

# absolute india

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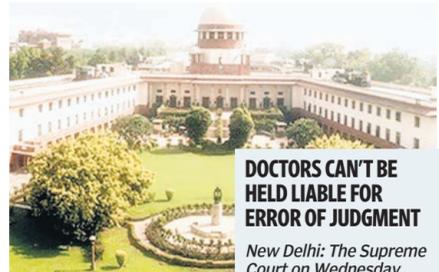


## DELHI VIOLENCE: SC STEPS IN, STAYS 'ENCROACHMENT DRIVE' IN JAHANGIRPURI

# SCARE AND RULE

A plea against the use of bulldozers to raze down the properties of riots-accused in the Jahangirpuri violence case was mentioned for urgent listing before the Chief Justice of India on Wednesday morning. Senior advocate Dushyant Dave on Wednesday again mentioned the Jahangirpuri demolition matter before a bench headed by Chief Justice N.V. Ramana, saying despite the top court's order, the municipal corporation had not stopped the demolition drive. Dave said the top court in the morning ordered status quo on the demolition, yet the municipal corporation did not stop the demolition drive at Jahangirpuri. The Chief Justice then asked the registry to communicate the court's status quo order on the demolition drive to the respondents in the matter -- NDMC Commissioner, Mayor and Delhi Police Commissioner. The top court will hear the petitions today.

## TV DEBATE ON COURT MATTERS AMOUNTS TO INTERFERENCE IN ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE: SC



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court has observed that all matters connected with a crime and whether something is a "conclusive piece of evidence" must be dealt with by a court of law, and not through a TV channel. A bench of Justices U.U. Lalit and P.S. Narasimha said: "All matters relating to the crime and whether a particular thing happens to be a conclusive piece of evidence must be dealt with by a court of law and not through a TV channel. If at all, there was a voluntary statement, the matter would be dealt with by the court of law." "The public platform is not a place for such debate or proof of what otherwise is the exclusive domain and function of courts of law. Any such debate or discussion touching upon matters which are in the domain of courts would amount to direct interference in administration of criminal justice," it said, while hearing an

**DOCTORS CAN'T BE HELD LIABLE FOR ERROR OF JUDGMENT**  
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday observed that doctors can provide the best medical assistance available at their command but merely because they could not save the patient, that could not be considered to be a case of post-operative medical negligence. A bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and Abhay S. Oka said: "The doctors are expected to take reasonable care, but no professional can assure that the patient will come back home after overcoming the crisis." The bench added that a medical practitioner is not to be held liable simply because things went wrong from mischance or misadventure or through an error of judgment in choosing one reasonable course of treatment in preference to another.

appeal challenging the Karnataka High Court judgment commuting the death sentence awarded by the trial court to life imprisonment. The petitioners were accused of committing dacoity and murder.

## RUSSIA TESTS NEW INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC NUKE MISSILE

LONDON | Agencies

Russia has test launched a new intercontinental ballistic missile, raising fears of a further escalation of war in Ukraine. The Russian leader said the Sarmat missile, also known as Satan-2, will provide 'food for thought for those who try to threaten Russia' and will make his enemies 'think twice'. The first launch was carried out today from an underground silo at the Plesetsk spaceport in north-

ern Russia at a moment of heightened tensions after Putin threatened the use of nuclear weapons in response to perceived Western provocation. The Kremlin claims the unmatched 16,000mph missile, which has been in development for years, could hit any target on earth and carry 12 nuclear warheads. It is among Russia's next-generation missiles that Putin has called 'invincible,' and which also include the Kinzhal and Avangard hypersonic missiles.

**ABSOLUTE INDIA'S VIEW**  
Before Uttar Pradesh election results a teacher and journalist Professor Abhay Dubey warned that if BJP wins, the UP model will be implemented in entire country as it will be proved successful and accepted by the people of India, because this bulldozer concept was introduced by UP CM Yogi Adityanath. His forecast became real. After UP, MP now, Delhi is implementing this concept. It is politics of fear. Politics to scare majority against minority. Hindus and Hindutva is in trouble. Just secure the position of power. Minority citizens are not going anywhere; they will live here in India but with tied hands and tight lips.

- ▶ 14 TEAMS FROM THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI CARRIED OUT THE OPERATION USING NINE EXCAVATORS.
- ▶ 400 COPS WERE REQUESTED FROM THE DELHI POLICE BY THE CIVIC BODY BUT KEEPING THE SECURITY SITUATION IN MIND, MORE THAN 1,500 POLICE PERSONNEL AND PARAMILITARY FORCES WERE PRESENT.
- ▶ NOBODY WAS SERVED ANY NOTICE BEFORE THE DEMOLITION. THE NORTH DELHI MAYOR TOLD NDTV THAT SINCE IT WAS AN 'ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE' AND NOT A DEMOLITION, THERE WAS NO NEED FOR NOTICES.
- ▶ THE NORTH DELHI MAYOR HAD JUST WRITTEN A LETTER TO THE COMMISSIONER OF DELHI POLICE ASKING FOR SECURITY FORCES WHICH HE WAS READILY PROVIDED WITH.



### JUICE STALL RAZED HAVING CIVIC BODY PERMIT

New Delhi: The bulldozers that ran in Delhi's Jahangirpuri for nearly two hours despite a Supreme Court order to stop, razed the juice stall of Ganesh Gupta. His entreaties that his stall was running with the permission of the civic body, cut no ice with the officials. "My shop is in my father's name. I asked them to see my papers. But they didn't listen, they used the bulldozer on the shop," Mr Gupta told NDTV in an exclusive interview today. There were no officers at the front. I am not involved with the rioters. My father had been running the shop since 1977, now I am running it. They didn't want to see the paper," he said.

**DEMOLITION OF INDIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES: RAHUL**  
"This is a demolition of India's constitutional values. This is state-sponsored targeting of poor & minorities."



**RAZE HOUSES OF BJP LEADERS: AAP**  
"The Home Minister is himself orchestrating these riots. If you want to use the bulldozer, use it to demolish the Home Minister's house. That's how riots will stop."  
Raghav Chadha, MP, AAP



**ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE: DELHI CIVIC BODY**  
The North Delhi Municipal Corporation, in a statement on Wednesday evening, said the anti-encroachment drive was an attempt to clear pedestrian walkways and roads to ease the traffic and pedestrian movement. "Such encroachment removal drives on public roads is done regularly in all wards /Zones by North DMC with/without notice under section 321/322/323/325 of the MCD Act, 1957 with prior intimation to local police," the statement read.

Team Absolute | New Delhi  
North Delhi's civic body on Wednesday demolished several structures in what they called a routine "anti-encroachment drive" in the violence-hit Jahangirpuri. The Supreme Court, responding to an appeal, halted the demolition and ordered an urgent hearing. Ordering to maintain status quo, the Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the demolition drive by the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) in Delhi's Jahangirpuri area where violence broke out last week during a religious procession. Delhi's Jahangirpuri area was

under heavy security cover on Wednesday morning ahead of the "encroachment drive" that was to be done on illegal construction in the area over three days. The demolition started at 9:30 am and continued till around 12 pm. Several shops, construction in front of buildings, handcarts and even the outer gate of the mosque that was at the centre of last week's violence were demolished by North Delhi Municipal Corporation's excavators. This is the first of its kind operation in Delhi just after an incident of violence like the one during Hanuman Jayanti. The administration acted very quickly. The anti-encroachment exercise was ordered after Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta wrote to the mayor, asking him to identify illegal constructions by "rioters" and demolish them. While the Mayor termed it a "routine exercise", the timing of the order, especially since it came after the BJP's chief letter, prompted questions regarding political motives.

