For Generation Ace

Like our stories? Have something to share? Send in your bouquets and brickbats to absoluteindiadesk@gmail.com

facebook.com @absoluteindianews | twitter.com @absoluteindnews | instagram.com @absoluteindianews | Live TV ▶ Live Tv @absoluteindianews

# absolute india

VOL. 6, ISSUE 347, BHOPAL | THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021 I ₹5 I PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL,MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI

**NATION** >02

Governor extends good wishes and greeting on Deepawali...

**HOLLYWOOD** > 06

Matt Dillon, Bernadette Peters to join series 'High Desert'...

**SPORTS** > 07

Batters set up India's empathic 66-run win over Afghanistan

## HAPPY DIWALI

On the occasion of light festival, Absolute India's office will remain close for two days. The next issue will be published on 7th of November, 2021.

*Editor*

## Wing Commander Abhinandan promoted as group captain

**New Delhi:** Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, who downed a Pakistan jet during an aerial combat in February 2019 and was held captive for three days, has been promoted to the rank of Group Captain. Wing Commander Varthaman is a Vir Chakra, India's third-highest war time gallantry medal, awardee.He was captured by the Pakistani Army on February 27, 2019 after his MiG-21 Bison jet was shot down in a dog-fight with Pakistani jets. Before his jet was hit, he downed a Pakistani F-16 fighter. The 'Balakot Air Strike' was carried out at terror camps at Balakot of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in response to the deadly Pulwama attack that claimed the lives of 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel. It was the first aerial assault carried out by India in Pakistan after the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war.

On February 26, 2019, at around 3.30 a.m., 12 Mirage 2000 fighter jets crossed the Line of Control (LoC) and destroyed the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terror camp in Pakistan's Balakot.

After the strike 'Operation Bandar', over two dozen fighter planes, including F-16s left Pakistani bases aiming to hit Indian military installations. But the Indian Air Force in anticipation of such an attack was ready and aerial dogfight ensued. It ended with Wing Commander Varthaman, shooting down an F-16 fighter plane of Pakistan and getting hit in the

# INDIA'S INDIGENOUS COVAXIN GETS WHO NOD

**Covaxin has been specifically designed to meet the needs of global distribution chains, the requirements for which are more critical in low- and middle-income countries. It has been formulated to enable shipping and long-term storage at 2-8 degrees Celsius. It is also formulated to adhere to a multi-dose vial policy, thereby reducing open vial wastage, saving money to procurement agencies and governments alike.**

- With validation from the WHO, countries can now expedite their regulatory approval processes to import and administer Covaxin. Furthermore, UNICEF, Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO), GAVI COVAX facility, will be able to procure Covaxin for distribution to countries worldwide.
- This will enable them to secure the critical supply needed to meet the requirements of priority populations, thereby ensuring equitable access.

**HYDERABAD** | Agencies

The Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech announced on Wednesday that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has franted Emergency Use Listing to India's first indigenous Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin.

Developed by Bharat Biotech in partnership with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, Covaxin is a whole virion-inactivated vaccine.

The EUL procedure assesses the suitability of

novel health products during public health emergencies, with the objective of providing rapid access to medicines, vaccines and diagnostics, while adhering to stringent criteria of safety, efficacy and quality.Dr. Krishna Ella, Chairman and Managing Director, Bharat Biotech described validation by WHO as a very significant step towards ensuring global access to India's widely administered, safe, and efficacious vaccine.

The Phase 3 trial data for Covaxin was available during June. WHO's EUL process commenced on July 6 with rolling data submission. The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) of WHO had reviewed Covaxin data on October 5 in a meeting and granted EUL for Covaxin on November 3.

Covaxin has been evaluated through neutralizing antibody responses against several variants of concern, like B.1.617.2 (Delta), B.1.617.1 (Kappa), B.1.1.7 (Alpha), B.1.351 (Beta), P2- B.1.1.28 (Gamma). The data from these studies and others have been extensively published in more than 12 peer-reviewed journals and available for review in the public domain.

Bharat Biotech stated that the manufacturing capacity expansion was started during first quarter 2021, as the first Phase 3 efficacy readouts were available. Within a short period of about 9 months, the capacity was scaled up to 50-55 million doses per month, as of October 2021.

The company has established Covaxin manufacturing to reach an annualised capacity of 1 billion doses by the end of 2021. Technology transfer activities are also in progress to companies in India, the US, and other countries, it added.

# Centre on verge of launching long-term leasing out of ITDC hotels

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi

India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd.

After selecting a new buyer for Air India, the Central government has accelerated the process of handing out luxury hotels belonging to the ITDC on a long-term lease of around 40 to 60 years, industry insiders said.

The details of the plan have been kept under the wraps even as an inter-ministerial panel has completed the consultation process on the issue.As per industry sources, a draft note has been circulated on the matter and the likely lessee will be selected soon based on a bidding process.

However, it is not known if all the Ashok Group of Hotels which are 100 per cent owned by the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) will be leased via a single bidding process.

At present, ITDC has a network of three Ashok Group of Hotels and one joint venture hotel, amongst other properties.Nevertheless, it is certain, said industry insiders, that The Ashok, New Delhi will be the first one off the blocks.

The hotel is amongst assets of the ITDC which are slated to be leased-out under the National Monetisation Pipeline.It is widely speculated that the new lessee will be allowed to convert a part of the property by introducing service apartments as well as a new and enlarged retail space amongst other facilities.A landmark property, The Ashok is spread over a 25-acre area next to the diplomatic enclave of Chanakyapuri in Lutyens' Delhi.It was Prime Minister Jawarahlal Nehru, who ordered the construction of the hotel to host a UNESCO conference in 1956.

Interestingly, several royals of erstwhile princely states at that time played a part in the development of the project with land donations coming from Prince Regent of Jammu and Kashmir, Karan Singh amongst others.

# Fuel prices to fall as excise duty cut on petrol, diesel

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi

The Centre on Wednesday sweetened Diwali celebrations by announcing that it will slash excise duty rate on both petrol and diesel fuels, thus bringing down retail rates.

The excise duty will be reduced by Rs 5 for petrol and Rs 10 for diesel from November 4.

Domestic prices of both fuels have touched record highs on the back of a steep rise in crude oil cost.

Petrol has already breached the Rs 100 per litre mark and above in several cities, whereas, diesel is not far behind.

The rise in transport fuels had raised concerns over a build-up of inflationary pressure which has even concerned the RBI.The Finance Ministry, in a statement on Wednesday night, a day before Diwali, said: "The reduction in excise duty on diesel will be double that of petrol. The Indian farmers have, through their hard work, kept the economic growth momentum going even during the lockdown phase and the massive reduction in excise on diesel will come as a boost to the farmers during the upcoming Rabi season." As per the statement, the Centre has made efforts to ensure that there is no energy shortage in the country and that commodities such as petrol and diesel are available adequately to meet requirements.In addition, the Centre urged state governments to commensurately reduce VAT on petrol and diesel.

## Vax drive needs 'Har Ghar Dastak' approach to achieve target: PM Modi

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the vaccination drive against Covid-19 needs a 'Har Ghar Dastak' approach to achieve its target. "So far you have been working to take people to vaccination centres, now it is time to reach every house for door-to-door vaccine. You can take help of local religious leaders to spread awareness about Covid vaccines and to fight rumours," PM Modi told District Magistrates of low vaccination coverage districts during a review meeting. A total of 40 low vaccination coverage districts have been identified across Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tamil Nadu. The Chief Ministers of these states were also present at the meeting. The Prime Minister asked the officials to change gear from arrangements made for taking people to the vaccination centre to administering vaccines door to door.

# Afghan father forced to sell his 9-year-old daughter

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi

An Afghan father who has been forced to sell his nine-year-old daughter to a 55-year-old man as a child bride so he can buy food has pleaded for his child's new husband not to beat her, Daily Mail reported.

Parwana Malik, nine, is being sold by her parents to a stranger who the youngster describes as an 'old man' due to his white beard and eyebrows.

On the day Parwana was taken away by her 55-year-old buyer, Qorban, her weeping father, Abdul Malik, pleaded for him to not hurt his child, reports CNN.

Abdul, who is 'broken' with guilt, broke down in tears as he told Qorban: "This is your bride. Please take care of her. You are responsible now, please don't beat her."

Parwana's family said they had no choice, and are among scores of destitute families who being forced to sell their young daughters into marriage to survive, as Afghanistan plunges further into a humanitarian crisis, the report said.

One girl, aged 10, spends her days crying as she waits for the day she is sold to a 70-year-old man to help her family pay off their debts.

# 20 thieves who stormed into J'khand mine elude police to escape

**RANCHI** | Agencies

At least 20 criminals trapped in a coal mine in Jharkhand managed to escape despite the heavy police presence.

The criminals had entered into Bhagyalakhi coal mine located in Kumardhubi of Dhanbad district on Sunday with an intention to steal cables.Heavy police force was deployed outside the mine to prevent the thieves from escaping, and kept guard for three days.

After the criminals entered the mine, coal production was stopped on Monday and Tuesday.The criminals entered the mine after firing on police and security forces on Sunday night and even hurled bombs. A policeman received injuries in the firing.There had been continuous vigil since then, but the police are now at a loss to know how the criminals managed to escape even after a heavy police presence outside.Eastern Coalfields Ltd General Manager, Mugma area, B.C. Singh said that three search operations were conducted to find the thieves inside, but were unsuccessful.Police sources say that criminals managed to escape on Sunday night only when they fired on the security forces and hurled bombs. The joint search team found no one inside the mine during the search operation.

The gang of thieves last Sunday night entered the mine with the intention to steal the cables. Since then a team of district administration, police and CISF was posted outside the mine. They used loudspeakers to tell the thieves to come out of the mine, but there was no response.

After making sure that there is no one inside, coal production resumed in the mine.

# 92% Indians say Global South needs richest nation's support

- THE TERM -- GLOBAL SOUTH -- BROADLY REFERS TO LATIN AMERICA, ASIA, AFRICA, AND OCEANIA INCLUDES REGIONS OUTSIDE EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA, MOSTLY LOW-INCOME AND OFTEN POLITICALLY OR CULTURALLY MARGINALIZED.
- SIX IN 10 PEOPLE IN INDIA, AROUND 63 PER CENT THINK THAT THE GLOBAL SOUTH IS BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE COP26 CLIMATE TALKS, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THREE-QUARTERS, 78 PER CENT THINK THAT PEOPLE FROM THESE REGIONS WILL BE MOST IMPACTED BY THE DECISIONS MADE AT THE SUMMIT.

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi

As the devastating effects of the climate emergency are already being felt in the country, around 92 per cent of people in India say the Global South needs support from the world's richest countries to adapt to climate change and recover from climate disasters like severe flooding, drought, and cyclones, according to a survey.Around 93 per cent of survey respondents from India said that world leaders should intervene for solving the climate crisis in these regions, reveals the new research from ActionAid.

The survey also said that people from India and across the Global South are calling for world leaders to take responsibility and represent the views of those who are most at risk - particularly women and young people. Nine in 10, around 91 per cent, think that the countries most responsible for the climate crisis should support those hardest hit, while 94 per cent of people in India say the world's richest countries need to do more to protect and support climate refugees.

At Glasgow, from Sunday onwards till November 12, leaders, and negotiators from across the globe would be deliberating on reducing carbon emissions to restrict the temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to the pre-industrial era.

## GOVERNOR EXTENDS GOOD WISHES AND GREETING ON DEEPAWALI

**Bhopal:** Governor Mangubhai Patel has extended warm wishes and greetings to the people of the state on the occasion of Deepawali festival. Wishing all the families happiness, prosperity and joy, he called upon the citizens that Deepawali is a festival of sharing happiness. It should be celebrated by spreading the light of happiness in the lives of others.

Patel said that this festival of lights is a symbol of prosperity. The earthen lamp is a symbol of self-reliance, independence and self-respect. The festival of Deepawali tells that even small lamps can unite and defeat darkness. He has said that on such auspicious occasions, we should all take with us those who are sad and needy. The Governor has appealed to the people of the state to celebrate Deepawali in a disciplined, pure, clean and healthy environment. Contribute to strengthen the atmosphere of brotherhood and harmony with enthusiasm and zeal.

