his achievements and for his genuine regard for the award ceremony. He also congratulated Jha for initiating such a platform for honouring the heroes of the society who have served the country in their respective fields. He said that there can't be a better feeling than being recognized for all your efforts towards the society.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The awardees included Home Minister of Maharashtra Dilip Walse Patil, Nana Patole (former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Maharashtra), Social activist Sindhutai Sapkal, Sarpanch of Hiware Bazar Popatrao Pawar, Bollywood actors Jackie Shroff & Dia Mirza And several others who made useful contributions towards the

# Alliance with BJP did not let Sena expand base in Maha: Sanjay Raut

PANAJI | Agencies

Shiv Sena's 25-year long alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party in Maharashtra did not allow it to expand its base in the state, its Rajya Sabha member and national spokesperson Sanjay Raut said on Friday.

Addressing a press conference here, he also said that the party would contest between 22-25 seats in the Goa Assembly polls which are scheduled to be held in early 2022. "All this while, we focussed on alliances. In Maharashtra, our leader and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had to concede that we could not expand our base because of the alliance for 25 years," he said. Raut, who is in-charge of party affairs in Goa, is here to oversee the Sena's election campaign for the 2022 polls. "Even in Goa, we used to opt for alliances... that is why we could not expand. That is why we have decided that we will contest 22 to 25 seats in Goa on our own strength," he said. The Sena has contested Assembly elections in the past, but performed poorly. In 2017, it contested on three seats in



alliance with the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party and the Goa Suraksha Manch, but lost all three. Asked about the resurgent Aam Aadmi Party and the re-entry of West Bengal-based Trinamool Congress in Goa ahead of the polls, Raut said that Goa was in the midst of a "political carnival". "There is a political carnival in Goa. Goa has become a laboratory for everyone. Someone comes from West Bengal, others come from Delhi to contest elections. Anyone can contest elections in Goa. But Goa and Maharashtra have an emotional relationship. It has always been that way," Raut said.

# After CM's green flag, Mumbai Metro train trials to start early 2022

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray gave the go ahead, the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (MMRCL) on Friday said it plans to start trial runs for the Mumbai Metro 3 line by early 2022.

The state government has permitted the MMRCL to create a temporary facility - a train delivery and testing track area for the technical trials of the prototype 8-coach trains due to arrive here by December, said MMRCL Managing Director Ranjit Singh Deol.

After a two-week period to assemble the train coaches, by January 2022, the trials for the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ fully-underground Mumbai Metro 3 corridors shall start, he added. The trials will be conducted from the mouth of a ramp on the west of the Marol-Maroshi Road in Andheri east, in an area vacated by diversion of the road to an upcoming underpass. The ramp - which connects the underground part of the Metro line with the surface -



coming up here is around 225 metres long.

Presently, two metro trains of 8-cars each are ready, a third is being manufactured and for the testing programme of the prototype train, the parking will be at the temporary facility at Marol-Maroshi Road, said Deol. The development comes amid apprehensions that a Centre-State tug-of-war for the car-shed depot may delay the project by two

years while an alternative site is being acquired for the prestigious Mumbai Metro Line 3.

Thackeray has also directed the MMRCL not to chop a single tree in the Aarey Colony area - which was rejected as the original proposed site for the car-shed - and instead build the ramp in Marol-Maroshi Road for conducting the train trials.

The manufacturer, Alstom, has already conducted technical trials of the 8-car trains in Sri City, Andhra Pradesh, and now the trains will be coming to Mumbai for rigorous trials of 10,000-kms before the Mumbai Metro 3 operations begin with 31 trains. Currently, 97 per cent of the tunnel work and around 70 per cent of the civil works for the Line 3 is ready and the technical trials of the prototype train would mark a major milestone, said Deol.

Incidentally, through a NITI Aayog delegation which visited the state recently, Thackeray again appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene and end the tussle of the Kanjurmarg site selected for the Mumbai Metro carshed, which is stuck in a legal dispute.

# NCB seizes Australia-bound drugs hidden in mattresses from Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Narcotic Control Bureau has busted yet another international narcotic smuggling racket, seizing a drugs consignment from Hyderabad bound for Australia via Mumbai, a top official said on Friday.

"The contraband has been seized in Andheri... around 4.60 kg of ephedrine, which was sourced from Hyderabad. It was intended to be smuggled to Australia via Mumbai," NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede said. Following a tipoff, the NCB teams found the contraband hidden inside three mattresses, packed in a carton, in the form of a parcel. All the mattresses were taken out and after a thorough check, the NCB sleuths recovered the ephedrine



concealed in them, he added.

Further investigations are on to trace and arrest the consignor and the consignee and discern the links of the international drug mafia in Mumbai and their connections in other countries, etc.

According to the NCB, ephedrine has a chemical structure similar to amphetamines and it can be used to create methamphetamine, which makes it a highly sought-after chemical precursor in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine.

In India, ephedrine falls under the Section 9A of the NDPS Act, 1985 and is a Table-I precursor under the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, making it an illegal narcotic drug.

# Suspected 'marauder' leopard trapped in Aarey Colony

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Forest Department has managed to trap a leopard in a cage in the Aarey Colony after over half a dozen attacks by the spotted big cats in the Sanjay Gandhi National Park and its periphery, officials said on Friday.