## PK PROPOSED STRATEGY TO CONGRESS FOR 2024

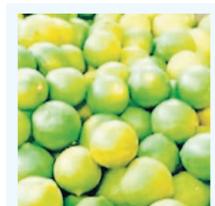
New Delhi: A special committee of Congress leaders constituted by party president Sonia Gandhi to suggest measures for strengthening the organisation and to make it ready for the next round of elections will submit its report in the next two-three days. On Wednesday, two Congress CMs, Ashok Gehlot from Rajasthan and Bhupesh Baghel from Chhattisgarh, were called to Delhi to discuss the proposals. However, one of the signatories of the letter written to Sonia Gandhi by the G-23 leaders, Veerappa Moily, has said that it is a welcome move to rope in Kishor. Meanwhile, Gehlot said

that "Kishor is a brand now", hinting that the party is keen to induct the political strategist into its fold. According to Congress General Secretary Randeep Surjewala, the party will decide within 48 hours about the proposals and the possible induction of Kishor into the Congress. The Congress is now more focused on Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, which will go to the polls later this year, as success in state polls will be crucial going to the general elections in 2024. In total, there are six big state elections ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. During the three meetings with Kishor held since Saturday, those present included Sonia Gandhi, Ambika Soni, A.K Antony, Jairam Ramesh, K.C Venugopal and Randeep Surjewala, among others. "Prashant Kishor has given a detailed presentation for the 2024 elections and the Congress President has deputed a small group to look into it and report to her within a week. A final decision will be taken after that," Venugopal had said. According to sources, Kishor said during Saturday's meeting that the Congress must target 370-400 seats and work on alliances wherever the party is weak.

## Delhi makes wearing of mask compulsory, Rs 500 fine for violations



Team Absolute | New Delhi  
The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Wednesday (April 20, 2022) announced that it is bringing back the mask mandate in the Capital city. The authority, after its meeting chaired by the Delhi Lt Governor today, said that the residents of the national capital will have to compulsorily wear masks in public places. DDMA also informed that those found in violation of the rule will have to pay Rs 500 in fine. Officials said the Delhi Disaster Management Authority, in its meeting, also decided not to shut schools, but those to come up with a separate Standard Operating Procedure in consultation with experts. The government is expected to issue an official order regarding the mandatory use of masks soon.



## SPECIAL PUJA TO BRING DOWN PRICES OF LEMON

Varanasi: A special puja was organised at the Maa Adishakti temple in Varanasi to control the rising prices of lemon. The puja was held at the temple which is also known as a centre of black magic, and 11 lemons were 'sacrificed' to appease the Goddess. Harish Mishra, who organised the puja, said that the 'tantra puja' has the power to fulfil wishes and he was confident that the prices of lemon would come down within days. He denied that indulging in black magic was wrong if it was not designed to harm anyone. "In fact, this puja was for the welfare of all consumers of lemon," he said.

## Say 'no' to health star ratings on junk food: Experts

Team Absolute | New Delhi  
Instead of the 'Health Star Ratings' on junk food, as proposed by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), which will "mislead the consumers", the Centre for Science & Environment (CSE) on Wednesday demanded that warnings about unhealthy levels of salt, sugar, and fat be featured instead. "Health Star Ratings are designed by the powerful food industry to mislead the consumer. By pushing these, the FSSAI will give license to glorify junk foods, which is the opposite of what should be



done. India can't afford the epidemic of obesity and non-communicable diseases. It is time the Indian consumer is warned about how bad and unhealthy junk food is," CSE Director General Sunita Narain said. Front-of-pack labelling on packaged foods was first recommended by an FSSAI-led committee formed in 2013 (CSE was part of this committee). The FSSAI then came up with a draft regulation in 2018, which had strict thresholds - limits to know unhealthy levels - based on those developed by the WHO for countries like India in the South-East Asia Region. "Due to industry pressure, FSSAI

came up with another draft in 2019. The food industry was still not pleased and this draft was repealed. From January-June 2021, stakeholder consultations were held on the labelling design to be adopted, thresholds to make applicable and nutrients to be displayed. The latest consultation took place in February 2022, when it was made clear that FSSAI plans to go ahead with the "Health Star Rating," the CSE statement said. Health Star Rating is a labelling system which includes depiction of 1 to 5 stars on packaged foods. These stars are depicted based on an algorithm at the back-end, which is not known to consumers.





# MODI ANNOUNCES SPECIAL MARK FOR AYUSH PRODUCTS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday announced a special Ayush mark for Ayush products among many new initiatives for Ayush sector, on the occasion of Global Ayush Investment & Innovation Summit 2022.

The Prime Minister on Wednesday inaugurated the three-day Global Ayush Investment & Innovation Summit 2022 at Gandhinagar in the presence of the Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, WHO Director General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Ayush Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and others.

In his inaugural address, Modi said: "We are already witnessing unprecedented growth in the production of Ayush medicines, supplements and cosmetics. In 2014, where the Ayush sector was less than \$3 billion, today it has increased to more than \$18 billion. An unprecedented efforts has been made in the past years to promote the export of Ayush products."



Along with first being a special Ayush mark for Ayush products, Modi announced many other initiatives for Ayush sector. A new category named 'Ayush Aahar' was announced which will greatly facilitate the producers of herbal nutritional supplements.

Further, another major initiative for foreign nationals who want to

come to India to take advantage of Ayush therapy was announced. India will soon introduce a special Ayush visa category. Describing the current age of the era of unicorns, the Prime Minister informed that in the year 2022 itself, so far 14 start-ups from India have joined the Unicorn Club. "I am sure unicorns will emerge from our Ayush start-ups very soon", he

stated.

Prime Minister also announced launch of Ayush Export Promotion Council and four Ayush ICT initiatives which includes Ayush Information Hub, AyuSoft, Ayush Next and Ayush GIS.

The Prime Minister also released a comic book named 'Professor Ayushman', which describes how Ayush systems and products helped in fighting not only Covid-19 but other diseases also.

Addressing the session, Tedros said that the Ayush sector is growing significantly -- by 17 per cent per year since 2014.

He said that Ayush industry is projected to reach \$23 billion by the end of this year. "We are exploring innovative study designs and the use of artificial intelligence to document the impact of traditional medicine practices, in cases when standard randomised trials are not possible or are difficult to undertake."

"Strengthening the evidence base of traditional medicine should facilitate its use by communities, to promote better health outcomes, economic benefits and overall impact," he added.

## In the name of 'national security', EIA notification further amended

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After carrying out a set of amendments and proposing another set last week, the Union Environment Ministry on Wednesday carried out yet another set of changes to the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) notification of 2006.

A major amendment among others is that the Centre will now exercise the power to assess and grant environmental clearance (EC) to the projects under national defence or security importance, instead of the state. "All the projects in category 'B', relating to the national defence or strategic or security importance or those as notified by the Central government on account of exigencies such as pandemics, natural disasters or to promote environmentally friendly activities under national programmes or schemes or missions or such projects which are inordinately delayed beyond the stipulated timeline as laid down in the EIA notification and also meet the criteria as laid down in this regard from time to time, shall be considered at the Central level as category 'B' projects," read the amendment notification.

As per the original EIA notification of 2006, the State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs) were constituted under relevant sections and sub-sections of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for implementation of the EIA Notification, 2006 at state level for exercising delegated powers to consider and grant ECs for all proposals under Category B (as mentioned above).