# CM greets people on Deepawali

### Diwali will become meaningful for artisans also if we light earthen lamps

**Team Absolute** | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has greeted citizens of the state on the auspicious occasion of Deepawali. Chouhan said that we pray to Goddess Mahalakshmi to grant happiness and prosperity in everyone's life.

Chouhan said that during Corona period we faced a lot of difficulties and the economy was also affected. The state government took care of the health of all the people. Our objective is not only to achieve 100 percent target by getting the second dose of vaccine to protect all the people of the state from Corona, but also to provide Suraksha Chakra to all. For this the cooperation of the public is necessary. In the last one and a half years, Madhya Pradesh has done work in many areas of development under adverse conditions. We are at the forefront in many projects in the country. This is also

the basis of increasing happiness and inspiration for all of us on the festival of lights.

Chouhan said that it is his resolve that while giving his full potential, he will spend every moment for the development of the state. He will work with full capacity, and serve the state. No stone will be left unturned and all possible efforts will be made for a prosperous and Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh. I am sure that public participation will make these efforts successful.Chouhan said that instead of using firecrackers and materials made in China or other countries, indigenous lamps and idols should be used while paying respect to the hard work of our own artisans. The old tradition of celebrating our festival by lighting earthen lamps is not only maintained, but this initiative of the common man also helps in making the livelihood of small clay craftsmen profitable. By doing this, our potters get financial and mental support. There is no doubt that due to these efforts of our artisans, Diwali also becomes meaningful.

# Vidisha Medical College is my dream project : CM

- ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR TREATMENT WILL BE ENSURED
- NECESSARY EQUIPMENT AND STAFF WOULD BE APPOINTED SOON

**Team Absolute** | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Vidisha Medical College is my dream project. Every effort will be made to provide all facilities in the medical college. Chouhan said this while discussing with the media in Vidisha today.

Chouhan said that CT scan machine will be installed in the medical college in one month and MRI machine will be installed within two months. Chouhan said that out of total 132 faculties, 73 are posted in the medical college. The work of posting on remaining posts will also be completed soon.

Chouhan inspected various wards of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical College and interacted with the admitted patients. He also inquired about the arrangements made for the treatment of Covid in the college.

Chouhan said that Medical College is a big gift for Vidisha. Our goal is to provide complete health facilities, so that patients do not have to be referred outside the district for treatment. He said that modern health facilities would be available in a new form in the grand building. Now the operation theatres have started operating, necessary guidelines have been given to the doctors so that they should be functional with full capacity.

# CM will celebrate Deepawali with beneficiaries of Mukhyamantri Covid Bal Seva Yojana

**Team Absolute** | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that many children lost their parents during the period of Covid-19. All such children are the responsibility of all of us and the whole of Madhya Pradesh. We have to take the responsibility of shaping the lives of these children, moulding their future and giving them happiness.

Antartam ka neh nichode,
Bujhi hui bati sulgaye.
Aao phir se diya jalaye

Aaiye, ham Deepawali ko kuchh khas banaye (Squeeze the innermost love, light the extinguished wick. Let's light the lamp again, let us make Deepawali something special.)

Chouhan has appealed to the people of the state with the above lines that if there are such children in your neighbourhood or in your acquaintance, then you should celebrate this Deepawali with them and share the happiness. With the Mukhyamantri Covid Bal Seva Yojana prepared during the Corona period, we are trying to meet all the needs including education of such children. Chouhan said that - "No one can take the place of the parents, my children, but your Mama Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be with you in every step on way to fulfilling the dreams they had dreamed for you."

During Covid-19 in the state, many children were orphaned due to the death of their parents and in most of the cases no help was available for their care and protection. Many close relatives were also not ready to maintain and care for such children due to financial difficulties. In such a situation, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, taking the responsibility of orphan children with full sensitivity, took a pioneering initiative in the country by starting Mukhyamantri Covid-19 Bal Seva Yojana to help them. In the Mukhyamantri Covid-19 Bal Seva Yojana, a provision has been made to provide free education and free ration to the children who lost their parents during the Corona period along with financial assistance.

Chouhan will celebrate Deepawali on November 4 with the benefitted children of Mukhyamantri Covid Bal Seva Yojna. In this special Deepotsav to be held at Chief Minister's residence at 12.30 pm, Chouhan will have lunch with 50 orphan children of Bhopal, Sehore, Raisen, Vidisha, Rajgarh and Hoshangabad districts and celebrate Deepawali by distributing sweets to them. Chouhan will also take these children for a tour of the Chief Minister's residence. On this holy festival, the benefitted children of Mukhyamantri Covid-19 Bal Seva Yojana from all the districts of the state will be connected through NIC and Chouhan will also address them. In all the districts, on behalf of Chouhan, sweets will be distributed by the district collectors to the beneficiary children on Diwali. In all the districts, on behalf of Chouhan, sweets will be distributed by the district collectors to the beneficiary children on Deepawali. In the state, 1052 applications were received under Mukhyamantri Covid Bal Seva Yojana, out of which 945 applications were approved and 1365 orphan children are being given benefits. Chouhan said that - "Sharing every happiness and sorrow is the message of festivals. Our culture, giving the message of humanity, public welfare and fraternity, makes us all feel as one family. Let us share the happiness of the festival with those families as well, who have lost their loved ones, have suffered during the Corona period. Illuminate their homes with happiness."

## SBI LADIES CLUB DISTRIBUTED SWEETS IN OLD AGE HOME

**Bhopal:**As part of its social CSR activity, State Bank of India has been taking initiatives from time to time for the welfare of the needy sections of the society. In the same vein, SBI Women's Club distributed food items and sweets on the occasion of Diwali to the senior citizens residing in Apnaghar Old Age Home on Kolar Road, Bhopal in the hands of President Rama Pandey and Asha Mishra. While wishing the seniors present, Pandey said that SBI has always been striving for the welfare of the underprivileged and needy people of the society and SBI Ladies Club has not only been cooperating in these efforts of the bank, the club itself has been organizing many social service activities. Soma Dutta, Vice President of SBI Ladies Club, other office bearers and members were also present on this occasion.

## DOCTOR COMMITS SUICIDE OVER FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

**Bhopal:** A case was registered in this regard and further investigation was underway, he said. According to sources, the doctor had invested a lot of money in the share market and was depressed after making a loss.

A 56-year-old doctor of a government hospital allegedly committed suicide due to financial problems in State capital Bhopal, police said on Wednesday. Dr Rakesh Manhar, posted at the government-run Hamidia Hospital, was found hanging at his residence in Narialkheda locality on Tuesday night, said Saurabh Pandey, in-charge of Gautam Nagar police station. A suicide note was recovered from the scene, in which the doctor has claimed that he was taking the extreme step, as he was going through a financial crisis and was under a lot of stress, the official said. A case was registered in this regard and further investigation was underway, he said. According to sources, the doctor had

# MP to bring in law to recover cost of damaged property during riots, rallies

### If the damages are not paid within 15 days of the Tribunal order, the tribunal will then be empowered to write to the district collector concerned to make recovery on the lines of the same done by the Revenue Department.

**Team Absolute** | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government is all set to introduce a bill allowing the government to recover up to twice the damages from an individual or a group for causing loss of public and private properties during communal riots, strikes, protests and rallies.

Principal Secretary (Home), Rajesh Rajora said, "The bill will come up for discussion in the forthcoming winter session once it is passed by the cabinet."

The bill, tentatively called the Madhya Pradesh Public and Private Property Damage Resolution and Recovery Bill, 2021, aims to realise damages from those accused of causing them through formation of various claims tribunals across the state.

The bill not only empowers the claims tribunal to recover up to twice the damages incurred to an individual or government but also levy interest in case the recovery is not made within 15 days since the order of the tribunal. The tribunal can also compensate an individual for the money spent in fighting the case in the tribunal.

If the damages are not paid within 15 days of the Tribunal order, the tribunal will then be empowered to write to the district collector concerned to make recovery on the lines of the same done by the Revenue Department.

A senior official from the state government said: "The tribunals will issue a certificate to the collector which the concerned district collector will use to recover pending dues as per the awarded compensation. The district collector will act as per the provision of Arrears of Land Revenue as per the Revenue Recovery Act 1980." The district collector can seize, auction movable and immovable assets of those held responsible in a bid to recover the

claims.

According to provisions of the bills, the damages will be recovered not only from those responsible for causing those damages but also those found to have incited the incident or encouraged others to cause the damage. "The bill is looking at setting up Claims Tribunals to recover those indulging in stone pelting and causing damage to private and public property. The cases in the tribunal will be resolved within three months and its order will only be challenged in the High Court. But those indulging in riots and stone pelting causing damage to public and private property will not be spared," said Home Minister Narottam Mishra while interacting with the media in Datia on Wednesday.

A similar law was passed by Uttar Pradesh in 2020 while Haryana passed it in 2021. Madhya Pradesh will be the third state to execute it.The order of the claims tribunal could only be challenged in the High Court while the police action in such cases will be independent of the Claims Tribunal. These Claims Tribunal will have the powers of the Civil Court as per the Code of Civil Procedure 1908.

A law to be made on similar lines was first discussed in the state in January this year, after a communal clash in Ujjain district, where a Bhartiya Janata Yuva Morcha rally was pelted with stones by residents of Begum Bagh in an alleged retaliation to provocative slogans made by those in the rally.

This was followed by stone pelting on rallies carried out by members of right wing groups in Indore, Mandsaur. After this, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had stated that the government is bringing in a law to make the stone-pelters pay while asserting that the rule of law will prevail in Madhya Pradesh

# Covid vaccination centers will remain open seven days a week

- COVID VACCINATION MAHA-ABHIYAN ON NOVEMBER 10, 17, 24 AND DECEMBER 4
- STRATEGY MADE TO ADMINISTER BOTH DOSES TO 100% PEOPLE
- RESPONSIBILITY GIVEN TO FIELD STAFF OF ALL DEPARTMENTS

**Team Absolute** | Bhopal

A strategy has been chalked out to administer both the doses of Covid-19 vaccine to 100 percent targeted persons of the state by the end of December. Vaccinations are being administered at the Covid-19 vaccination center seven days a week. The Covid Vaccination Maha-Abhiyan will be conducted on 10th, 17th, 24th November and 4th December. The officers and employees of all departments have been entrusted with the responsibility of identifying the people remaining from the Corona vaccine and those remaining from the second dose and taking them to the vaccination center and ensuring their vaccination. In view of the innovations made for Corona vaccination in the state, instructions have been given to adopt effective innovation and strategy in getting 100 percent people vaccinated.

In the strategy, officers and employees of all departments have been asked to ensure systematic efforts for Covid-19 vaccination, so that no person is deprived of it. For this, a list should be prepared by identifying such people, who have not even a single vaccine. After this a list of persons who have been vaccinated should be prepared. A list should also be made of the persons who got both the doses of Covid vaccine. To identify all the persons, a list of families who have left the place of residence or migrated from their place of residence to another place should also be made. A list will also be prepared by identifying the families who have resisted the Covid-19 vaccination.

ASHA workers, helpers, self-help groups, village panchayat secretaries, Rozgar Sahayaks, kotwars, patwaris, teachers, salesmen of government fair price shops, MNREGA workers, members of cooperative institutions, forest guards have been entrusted with the responsibility of identification of families and ensuring their vaccinations. Responsibility has been entrusted to the members of the committee and their families. By making all these department wise plans, 100 percent people will be ensured to get the first and second doses.

Department-wise responsibilities have been given to ensure 100 percent vaccination of eligible persons with both doses. School and college students have been given the responsibility to make their families aware and motivated to get the second dose of the vaccine. The work of vaccination of pregnant women and lactating mothers will be done by the Anganwadi and ASHA workers of the Women and Child Development Department. Immunization of labourers and their families by self-help groups of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and Rural Livelihood Mission will be ensured. Vaccination of persons living in remote forest areas will be ensured by forest guards and forest committees. The Transport Department will cooperate in increasing public awareness about vaccination through bus-stops and vehicles. Students of NCC and Scout Guide will motivate the families who are resistant to vaccination to get vaccinated.