The leopard was trapped in one of three cages placed at strategic locations in the Aarey Colony, but the officials are not certain if it the same suspected of creating havoc here in the past few days.

The female sub-adult was taken to the Leopard Rescue Centre in the park, Borivali, for treatment and observation, after it found inside the trap around 5 a.m.

The SGNP and Maharashtra Forest Department, which have accessed the CCTV footages of a couple of incidents recently and camera-trap images of the leopards, will match them with other evidence to ascertain if the same leopard has walked into the trap. The SGNP, spread across around 103



square km, is the only national park in the world to be located with a metropolitan city limits, and had the highest leopard density with around four dozen spotted cats flourishing here. Roaming inside the SGNP and its larger periphery, hugging three large and heavily populated areas of Mumbai Suburban District, Thane and Palghar, the leopards' hunt for food and prey often leads inside the human settlements, buildings, bungalow, slums, resulting in man-animal conflicts, with tragedies on both sides.

# Global cues sent equity indices; realty stocks down

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Weak Asian cues along with profit booking dented India's key equity indices - S&P BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty50 - during Friday's mid-afternoon trade session.

In the initial trade hours, the market struggled at lower levels after a gap down opening on October 1.

Globally, Asian markets after opening lower are languishing at low levels.

Furthermore, European markets have opened lower on growth and inflation fears. On the domestic front, realty, telecom, auto and FMCG are the main losers so far, whereas metals is the main gainer.

Accordingly, the 30-scrip sensitive index traded at



58,700.08 points around 1.15 p.m., down 426.28 points or 0.72 per cent. The Sensex opened at 58,889.77 points from its previous close of 59,126.36 points. Besides, the NSE Nifty50 traded at 17,499.85 points, down by 118.30 points or 0.67 per cent. "Weakness in other Asian markets has impacted sentiments despite encouraging macro data locally," said

Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities. "Indian markets may make an attempt to partially recover the opening loss, later in the day." According to Likhita Chopa, Senior Research Analyst, CapitalVia Global Research: "Traders were cautious, as government fiscal deficit touches 31.1 per cent of budget estimates at the end of August."

# Everest Twins want to nurture an Olympic dream for India

B Shrikant | Mumbai

In between conquering mountain peaks, India's Everest Twins, Tashi, and Nungshi Malik, also harbour an Olympic dream. They want to select very young girls from across India and train them in sports climbing so that one day they can win a medal for India at the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Sports climbing is a medal sport at the Olympics, introduced in Tokyo 2020.

'Mission Women Olympic Climbing Medal Hunt' is a dream very close to the heart for Tashi and Nungshi Malik, the first female twins to climb Mount Everest (in 2013) and the first siblings and twins to climb the Seven Summits and reach the North and South Poles and complete the Adventurers Grand Slam and Three Poles Challenge.

As part of their pet project, the twins want to select very young girls from across India through



regional wall climbing competitions and train them at Outdoor Leadership School for an Olympic medal in 2028. They are hoping to soon arrange funds through sponsorships to launch this programme as part of their foundation. The twins, winners of India's highest adventure honour 'Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award'

2015 by the President of India on August 29, 2016, and awarded the Leif Erikson Young Explorers Award in Iceland by president Guoni Th. Johannesson in 2019, themselves are too old to take up sports climbing as they are already 30-years old.

"It is always better to get into sports climbing when you are young so that you develop and strengthen the required set of muscles early on. It is very encouraging to have sports climbing included as an Olympic sport with three medals up for grabs! In India, we still have a long way to go to be considered serious contenders for this honour," they told correspondent in an interview.

Tashi and Nungshi also want to launch a few adventure-reality shows in India and annually lead all women Everest and Kanchenjunga base camp leadership treks for women. They want to produce and anchor a video series called Invisible Mountains to showcase how subtle and often invisible socio-cultural practices based on gender

# Lorde lauds 'Golden Microphone' for amplifying her voice to fight climate change

New York | Agencies

Lorde was recognized at Variety's Power of Women event for her efforts on behalf of 350 Aotearoa, an organization "whose commitment to ending fossil fuel-driven projects back home is truly inspiring", reports Variety.com. Introduced by Hunter Schafer, the model, LGBTQ advocate and star of HBO's 'Euphoria', who said: "In the past year, Lorde has used her powerful words, sounds, and presence to promote environmentalism and raise awareness about the growing issue of climate change. To so many of us young people, this is the crucial issue of our time. How can we protect our planet and make it a safe place not only for us to live, but for our children and their children? How can we make these changes in the face of lost time?" Lorde then delivered a speech that was both reflective and future-looking, recalling how she rose to fame and what she's doing with the "golden microphone" she was gifted to help better the world. Lorde is not one to talk the talk without walking it, and she did just that when, for her latest album, "Solar Power," she resisted a CD release, demonstrating her commitment to slowing the speed of climate change. In fact, the project is a sonic love letter to the natural world. As she says in her Power of Women cover story: "The purity of being outside was really magical to me," Lorde says. "It felt like all the answers were out there, like I could be healed by the natural world."