Stating that the SEIAAs have gained substantial experience over the past 15 years in the EC appraisal process and the process at the state level has also been made completely online through the PARIVESH portal for efficient and transparent disposal of EC proposals, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change said: "The Central government deems it necessary to further de-centralise the EC process for facilitating clearances at state level. "But category B projects being those related to defence or strategic importance have "significant element of security involvement" and yet are being appraised at the state level, the Ministry said, and added: "The

Central government deems it necessary to be appraised centrally taking into account national security concerns." Citing relevant clauses, it also dispensed with the requirement of notice "in public interest" while carrying out the amendments in the EIA notification of September 14, 2006. Earlier on April 14, the Environment Ministry had amended the EIA notification for extending validity of ECs to hydro-power and nuclear projects among others. The amendments include revising EC validity for hydropower projects - also termed as river valley projects - to 13 years (plus two years after consulting the Expert Appraisal Committee), 15 years for nuclear projects; 30 years for mining projects, extendable by 20 years and 10 years for other projects, such as townships. Prior to that, on April 12, the Ministry had published a set of proposals to amend the same EIA notification seeking exemption of EC to several projects, including defence related/border areas projects, those up to 25 MW thermal plants based on biomass or expansion of terminal building of airport.

## 100-member suicide squad formed, says TDP leader

AMARAVATI | Agencies

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader Buddha Venkanna on Wednesday announced that a 100-member "suicide squad" has been formed to tackle those making objectionable remarks against party President N. Chandrababu Naidu.

He said members of the suicide squad were ready to kill or get killed to protect the former Chief Minister and his family.

The TDP leader made controversial remarks while talking to reporters in Vijayawada after participating in birthday celebrations of Chandrababu Naidu.

He said they would not keep quiet if detractors attack Naidu in the hope that this would help them reach higher positions.

Meanwhile, Housing Minister Jogi Ramesh lashed out at Buddha Venkanna for making the remarks. The minister wondered how anyone can talk about forming suicide squads.

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leader said instead of cutting cake on Naidu's birthday, Buddha Venkanna has said something



mindless.

The minister also said just as Chandrababu Naidu "backstabbed" his father-in-law (N.T. Rama Rao) to usurp power, his own party leaders would backstab him.

## OVER 70 HELD FOR RAPE OF MINOR ANDHRA GIRL PUSHED INTO FLESH TRADE

AMARAVATI | Agencies

Amravati: Andhra Pradesh Police have arrested over 70 persons in connection with the rape of a minor girl during the last eight months.

The 13-year-old victim from Guntur district was pushed into prostitution by a woman, who had adopted her after she lost her mother to Covid-19 last year.

According to police, the 74 persons arrested include kingpins of a prostitution racket, pimps and customers. Guntur police are on the lookout for six other accused and one of them is stated to be in London.

As many as 35 prostitution organisers were among those arrested.

Additional Superintendent of Police K. Supraja said the girl was purchased by several gangs who took her to various districts in Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring Telangana where she was forced into prostitution. The victim was sent to different brothels in the two Telugu states. The main accused in the case is Swarna Kumari, who had befriended the girl at a hospital where the latter's mother was undergoing treatment for Covid-19 in June 2021. After the girl's mother died, Swarna Kumari took her away to look after her without her father's permission. The woman later forced the victim into prostitution.

The girl's father lodged a missing complaint with the police in August. The first arrest was made in January and since then the police intensified the investigation and during the last few days, the maximum number of accused were arrested.

## Sasikala to be grilled in Kodanad murder and heist case

CHENNAI | Agencies

A special team of the Tamil Nadu Police will be questioning AIADMK's former interim General Secretary, V.K. Sasikala in the Kodanad murder and heist case on Thursday, officials said.

The 906-acre estate was jointly owned by late Chief Minister and AIADMK chief J. Jayalalitha and her aide Sasikala, and the murder and heist case took place on April 24, 2017, four months after the passing away of J. Jayalalitha and the arrest of Sasikala.

According to the charge sheet, C. Kanagaraj, who was once the driver of Jayalalitha, hatched a conspiracy to break open the Kodanad estate as he believed that huge money was stashed in the estate bungalow. On April 23, 2017, a gang of ten people, led by him, broke into



the estate and killed guard, Om Bahadur while another guard Krishna Thapa was beaten and tied. Police sources said that Kanagaraj had convinced another accused Stayan that an amount of Rs 200 crore was stashed in the estate bungalow but the burglars could get only ten watches and a crystal replica of rhinoceros worth Rs 42,000. Five days after the Kodanad estate heist,

Kanagaraj was killed in a road accident on the Salem-Chennai highway in Attur. Another accused Sayan from Kerala also met with an accident on the same day but he escaped with injuries while his wife and daughter got killed.

In July 3, 2017, Dinesh Kumar, a computer operator at the estate, was found dead in his home leading to five deaths altogether.

## Kumar Vishwas cautions Mann after Punjab Police team lands at his place

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A team of Punjab Police personnel reached the house of poet and former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas to serve a notice upon him, here on Wednesday.

An FIR was registered against Vishwas under the IT Act for allegedly doctoring a video. The police team visited his house to ask him to join the investigation.

In the run-up to the Punjab Assembly elections in Punjab earlier this year, Vishwas, without naming him, had said that Arvind Kejriwal wants to be the Prime Minister of an independent nation of Khalistan, accusing



the AAP convenor of having connections with separatists in Punjab.

Taking to Twitter, Vishwas served a warning to Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, saying: "Punjab police team was at my doorsteps early morning. I am caution-

ing Bhagwant Mann, whom I inducted into the party myself, that the person sitting in Delhi will betray both you and Punjab one day. The country should remember my warning." He also posted pictures of policemen at his residence.

## Mamata's 'central agency' jibe at Bengal summit creates political ripples

KOLKATA | Agencies

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee urging Governor Jagdeep Dhankar to ensure that "industrialists are not disturbed by central agencies" created political ripples in the state on Wednesday.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS) 2022 here on Wednesday, Banerjee said: "I want to tell the honourable Governor that we are all ready to cooperate with the Union government to ensure economic development of the state and the country."

"But I would also like to request the honourable government to take the matter with the Union government so that we receive central assistance. At the same time, the industrialists should not be disturbed through any central agency."



Soon after Banerjee made the remarks, political reactions started pouring in from the opposition lead-

ers, with most slamming the Chief Minister for her comments made at a business summit.

State BJP chief and Lok Sabha MP Sukanta Majumdar said that the business summit was not the ideal platform for the Chief Minister to make such a political comment.

"Such comments send wrong signals to the business fraternity. She publicly referred to the industrialists being disturbed. Did she actually refer to her party colleagues and family members who are under the lens of the central probe agencies?"

"The Union government is always ready to cooperate with the state government on the issue of economic development. But the Chief Minister must first ensure an atmosphere of peace sans law and order issues in the state. If not, no industrialist would invest in the state," Majumdar said.

CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakraborty accused the Chief Minister of using all platforms to convey her political views.

## Power crisis will crush small industries: Cong on coal shortage

A day after Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a meeting of the concerned department on power situation, the Congress on Wednesday attacked the Centre and alleged that only eight days of coal was left in the country. "8 years of big talk has resulted in India having ONLY 8 DAYS of coal stocks."

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Modi ji, stagflation is looming. Power cuts will crush small industries, leading to more job losses. Switch off the bulldozers of hate and switch on the power plants," said Randeep Surjewala, Congress General Secretary in a tweet.

Shah on Tuesday had chaired a meeting with Power Minister R.K. Singh, Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav to assess the situation following reports of coal shortage reported by many states.



The meeting was held in the Home Ministry in the North Block to review

the power situation and supply of low ash coal to various thermal power

plants in the country, the officials said.

In the hour-long meeting, the Ministers reportedly discussed the availability of coal to power plants and the current power demands because the temperature has gone up early this year in April itself.

This move comes in the wake of many states having reported about the low stocks of coal.

As many as 12 states such as Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Jharkhand and Haryana are facing power cuts because of less coal supply.