The vaccination strategy outlines the most successful efforts to motivate vaccination. Such efforts made at one place have also been asked to be adopted at other places. In Agar district, these successful efforts include innovations like establishment of vaccination center at Krishi Mandi, listing of persons who are yet to be vaccinated in Gram Panchayat with the help of self-help groups, etc., in Bhopal district declaring fully vaccinated market for administering second dose through special gram sabhas in the rural market areas by shopkeepers and their employees. Similarly, telephone contact for vaccination by teachers in Datia district, establishment of vaccination centers on paddy fields in Dindori, nomination of college students as 'Mein Corona volunteer hun' in Harda, encouraging people for vaccination through Sarthak Lite App", Jhabua has also been asked to adopt innovations like creating a special group titled 'Saathiya' and motivating people for vaccination through it.

Collectors will review the progress of 100 percent Covid-19 vaccinations daily. The concerned District Collector, District Panchayat Chief Executive Officer and Chief Medical and Health Officer will visit such places where less vaccination has taken place and ensure necessary action.

# Madhya Pradesh : The Tiger State

Madhya Pradesh got the status of Tiger State by occupying the top place with 526 tigers in the tiger census conducted three years ago at all India level. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan the state government carried out several innovations to ensure wildlife conservation, due to which Madhya Pradesh became the foundation stone of the process of Tiger State. In the last one and a half decade, 167 villages from protected areas were rehabilitated at suitable places to provide habitat for tigers and other wild animals. More than 15 thousand family units living with minimum facilities under inaccessible forest areas were brought out of the forests and settled in village-towns. As a result, wild animals got a free habitat without any disturbance. Along with this, the financial condition of the forest dwellers also improved. In all these innovations, an amount of Rs 900 crore was made available by the state government.

## Tigers are found apart from tiger reserves

The Tigers of the state are found not only in the Tiger Reserves but are also found roaming like other animals in other regional forest divisions even in the limits of big cities like Bhopal. In the year 2018, the tigers had become extinct in Panna. An active initiative was taken by the Forest Department for tiger conservation, in which tigers were brought from other protected areas and resettled in Panna Tiger Reserve. Due to the continuous efforts of last 9 years, today Panna Tiger Reserve has returned to its old glory. More than 20 adult tigers and 15 sub adult tigers/cubs are present here. Around 50 tigers including cubs are available in the entire Panna landscape.

## Unique wild animal

The tiger is known to be a fearsome and powerful animal. Its roar and growl are terrifying as well as intimidating. Its roar is heard up to a range of 3 km. The hind legs of a tiger are longer compared to the front legs. With this, it can jump 20 to 30 feet at a time. The lower part of the legs of the tiger is padded. Because of this, it quietly reaches close to the victim. The tiger has the ability to run at a speed of 60 kilometers per hour. The specialty of the tiger is that it lives alone and not in a group. Males and females assemble during the breeding season. After the cub is born, it stays with its mother for one and a half to two years and becomes proficient in the art of hunting. The tiger hunts in a clever and agile way and more often during the night. It is well known that it attacks the prey suddenly from behind by ambushing in the bushes.

## Tiger Reserve areas

Kanha Tiger became the first tiger reserve of the state in 1973. At present there are 6 tiger reserves in the state. Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Sanjay Tiger Reserve, Panna, Satpura and Pench have been designated as Tiger Reserves. The largest of these is the Satpura Tiger Reserve and the smallest is the Pench Tiger Reserve. Among the sanctuaries are Pachmarhi, Panpatha, Bori, Pench-Mowgli, Gangau, Sanjay-Dubari, Bagdara, Sailana, Gandhi Sagar, Karera, Nauradehi, National Chambal, Ken, Narsihgarh, Ratapani, Singhori, Seoni, Sardarpur, Ralamandal, Ken Gharial, Ghatigaon, Son Chiriya Sanctuary, Orchha and Veerangana Durgavati Sanctuary.

EDITOR'S SPECS

## Covid Vax Popularity

*People had more positive views of Covid-19 vaccines after they asked a chatbot questions about the shots compared to being given a packet of information, a new study suggests. A team of researchers analysed attitudes about vaccines among a group of people who interreacted with a chatbot and those who read a paragraph on the jabs, Daily Mail reported. They found that the number of chatbot participants with positive views about Covid shots increased by nearly 40 per cent while the number of those who were hesitant fell by 20 per cent while there was barely any change in the control group. The French team, from Institut Jean-Nicod and the Laboratoire de Neurosciences Cognitives et Computationnelles, both in Paris, said the findings show a regularly updated chatbot could be the latest tool used by public health experts to reach large swathes of vaccine-hesitant people. Since the rollout of Covid-19 shots began in December 2020, vaccine hesitancy has been one of the biggest challenges to overcome, the report said. Public health officials and organisations have spent millions of dollars running TV and radio ads encouraging people to get the shot. However, studies and polls have shown that having a conversation is a more effective way to get hesitant people vaccinated. Meanwhile, Terming the five million lives lost to Covid-19 a "painful new threshold", United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday called for vaccine equity and said this "devastating milestone reminds us that we are failing much of the world". While wealthy countries are rolling out third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, only about five per cent of people in Africa are fully vaccinated. "This is a global shame. Five million deaths should also stand as a clear warning: we cannot let our guard down," he warned. He also called on the world leaders to deliver with urgency and scale, address funding gaps and coordinate their actions for success, according to a UN release.*

# Diwali resolution we need in Covid times for a breathable future

**Dr Rajat Arora**

The much-awaited festival of lights stands at our threshold -- the harbinger of peace and prosperity. With the economy coming back on track after the jolt suffered on account of the lockdown during the pandemic, spirits are rising, as they should.

Over the years, not only has the popularity of Diwali increased but so has its mode of celebration which has witnessed a drastic change.

The bursting of firecrackers which was once a rare spectacle has now turned into a common event. Up until the 19th century, firecrackers being expensive, would be commissioned by rulers for the entertainment of their citizens.

Generating awe and wonder, aatishbaazi shows were organised on special occasions such as royal marriage ceremonies as an exhibition of the kingdom's grandeur and prosperity.

It was only after independence that restrictions were placed on imported crackers which led to the emergence of the first firecracker industry in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu.

Thereafter, as crackers became cheaper and people became more prosperous, the bursting of firecrackers commenced on Diwali. However, in recent years, the combustion of metals, smoke and dust in the air has become a matter of grave concern despite

comprising of a mere 5 per cent of the aggregate air pollution. With pollution levels already too high on account of vehicular emissions, industrial activities and construction, there is no room for bursting of crackers.

These toxic products contain harmful substances which on combustion produce 2.5 PM; while the smoke evaporates in a matter of hours, the pollutants from the crackers remain suspended for days, making the air more unbreathable and carcinogenic.

The ominous, heavy air during this time of the year further deteriorates the air quality as does stubble burning. The weather, cracker pollution and agricultural residue burning combine to diminish the air quality to severe and dangerous levels, choking the air by converting it into gas chambers.

Yet, in spite of the blanket bans imposed on the burning of these pyrotechnics by the Supreme Court, the AQI (Air Quality Index) is far from normal. The reason being stubble burning which continues to remain a bone of contention between a number of state governments, all of which persistently engage in futile arguments with no definitive corrective action whatsoever.

With poor policies and non-existent incentives, crop burning continues unabated. Imposing fines on the food producers and putting them behind bars will serve no good; giving them the promised subsidies upon not engaging in stubble burning will. With our granaries overflowing with wheat and paddy, the cropping patterns need to be reconfigured. Happy Seeder, a harvesting-cum-sowing tractor remains out of hands for most of the farmers owing to its exorbitant cost and suitability in primarily, larger farms. Then again, the process of converting the stubble into manure is a lengthy one; it takes approximately 15-20 days before the field is ready for the next crop and farmers do not possess the luxury to devote these many days.

Beijing's poor experience with smog towers clearly indicates that installing the same at different places will amount to nothing more than sheer wastage of the taxpayer's money. Likewise, imposing odd-even rules serves nothing more than a populist gimmick in the long run. Our lungs, already weak having inhaled the toxic air for the past many years, suffered another major setback only last year with the onset of the highly contagious Covid-19 pandemic. Many are still battling with post-covid complications while those with asthma, bronchitis, COPD and other respiratory conditions are gasping for every minuscule amount of cleaner air like never before.

With the horrifying nightmares of oxygen shortage witnessed all over the country during the second wave still afresh, the indispensability of breathable air cannot be overemphasised. Recent statistics reveal that 11 of the 20 most polluted cities globally are in India; no wonder the number of air pollution induced-deaths amount to 2 million in this part of the world. Gasping for breath in this encircling toxic haze, we desperately need an air pollution control policy overhaul.

Meanwhile, as I see markets bustling with festivity mania, mask-less faces make me apprehensive. Worldwide, deaths on account of the coronavirus are breaking records in Russia; in the UK, the Delta-Plus variant of Covid-19 is wreaking havoc. Is this a sign of the impending third wave? Only time will tell.

A woman rebuking a stranger for not wearing his mask properly brings a tiny sliver of hope on my otherwise anxious vestige. Hopefully, the next Diwali will be different.

***(Dr Rajat Arora is an Interventional Cardiologist and Group Director at Yashoda Group of Hospitals, Delhi-NCR and Seeds of Innocence and Genestrings Diagnostic Centres, Delhi-NCR.)***

# *Diwali: Destroying the belligerent Bhaumasura within*

**Radhanath Swami Maharaj**

Diwali is a much awaited festival of the year. It is a festival for all age groups. It touches every aspect of life. All the places are decorated with beautifully lit lamps and floral designs. Delicious and mouth-watering sweet preparations are offered to the divine Lordships and the remnants are savored with delight. The evening is filled with never-ending fun in form of fireworks and crackers all over the place. Diwali commemorates the victory over evil, the victory over darkness - the slaying of the demon - Bhaumasura also called as Narakasura by Lord Krishna.

Bhaumasura was a virtous king ruling the city of Pragjyotisapura. He was influenced by bad company of other demons like Banasura, Dvividha etc. He became wicked and caused trouble all over the universe. He stole various precious assets of Devatas - Varuna's umbrella, Aditi's earings, Mani-parvata - the jewel studded playground. He also kidnapped

16,000 princesses from heavens and other planets. He held them captive in his fort surrounded by a huge moat, barbed electric fences and protected by dark spells. Indra petitioned Lord Krishna to deal with this situation. Lord Krishna singlehandedly destroyed all the fortifications and defeated all the armies of Bhaumasura. In the final fight that ensued with Bhaumasura, Lord Krishna effortlessly annihilated him. He liberated all the captive princesses and returned the stolen assets to Indra. The Bhaumasura signifies the evil in this world - without and within. Today the evil is prominently evident in the form of corruption, homicide, sexual violence, terrorism, war, fraud etc. No day goes without a mention of it. There were repeated attempts to contain this evil through policing, military strength, economic monitoring etc. Still it appears in newer forms with increasing magnitude, armed with today's technology and social media. The root cause is evil within. The evil without is a symptom of evil within. The evil within exists in two forms - sensuality and selfishness. Sensuality makes us believe that sense indulgence is all in all - the ultimate happiness. Factually the senses are merciless masters. They are ever-demanding and never get satisfied. It is like pouring fuel in the fire. The senses compel us to cross ethics and human virtues to supply their demands. This leads to theft, deception, sexual violence etc. The senses blind our intelligence to the reality as described in Bhagavad Gita 3.39. They take us on a perilous ride in the name of indulgence. It is beyond our power and intellect to overcome this evil. Our solace is in approaching the all-powerful and all-merciful divine Lord Krishna through Bhakti yoga. It frees us from all the obstacles [BG 9.28]. It revives our innate propensity of love and service. It redirects the propensity to the divine Lord which bestows ever-lasting and ever-increasing happiness. Everyone can practice this by cultivating wisdom, prayer and service.