## DANIEL CRAIG, RUTH NEGGA TO STAR IN 'MACBETH' ON BROADWAY

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood personalities Daniel Craig and Ruth Negga are teaming up to bring 'Macbeth' back to Broadway. Craig, who was last seen on Broadway in 'Betrayal' in 2013, is returning to the stage to star in the titular role. Negga will be making her Broadway debut as Lady Macbeth, though the 'Passing' actor has previously tackled Shakespeare in a New York-based production of 'Hamlet', reports Variety.com. Craig recently appeared in 'Othello' opposite David Oyelowo. The Shakespearean tragedy, one that involves malice, matrimony and murder, tells the story of the Macbeth couple's obsession with power -- and their guilt after doing the unthinkable. A statement announcing the show promises "this thrilling new production will capture the passion and ferocity of Shakespeare's most haunting text like never before". Sam Gold is directing the Scottish play. The new production will run for a limited 15-week engagement. It is scheduled to begin performances on March 29, 2022, and its opening night will be on April 28 at Broadway's Lyceum Theatre. Additional casting will be announced at a later date.

## Angelina Jolie delivers emotional tribute to poet Amanda Gorman

New York | Agencies

Angelina Jolie struck a poignant and empowering chord on Thursday night, presenting national youth poet laureate Amanda Gorman with Variety's Power of Women honour, reports Variety.com. The superstar director, actor, and humanitarian arrived at the Beverly Hills celebration presented by Lifetime with daughter Zahara Jolie-Pitt in tow, to hand the honour to Gorman - the poet who captivated the country in January at the inauguration of President Joe Biden. "The young woman of grace, who stepped fearlessly to the podium on inauguration day. Not just the youngest but the strongest voice we could ask for in that moment. The Amanda we see today might seem as if she leapt into our times, fully formed, to summon our better angels. But there was an Amanda we didn't see," Jolie said. "A little girl with a speech impediment. In her own words, 'a buck-toothed, kinky-haired, speech-garbled 7-year-old.' Scribbling in her journal, on the school bus and park bench. Wrestling with language, puzzling out meaning and rhyme, inventing her own dictionary. All those hours of thought and creation forged the unfaltering woman you see today," Jolie said. Jolie applauded Gorman's ability to hone her words in deep solitude and express them in multitudes, saying if anyone can "bring people to the streets" with their words in this urgent moment, it is Gorman.



New York | Agencies

Scarlett Johansson and Disney have reached a settlement over her lawsuit that accused the studio of sabotaging the theatrical release of 'Black Widow' to prop up Disney+, reports Variety.com. Terms of the settlement were not disclosed. Johansson had sought a \$50 million payout from the studio.

## Scarlett Johansson, Disney settle 'Black Widow' pay lawsuit

"I am happy to have resolved our differences with Disney," Johansson said in a statement on Thursday. "I'm incredibly proud of the work we've done together over the years and have greatly enjoyed my creative relationship with the team. I look forward to continuing our collaboration in years to come." Alan Bergman, the chairman of Disney Studios Content, said he too was pleased to have resolved the dispute. "I'm very pleased that we have been able to come to a mutual agreement with Scarlett Johansson regarding 'Black Widow,'" he said in a statement. "We appreciate her contributions to the Marvel Cinematic Universe and look forward to working together on a number of upcoming projects, including Disney's 'Tower of Terror.'" CAA co-chairman Bryan Lourd responded that the studio was seeking to "weaponise" his client's success against her.

## 'Bingo Hell': Blends horror and satire in a unique style

FILM REVIEW

TROY RIBEIRO

**Direction:** Gigi Saul Guerrero  
**Cast:** Adriana Barraza, L. Scott Caldwell, Richard Brake, Joshua Caleb Johnson, Clayton Landey, Jonathan Medina, Bertila Damas, Grover Coulson, Kelly Murtagh and David Jensen

**Duration:** 85 minutes (Streaming on Amazon Prime)

**Ratings:** \*\*1/2

'Bingo Hell' is an off-beat film that blends horror and satire in a relatively unique way. Set in a distant locality named Oak Springs, the narrative follows Lupita (Adriana Barraza), an elderly, loud-mouthed busybody who fiercely protects her neighbourhood from gentrification.

Oak Springs had seen fabulous days, but now, with every other house in town up for sale and long-term businesses closing down, Lupita and her peers are fed up with the constant home-purchase offers from developers.

Lupita's peers include her hairstylist Yolanda (Bertila Damas), handyman Morris (Clayton Landey), auto mechanic Clarence (Grover Coulson), the recently widowed Mario (David Jensen), and her best friend Dolores (L. Scott Caldwell).

When Mr Big (Richard Brake) an ill-defined, mysterious supernatural stranger, comes into Oak Springs with his big paying bingo hall, Lupita finds that her long-time neighbours and residents of the town dying under grisly circumstances, and she suddenly discovers that gentrification is the least of her problems.

She takes the bulls by the horns



when she realises that Mario, who is already conspicuous in his absence all day, has sold his place, and when she goes over to his house finds him dead in mysterious circumstances.

The scares set in after a mysterious limousine makes its first appearance, but by then the audience is already pulled into the narrative just like Lupita's investigation of the uncanny events in town. The horror in the film perfectly alludes to the '80s with slime and cinematography that captures psychedelic lighting.

Adriana Barraza as Lupita is a likeable character. With her blabber-mouth and into everybody's business demeanour, she is the typical, good-hearted neighbourhood lady. Much like the neighbourhood she loves, there is a quality about her that will make you accept her.

L. Scott Caldwell as Dolores, who is

stuck housing an absent son's trashy, ungrateful wife (Kelly Murtagh) and a grandson (Joshua Caleb Johnson) who is drifting towards delinquency and all the others in supporting roles have their moments of on-screen glory.