## Jolt to SP, another Muslim leader quits party

SAHARANPUR | Agencies

The Samajwadi Party, on Wednesday, suffered yet another jolt when senior leader Sikandar Ali resigned from the party and all posts, accusing party chief Akhilesh Yadav of turning a blind eye towards Muslims.

Ali told reporters, "Atrocities are being heaped on Muslim leaders in SP, but the party president is maintaining a studied silence. The situation within the party has become stifling."

He said that the SP had won 111 seats on the strength of Muslim votes, but Akhilesh had refused to utter a word on action being taken against leaders like Nahid Hasan and Shazil Islam. "If Akhilesh Yadav cannot stand up for a senior leader and MLA, how can he be expected to stand up for ordinary members of



our community?" he asked. He further alleged that Akhilesh was surrounded by a coterie and is completely disconnected with party workers at the ground level.

Sikandar Ali is not the first Muslim leader in the Samajwadi Party who has raised a voice against Akhilesh.

Earlier, SP MP Shafiqur Rehman Barq had claimed that Akhilesh Yadav had stopped working for Muslims. Samajwadi Party leader, Salman Javed Raean then tendered his resignation from the party in protest against the alleged apathy of the party leadership towards the Muslim community.



# BHARTI DEMANDS UP-LIKE POLICY ON LOUDSPEAKERS, PROCESSIONS IN MP

► SENIOR BJP LEADER UMA BHARTI ON WEDNESDAY WELCOMED THE UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO REGULATE RELIGIOUS PROCESSIONS AND USE OF LOUDSPEAKERS, AND DEMANDED A SIMILAR POLICY IN MADHYA PRADESH TOO. UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER YOGI ADITYANATH EARLIER THIS WEEK DIRECTED THAT NO RELIGIOUS PROCESSION SHOULD BE TAKEN OUT WITHOUT PERMISSION, AND LOUDSPEAKERS SHOULD NOT INCONVENIENCE OTHERS. THE POLICY DECISION TAKEN BY YOGI ADITYANATH'S GOVERNMENT IS COMMENDABLE, BHARTI SAID IN A SERIES OF TWEETS IN HINDI.



**Team Absolute | Bhopal**  
Senior BJP leader Uma Bharti on Wednesday welcomed the Uttar Pradesh government's decision to regulate religious processions and use of loudspeakers, and demanded a similar policy in

Madhya Pradesh too. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath earlier this week directed that no religious procession should be taken out without permission, and loudspeakers should not inconvenience others. "The policy decision taken by Yogi

Adityanath's government is commendable," Bharti said in a series of tweets in Hindi. Ailments of the nervous system are increasing due to excessive noise pollution and people should be able to sleep peacefully at night, the former Union minister said. "Therefore, there should be strict regulation of loudspeakers from 10 pm to 7 am. Sound amplifiers for public programs should be allowed on the condition that only people who are sitting there will be able to hear it. There should be no discrimination on the basis of religion," Bharti added. Loudspeakers disturb hospitals and schools and cause inconvenience to students, sick people and senior citizens, she added. She also said that time and sound limits must be decided for DJ systems and taking out processions. "Let us take such a decision in Madhya Pradesh too," Bharti added. The use of loudspeakers by mosques as well as in religious ceremonies and processions has become a hot-button issue. Violence broke out during Ram Navami and Hanuman Jayanti processions in Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat and West Bengal, while in Maharashtra the MNS has demanded that loudspeakers on mosques be removed.

## Malegaon blast witness seeks MP Police protection

► JITENDRA WAS ASKED TO APPEAR BEFORE A SPECIAL NIA COURT IN MUMBAI ON TUESDAY BUT HAS SOUGHT SECURITY AND EXPENSES FOR TRAVEL.

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Indore-based mechanic, Jitendra Bhakroda, a key witness in the Malegaon blast case has demanded the security cover from Madhya Pradesh Police, expressing a threat to his life. Jitendra was asked to appear before a special NIA court in Mumbai on Tuesday but has sought security and expenses for travel. Six people were killed and over 100 injured when an explosive device attached to a motorcycle went off near a mosque in Malegaon, a communally sensitive town in north Maharashtra, on September 29, 2008. Bhopal BJP Member of Parliament, Pragna Singh Thakur is one of the accused

in this case. The prosecution claims that the bike that had been used in the Malegaon blast was taken for servicing to Bhakroda's garage. However, Bhakroda told, "I used to repair the bike of Ramji. The NIA said that the bike belonged to Pragna Thakur. But I have never met her. Ramji used to come and I knew him. I have told this to the NIA." While the court has warned to issue a warrant to compel his presence but he failed to turn up stating that he feared that like witness Dileep Patidar he too will go missing. "Dileep Patidar, another resident of Indore and a witness in the Malegaon blast case, is still missing after being taken away by Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) in November 2008", said Bhakroda. The Indore-based mechanic said that he did not have faith in Maharashtra Police and had sent an application to Indore Police Commissioner Harinarayan Chari Mishra. He said he had also sought time to meet the official but has not yet got it.

## Police seize idols to prevent encroachments

► Additional district magistrate Narottam Bhargava said they have been receiving complaints of encroachments upon government land in the name of sentiments

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Authorities seized statues of Lord Hanuman and Bhimrao Ambedkar at separate places last week to prevent encroachment upon government land taking advantage of public sentiments in Morena district. Police said Ambedkar's statue was installed in Mangrol near a religious place on Thursday last. Villagers opposed this and triggered tensions. They accused Dalit activists of encroaching upon government land. The activists

insisted the government should allocate the land for Ambedkar's statue for people to draw inspiration from him. The statue was seized and 10 police personnel were deployed to guard the land till the issue is resolved. Bhim Army leader Vinay Ratna said Ambedkar taught Dalits how to fight for their rights and his statue will inspire the villagers, who are facing discrimination and have no courage to raise their voices against suppression by the upper caste. "The state government should allocate us the land. Otherwise, we will intensify our protest." Ramesh Sharma, a local resident, said some outsiders were trying to create tensions by installing the statue near the century-old religious place. "They want to encroach upon government land and we will not allow this misuse of sentiments." SDOPGuruvachan Singh they are maintaining peace in the village.

Lord Hanuman's idol was seized on Saturday when Sehrama village residents informed police that some seers encroached upon a piece of government land to set up a temple. The seers staged a protest outside a police station. Hindu organisations also came in support of seers and said if the police do not return the idol, they will stage protests at the district headquarters. Hindu Jagran Manch leader Devendra Mudgal said, "Police insulted our god. We have requested police to return the idol. Otherwise, we will take to the streets." Police superintendent Atul Singh said they seized the idol because it is illegal to encroach upon government land. Additional district magistrate Narottam Bhargava said they have been receiving complaints of encroachments upon government land in the name of sentiments. "We are taking action to stop the

## CM EXPRESSES GRIEF OVER THE DEATH OF GIRL STUDENTS

**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the death of four girl students due to drowning in a canal near village Kothi near Omkareshwar in Khandwa district. Chouhan has prayed to God to give place to the departed souls at his lotus feet and strength to the family to bear this immense loss.