***The author is the spiritual guru at the "International Society for Krishna Consciousness" (ISKCON)***

## international

# INDIA PERMITS NEPAL TO SELL POWER IN ITS ENERGY MARKET

**Kathmandu** | Agencies

In a major boost to the bilateral ties between Nepal and India, New Delhi for the first time hpermitted Kathmandu to sell its electricity in India's power exchange market.

The Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation said in a statement that the concerned Indian authority, Central Electricity Authority, on Monday decided to allow Nepal to sell 39 MW of electricity produced by the 24MW Trishuli Hydropower Project and the 15MW Devighat Hydropower Project in the India Energy Exchange Limited (IEX), after receiving a nod from the Ministry of Power.

In the first phase, 39 MW power, including 24-MW produced from Nepal Electricity Authority(NEA)- owned Trishuli hydropower and 15-MW Devighat powerhouse, has been permitted for trading in the Indian Energy Exchange.

The NEA was scheduled to start exporting the power through Dhalkebar-Mujaffapur 400-KV inter-country transmission line from midnight Tuesday. This transmission line has been used merely to import power.

"Following the Indian approval for Nepal to export its electricity, power trade between the two countries has entered a new phase," the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation said.

Nepal had already received permission for purchasing and importing power from the Indian Energy Exchange. With this, the NEA has been importing power through Indian Energy Exchange at a competitive rate since last April 30 as per the need. After obtaining the approval, the power trade between Nepal and India has entered a new phase. Minister for Energy, Water Resource and Irrigation Pampha Bhusal said Nepal has become the first country in the South Asian region to enter into the agreement for power import and export from and to the Indian energy exchange market.

"We have been permitted for the trade of surplus power after continued efforts at political, diplomatic and administrative levels. This is a milestone for power trade between the two countries.

"We have also expected the approval for trade of power produced from the 456-MW Upper Tamakoshi, 69-MW Marsyangdi and 45-MW Upper Bhotekoshi power house in near future," the Minister added.

About two months ago, the power utility of NEA had proposed that electricity generated by hydropower projects, including Upper Tamakoshi, Upper Bhotekoshi, Marshyangdi, Trishuli, and Devighat, whose combined generation capacity totals 621.1MW, be auctioned in India's power exchange market.

Nepali officials said that the Indian government's permission to allow Nepal in the power exchange market has been a huge respite for the NEA, which is facing a wastage of power for more than two months.

The Himalayan nation became an energy surplus country ever since the 456MW Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project came into full operation in August.

According to the NEA, Nepal now has surplus power even during peak hours, usually between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. The peak hour demand stands at 1,500MW.

The country is currently producing 2,000MW of electricity, of which 1,900MW is generated from hydropower projects.

**S KOREAN WATCHDOG ADVISES AGAINST BAN ON USING PHONES IN SCHOOLS**

**Seoul:** The Seoul-based National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) said on Wednesday that it has asked a local high school to lift a ban on the use of mobile phones by students.

The state human rights watchdog said the ban on the use of mobile phones at the high school, whose name was withheld, infringes on its students' general right to freedom of action and freedom of communication, reports Yonhap News Agency. The school's students are allowed to possess cell phones on campus but are completely prohibited from using them, according to the NHRCK. If students want to use a mobile phone during breaks or lunch time, they have to ask for a teachers' permission. The use of mobile phones during class time is only possible under the guidance of a teacher. Due to such strict rules, the school has reported 304 cases of demerit points being imposed for the use of mobile phones in a period of three months, prompting the concerned students to appeal to the NHRCK.

# Iranian FM questions US' readiness to nuke talks

**Tehran** | Agencies

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has questioned Washington's readiness to return to the Iran nuclear deal, or the JCPOA, and criticised its two-faced actions concerning the nuclear talks.

"The White House calls for negotiations with Iran and claims to be ready to return to the JCPOA. Yet it simultaneously imposes new sanctions on Iranian individuals & entities," Amir Abdollahian wrote on his personal Twitter account early afternoon.

"We are closely examining Mr. Biden's behaviour," he added.

On October 29, the US Department of Treasury issued sanctions against four individuals and two companies related to the unmanned aerial vehicles program of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps.

The upcoming Vienna talks should be "on the basis

of respect for mutual interests", Amir Abdollahian stressed, noting that "the purpose of negotiations is not talking for the sake of talking, but to achieve tangible results".

The US and Iranian officials began indirect talks in Vienna this April to restore the 2015 nuclear agreement, but their disagreements remained significant after six rounds of negotiations, which have been interrupted due to Iran's government transition.

To pressure Tehran, US President Joe Biden's administration has recently reiterated the window for negotiations on a return to the JCPOA will not be open forever and warned of turning to other options if diplomacy fails. The US withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal in May 2018 when Donald Trump was in office, and imposed sanctions on Iran.

In response, Iran has gradually stopped implementing parts of its commitments to the deal since May 2019.

# Ethiopian capital starts 2-day weapons registration drive

**Addis Ababa** | Agencies

Authorities in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa announced the launch of a two-day weapons registration drive.

"Any resident of Addis Ababa starting from today (Tuesday) has to register weapons it has in its hands in a two days period to the nearest police stations regardless whether the weapon was registered in prior times or not," Xinhua news agency quoted Chief of Addis Ababa city Peace and Security Administration Bureau Kenea Yadeta as saying.

"All residents have to be organised in blocks and neighbourhoods to protect their home area's peace and security in coordination with the security forces," Yadeta was quoted as saying by state media outlet Ethiopia News Agency.

The Addis Ababa security chief also announced abrupt security checks will be conducted across various parts of Ethiopia's capital and warned individuals to stop disseminating fake information on social media platforms. "Irreversible measures will be

taken on entities that work to create gaps and suspicions between the government and the people," Yadeta said. The heightened security measures in Ethiopia's capital come amid reports of intensifying clashes between federal government allied forces and forces allied with the Tigray People's Liberation Army (TPLF) in northern Ethiopia. The TPLF and the Ethiopian National Defense Force backed by allied forces have been engaged in a one-year-long conflict that has reportedly left tens of thousands of people dead, hundreds of thousands displaced, and millions in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

# Biden attacks Xi, Putin for skipping COP26 summit

**New Delhi** | Agencies

US President Joe Biden has criticised the leaders of China and Russia for not turning up to the UN COP26 climate summit currently underway in Glasgow, the BBC reported.

In a speech on Tuesday night, Biden said climate was "a gigantic issue" and China "walked away" - adding it was the "same thing with Russia and Putin".

Neither Russian President Vladimir Putin nor Chinese President Xi Jinping were at the summit.

Both countries however have sent delegations to the talks, which are due to run for two weeks until November 12.

China is the world's largest emitter of carbon dioxide, followed by the US. Russia is the fifth largest after the EU and India, the report said.

More than 120 leaders turned up at the conference in Scotland's largest

city.

Both China and Russia are signatories of the pledge to reverse deforestation.

Before Biden's speech, Putin virtually addressed a meeting on forest management at the COP26 summit on Tuesday, saying that Russia takes the "strongest and most vigorous measures to conserve" woodlands, according to a Kremlin press release.

The US president made his comments when asked about the role that other countries, including China, Russia and Saudi Arabia, have played in talks so far.

"The fact that China is trying to assert, understandably, a new role in the world as a world leader - not showing up, come on," Biden said, adding that Xi's absence was a "big mistake", the BBC report said.

He said the same about Putin, saying that Russia's wilderness was burning and their president "stays mum" about the issue.

Anil Deshmukh case:

# PARAM BIR SINGH HAS 'NO MORE EVIDENCE'

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

In a fresh twist, Mumbai's former Commissioner of Police Param Bir Singh has informed a government-appointed probe panel that he has no further evidence to share in the corruption allegations he had levelled against former state Home Minister Anil Deshmukh.

He had made this submission, in an affidavit, to Justice K.U. Chandiwal Commission at its previous hearing on October 13, official sources said here.

The revelations came two days after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) - based on a CBI FIR arising out of Singh's allegations - questioned and later arrested Deshmukh, who is now in the agency's custody till November 6.

The commission sources reveal that, barring his original March letter to the Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Singh has apparently declined to share any more evidence pertaining to the allegations he had levelled against the then Home Minister Deshmukh, who quit in April. Deshmukh's lawyer

Aniket Nikam said that "its now clear that Singh had no proof against the ex-minister and simply hurled the allegations for the sake of it". The Nationalist Congress Party's senior leader Deshmukh, 72, has consistently rubbished all allegations and questioned "where is the complainant Singh who hurled the false charges against him and then disappeared, and may have sneaked out of India as per some media reports".

NCP leader and MLA Shashikant Shinde said that this is an indirect admission by Singh that Deshmukh was a victim of the IPS officer's false charges after which the accuser (Singh) has gone missing. "Moreover, Singh had merely written a lettera he had not given any proof/evidence. It's an indirect admission that Deshmukh is innocent," Shinde told media persons.

On his part, Singh has ignored several summons by the probe Commission, coughed out fines three times and skipped a bailable warrant.Besides, Singh faces two non-bailable arrest warrants issued by a Mumbai and Pune court as he is named in some extortion cases lodged against him by the police.

After Singh's letter to the CM, the CBI and ED raided Deshmukh's Mumbai and Nagpur homes several times in the past few months, and after he appeared before the ED, he was arrested on November 1 and is presently in its custody till Saturday.

The ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi has slammed Deshmukh's arrest and termed it as the Bharatiya Janata Party's strategy to misuse the central agencies against opposition-ruled governments and destabilise them.

# MVA retains Deglur-Biloli seat with huge margin

Making it a prestige issue, top state leaders of the BJP had vigorously campaigned for the October 30 polls which witnessed an impressive voter turnout of nearly 64 per cent.

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

In a big morale booster for Maharashtra's ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi, Congress candidate Jitesh Antapurkar won the Deglur-Biloli assembly by-election in Nanded district with a huge margin.

Of the total 12 candidates in the fray in the SC reserved seat, Antapurkar secured around 108,840 votes compared with his nearest Bharatiya Janata Party rival Subhash Sabne getting 66,907 votes.

The third contender, Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi's Dr Uttam Ingole was left trailing far behind with 11,348 votes, along with the remaining 9 in the fray who polled less than 500 votes each, and there were 1,103 votes on the NOTA option.

Overjoyed MVA leaders including Congress PWD Minister Ashok Chavan, Nationalist Congress Party Minister and state President Jayant Patil and Shiv Sena Minister Aditya Thackeray welcomed Antapurkar's handsome victory in the by-elections, necessitated by the death of the sitting Congress Raosaheb Antapurkar due to Covid-19 in April.

Aditya Thackeray said the MVA candidate's victory is "a symbol of the faith reposed by the people in the MVA government", headed by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

NCP's Patil said that despite all attempts at disruptive politics indulged in by the opposition BJP, the people of Maharashtra have unequivocally supported the MVA and its progressive policies.

District strongman and Congress' Chavan commented that the victory proves that the people of the state have endorsed the solid developmental agenda of the MVA government over the past two years.

Making it a prestige issue, top state leaders of the BJP had vigorously campaigned for the October 30 polls which witnessed an impressive voter turnout of nearly 64 per cent.

# Mumbai Police seized 3.4 tonnes narcotics in 3 years: RTI

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

In a rich haul, the Mumbai Police have seized various types of drugs and narcotics totalling 3,414 kg, and valued at a staggering Rs 131 crore in the past 3 years, according to a RTI reply released here on Wednesday.

The Anti-Narcotics Cell (ANC) of Mumbai Police also lodged 208 anti-drug cases and arrested 298 persons so far, but without any fanfare.

The disclosures came in a RTI reply given by Mumbai Police's Assistant Commissioner of Police (ANC) Sandeep Kale, to activist Anil Galgali.

According to Kale's reply, a total of 5 ANC units are working in Mumbai - at Azad Maidan, Worli, Bandra, Ghatkopar, and Kandivali - to go after the drugs peddlers and narcotics mafia.