Richard Brake as Mr Big is truly a frightening figure. His clownish get-up and mannerisms are terrifying. As the narrative progresses, he becomes more monstrous in appearance and develops like a classic horror film villain.

Overall, while the characters and the setting provide a comforting sense to those who have grown up in small towns or similar surroundings, the comic and macabre aspect of the screenplay appears undernourished and murky. Moreover, the film ends on a feel-good factor which reveals, "As long as we are together, it does not matter where we go."

## Promoting her barnd

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rihanna looked absolutely incredible in a plunging black latex leotard that displayed her toned curves and ample cleavage on Thursday night.

In a series of images posted by her lingerie brand, Savage X Fenty, the 33-year-old singer showed off her toned legs in a sexy pair of knee-high pair of criss cross heels as she stood in a lush apartment with views of New York. Such a show out [sparkle emoji] #YKYKsavageX? , her company captioned the pictures. 'But wouldn't you be too if you could rock this #SAVAGEXFENTYSHOW VOL. 3 lewk? Well now you can... & now you know.' During the show, the Fenty Beauty founder also wore a crimson snake-print mini dress and lace tights. Rihanna's debut in the Savage X Fenty show - which was more like a music video than a traditional fashion show - came about three-quarters of the way through the 40-minute runtime.



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kourtney Kardashian



## IPL 2021

# RAHUL 67 HELPS PUNJAB BEAT KOLKATA BY FIVE WICKETS

Dubai | Agencies

Skipper KL Rahul struck a well-paced half-century to help Punjab Kings beat Kolkata Knight Riders by five wickets in a thrilling encounter in the IPL 2021 here on Friday, moving to fifth position and maintaining their chances of making it to the knockout rounds. Both teams needed a win -- the KKR more so as it would have pushed them to 12 points from 12 games and closer to a place in the top four. But it was not to be as Punjab (10) won the match and reached the fifth position, moving ahead of Mumbai Indian (10) on better Net Run Rate. This win means that the Delhi Capitals are assured of a place in the knockouts with Punjab, KKR, and Mumbai Indian on 10 points and fighting for the final qualifying spot.

Punjab restricted KKR for 165/7 in their 20 overs despite a superb 67 by opener Venkatesh Iyer and a quick 31 off 18 deliveries by Nitish Rana, with some good bowling in the middle overs, and came back to reach 168/5 in 19.3 overs capitalising on a few dropped catches by their opponents. Punjab too lost their way a bit in the middle overs on a slow track but Rahul managed the innings well and helped them keep their noses



ahead. Punjab were also helped by a debatable decision on a diving catch by Rahul Tripathi by the third umpire. A wicket at that time would have made things very difficult for Punjab. Rahul was eventually out, caught by Shivam Mavi off Iyer with Punjab needing four runs to win off as many deliveries. Shahruxh Khan (22 off 9 balls) blasted the next ball over the rope and Punjab won the match.

Rahul and his opening partner Mayank Agarwal gave the team a great start -- with Agarwal capitalising on an early life -- as Punjab chased down the target after asking

KKR to bat first. Rahul anchored the innings while Agarwal went for his shots as they raised 70 runs for the opening stand. Agarwal, who struck three big sixes after being put down by Eoin Morgan when he had not yet scored a run, was caught by Morgan, incidentally, off Varun Chakravathy. Punjab lost a couple of wickets, Nicolas Pooran (12), Aiden Markram (18), and Deepak Hooda (3) getting out early but Rahul found a good partner in the big-hitting Shahruxh Khan and they pushed Punjab Kings across the line.

Earlier, after his partner Shubman Gill was out early, Venkatesh Iyer (67) hit some powerful shots to post

his highest score in IPL in his fifth match but just when KKR, asked to bat first, were looking to dominate the match, Punjab Kings came back to claim some quick wickets in the middle overs to halt their progress. Nitish Rana struck some good blows in making 31 off 18 balls that proved crucial for KKR. Arshdeep Singh was the most successful Punjab bowler as he claimed 3/32 while Ravi Bishnoi picked 2/22 in his four overs as Punjab did well in the middle overs to restrict KKR which were looking for a score around 180.

KKR did their chances lot of harm by picking only four bowlers in order to get an extra batsman -- hoping that Venkatesh Iyer and Nitish Rana, who did well for them with the bat, will make good of the four overs. But the two batting-allrounder cost them 37 runs in 3.3 overs which in the end thwarted them.

### Briefscores:

Kolkata Knight Riders: 165/7 in 20 overs (Venkatesh Iyer 67, Rahul Tripathi 34, Nitish Rana 31; Arshdeep Singh 3/32, Ravi Bishnoi 2/22) lost to Punjab Kings 168/5 in 19.3 overs (KL Rahul 67, Mayank Agarwal 40, Shahruxh Khan 22; Varun Chakravathy 2/24).

# Jason, Gagana claim titles in AITA U-18 Champions Series 7



Bengaluru | Agencies

Top seed Jason Michael David lived up to his billing as he annexed the boys' U-18 title in the AITA Champions Series 7 U-18 tennis tournament that concluded here on Friday.