Forest Minister Kunwar Vijay Shah has said that there has been an increase of 63 percent in the area of very dense forest in Madhya Pradesh. In the year 2005, there was 4239 square kilometer of very dense forest area, which has now increased to 6665 square kilometer. This has been mentioned in the report published by the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun in the year 2021. Shah informed that forest committees have been formed in 15 thousand 608 villages of the state for public participation in forest management of 79 lakh 70 thousand hectare

## Very Dense Forest Area of MP Has Increased by 63 Percent: Shah

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Forest Minister Kunwar Vijay Shah has said that there has been an increase of 63 percent in the area of very dense forest in Madhya Pradesh. In the year 2005, there was 4239 square kilometer of very dense forest area, which has now increased to 6665 square kilometer. This has been mentioned in the report published by the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun in the year 2021. Shah informed that forest committees have been formed in 15 thousand 608 villages of the state for public participation in forest management of 79 lakh 70 thousand hectare

forest area. The participation of dependent communities in the management of forests has yielded positive results. Where on the one hand the natural forests in the world are under threat. Even in such a situation, thousands of village communities in the state along with the forest department have done the work of converting the degraded forest areas into forest areas with good forest cover. The people of the state, especially the tribal communities living near the forest areas, have played an important role in the increase in forest cover. Shah said that it has been decided to give 20 percent share of revenue to the forest committees constituted in the

state. With the establishment of this system, the forest committees will be financially strong. Especially the tribal class will get the benefit of this. He said that in view of the demand to convert the forest villages into revenue villages, an in-principle agreement has been obtained from the revenue department on the instructions of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Now the process will be started as soon as possible. The forests of Madhya Pradesh are famous throughout the country in terms of production of precious timber like teak, sal as well as bamboo. Along with this, it has also become a leading state in the matter of conservation of wildlife.

## Families Displaced From Protected Areas of Vananchal Should Be Linked With Livelihood: CM

► Meeting of State Level Steering Committee Held under Chairmanship of Chief Minister

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Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that effective efforts are necessary to connect the families displaced from the protected areas of Vananchal (forested regions) with livelihood. By providing necessary training to the youth of such displaced families, they should be connect-



ed with employment activities by upgrading their skills. Chouhan expressed pleasure over the increasing number of tigers in the state. He stressed the need for systematic management of tigers. Chief Minister was addressing the second meeting of the

Madhya Pradesh State Level Steering Committee. Forest Minister Kunwar Vijay Shah, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Principal Secretary Forest Ashok Varnwal, Principal Secretary Scheduled Tribes Welfare Pallavi Jain Govil, Forest

Department officials and committee members were present in the meeting held in Mantralaya. It was informed in the meeting that out of 8826 beats in the state, presence of tiger has been found in 1858 beats. The posts of 10 veterinary doctors have been created in the forest department for the treatment, rescue and prevention of diseases among wild animals found in the protected areas and regional divisions of the state. Suggestions were also received in the meeting to conduct a fire audit at the state level to control forest fires and to develop a guideline for eco-tourism by the state government.

## LIFE OF REVERED BABUL GAUR WAS WONDERFUL: CM

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Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that the life of revered Babul Gaur was wonderful and full of struggle. He has many achievements. The VIP road in Bhopal is his gift. To keep his memory intact, this college has been named after him. Chouhan was addressing the dedication and naming ceremony of the new building of Babul Gaur Government Post Graduate College, Bhopal. Chief Minister said that entire Madhya Pradesh is one family. The people are its God and I am the priest of the people. Along with the development of the state, no stone will be left unturned for the development of ovidpuraVidhan Sabha. The state government is committed for the welfare of the people. Under the Mukhya Mantri Medhavi Vidyarthi Protsahan Yojana, the fees of meritorious students for higher education will be paid by the state



government. He said that the country's largest Global Skill Park is being built in GovindpuraVidhan Sabha. This will provide employment opportunities to many youths. Chouhan said that the land freed from the land mafia in the state would be given to the poor to build houses. The Chief Minister gave necessary instructions to the principal and concerned staff of the college to include the college in 'A' grade. He said that various demands of the college would be fulfilled. PG classes will be started in the college, posts of professors and staff will also be approved. He called for taking

forward Bhopal in the matter of cleanliness and environment. The Chief Minister said that Bhopal's Gaurav Diwas (pride day) would be celebrated on June 1. Will take Bhopal ahead in every field. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan benefitted the beneficiaries of various schemes including Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat Yojana in the programme. Before the programme, Chief Minister visited the exhibition based on the life of Late Shri Babul Gaur. He inaugurated the programme by performing Kanya-Poojan. The Chief Minister lit the lamp by paying floral tributes at the portrait of Late Babul Gaur. MLA Krishna Gaur said that today we are all fortunate that this programme is being organised in the presence of Chief Minister Chouhan. Chief Minister Chouhan is such a Jannayak (leader of masses) under whose able leadership the state is continuously moving ahead on the path of development.

## Outstanding Trainers and Principals Will Be Rewarded ITI Trainers Will Receive Training at ITE Singapore Civil Branch Students Can Do Internship at the Construction Site

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

The Minister for Technical Education, Skill Development and Employment YashodharaRajeScindia has taken important decisions to promote high level training and quality education in technical education and skill development. During a review of the departments on Wednesday, Scindia said that ITI trainers would be sent for training at the Institute of Technical Education Singapore. Along with this, the trained trainers will also be rewarded on the basis of the feedback of the institute. Scindia said that encouragement and respect in any field helps in promoting quality. Therefore we have decided that the trainers and principals who do excellent work will be rewarded. This will not only bring quality in their performance but also motivate the students. Scindia said that the students of Civil Faculty of Engineering College will be able to do internship at the site of the construction works implemented in the department. This will also ensure the quality of the ongoing construction works. Scindia informed that 10 topper students and



their teachers will be rewarded at the end of each academic session of all government engineering, ITI and polytechnics. Principal Secretary Technical Education Akash Tripathi informed that the construction work of Global Skill Park is to be completed by June 2023 and it is proposed to start the new session from July 2023. He said that the action to develop engineering colleges of Chhatrapur and aspirational districts (Khandwa, Chhatrapur, Damoh, Barwani, Rajgarh, Vidisha, Guna, Singrauli) as multi-disciplinary institutions is under process. Shri Tripathi informed that a task force has been constituted to connect every ITI of

the state with the industry and to provide training to the youth as per the requirement of the industries. As per the recommendation of the task force, a proposal has been sent to the Central Government for conducting 15 days internship in one year course and 30 days in 2 years course from the upcoming training session in addition to dual system training in ITI training. Director Skill Development Jitendra Singh Raj informed that after the approval of the new government ITIs Gairatganj, Buxwaha and Chitrangi, the number of government ITIs operating in the state has increased to 238. He informed that 10 trainees of carpenter trade, who are trained in Government ITI Betul in "One District-One Product", have been sent for one month training at Advance Wood Working Training Centre Institute of Wood Science and Technology in Bengaluru for skill development. Trainees have received training related to CNC Machining, Programming, 2-D, 3-D Designing in wood works. Project Director of Global Skills Park Shri Harjinder Singh and Chief Executive Officer Shammukh Priya Mishra were present.

## First event of the ideal Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah organised: CM

**Team Absolute | Bhopal**

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana is being relaunched from April 21. The first event of the scheme will be held at Nasrullaganj in Sehore. The programme should be organized in such a way that it becomes a model for the entire state. Adequate electrical decoration should also be

made in the city for the event. Public participation should also be encouraged in the programme along with the administrative system. Government officials, public representatives and people of the society should be involved emotionally in the event. Chouhan said that the cheques to be provided under the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana should be given in the name of only daughters. Chief Minister

Chouhan was reviewing the preparations for organizing Nasrullaganj marriage in Sehore district on April 21 through video conferencing from the residence office. It was informed in the meeting that so far 461 couples have been registered for the mass marriage programme to be held in Nasrullaganj. Employees organizations along with social organizations are also actively participating in the

event. Chouhan also sought information regarding the materials to be given as a gift under the scheme, arrangements for lodging of the families of bride and groom and arrangements for procession etc.