The seizures include cannabis, hashish, mephedrone, cocaine, codeine, opium, MDMA, LSD papers, alperzoam, and netravet tablets.

Compared with 2019 and 2020, the ANC was more active this year and by October 20, its swoops had increased seven times, particularly after the issue blew up after the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput, said Galgali, citing the information received.

In the data given by Kale, in 2019, of the total 394.35 kg seizures of narcotics, there were 1,343 strips, 7,577 bottles and 1,551 dot milligrams valued at Rs 25.29 crore.

During 2020, of the total 427.27 kg of narcotics seized, there were 5,191 bottles, 66,000 tablets, and 14 dot milligrams valued at Rs 22.24 crore.In the first 10 months till October 20 this year, the ANC sleuths seized 2,592.93 kg narcotics comprising 15,830 bottles and 189 LSD papers worth Rs 83.19 crore - significantly higher than the previous two years, Galgali said. Going about its sensitive task discreetly, the ANC lodged the highest 94 cases and nabbed 137 accused this year, compared with 44 cases and 58 arrests (2020) and 70 cases with 103 arrests (2019).

# "Secrets In Hotel:" Nawab Malik Teases "Expose"

Maharashtra may have banned firecrackers this season, but an explosive few days after Diwali is expected, given Devendra Fadnavis has also promised an "expose"

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik seemingly inexorable in his attacks on Sameer Wankhede and the NCB's handling of the Aryan Khan drugs case, with swipes at former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to spare has promised to reveal more "secrets" but after a break for Diwali.

"Happy Diwali to all of you... There are many secrets hidden in The Lalit (a luxury hotel in Mumbai) ... see you on Sunday," the NCP leader tweeted cryptically Wednesday morning, suggesting there are more allegations and accusations coming at Wankhede and Fadnavis this weekend.

Maharashtra may have banned firecrackers this season, but political observers and supporters can expect an explosive few days after Diwali, given Fadnavis has also promised an "expose". The BJP leader this week laughed off Malik's claim he was once in a music video financed by a drug smuggler; the video featured Mr Fadnavis' wife, Amrutha Fadnavis as the lead singer.

Fadnavis said: "I am just waiting for Diwali to pass... He has lit a tiny firecracker before Diwali, but I will light a big one after the festival", but dropped a teaser himself, adding, " Those who have relations with the underworld should not speak about me... I will present evidence."

The former Chief Minister was referring to a case filed by the anti-drugs agency against Malik's son-in-law, Sameer Khan, who was arrested earlier this year and granted bail.

Today's tweet by Nawab Malik comes a day after he declared Wankhede had a wardrobe that included shoes worth Rs 2 lakh and watches worth Rs 20 lakh.

The minister also claimed that Wankhede's sister, Yasmeen Wankhede, a lawyer, had connections to a known drug smuggler; he shared WhatsApp chats to back that claim.

Wankhede hit back hours later, pointing out that his sister is a criminal lawyer who did not handle cases under the NDPS, or Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

The officer dismissed observations on his wardrobe; his sister was less kind, mocking Malik for having been inspired by watching one too many dramatic movies the night before.

Sameer Wankhede is the lead investigator in the Aryan Khan drug case and faces allegations of a Rs 8 crore payoff levelled by an agency witness. The Narcotics Control Bureau has initiated an internal inquiry into these charges. The agency has, however, publicly defended the senior officer, who has denied all charges.

Aryan Khan was released on bail Sunday after spending over 20 days in jail. The son of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, he was arrested October 3 but no drugs were found on him.

# Maharashtra BJP likely to convene meeting after Diwali to discuss bypoll debacle

The Dadra and Nagar Haveli b-ypoll defeat, coming on the back of the loss in Deglur assembly seat in Nanded, has jolted the Maharashtra BJP, with state chief Chandrakant Patil likely to convene a core committee meeting after Diwali to ascertain the possible reasons for the poor show.

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

The saffron party suffered the poll debacles despite an aggressive poll campaign.

In Deglur, Congress candidate Jitesh Antapurkar defeated BJP nominee Subash Sabane.

The Deglur bypoll was a "prestige issue" for Congress PWD minister Ashok Chavan. With the Congress candidate pulling off an easy victory, Chavan has been able to prove to his detractors that he still retains a lot of support among his home base.

The Deglur by-poll was necessitated following the death of sitting Congress MLA Raosaheb Antapurkar. The Congress fielded his son, Jitesh Antapurkar, from the seat. The party banked on the sympathy factor along with the traditional support base and goodwill of the Chavan family in the region.

However, BJP was determined to make inroads and adopted an aggressive campaign against the Congress. During the campaign, Patil had threatened to unleash central investigating agencies against Congress leaders.

The BJP fielded Subash Sabane, former Shiv Sena MLA, who defected after efforts by opposition leader Devendra Fadnavis, sources claimed.

Chavan said, "We have never seen such a fierce and low-level campaign by the opposition in a bypoll. They tried everything to get the seat. But people's trust in the Congress prevailed. We won because of our work."

However, state BJP leaders countered Chavan by claiming that they put up "a good fight". Patil said, "The Congress misused its power and administrative machinery in the polls. But we will introspect as to why we fell short of victory."

BJP loyalists, who were sulking after Sabane was given the ticket, warned the top leadership not to ignore party workers.

A senior office-bearer, requesting anonymity, said, "We hope the top leadership learns a lesson or two from these results.
Overdependence on outsiders is affecting the morale of the rank and file. All these imported leaders come to the party to enjoy power. But they will leave once their interests are ignored."

While BJP leaders reckoned that Deglur was tough to win, they cannot reconcile to the fact that former ally Shiv Sena wrested the Dadra and Nagar Haveli Lok Sabha seat.

Almost 24 hours after the results were announced, none of the leaders was willing to list the reasons for the defeat. The official stand of the party was that Shiv Sena candidate Kalaben Delkar won on the sympathy factor. The polls were necessitated following the death of sitting MP Mohan Delkar. Mohan Delkar allegedly died by suicide in a Mumbai hotel.

Late Mohan Delkar's wife, Kalaben, along with their son, Abhinav, had joined the Shiv Sena recently. Sena fielded Kalaben as its candidate. She defeated BJP's Mahesh Gavit by 51,269 votes.

A senior BJP general secretary said, "We will have to answer questions on what went wrong with Mohan Delkar and why did Delkar family drift to Sena."

Covid-19:

# November 30 vaccination deadline set for all in Maharashtra

## Residents must take at least first dose of vaccine, says Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Maharashtra, that has reported over 140,000 deaths due to Covid-19, has set November 30 as the deadline for all residents to be vaccinated with at least the first dose.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray told officials on Wednesday that even as the state opens up gradually, citizens must be encouraged to opt for vaccination. Mumbai, Pune, Thane and Nagpur were among the worst-hit cities in India because of a spike in Covid-19-related fatalities.However, there has been a sharp decline in viral outbreaks over the past few weeks.On Tuesday, three deaths were recorded in Mumbai the lowest in 70 days while active cases dipped sharply since the deadly disease ravaged the western Indian state. The total number of active cases in Maharashtra is below 15,500, and in Mumbai, 4,250 people are still battling the disease. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who returned to India after attending the G20 and COP26 meetings in Rome and Glasgow, respectively, told officials of 40 districts with low Covid-19 vaccination coverage on Wednesday, including a few in Maharashtra. Now, the vaccination drive will be a door-to-door affair.

"The doors of all houses will be knocked where people have still not received both doses of vaccine," Modi told the officials from districts in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and a few others in the northeast. "They say one must never underestimate disease and enemies. They have to be fought against till the very end," he added.

Officials are worried about a likely spike in Covid-19 cases amid the festive season and Diwali being celebrated tomorrow.Many popular shopping hubs in cities, including Mumbai and Pune, saw thousands of people thronging over the past few days, many not wearing masks.

# *Nawab Malik, who dares to snoop on NCB super-sleuth!*

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

As far as snoops go, Maharahstra Minister Nawab Malik presents an unlikely picture as he takes on the shaken might of the Narcotics Control Bureau Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede.

Compared with cocky original 007, the bespectacled, bearded Malik presents a rather homely, fatherly figure, mostly in comfy kurtas who has taken upon himself to right the alleged wrongs of the Super Sleuth Wankhede.

As the stunned NCB and the national polity gaped, the Malik-Wankhede war - which started after the agency's swoop on a luxury cruise ship in which one of those caught was Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan's son, Aryan Khan - became the top TRP catcher. The besieged and worried Wankhede is fighting it out in different fora and pulling all possible strings to keep the muck raked by Malik from sticking to him, with the latter vowing in public that it will all end with the officer (Wankhede) getting the sack and going to jail.

Last month (October 2021), in an unprecedented step, Malik launched an expose campaign against Wankhede and his activities, raising a big question mark on the officer's credentials and the NCB's credibility.

His latest serial exposure has not only rattled Wankhede, but raised uncomfortable questions on how the NCB, other central agencies like ED, ITD, CBI, NIA, etc, are being deployed to harass Opposition-parties ruled states by the BJP at the Centre.

"I have first-hand knowledge of how injustice is being meted out by these agencies to innocents. I decided somehow, someone has to do the cleaning up... I have no personal motives... Only Truth I am putting out before people," Malik smiled with confidence.On his prime target, Malik contends that the charge of extortion already established, soon the fake caste certificate matter will also be officially proved, and the "crusade for truth will continue till Wankhede is dismissed and dumped in jail".His regular media briefings are reminiscent of the Vikram-Betaal tales when he hurls agonising questions at the dazed Wankhede, who scurries from pillar-to-post for dear help.Born in 1959 in the small Dhuswa village of Utraula Tehsil, Balrampur district in eastern Uttar Pradesh, close to India-Nepal border, despite his name suggesting 'nobility', Malik was an ordinary village lad till the family migrated to Mumbai for better prospects in 1970.

Dhuswa folks say that his father Mohammed Islam Malik initially started a small business in 'chindi' (rags) in Dongri, south Mumbai, and later shifted to north-east suburban Kurla.In Kurla, Malik helped his father launch a scrap buying-selling business - the reason why some people now snobbishly try to run him down as a 'kabadiwala'. "So... What's wrong in being a 'kabadiwala'? We are doing a service to the nation, converting waste into wealth, which is also good for the environment," Malik told IANS. After dabbling in local social activities, he forayed into politics first with the 'Sanjay Vichar Manch' party launched by Maneka Gandhi - after the death of her husband Sanjay Gandhi - along with his close aides like Akbar 'Dumpy' Ahmed, Sanjay Singh, JN Mishra, Kalpnath Sonkar, etc.

Malik first contested Lok Sabha elections in 1984 against the Congress stalwart, the late Gurudas Kamat but barely got around 2,500 votes. Later, he flirted with the Congress briefly before switching over to the Samajwadi Party (SP), won a bypoll to become an MLA and was promptely rewarded with a Minister of State position in the then Congress-Nationalist Congress Party alliance government in 1999.

Following political wrangles with the SP State President Abu Asim Azmi, Malik left and joined the NCP led by Sharad Pawar, and became a MoS and later a Cabinet Minister.

In 2005, he was targeted for alleged corruption by a social crusader Kisan Baburao alias Anna Hazare and had to quit the cabinet along with 4 other ministers. Though Malik vehemently rubbished all charges against him, he was plucky enough to launch a counter-campaign against Hazare and also continued to work for the NCP, slowly earning the confidence of the party top brass, including the Pawar clan. In November 2019, when the Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress Maha Vikas Aghadi took office, Malik catapulted to the cabinet but encountered a setback when his son-in-law Sameer Khan was nabbed by the NCB and finally released on bail after over 8 months.His former colleagues including ex-ministers (on condition of anonymity) describe Nawab Malik as "a meticulous worker, who handles any issue studiously, a tad arrogant occasionally, a fierce 'family-man', a gutsy leader who dares to barge in where angels fear to tread, and has the gall to call a spade a spade," etc.