In the final that was stretched to three sets, Jason overcame second seed Rishi Vandan 1-6, 6-1, 6-2 to emerge victorious. Jason, however, was

unlucky in the boys' doubles final as he and his partner Rishi Vandan lost to Suchir C Seshadri and Sarth in a super tie-breaker, 4-6, 6-3, 10-4. Meanwhile, Gagana Mohan Kumar, seeded second stopped giant killer Danica Fernandes of Maharashtra in the final to claim the Girls' crown. The local girl emerged 6-3, 6-3 winner over Danica in the final on Friday.

Results (all finals):  
Boys' U-18

Singles: 1-Jason Micheal David bt 2-Rishi Vandan 1-6, 6-1, 6-2

Doubles: Suchir C Seshadri/Sarth bt Jason Michael David/Rishi Vandan 4-6, 6-3, 10-4.

Girls' U-18  
Singles: 2-Gagana Mohan Kumar bt Danica Fernandes 6-3, 6-3.

Doubles: Jennifer Chacko/Charmi Gopinath bt Danica Fernandes/Surabhi Srinivas 6-3, 7-5.

# Vishnu Vardhan to meet Maanav Jain in final of AITA men's event

Bengaluru | Agencies

Asian Games medallist Vishnu Vardhan defeated Odisha's Kabir Hans in straight sets to storm into the final of the AITA Rs 1 lakh men's tennis tournament at the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA) courts here on Friday.

Red hot fifth seed Vishnu Vardhan of Telangana defeated his opponent from Odisha 6-3, 6-4 in the semi-finals.

In the final, he will face Karnataka's Maanav Jain, who continued his dream run by stunning third seed Yash Yadav in another semi-final. The lad from the host state won in straight sets 6-4, 6-3 to reach the title round.



Kabir then made good of his loss as he later won the doubles title partnering Madhwin Kamath of Gujarat. The fourth-seeded pair defeated the second-seeded duo of Oges Theyjo (TN) and Mohammad Sheik Ifthikhar (KA) 6-1, 6-4 in the final.

Results (Seedings in the prefix, States in brackets)

Men's singles semis:  
Maanav Jain (KA) bt 3-Yash Yadav (MP) 6-4, 6-3; 5-Vishnu Vardhan (TS) bt Kabir Hans (OD) 6-3, 6-4.  
Doubles final: 4-Kabir Hans (OD)/Madhwin Kamath (GU) bt 2-Oges Theyjo (TN) / Mohammad Sheik Ifthikhar (KA) 6-1, 6-4.

# It's something that we all respect a lot: Mandhana on Raut walking out

Gold Coast | Agencies

Indian opener Smriti Mandhana said that her team respects the decision of Punam Raut walking out despite the umpire Phillip Gillespie shaking his head on day two of the one-off Test against Australia in Metricon Stadium on Friday. On a day when Smriti made her first Test century, the cricketing world was abuzz with varied opinions on Punams decision to walk off.

The incident took place in the 81st over of India's innings when Punam, batting on 36 off 165 balls, decided to walk off after believing to have nicked left-arm Sophie Molineux behind to wicketkeeper Alyssa Healy. Punam stretched forward to block the delivery but the ball spun away and went behind to Alyssa. The Australians didn't appeal whole-heartedly but Punam had walked away by then.

"First we reacted, like, 'Oh, why did she do that?' But, then, of course, it's something that we all respect a lot. I think she has earned a lot of respect from all the team-mates that she actually walked



out. And I don't know how many people would actually do that in cricket at the moment - men's or women's," said Smriti to reporters after the day's

play was brought to a close due to rain. "Nowadays people walk out because there is DRS. But when there is no DRS and to walk out, I don't know. So, definitely she has earned a lot of respect from us, but, yeah, the first reaction was, 'Oh, was it actually an edge or why did she walk?' That was our first reaction," added Smriti.

When the Punam walk-off question was put to Australian all-rounder Ellyse Perry, she said, "Yeah, there seem to be a really faint edge. That's very much at her discretion whether or not she wanted to walk. And she did so, I suppose so from our point of view it's just acknowledging that. Besides that, there wasn't too much conversation about it."

When batter Beth Mooney was asked by the commentators whether she would have walked, she instantly replied, "Nup, no chance."

Punam was playing her first game of the tour to Australia. She didn't feature in the ODI series at Mackay and isn't a part of the squad of the T20I series in Gold Coast coming after the pink-ball Test.

# Bagnaia and Quartararo set for key battle in America

Austin (Texas) | Agencies

Ahead of a crucial weekend which could heavily influence where the 2021 MotoGP World Championship trophy heads to, current standings leader Fabio Quartararo of Yamaha MotoGP was confident of his chances in the battle against main rival Francesco Bagnaia of Ducati in the Grand Prix of the Americas this weekend.

With four races to go, the title race is hotting up between the Frenchman and the Italian and both will be hoping for a victory at the Circuit of the Americas.

Quartararo and Bagnaia discussed the Round 15 of the season on Friday at the pre-event Press Conference alongside Marc Marquez (Honda Team).

Just 48 points split Quartararo and Bagnaia in the Championship with just four races to go. To say this weekend is vital in the title race is probably an understatement, and heading into the weekend at Circuit of the Americas (COTA), both riders are in a buoyant mood. It's going to be incredibly interesting to see how Quartararo goes about his business with his healthy points advantage, and it's a topic he touched upon.



Quartararo: "Yes honestly in Misano, behind Jack, I had some moments. But as soon as I overtook Jack and I saw Pecco in front, I needed to try. Second is ok for the championship and in the end that's the position we finish'd but it's the race I had more fun in this year."