## CM PLANTED SAPTAPARNI AND ALMOND SAPLINGS

**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Saptaparni and almond saplings with Give Bharat Welfare Foundation in the Smart City Garden on Wednesday. Members Aditya Sharma, Ankit Tiwari, Kaustubh Bhide and Paras Vajpayee also planted saplings. Give Bharat Welfare Foundation is a charitable organisation, which has been serving the society in many ways since the last Corona period till now. Along with this, the work of providing medicines and food to destitute people, poor and elderly persons is also done according to the need. Keeping in mind the educational needs of the girls living in rural areas, financial assistance is also provided. Among the saplings planted today, Saptaparni plant is an evergreen medicinal tree, which has great importance in Ayurveda. It is used in the manufacture of various medicines. Consumption of almonds has been considered useful in high blood pressure, constipation and heart disease. It is rich in potassium,



न्यायालय नायब तहसीलदार, तहसील कोलार, जिला भोपाल प्रक्र. 0163/A-6/2021-22 //इश्तहार//

एतद् द्वारा सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि प्रकरण में आवेदक संदीप सरसे पिता आर.जी. सरसे द्वारा ग्राम जाटखेड़ी प.ह.नं. .... स्थित खसरा क्रमांक 39/1/1/1/41/1/1/2 43,42,43/1/1/42/13 रकबा 97.50 वर्गमीटर हे. का पंजीकृत विक्रय पत्र/फौती नामांतरण/दानपत्र/ हक त्याग पत्र के आधार पर नामांतरण किये जाने का आवेदन प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

इस संबंध में किसी व्यक्ति/संस्था को आपत्ति हो तो वह इस इश्तहार के जारी होने के दिनांक 27/04/2022 के भीतर इस न्यायालय में स्वयं अथवा अपने अधिभाषक के माध्यम से आपत्ति प्रस्तुत करें, समयावधि पश्चात आपत्ति पर कोई विचार नहीं किया जावेगा।

आज दिनांक 20/04/22 को मेरे हस्ताक्षर एवं न्यायालयीन मुद्रा से जारी किया गया।

नायब तहसीलदार तहसील-कोलार, जिला-भोपाल



## EDITOR'S SPECS

## Hindutva in full flow

The Uttar Pradesh government, on Tuesday, allotted residential and agricultural plots and houses to 63 Hindu families who had migrated from East Pakistan in 1970. Speaking on the occasion, UP Chief Minister said that though the number of families was 63, the number of persons who would benefit was 400. He said that it was the vision of the Centre that would now allow these displaced Hindu families to get the advantage of government schemes. He also slammed the previous governments for not caring about them. According to a government spokesman, these refugees had settled in different parts of the state. Two years ago, the UP government had started collecting primary data of those expelled from Pakistan and Bangladesh, and living in Uttar Pradesh. Till 2020, over 37,000 Bangladeshi and Pakistani refugees were identified in Pilibhit district. The data was being collected to grant them Indian citizenship under the citizenship act. Earlier, in January too, Yogi Adityanath had announced that his government has accommodated the expelled Hindus from Pakistan and Bangladesh in the land that the state government freed from encroachers. Hindus, who were living in Meerut for decades after facing expulsion from Pakistan and Bangladesh, could not afford to build their own houses or buy lands. Government has given 63 such Bengali Hindu families two acres of land and 200 square yards for housing per family in Kanpur Dehat. These lands were freed from land grabbers. Yogi Adityanath earned the name of "bulldozer baba" after several illegal encroachments in the state were razed, and the move was linked to the chief minister's model of governance.

## Pakistan is back on the US side of the fence

D.C. Pathak

The April 7 ruling of the Supreme Court of Pakistan delegitimising the Deputy Speaker's action of annulling the No Confidence Motion tabled in the National Assembly by the combined opposition and the dramatic course of events that followed in the House on April 9 culminating in the ouster of Prime Minister Imran Khan through a midnight voting on that motion and the subsequent election of leader of the opposition Shehbaz Sharif as the new Prime Minister -- all significantly mark the emergence of a new geopolitical profile of Pakistan.

The Deputy Speaker belonging to the ruling party, PTI, had on April 3 lost no time in discarding the No Confidence Motion on the extraordinary ground that it was the manifestation of a foreign conspiracy against Pakistan, and in the legal follow up the five-member bench of the SC unanimously decided that there was no substance to that contention.

What is important in all of this is the fact that a steady shift in Pakistan's international relations had been consciously brought about by Imran Khan during his prime ministership.

Considering the reality of Imran Khan's installation as Prime Minister having been facilitated by the Pakistan army, it is to be presumed that General Qamar Bajwa was initially inclined towards the Prime Minister in the tussle between the latter and the opposition -- Imran Khan had repeatedly praised the Pak Army while the leaders of the PPP and PML(N) as also Maulana Fazlur Rehman were not particularly admired by the General.

At a deeper level what had been happening in Pakistan is that US-Pak relations based on the traditionally close friendship of Pentagon with the Generals commanding the Pak Army, were having to reckon with the growing strategic partnership of the US with India, the assiduous moves of Imran Khan's regime to make 'adjustments' with Islamic radical organisations that considered US-led West as their prime enemy, and the impact of Sino-Pak military alliance that was steadily strengthened by Imran Khan.

It is to be noted that the Sino-Pak axis primarily worked against India. It was rooted in the economic pact between the two countries symbolised by the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which cut through the territory of POK unauthorisedly ceded by Pakistan to China.

Pakistan Army, on the other hand, was a party to Pakistan's offer of mediatory help to the US in arranging peace talks between the US and Taliban at Doha for the purpose of



facilitating withdrawal of American troops from a messy battlefield that Afghanistan had been reduced to, and it cannot be denied that in spite of a perception of duplicitous approach of Pakistan towards radical Islamic outfits, a grateful American administration still looked upon the Pak Army as an ally in geopolitical terms and trusted it for ensuring that Taliban would not allow Afghan territory to be used for terror activity against the US.

Imran Khan was keen to have a strategic link with the Taliban Emirate that had come to power in Afghanistan for a second time -- and also wield an effective influence on it so that he could bring about a rapport between the Kabul regime and the Chinese leadership.

While the Sino-Pak alliance was gaining strength, Prime Minister Imran Khan created a serious wrinkle in Pak-US equilibrium by persistently running down the US led 'war on terror' in Afghanistan and declaring more than once that Pakistan had committed a grave mistake by supporting the US in that combat.

Imran Khan is a fundamentalist at heart, his party PTI is rooted in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa -- the home ground of Wahhabi Jihad in historical terms -- and his political thinking was shaped by his belief that the corrupt leaders of the opposition had 'sold out' the country to Americans.

He pushed Pakistan deeper into the Chinese camp, upheld the cause of Islamic radicals and secured Chinese support for the Kabul Emirate through a process of 'give and take' in which Pakistan would not encourage any questioning of China's treatment of its Muslim minority in Xinjiang and elsewhere.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Taliban shared a strong antipathy towards the US while Pakistan and China were together in opposing India's action of abolishing Article 370 on Kashmir.

The Sino-Pak axis worked against India in Afghanistan and helped Pakistan's objective of

retaining 'strategic depth' there. The US under the Joe Biden Presidency did not feel too bothered about Afghanistan after the mission of troop withdrawal from there was achieved, and kept up making only notional appeals to Pakistan to take action against Islamic extremists and radicals. The US policy makers were, however, not unaware of the geopolitical implications of China-Pak collusion that cut against the global American interests.

The Pak Army had no problem with Imran Khan's softness towards Jihadis or his siding with China in the growing Cold War-like bipolarity that was setting in between the US and China, so long as its own apple cart with America was not disturbed.