# Halle Berry's 'Bruised' soundtrack includes H.E.R., Cardi B, Saweetie

**Los Angeles** | Agencies

The soundtrack Halle Berry's directorial debut film 'Bruised' will feature H.E.R., Cardi B and Saweetie

The Netflix feature, which Berry also stars in as a disgraced M.M.A. fighter, debuts on the streamer on November 24, after a limited one-week run in theaters, reports variety.com. "I can't wait to show it," Berry tells Variety."I have to tell you, one of the things I'm most excited about is the title song that H.E.R. sanga and she killed it. So I can't wait to share with everyone and am super excited." Hand-selected by executive producers Berry and Cardi B, the film's soundtrack features six original songs by award-winning and multi-platinum female artists, including Cardi B ('Bet It'), Saweetie, City Girls, H.E.R., Flo Milli and Latto.The tracks by H.E.R. and City Girls, both prominently featured in critical moments of the film, are expected to get a considerable push as awards season continues to unfold.In addition, the track by Miami duo Yung Miami and JT gritty, better known as City Girls, which is featured during a key sequence on-screen, will be the first single released on Friday.Saweetie teased her contribution to the film last week by posting an internet-breaking clip of herself dressed as Berry's famed 'Catwoman' from the 2004 film that has seemed to find a second life on social media.H.E.R., who is fresh off winning the Academy Award with D'Mile and Tiara Thomas for their song 'Fight for You' from 'Judas and the Black Messiah', is a hot commodity in the entertainment industry. H.E.R.'s protest anthem 'I Can't Breathe' won song of the year at the Grammys this past year, putting her halfway to EGOT status.

At 23 years old, she also became the youngest African-American to win an Academy Award (surpassing Jennifer Hudson's supporting actress win for 'Dreamgirls', who was 25 at the time).

Her song 'Automatic Woman' is another award-worthy entry for original song.

'Bruised' is premiering at the AFI Film Festival on November 13. The film presents Berry in one of her most physically demanding and assertive acting portrayals of her already impressive career.

# Salma Hayek is 'grateful' 'Eternals' is her first superhero movie

**Los Angeles** | Agencies

Actress Salma Hayek, who plays Ajak in the new Marvel blockbuster 'Eternals', described the part as "an honour" and said being cast in the movie means more because she has been passed on for so many opportunities in the past.

Hayek told Digital Spy: "I have this strange sensation that this is the film that I belong to. I don't know what it says about me, maybe because I'm a rebel and I like to fight for different things and this is so special. It's an honour.

"I used to complain like, 'How come they never call me for this film? I'm never going to be a superhero...' and I'm so grateful that nobody called me. Thank you for not thinking about me because then I wouldn't have been asked (for this)."

The film was shot on location in Camden and elsewhere across London, and shooting without a green screen had a big impact on the cast.

Hayek added: "It was part of the beauty of shooting in real locations. It helps a lot. It creates an atmosphere. I've got to say though, one thing that was surprising to me, a lot of that was shot around London.

"There's so many beautiful woods in London, there's so many and so different one from the other. I live here and I was like, 'Wow, I don't know this place at all'."

# Simu Liu wanted to do something different after 'Shang-Chi' role

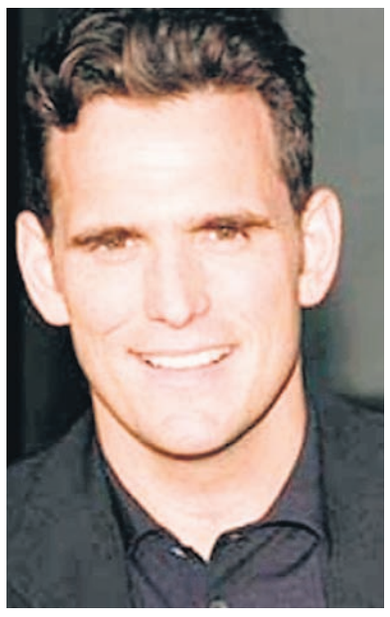
**Los Angeles** | Agencies

Actor Simu Liu signed up for the romantic film 'One True Loves' as he was desperate to change direction following his role in the Marvel superhero film 'Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings'.

Liu added that he didn't want to be trapped doing 'kung-fu' films in a similar manner to Jackie Chan and the late Bruce Lee, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Asked about his decision to shift genres, Liu told The Hollywood Reporter: "To quote Monty Python, 'and now for something completely different!' Coming off an action film/martial arts spectacle like 'Shang-Chi', I knew that much of the world was going to expect me to do more kung fu films."The actor continued: "It's always been important to me to constantly challenge people's perceptions of myself, as well as of Asian people as a whole. While I celebrate legendary actors such as Jackie Chan, Jet Li and Bruce Lee, I know that my path is very different.""I am not a master of kung-fu, after all I am an actor who trained very hard to embody the character that I was hired to play."The star admits that he wants to continue to challenge the perception of Asian characters during his career and describes it as "avant-garde" to be playing a typical human being.

# Matt Dillon, Bernadette Peters to join series 'High Desert'



**Los Angeles** | Agencies

The Patricia Arquette-led comedy series 'High Desert' has added six new cast members.

Matt Dillon, Rupert Friend, Weruche Opia, Brad Garrett, Bernadette Peters, and Christine Taylor will all star alongside Arquette in the series, reports variety.com.

The series follows Peggy (Arquette), an addict, who decides to make a new start after the death of her beloved mother with whom she lived in the small desert town of Yucca Valley, California.

She makes a life-changing decision to become a private investigator. It was originally ordered by Apple in September 2020.

Dillon will play Denny, Peggy's former flame, and an undeniably charming parolee and a relentless operator.

Friend will play Guru Bob, a local exanchorman, who, after a trauma, rebrands himself as a mystic desert personality.

Opia stars as Carol, Peggy's closest friend who has a secret of her own.

Garrett plays Bruce, a private investigator whose business is circling the drain, and who becomes Peggy's reluctant employer.

# Robert Downey Jr., Matt Damon to star in Nolan's 'Oppenheimer' movie

**Los Angeles** | Agencies

Actors Robert Downey Jr. and Matt Damon will star in Christopher Nolan's upcoming World War II epic aOppenheimer', a drama about the development of the atomic bomb.

It is not clear who Downey Jr. and Damon will be playing in the film.

Nolan is assembling a star-studded cast, one that includes Cillian Murphy as J. Robert Oppenheimer and Emily Blunt as his wife Katherine, reports variety.com.

Oppenheimer, a physicist who was integral to the Manhattan Project, is known as the father of the atomic bomb. Though exact plot details have been kept under wraps, the story is expected to dramatize the creation of the nuclear weapon.

Universal Pictures is distributing 'Oppenheimer', which the studio describes as an "epic thriller that thrusts audiences into the pulse-pounding paradox of the enigmatic man who must risk destroying the world in order to save it".

The film carries a $100 million production budget.

# Gemma Whelan: 'Game of Thrones' sex scenes were 'frenzied'

**Los Angeles** | Agencies

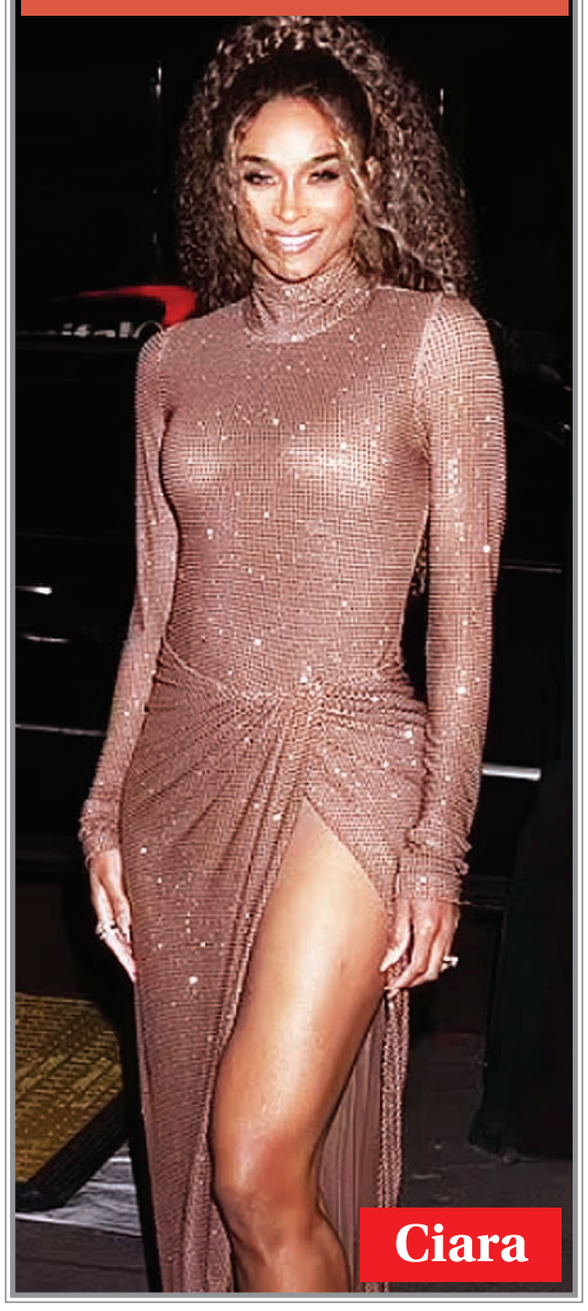
Actress Gemma Whelan, who portrayed bisexual Yara Greyjoy in the fantasy drama series 'Game Of Thrones', admitted actors getting intimate on the show were given very little guidance but fortunately they had an 'instinct' to 'check in' with one another to ensure no one was left feeling uncomfortable.Asked if they were left to get on with things without an intimacy co-ordinator, Whelan told The Guardian newspaper: "Almost literally. They used to just say, 'When we shout action, go for it!', and it could be a sort of frenzied mess."

"But between the actors there was always an instinct to check in with each other. There was a scene in a brothel with a woman and she was so exposed that we talked together about where the camera would be and what she was happy with.

"A director might say, 'Bit of b*** biting, then slap her b*** and go!', but I'd always talk it through with the other actor."

Whelan recalled a particular controversial sex scene in the second series of the show between Yara and her brother Theon Greyjoy, and said she and co-star Alfie Allen discussed the moment at length before filming.She continued: "Alfie was very much, 'Is this OK? How are we going to make this work?' With intimacy directors, it's choreography - you move there, I move there, and permission and consent is given before you start. It is a step in the right direction." The British actress said there has been a very different tone on set in the wake of the #MeToo movement.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Ciara

## T20 World Cup

# BATTERS SET UP INDIA'S EMPATHIC 66-RUN WIN OVER AFGHANISTAN

**Abu Dhabi** | Agencies

India's batters stepped up when the occasion demanded to set up an emphatic 66-run win over Afghanistan in a Group 2 match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium here on Wednesday. This is also India's first win of the tournament, opening their account in the group standings and pushing their Net Run Rate into a positive zone with matches against Scotland and Namibia remaining.

After India's batting, comprising of Rohit Sharma (74 off 47 balls), KL Rahul (69 off 48 balls), Hardik Pandya (35 not out off 13 balls) and Rishabh Pant (27 not out off 13 balls) rose to the occasion to post a gigantic 210/2 in 20 overs, it was always an uphill mountain to climb for Afghanistan, who made 144/7 in their 20 overs.

Afghanistan lost openers Mohammad Shahzad and Hazratullah Zazai in the power-play. While Shahzad lobbed one to mid-off off Mohammed Shami for a three-ball duck on the last ball of third over, Zazai top-edged to short mid-wicket off Jasprit Bumrah on the first ball of the fourth over.

The fifth over by Shami went for 21 runs, with Gulbadin Naib taking a four while Rahmanullah Gurbaz smacked back-to-back sixes before finishing the over with a four. Naib struck Hardik Pandya for two fours to take Afghanistan to 47/2 in the first six overs. Post power-play, Gurbaz went for another big hit but skied to Pandya at deep mid-wicket off Ravindra Jadeja. With Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin working in tandem, Afghanistan found it hard to break free. Ashwin got his first T20I wicket since 2016 by trapping Naib plumb lbw in front. Ashwin scalped his second wicket of the match in the 12th over as Najibullah Zadran tried to reverse sweep but was clean bowled. Mohammad Nabi and Karim Janat stitched a 57-run partnership for the sixth wicket. But Shami came back in the 19th over to take out Nabi, holing out to deep mid-wicket. Two balls later, Shami had his third wicket of the match as Rashid Khan slogged straight to long-on. Karim Janat hit a six on the final ball of the innings but the match's fate had been sealed long ago in India's favour.