"It's a shame 'we didn't get that place at the end, but the race was going super fast and I want more of this at the end. Of course, I'm in a tricky situation, I will not push over my limit but if I can achieve something like Misano or something better, I will go for it," he was quoted as saying in a release on Friday. On the other hand, Pecco can't afford to make any mistakes and has to go all-out attack. Four races, 48 points - by no means impossible, but

it's certainly difficult. A Ducati rider has never won at COTA, however, Bagnaia is confident he can be very competitive this weekend.

Bagnaia said, "This year we were fast at tracks that we struggled at in the past years. I think our bike suits better in all the conditions in all the situations of tracks. This first sector is very similar to Silverstone, maybe more difficult but similar, and we were fast there so I think we can also be very competitive here. We need a chance to stay in front so we have to be competitive."

Can Marc Marquez reclaim his COTA crown? That's the question on a lot of people's minds going into this weekend. Marc Marquez is a six-time winner in Austin, but 2021 is different. While admitting the approach to this GP is certainly different from somewhere like Misano, Marquez is aware that COTA's heavy braking zones and fast changes of direction might take their toll slightly. The eight-time World Champion's goal? Enjoy himself. Marc Marquez said, "Yeah of course I mean the approach of the weekend, for example, compared to Misano and Austin is a bit different because I know that normally in this track I enjoy a lot and this year I will try to enjoy it because if we take this season I'm suffering more than enjoying."

# Sehwag recalls incident when Dhoni scolded Ashwin for on-field behaviour

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former Indian opener Virender Sehwag recalled an incident when CSK captain MS Dhoni scolded Ravichandran Ashwin for giving an animated send-off to Glenn Maxwell during an IPL match between the Chennai Super Kings and Punjab Kings (Kings XI Punjab). Though Sehwag did not mention when the match happened, but it is certain that the incident happened during 2014 IPL.

"Even when I was playing for Punjab, Ashwin dismissed Maxwell, picked up some dust and blew it off (in celebration). I didn't like that scene either but I didn't come out publicly to say that he should not have done that or it was against the spirit of the game,



although MS Dhoni was very angry about it and scolded him a lot too," Sehwag was quoted as saying by Cricbuzz while sharing his views on the 'spirit of the game' debate after the Ashwin-Morgan verbal blows in IPL 2021 on Tuesday.

Sehwag, who was at the non-striker's end when the incident happened in 2014, mentioned that he did not like the celebration but he didn't speak about it to not start a 'spirit of cricket' debate. He

also believed that things happening inside should remain inside.

"But it was Ashwin's wish to do that and if someone had come out talking about it in the media or social media it might have caused an uproar too. This is the player's responsibility, right? What happens inside should remain inside. If more things from the inside start coming out, I can guarantee every match will have something like this that will cause an uproar. The spirit of the game also says that players should leave what happens inside the ground as is and move on." On Thursday, Ashwin explained through a series of tweets that he had not seen the ball hitting the non-striker and Delhi captain Rishabh Pant.

# INDIA MEN WIN TEAM BRONZE IN ASIAN TT, WOMEN FINISH FIFTH

Doha (Qatar): The Indian men's table tennis team comprising Achantha Sharath Kamal, Sathiyam Gnanasekaran, and Harmeet Desai enhanced its reputation with a bronze medal in the Asian Table Tennis Championships here on Friday. The Indian women's team playing without Manika Batra, who was left out as she did not attend the camp, finished fifth after a 3-1 win against Thailand.

India had won the men's team bronze at the Asian Games in Jakarta in 2018 and Friday's bronze in the Asian Championships cements their reputation among the top three in the Continent. On Friday, the Indian team lost 0-3 to top seeds South Korea in the semi-finals. They were already assured of a medal as both losing semi-finalists get bronze medals just like at the Asian Games. Though the scoreline may show that the Koreans won it easily, the Indians did put up a fight. Sathiyam lost to World No 12 Jang Woo-jin but took a game off the higher-ranked player in the 3-1 (11-5, 10-12, 11-8, 11-5) defeat. Four-time Olympian Achantha Sharath Kamal could not capitalise on a 2-1 lead as he went down to World No. 22 Lee Sang-Su 3-2 (7-11, 15-13, 8-11, 11-6, 11-9). Harmeet Desai too came back strongly after losing the first game to win the next two but eventually went down 3-2 (11-4, 9-11, 8-11, 11-6, 13-11), losing in extra points in the deciding game.

# FORMER ENGLAND CAPTAIN CONNOR TAKES CHARGE AS MCC'S FIRST FEMALE PRESIDENT

London | Agencies

Former England captain Clare Connor took charge as the president of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) on Friday. She also becomes the first woman ever to hold the post in the 234-year-old history of the club.

Her nomination was announced by her predecessor, former Sri Lanka captain Kumar Sangakkara at the Annual General Meeting in 2020. Clare now takes over from Sangakkara after his term was extended to two years because of Covid-19 pandemic. Clare, who is currently the ECB's Managing Director of Women's Cricket, was made an Honorary Life Member of MCC in 2009.

"I am truly honoured to be MCC President and would like to thank Kumar Sangakkara for putting his faith in me to deliver this enormously important role, for the good of the sport I have loved all my life. I will try to bring my range of experiences from the dressing room and the boardroom to support, influence and work alongside the Club's leadership and committees over the next 12 months. I am really looking forward to being part of the MCC team," said Clare in a statement by the MCC.