Imran Khan caused embarrassment to the Army precisely on that count and it is therefore not surprising that after the March 30 meeting of Gen Bajwa and the ISI head with Imran Khan at the latter's residence, the Army chief clarified that US-Pak relations were as good as ever. Imran Khan was also made to say that he had not named the US as the plotter of the opposition move to oust him, in his address to the nation on March 31. It is possible that Imran Khan, aware of the US antipathy towards his policies -- reflected in the disinclination of Joe Biden to call him after taking over as the US President -- magnified it into an American 'plan' to oust him. The Supreme Court of Pakistan, cognisant of the increasing isolation of Imran Khan, facilitated return to Constitutional normalcy in running the government and avoided doing anything that would create greater instability in the country. Imran Khan, once a favourite of the Army, became recalcitrant towards its chief as the political balance turned against the former. As Pakistan is possibly headed towards another mid-term poll, Imran Khan can be said to have altered its political profile and established new alignments -- which deserve

the notice of both the US and India.

The rise of radicalism in the Muslim world is seeing a group emerging in parallel to the pro-Saudi camp in OIC -- comprising Pakistan, Turkey and Malaysia -- that would not toe the American line, would look at Islamic radicals with their call for 'revivalism' of the faith of the 'golden period' of Islam with considerable sympathy and would seek geopolitical friendship with countries outside of the US sphere of influence.

What should add to American and Indian concerns is the fact that Pakistan had created a convergence between China and radical forces like Taliban because of their political opposition to the US and had in the process helped to enlarge the geopolitical expanse of China in its endeavour to become the second superpower. In the context of the developments in Ukraine, Imran Khan's visit to Moscow on February 24 for a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin -- with whom Xi Jinping was fully aligned -- was an attempt to enlarge Pakistan's international role not only as a peacekeeper in Afghanistan after the return of the Kabul Emirate, but also in the geopolitical divide that was deepening between the US and its NATO allies on one hand, and the China-Russia grouping on the other. India in any case has to look out for any aggressive acts of Pakistan -- working with or without operational collaboration with China -- on its borders and elsewhere in the days to come. At the same time, Pakistan -- regardless of a regime change there -- would press for talks on Kashmir and also continue speaking up for the issues pertaining to the Muslim minority of India. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's first statement after being sworn in was to allege that 'Kashmir valley was red with the Kashmiris blood', assert that Indo-Pak peace was dependent on a solution to the 'Kashmir dispute' being found and urge Prime Minister Modi to come forth for holding talks.

The successor regime in Pakistan may be the beneficiary once again of the US proclivity of making a distinction between 'good terrorists' and 'bad terrorists' as in the past, to draw a line between Islamic radicals and others -- India always found this unacceptable.

The Biden administration may go along with all of this adding to the challenge Indian diplomacy would face in handling the interplay of Indo-US and US-Pak relationships.

(The writer is a former Director of Intelligence Bureau. The views expressed are personal)

## international

## PML-N plans impeachment of Pak President Alvi

Islamabad | Agencies

The PML-N led government in Pakistan has announced plans to impeach President Arif Alvi, who has recently emerged as a major obstacle to the smooth sailing of the new government and blocked Pak Punjab Chief Minister-elect Hamza Shehbaz Sharif's oath-taking among other things, Samaa TV reported.

The possibility of impeachment was first raised by Pak Information Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb and then elaborated by Senator Afnanullah Khan.

Aurangzeb said that Alvi must know that he is the president of Pakistan and not the PTI. "If he wants to indulge in politics, he must



leave the office of the president," she said at her press conference.

Under the Constitution of Pakistan, the president could be impeached only by the two-thirds majority of the joint session of the National Assembly and Senate.

Later, PML-N's Senator

Afnanullah said that a total of 290 votes in a joint session were required to remove the president, and all parties in the ruling coalition have only 265 votes -- 25 short of the required number.

Afnanullah said that the ruling coalition will reach out to dissident PTI members to remove Arif Alvi, who he said has become PTI's president.

Imran Khan last week announced that the PTI would withdraw all its lawmakers from the National Assembly. Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri, from the PTI, accepted the resignations of 123 PTI members. However, experts claim that the resignations were not given in handwriting as the rules required and may be rejected by the ECP.

## 34 PEOPLE SHOT IN LOS ANGELES IN 'TROUBLING WEEK,' SAYS POLICE CHIEF

Los Angeles: A total of 34 people were shot in Los Angeles in a "troubling week," local media reported citing Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department Michel Moore.

The police chief told the Los Angeles Police Commission on Tuesday that 23 of the shootings happened within a "remarkably small area" last week in the second-largest city in the US, Xinhua news agency reported citing City News Service.

"The problem that we have throughout Los Angeles is that too many guns in too many hands," Moore was quoted as saying.

So far, 70 people have been shot in Los Angeles this month, which was 55 during the same period last year. There have been 107 homicides, till now, in 2022, while at this point last year, there were 109. While the number has decreased slightly in 2022, Moore said, it still represents a 37 per cent increase over a two-year period, City News Service reported. Violent crime has increased 7.1 per cent year-to-date, with 575 additional violent crimes reported, primarily aggravated assaults, street robberies, and commercial robberies, the news outlet reported, citing Moore.

## Pak court orders to make public details of gifts presented to Imran

Islamabad | Agencies

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday directed Deputy Attorney General Arshad Kayani to ensure the implementation of the Pakistan Information Commission's (PIC) order to publicise the details of the gifts presented to former Prime Minister Imran Khan by heads of states since he assumed office in August 2018, media reports said.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb issued the directive while hearing two petitions on the matter, one by a citizen seeking implementation of the PIC order and the other by the Cabinet Division challenging that order, Dawn reported.

Last year, the PIC had accepted an application on the matter and directed the Cabinet Division to



"provide the requested information about the gifts received by Prime Minister Imran Khan from foreign head of states, head of governments and other foreign dignitaries... description/specification of each gift, information about the

gifts retained by the PM and the rules under which gifts thus received are retained by him".

The Cabinet Division was told to share the required information within 10 working days and upload it on the official website as well.

Subsequently, the Cabinet Division challenged the PIC order in the Islamabad High Court, claiming that it was "illegal, without lawful authority". The then-government took the stance that the disclosure of any information related to Toshakhana jeopardises international ties.

During Wednesday's hearing, Justice Aurangzeb observed that the gifts belonged to the office of the Prime Minister and were not meant to be taken home, Dawn reported.

## Russia has zero confidence in Ukrainian negotiators

Moscow | Agencies

Moscow has no confidence in the Ukrainian negotiators, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

"Here it's not like 'trust and verify' -- here it's just 'verify', because there is no trust in these people for a long time," she commented on the negotiation process between Russia and Ukraine, RT reported.

Press Secretary of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Peskov, said that the dynamics of Russian-Ukrainian negotiations leave much to be desired.

"The special military operation continues. The President recently said that he was going according to plan," Peskov said. He added that at the expert level, contacts continue within the framework of the negotiation process with Ukraine.

"I also want to remind you of the president's words that, unfortunately, the Ukrainian



side does not demonstrate much consistency on the agreed points. The position often changes, and, of course, the dynamics of progress in the negotiation process leaves much to be desired," Peskov said.

State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin, commenting on the words of Ukraine President Vladimir Zelensky about his readiness to discuss with Russia the refusal to join NATO and the issue of ownership of Crimea, said that he wants to gain time. He stressed that simultaneously with these statements, the Ukrainian leader is turning to NATO for military support.

## Erdogan urges Israel to not allow 'provocations' against status of Al-Aqsa mosque

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan urged his Israeli counterpart Isaac Herzog not to allow "provocations and threats" against the status and spirituality of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Ankara | Agencies

Talking to Twitter, he said he held a phone call with Herzog to discuss regional issues and bilateral relations, especially the events caused by "some Israeli radical groups and security forces in Palestine", Xinhua news agency reported.