After being asked to batting first, India made a strong start with 53/0 in power-play. With no vicious swing or seam or spin, Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul hit eight boundaries between themselves. With Rahul taking Sharafuddin Ashraf for a six over long-on followed by a four over mid-on, Sharma smacked Naveen-Ul-Haq for a four over backward point, a massive six over long-off and ended the over with a drive over extra cover.

Post power-play, Sharma and Rahul relied on strike rotation while getting boundaries at a consistent rate. Sharma reached his half-century with a cut through point off Ul-Haq in the 12th over. In the next over, Rahul too reached his half-century with a loft over extra cover off Naib. Sharma went on to smash Khan for back-to-back sixes on the leg-side. The 140-run partnership was broken in 14.4 overs as Sharma chipped straight to short cover off Janat. In the next over, Rahul was clean bowled while trying to scoop over fine leg off Naib. Rishabh Pant, promoted to No 3, welcomed Naib with successive sixes. Hardik Pandya joined the run-fest with three fours off Hamid Hassan in the 17th over. Overall, Pant and Pandya had nine boundaries between themselves to power India to an imposing total.

### Highest partnership in T20 for India

Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul had an association of 140 runs, the highest opening partnership for India across all editions of Men's T20 World Cups. While Rahul was more dominant on the leg-side, Sharma scored runs all over the park. After the duo departed, Pandya and Rishabh Pant gave the perfect flourish with their unbeaten partnership of 63 runs in 3.3 overs to take India to the highest score of the ongoing tournament.

### *Brief scores*

India 210/2 in 20 overs (Rohit Sharma 74, KL Rahul 69, Karim Janat 1/7, Gulbadin Naib 1/39) beat Afghanistan 144/7 in 20 overs (Karim Janat 42 not out, Mohammad Nabi 35, Mohammed Shami 3/32, Ravichandran Ashwin 2/14) by 66 runs

# Guptill shines as Kiwis secure second win, beat Scotland

**Dubai** | Agencies

Veteran opener Martin Guptill's excellent 93 helped New Zealand beat Scotland by 16 runs in the 32nd match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.

Guptill, who was going through a rough patch before the match, smashed 7 sixes and 6 fours during his 56-ball stay in the middle. After putting 172/5 in 20 overs, the Black Caps restricted Scotland to 156/5 as their bowlers' experience triumphed over an inspirational Scotland performance.Michael Leask played some brilliant shots but failed to guide his team home. He remained unbeaten on 42. Seamer Trent Boult and spinner Ish Sodhi scalped two wickets each for New Zealand.

Earlier, despite a top-order failure, New Zealand posted a good total of 172, thanks to Guptill.

Meanwhile, Guptill also became just the second batsman in T20I history to breach the 3000-run mark. He reached the milestone after Indian skipper, Virat Kohli, who currently has 3225 runs in 92 matches. The Kiwi opener secured the feat in 105 matches while opening for Black Caps, scoring at an average of 32.30 with a good strike rate of 136.29.

Guptill held one end as wickets fell at the other on regular intervals in the first ten overs, while Glenn Phillips (33) helped stabilise the innings alongside Guptill.

Among bowlers, Safyaan Sharif and Bradley Wheal picked two wickets each but Mark Watt bowled a brilliant spell, conceding only 13 runs in four overs while picking the wicket of Devon Conway.

### *Brief scores*

New Zealand: 172/5 in 20 overs (Martin Guptill 93, Glenn Phillips 33, Sharif 2-28) vs Scotland: 156/5 (Michael Leask 42*, Matthew Cross 27, Trent Boult 2-29, Ish Sodhi 2-42).

# Rahul Dravid appointed as India head coach, to take charge from New Zealand series

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Former India captain Rahul Dravid has been appointed as the head coach of the senior Indian men's cricket team, said the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Wednesday. Dravid will take charge from the upcoming home series against New Zealand, starting with the T20Is from November 17.

"It is an absolute honour to be appointed as the new Head Coach of the Indian Cricket Team and I am really looking forward to this role. Under Mr Shastri, the team has done very well, and I hope to work with the team to take this forward. Having worked closely with most of the boys either at NCA, U19 and India A setup, I know they have the passion and desire to improve every day. There are some marquee multi-team events in the next two years, and I look forward to working with the players and the support staff to achieve our potential," said Dravid in a statement.

Dravid will take over from Ravi Shastri, whose tenure comes to an end after the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup. The decision to appoint Dravid was taken by the Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC), comprising of former India wicketkeeper Sulakshana Naik and former India pacer RP Singh.

"The BCCI welcomes Rahul Dravid as the Head Coach of India's senior men's team. Rahul has had an illustrious playing career and is one of the greats of the game. He has also served Indian cricket as Head of National Cricket Academy (NCA) with distinction. Rahul's effort at the NCA has nurtured several young cricketing talents who have gone on to represent the country at the international stage. I am hopeful that his new stint will take Indian cricket to new heights," said BCCI president and former India captain Sourav Ganguly.

### BABAR AZAM CLIMBS TO NO.1 IN ICC RANKINGS

**Dubai:** Pakistan skipper Babar Azam has climbed to the No.1 spot on the ICC Men's T20I batting rankings, with Sri Lanka's Wanindu Hasaranga atop with the ball for the first time in his career.Azam, who was previously at the top of the ranking in January 2018, has played a key role in Pakistan's ICC T20 World Cup campaign, making 198 runs across four innings, averaging 66 at a strike rate of 124.52.

Sitting in second in last week's rankings, he moved up 14 points (to 834), pushing past England's Dawid Malan, who slid from 831 to 798.

# UEFA Champions League: Bayern see off Benfica to progress into knockout stage

**Berlin** | Agencies

Robert Lewandowski provided a brace and paved the way for Bayern Munich's 5-2 victory over Benfica in Group E at the fourth round of the Champions League's group stage.

Both sides staged a lively opening period late on Tuesday with opportunities at both ends of the pitch but the visitors from Portugal came off with a bright start as Alejandro Grimaldo sent a free-kick close in the fourth minute. Bayern responded immediately and forced Benfica goalkeeper Odysseas Vlachodimos into action after Serge Gnabry unleashed a dangerous attempt on target in the sixth minute.

The hosts were clearly in control and pressed Benfica into its territory as Leon Goretzka came close with a volley before Lewandowski headed just wide in the 11th minute, Xinhua reports. The visitors, however, remained dangerous on counterattacks and thought they had opened the scoring, but Lucas Verissimo da Silva's header was ruled offside by the video assistant referee in the 16th minute.

The Bavarians weren't done with the scoring and answered 10 minutes later after Lewandowski utilised a goalie kick from Neuer before lifting the ball past hapless Vlachodimos to wrap up his hat-trick. With the result, Group E front-runners Bayern booked its berth in the round of the last-16 ahead of schedule. Meanwhile, Benfica slipped to third place in the table.Wolfsburg climbed to second in Group G after overpowering front-runners Salzburg on the goals from Ridle Baku and Lukas Nmecha in the fourth round of Champions League's group stage on Tuesday.The momentum of the game changed out of the blue at the hour mark as Wolfsburg shocked Salzburg with the 2-1 lead after Nmecha chested down a long ball from Maximilian Arnold before drilling the ball into the roof of the net. Nmecha remained a menace, but the striker wasted a promising chance to make it 3-1 from six metres in the 65th minute. With the result, Wolfsburg reaped a vital win and moved second in Group G whereas Salzburg remain atop the standings.

# Djokovic struggles but wins opening-round game at Paris Masters

**Paris** | Agencies

Five-time Paris Masters champion, Serbia's Novak Djokovic, made a winning return to the Tour in his first singles game since his US Open final loss to Russian Daniil Medevdev in September, overcoming Marton Fucsovics of Hungary 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 in two hours to reach the third round here.

The 34-year-old Serbian world No. 1 said that it was a great feeling to be back on court nearly two months after the US Open final defeat to world No.2 Medvedev, who clinched his maiden major in September and denied Djokovic a record 21st major, which would have broken the tie with Spain's Rafael Nadal and Swiss ace Roger Federer. Nadal, Federer and Djokovic are current on 20 majors each. "It was great to be back on the court after almost two months without competition," Djokovic was quoted as saying by atptour.com. "I did not expect anything but I knew this was not going to be an easy match. Marton is a very talented player; he has a lot of quality. It was a great fight. I couldn't break his serve, he was playing with a lot of precision and we pushed each other to the limit. It was a great opening match for me. I am very pleased." If the top seed Djokovic wins the Paris title, he will clinch his seventh year-end No. 1 finish in the ATP Rankings, which would break his tie with Pete Sampras for the most year-end No. 1 finishes in history.

### EJECT BIG NAMES, BRING IN YOUNGSTERS: KAPIL DEV TELLS BCCI

**New Delhi:** Indian cricket legend Kapil Dev has said that he would be proud if India qualifies on the basis of its performance, and not wait for the outcome of other matches to make the grade at the ICC T20 World Cup, underway in the UAE. The Virat Kohli-led India have been soundly beaten in both their 'Super 12' Group 2 matches so far and even if they win the remaining three games, starting with match against Afghanistan on November 4, their qualification for the semifinals would be subject to net run rate (NRR) calculations and the results of some other games in the group favouring them.

"If we succeed on the basis of some other teams, Indian cricket has never appreciated it. If you want to win the World Cup or reach the semifinals, do it on your own strengths. It is better not to depend on other teams," Kapil told ABP News on Wednesday.

The former cricketer added that it's time for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to take some harsh decision vis-a-vis the seniors in the squad.

# *Shubham Jaglan top Indian at Asia-Pacific golf, despite closing bogey*

**Dubai** | Agencies

The seven Indian debutants on show at the 12th Asia Pacific Amateur Championships were all thrilled at the new experience and of them, the 17-year-old Shubham Jaglan, who flew in from the United States only on Monday night was the best Indian after the first day.Jaglan, who missed the practice round because of a Covid test, shot 1-under 70 despite a bogey on 18th and was T-24th. He had a 20-foot putt for birdie on 18th, but he not only missed that but also the par putt for a bogey, "It was disappointing, but it is okay," said Jaglan, who earlier this year took admission at University of South Florida on a golf scholarship.

There were as many as seven players including World No. 1 amateur Keita Nakajima and 2-time AAC champion, Yuxin Lin at 4-under 67 and in shared lead. They also included Hong Kong's Alexander Yang (67) who had two eagles, two birdies and two bogeys. Others were two Koreans, Sam Choi and Cho Wooyoung, Kiwi Jimmy Zheng and Australian Lukas Michel.Among the other Indians, Milind Soni, just 16, who was unwell Tuesday night, did well for an even par 71 and was the second best Indian at T-34.India No. 1 Rohan Dhole Patil, playing with two of the world's best amateurs, Nakajima and Yuxin, handled himself well to pull himself out of a big hole after four bogeys in a row from 8th to 11th holes. Patil finished 1-over 72 to be T-41.

# Life has been nothing short of a dream: Sunil Chhetri

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi

Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri, who has been named for the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, on Wednesday said that the journey that he has been through has been nothing short of a dream.

"I am thrilled, I am really thankful and honoured," he averred. "I have always said that it is a dream that I have gone through, and it would not have been possible without my family, my friends, my wife, my close group, the teammates that I have had and the coaches that I have played under. They have all played an important part in who I am today," he added.

"It has been amazing to play for the National Team, for so many years, for the number of matches, it has been an outstanding journey."

Sunil was named one among the 12 sportspersons by the MYAS who will be awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award for 2021. In fact, Sunil will be the first Indian Footballer to receive the Award - the highest one for sporting achievements in India. The Awards will be given as part of the National Sports Awards, which will be held on November 13 at the Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi.