Clare made her England debut in 1995 as a 19-year-old. She



took over the captaincy of England in 2000, leading England at Lord's against Australia a year later. An all-rounder who bowled left-arm spin, Connor led England women's team to

their first Ashes triumph in 42 years, overseeing a 1-0 series win in 2005. After retiring from the game shortly after winning the Ashes, Clare moved towards developing the women's and girls' game. As the ECB's Managing Director of Women's Cricket she oversaw the introduction of central contracts for England women's players in 2014, the ICC World Cup win in front of a full house at Lord's in 2017 and the introduction of professional contracts for female domestic cricketers in 2020.

Apart from Clare, Bruce Carnegie-Brown has taken charge as the sixth Chairman of the MCC. Carnegie-Brown has been a full member of the MCC since 1997 and joined the Club's Finance committee in October 2019.

"It is a privilege to be MCC's next Chairman and to increase my involvement with such a special Club. I look forward to working with the Club's Members to ensure that the Home of Cricket continues to provide a world class venue and warm welcome to players and visitors from around the country and internationally. On behalf of the Club's membership, I would like to express my gratitude to my predecessor, Gerald Corbett who did an outstanding job of leading the Club through the pandemic, while also overseeing the construction of the fabulous new Compton and Edrich stands, which opened this summer."



## Talent from Showbiz industries got felicitated at International destination

Dubai | Agencies

The two days awards ceremony organised by an English daily, honoured cinema stalwarts for their remarkable achievements at the Mid Day International Icon Awards ceremony in Dubai. At a magnificent ceremony at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Dubai, actors, producers, actresses, directors, singers, marketing, promotion, OTT, and film were rewarded for their work. In this award ceremony, Aditi Rao Hydari was given the Iconic Actress Female, Neha Sharma as the Iconic Performer, Zareen Khan as the

Iconic Actress, Actor Vivek Oberoi as the Iconic Multi Talented Actor, Daisy Shah was awarded the Iconic Style Icon, Amrta Dastoor the Iconic Fashion Trendsetter.

In acting category awards include Actor Jatin Khurana Award for Iconic Experimental Actor, Sandeepa Dhar Iconic Breakthrough Performance, Actor Tanmay Singh for Iconic Debut Award for the film Sayoni, Actress Anamika Shukla for Iconic Female Lead Actress for Mukesh Jasoo, Ravi Sudha Choudhary Iconic Debut for Sitapur The City Of Gangster, Actress Payal Ghosh Iconic Most Desirable Actress, Pakkhi Hegde Iconic Woman Performer in Performing Arts, Sunil Shah Iconic Director for the film Muddus Of Crime, Mr. Bhusra Iconic Production House, Ranjit Singh Iconic Actor, Ali Quli Iconic Singer, Sunil Shah Iconic Producer B4U Awarded.

### Bhumika hopes her biker role will inspire women

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Bhumika Chawla's film 'Idhe Maa Katha' will release on October 2. Keyed up about her character in this Telugu movie, the actress is hopeful that the narrative would inspire women. "My role in 'Idhe Maa Katha' is very different from what I have done before. It's about a middle class married lady following her dreams. As a young girl she had a few things in mind that she wanted to do, but life took a different course. In a much later stage in her life, she decides to follow her heart. I hope to inspire at least a few women to follow their dreams no matter what age they are. The role instantly appealed to me," adds the actress, known for her films in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi that include 'Kushi', 'Okkadu', 'Tere Naam', 'Missamma', 'Sillunu Oru Kaadhala', 'Gandhi, My Father' and 'M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story'. 'Idhe Maa Katha' is a story of four strangers who are attached to their bikes and travel together, and was shot in Hyderabad and Manali last year between October and December. Bhumika had to ride a bike for this role. "I learnt how to ride a bike in school. I knew how to drive so it wasn't an issue. People haven't seen me in this kind of a role before so they will be surprised," Bhumika says, and she will be seen wearing sarees but mostly biker dresses in the film.

### SHILPA SHETTY, TABU RECALL THEIR 25-YEAR FRIENDSHIP



Team Absolute | Mumbai

During the Sunday episode of 'Super Dancer: Chapter 4', celebrity guest and Bollywood actress Tabu will be seen complimenting the acts and also entertaining everyone with her dance moves. In conversation with judges Shilpa Shetty Kundra and Geeta Kapur, it is revealed that Shilpa and Tabu have been friends for about 25 years. Showing the duo some images from their time shooting, both Shilpa and Tabu walked down memory lane and spoke about how their friendship progressed and flourished over the years. Shilpa revealed on the show that she and Tabu became friends when Shilpa asked for a bottle of shampoo from Tabu on the sets of Shilpa Shetty's film 'Gambler' and Tabu's set 'Vijaypath' at Kudremukh waterfalls.

This incidentally happened because apparently Shilpa Shetty did not foresee that they would be shooting in a jungle where she would not have such necessities available at hand. From then on, their relationship with each other grew stronger.

Shilpa Shetty Kundra said: "Our films, maybe none of the pictures celebrated the silver jubilee but our friendship did, it's been over 25 years." Tabu also joined in with a story about their friendship on the sets of 'Tarkeeb' which was being shot on the hills of Pachmarhi. She said: "There would have been eating competitions with each other, packing in bowls after bowls of gulab jamun and kheer."