Asked about his role models, he outlined his philosophy of grasping anything positive around, Sunil expressed: "The amount of encouragement and inspiration around us is a lot, we just have to keep looking. The hunger of trying to learn more is needed, and you will seek out from so many people."

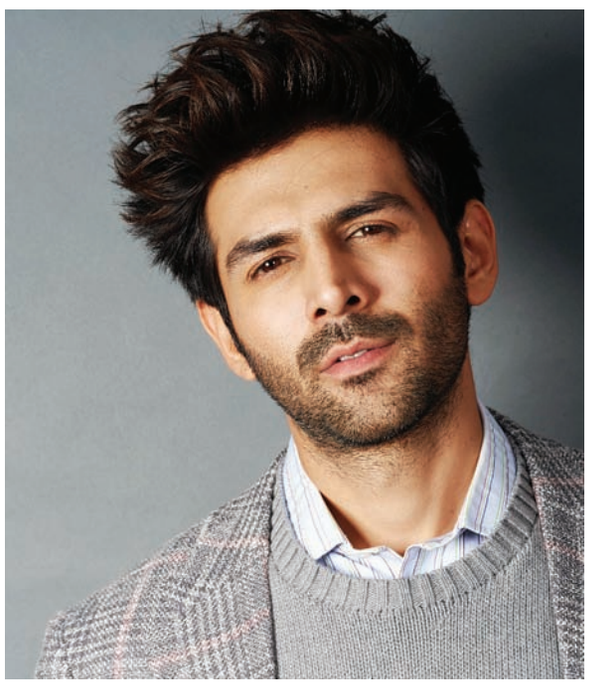
# 'DIWALI IS NO FUN WITHOUT FAMILY'

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Vijay Varma has been one busy bee ever since the start of this year and the actor is known to use his breaks in shoot from time to time to visit his family back in Hyderabad and he has now done the same post his return from a 2 month long schedule in Varanasi for an upcoming project.Talking about celebrating the festive days with his family, Vijay shares, "I am really excited to be back with my family for Diwali. I always looked forward to this festival as a child so I really wanted to celebrate it back home."

He added, "When I had got my schedule for the shoots earlier, I was so worried that I won't get to go back to Hyderabad for Diwali but luckily, I was able to wrap my schedules on time so I got these 2 days off. Diwali is no fun without family and I had been missing my family a lot when I was stationed in Varanasi these past 2 months for a shoot. The real fun of festivities comes in your own hometown and with your loved ones around so I am just super glad to be here."The Gully Boy actor has a bunch of super interesting projects in the kitty for which he has been shooting one after the other non-stop in places like Mumbai, to Uttar Pradesh to Rajasthan.

These include, Darlings with his Gully Boy co-star, Alia Bhatt only this time starring opposite her, he also has Fallen with Sonakshi Sinha, Hurdang with Nushrratt Bharuccha and Sunny Kaushal besides another untitled project.



# ROHIT DHAWAN BLOCKS KARTIK AARYAN FOR 6 MONTHS FOR SHEHZADA

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Kartik Aaryan has had a very busy year. The actor signed on for multiple films and is gearing up for his first release of the year. The actor who is currently promoting is film, Dhamaka, has no free time as he is simultaneously working on his film Shehzada. Source shares, "Rohit Dhawan is wanting to make the film on a very big scale. Massive set has been put in place at the Film City in Goregaon."

A source close to the project shared, "Kartik will sport a different look from anything that we have seen before. The security on sets had been kept tight to make sure there are no leaks. Everyone including the actors have been told to not click photos and post on social media or anywhere else. The directior is aiming for a continuous shoot schedule and so the actor is onboard with the idea of dedicating a strech of 6 months. Currently an extensive schedule is planned for city and post that the team will head to Delhi."

Recently Kartik's movie Dhamaka gave the fans a Dhamakedar trailer and then the actor straight away headed to shoot for Shehzada. The actor has been juggling with the shoot of Shehzada and promotions of Dhamaka.

Kartik's long list of lined up films include Dhamaka, Captain India, Freddy, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 and Shehzada.

# Tinnu Anand praises Nushrratt Bharuccha

Mumbai: Nushrratt Bharuccha is shooting in full swing for her upcoming flick 'Janhit mein Jaari' alongside Veteran actors like Tinnu Anand, Annu Kapoor among others. The Busan International Film Festival Award nominee has proved her versatility with her performance in Ajeeb Daastaans (Khilauna).

Amid shooting for 'Jan hit mein Jaari', Bharuccha garners praises from the 76-year old actor Tinnu Anand. He appreciated Nushrratt for her sweet gestures and for being so nice during the shoot. Sharing a happy anecdote from the sets, Anand said he has become his co-star's fan for life.

Tinnu further added, "Nushrratt is a lovely girl who comes from a decent family background and upbringing, and her gesture proved it all. I remember how she asked the boys to keep fans on for me while we were shooting in Chanderi. This kind gesture is rare and I am overwhelmed with the subtlety she has. I have become a big fans of hers forever."Having worked earlier in comedy films, actor Nushrratt Bharuccha is now set to be back on screens headlining yet another quirky flick. Her fans are waiting with bated breath for her superlative performance on-screen. Nushrratt is stepping up the success ladder like no other and post this, there would be no looking back as her talent being appraised all over is a testament to this.

Directed by Omung Kumar, Janhit Mein Jaari is an upcoming Hindi Comedy Film. The movie features Nushrratt Bharuccha, Tinnu Anand, Pavail Gulati and Annu Kapoor in pivotal roles. Janhit Mein Jaari will release in 2022.

Apart from 'Janhit Mein Jaari', Nushrratt Bharuccha has 'Chhori' and Akshay Kumar-starrer 'Ram Setu' and 'Hurdang' alongside Sunny Kaushal, and an unannounced project.

# Ranveer recalls impressing Deepika during 'Lungi Dance' shoot

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh revealed while dancing with contestant Divyansh on 'Lungi Dance' that he was trying to impress Deepika Padukone while shooting for this track. He was interacting with the contestant in the show 'The Big Picture', hosted by Ranveer.

During the weekend episode, Divyansh will be answering the questions asked by the host Ranveer Singh and also they will be having conversation about their fathers. As Divyansh opens up to Ranveer about how his father has supported him in his struggles, the host also reveals how his father has deeply contributed to his success. Divyansh also told Ranveer that he is the first person from his village to become a Civil Engineer. He hails from Uttar Pradesh.

Both Ranveer and Divyansh in a conversation opened up about their life struggles. Divyansh shared about the hardships his father faced to get him a good education. Ranveer also told how his father struggled financially when he went to study in America. He further mentioned how his father never made him realise the troubles he and his mother went through and can relate to Divyansh's story.

# Niharica Raizada talks about working with Katrina Kaif in 'Sooryavanshi'

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Actress Niharica Raizada who will be seen in Akshay Kumar and Katrina Kaif-starrer 'Sooryavanshi' has all the reasons to be pleased. She is playing a cop and feels that her passion for this role only helped the actress to get this opportunity. Niharica also opens up on her experience of working with Katrina.

Niharica states: "The film is about the paramilitary forces and how they counter terrorism. I play an Anti terrorist squad officer and the reason I got this role was the way I went for the audition. I was dressed up like a cop and I think my outfit made a positive impact and finally I am part of this movie."

The actress is known for her work in movies like 'Masaan', 'Baby' and 'Total Dhamaal'. Rohit Shetty's directorial 'Sooryavanshi' features Akshay Kumar and Katrina Kaif in lead roles and features special cameos by Ajay Devgn and Ranveer Singh. The movie will be released in theatres on November 5.

Niharica is all praise for Katrina: "Katrina is very experienced and it's interesting to have a conversation with her. I had a conversation with her and she told me she will marry soon so that was very nice to hear. I am happy when I hear about women settling down, I don't know why," she adds.

# Have to credit Zoya Akhtar for discovering Siddhant Chaturvedi: Saif Ali Khan

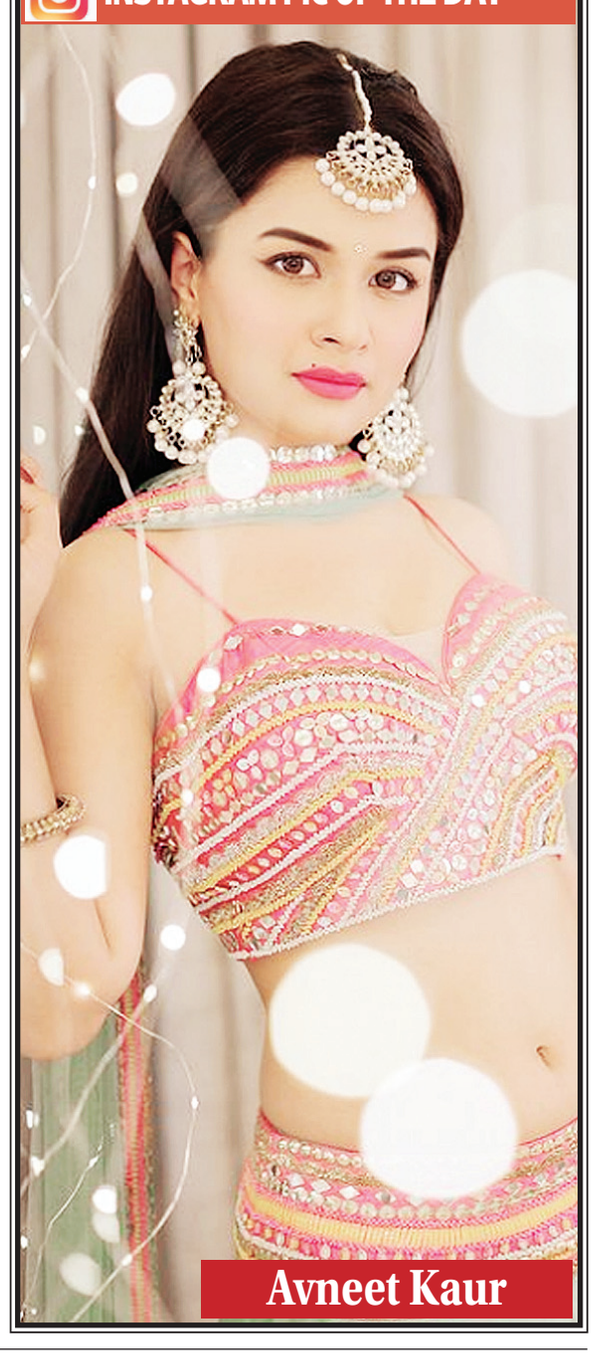
Actor Saif Ali Khan plays the role of the original Bunty in 'Bunty Aur Babli 2' and he has heaped praise on Siddhant Chaturvedi and said that filmmaker Zoya Akhtar should be credited for discovering the new actor.

**Team Absolute** | Mumbai

Saif said: "Siddhant is a star, no question about that. For someone so young to have the screen presence that he has and the acting maturity that he exhibits, he is definitely one of the most exciting talents that the industry has chanced upon."He added "We have to credit Zoya Akhtar for discovering him for 'Gully Boy' and Adi (Aditya Chopra) for believing that he can be a quintessential hero in a comedy genre which is one of the toughest for any actor to crack."

Saif reveals that Siddhant is a natural in front of the camera and that he was born to

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Avneet Kaur

Owned, Published and Printed by Yogendra Chaturvedi at P.G. Infrastructure and service Pvt.Ltd, Karond Bhanpur Bypass Road, Bhopal-462037 (MP) and published from 8/1, Malviya Nagar, Bhopal- 462011 ■ **Editor -** Yogendra Chaturvedi, **Advisory Editor-** Sarika Chaturvedi, **Resident Editor-** Nagendra Sharma| (*responsible for selection of news under PRB act). RNI. No. MPENG/2015/69891 Phone No. 0755-3577179, www.absoluteindianews.com, E-mail- absoluteindiadesk@gmail.com,(Bhopal will be the jurisdiction of any dispute.)