### SIDDHARTH CHATURVEDI IS EXCITED AS THEATRES ARE SET TO OPEN



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Thanks to MC Sher role in Gully Boy that Siddhant Chaturvedi has a funny sense of humour and incorporates weird raps when it comes to giving updates and posting on his social media. Recently the announcement of the theatre opening was made by the CM and as many as 50 films were announced. Siddhant Chaturvedi who has 5 movies from his end opened up on the same as he shared an update in a unique style on his upcoming movies. Siddhant Chaturvedi has as many as 5 films lined up for release between now and 2022 end. The actor choose to go with a photo of him chilling as he announced as many as 5 big films ahead of the opening of theatres. The actor has 3 projects signed with Excel Entertainment and his cheeky caption read, "2 saal se No-Show Main... Ab seedha parde pe Slo-Mo mein."



### Amitabh Bachchan posts throwback pics from his modelling days

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has shared throwback pictures from his modelling days on his social media. Big B took his fans down memory lane with pictures from his modelling days on his Instagram. In his nostalgia trip post, he expressed the desire to go back to those days. Amitabh looked dapper in two pictures, where he is seen dressed in a formal black and grey



outfit and another one in multi-coloured trousers and a black T-shirt carrying a duffle bag. "...would be so nice to be back to such days...but..." he wrote. Big B's Instagram got flooded with comments from Bollywood and fans. Actor Rohit Roy commented, "My life is centered around those days Amit ji...my existence is a sum total of THOSE days," with a heart emoji.

## 'SHIDDAT': SUNNY KAUSHAL, MOHIT RAINA LEAVE THEIR MARK ON SCREEN

### FILM REVIEW

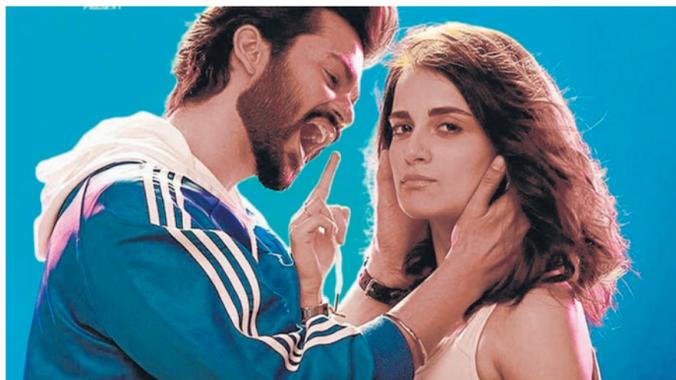
TROY RIBEIRO

### Shiddat (Streaming on Disney+ Hotstar)

**Director:** Kunal Deshmukh  
**Cast:** Mohit Raina, Diana Penty, Sunny Kaushal, Radhika Madan, Vidhatri Bandi, Gaurav Amlani, Gandharv Dewan, Chirag Malhotra, Atul Kumar and Nazneen Madan

**Duration:** 146 minutes

**Ratings:** \*\*\*\*1/2



If love stories don't touch an emotional chord, they are not worth it, if you are a sucker for romantic tales, especially the frothy ones.

Director Kunal Deshmukh's 'Shiddat', tugs at your heart twice over, once with Joginder Dhillon's saga and then with that of Gautam. While Gautam's love story is light and trite, Joginder's tale is heavyweight and intense. Both stories have arcs that make your heart ache. The narrative tells us how their paths

cross and about crossing borders, both literally and metaphorically. And like most love stories, 'Shiddat' does not offer anything that you aren't aware of. But what makes the film stand out is the striking cinematography, crisp editing, reasonably endearing direction, and most of all, the performances of its cast especially, Sunny Kaushal and Mohit Raina. There is sincerity and passion in what they offer to their audiences.

Sunny Kaushal with his charismatic smile

and demeanour has a unique blend, that reminds you of Shahid Kapoor and Shah Rukh Khan. He effortlessly displays the 'junoon', craziness that these actors are known for. He plays Joginder Dhillon, "the madly in love youth" with elan. He is the love-struck guy who "suffers from perpetual happiness" and attempts to cross the seven seas for his dream girl, Kartika, even, if it means stopping her wedding.

It is easy to copy Shah Rukh Khan, but

Sunny Kaushal has his take on that, especially when he is at the dress store buying a dress for his love, Kartika. Sunny Kaushal has put his heart and soul into his character and delivers a fab performance, making it inevitable for you to recognise his potential at the marquee.

On the other hand, is Mohit Raina playing Gautam, an Officer in the Indian Foreign Service. He is a romantic yet pragmatic lover who after a while feels, "kismet, fate, destiny is all rubbish..."

While we see his love story crumbling, how his attitude changes to help Jogi reach his destination makes your heart go out for him. With his intense disposition, he delivers a compelling, compassionate, and complex character with ease.

Radhika Madan and Diana Penty are competitive and brilliant actresses. The film is studiously mounted, with splendid production values. While there is nothing in common, 'Shiddat' reminds you of DDLJ and other romantic films from the Yashraj stable. The writing may be frothy but the dialogues are significant, contemporary, and racy.

Overall, 'Shiddat' is not an overtly melodramatic film. The narrative holds itself in good stead till the climax, but its weak and oft-seen dénouement fails to leave an impact at the end.

### INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Shobhita Rana