Erdogan said he told Herzog that he had been "very upset" about the Palestinians being injured or killed in the incidents in the West Bank and the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem since the beginning of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan in early April.

These incidents caused by radicals every year "hurt consciences and cause justifiable reactions" in the

entire Islamic world, he said.

The tensions between Israelis and Palestinians have been rising in the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the past weeks, especially on Friday, as the Jewish festival of Passover began.

Some 200 Palestinians have been injured in a recent wave of clashes in East Jerusalem, mainly at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, which is holy to both Muslims and Jews. Scores of Israeli have also died in a spate of deadly attacks in Israel.

The phone talk came amid the reconciliation efforts made by Israel and Turkey, whose ties were strained in 2010 when a Turkish-led flotilla attempting to break Israel's blockade on the Gaza Strip clashed with Israeli



forces, leaving 10 Turks on board dead. In 2018, Turkey expelled the Israeli Ambassador to Turkey after the US moved its embassy to the disputed holy city of Jerusalem.

On March 9, Herzog paid a visit to Ankara, during which Erdogan said he "clearly expressed Turkey's sensitivity on the issue of Palestine."

## Women's university in Pak imposes ban on smartphone use

Islamabad | Agencies

Women University Swabi, located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan has imposed a ban on the use of smartphones for all students, Samaa TV reported.

According to a notification issued by the provost of the university "Smart phones/touch screen mobile or tablets will not be allowed in the premises of Women University Swabi with effect from April 20, 2022 (Wednesday)."

It has been observed that students use extensive social media applications during university timings which affects their education, behaviour, and performance. Therefore, it is directed that students should not use mobile phones during university timings, the notification read.

In case of any violation, however, the university will take strict action against students and a fine of Rs 5,000 would be imposed. Universities across Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa often impose strict restrictions on female students, including dress codes and hair styles.

Last year in May, Peshawar University instructed the students to follow the new dress code and wear their chest cards at all times.

According to university officials, the dress code will ensure that students wear similar-looking clothes when they come to the campus.

On January 9, 2021 the Hazara University in Mansehra told women to wear 'shalwar kameez', along with a 'dupatta', 'chador', or 'abaya'. Heavy make-up, jewellery, and expensive handbags were banned under the new rules.

Men were told to wear either formal eastern or western attire. Students cannot wear cut, torn, or skin-fitted jeans, shorts, slippers, and accessories like earrings and chains.

The varsity made simple, formal hair and beard styles mandatory, Samaa TV reported.



# Will Maharashtra Impose COVID Restrictions Amid Rise in Cases? Tope Says Will Take Decision at Right Time

**Maharashtra Coronavirus Latest Update: Rajesh Tope said the Maharashtra government will definitely take the right decision at the right time depending on the prevailing situation.**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Even as the state is witnessing constant rise in COVID cases, Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope on Wednesday said there is no need to panic as the situation is under control. Talking about imposing COVID restrictions in the wake of rising cases, Tope said the state government is keeping a close tab on the present situation and it will take the 'right decision at the right time' based on the prevailing scenario. "We are keeping an eye on the situation. Cases are rising in the western countries, Europe, China and to some extent in Delhi. The Central



government, ICMR, our task force and health department are keeping a tab. We will definitely take the right decision at the right time depending on the prevailing situation," Tope said. The statement from Tope comes a day after the Centre advised Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana,

Maharashtra and Mizoram to maintain a strict watch and take pre-emptive action to control any emerging spread of coronavirus. As the wearing of masks is not mandatory in Maharashtra, the health minister urged all including senior citizens and persons with

comorbidities to cover their faces when in public as a precaution. Saying that the vaccination coverage in Maharashtra is good, Tope said the state government is encouraging inoculation of children in the age groups of 12 to 15 and 15 to 18 years. He also added that the state government is strictly following protocols such as testing the close and distant contacts of COVID-19 infected persons. Tuesday, Maharashtra reported 137 COVID-19 cases and three deaths, taking the state's tally to 78,76,041 and the toll to 1,47,830. Notably, the addition to the tally was more than double of the 59 cases detected on Monday, when the fatality count was zero. While Mumbai accounted for 85 of the 137 cases, the three deaths comprised two in Pune city and one in Parbhani. State health department data showed that Sindhadurg, Jalgaon, Nandurbar, Dhule, Jalna, Parbhani, Nanded, Osmanabad, Washim, Buldhana, Yavatmal, Bhandara and Wardha had no active case at present.

# 'MAHARASHTRA ON ALERT AFTER DELHI VIOLENCE, ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY PEACE STARTED': PATIL

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In the aftermath of the Jahangirpuri violence, Maharashtra has been put on 'alert mode' to tackle any untoward incidents to spoil the environment, Home Minister Dilip Walse Patil said on Wednesday. Patil revealed that police had been ordered to maintain the law and order situation in the state after attempts to 'destroy peace' began in the last few days. "After what happened in Delhi, we have inputs that there may be attempts to spoil the atmosphere in Maharashtra, we've ordered police to be on alert mode. It's our responsibility to maintain law and order in the state but in the last few days the work to destroy peace has started," said the Maharashtra Home Minister. The statement comes after the Maharashtra Cyber Cell on Tuesday proposed to block 22 accounts on different social media platforms for propagating communal disharmony. Of these 22

Patil revealed that police had been ordered to maintain the law and order situation in the state after attempts to 'destroy peace' began in the last few days.

accounts, 20 are on Twitter, while others are on Instagram and Facebook. Observing the current atmosphere of the country, 48 police stations under the cybercrime department are actively filtering out accounts that post objectionable and defamatory content, said Maharashtra Cyber Cell Superintendent of Police (SP) Sanjay Shintre. He also informed that several accounts on social media belong to fake organizations and individuals who are using morphed photos, editing, and deep fake technology to spread communal discord. Communal clashes have been witnessed across India over the past two weeks, first during Ram Navami on April 10 and later on Hanuman Jayanti on April 16, where processings were targeted by stone-pel-

ters. Violence was reported in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand during the Ram Navami processions, while clashes were reported from Delhi, Uttarakhand, and Andhra Pradesh during Hanuman Jayanti celebrations. The situation in Northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri continues to remain tense after the NDMC on Wednesday ran bulldozers over illegal constructions, evoking the SC to issue a status-quo on the action till it hears it again tomorrow. Political parties have come down heavily on the bulldozer crackdown, accusing the BJP of targeting minorities, even as the civic body confirms that action was taken against illegal encroachers and had nothing to do with the Shobha Yatra violence.

# NGT directs inspection of brick kilns in Maha's Sawantwadi-Dodamarg corridor

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Central and Maharashtra Pollution Control Boards (CPCB and MPCB) to inspect a plea alleging environmental violations by brick kilns in the Sawantwadi-Dodamarg corridor covering Palghar and Thane districts in Maharashtra.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Central and Maharashtra Pollution Control Boards (CPCB and MPCB) to inspect a plea alleging environmental violations by brick kilns in the Sawantwadi-Dodamarg corridor covering Palghar and Thane districts in Maharashtra. The principal bench of NGT, headed by its chairperson Adarsh Kumar Goel, was dealing with the plea against illegal mining of minor minerals and topsoil for the manufacture of bricks in these brick kilns. According to the applicant, the illegal operation of brick kilns and mining affects the environment, including the eco-sensitive zone of Tungreshwar Wildlife Sanctuary and Tansa River Valley and its floodplains. The applicant has given coordinates of the erring brick kilns and photographs. It is also stated that most of the brick kilns are close to the floodplains and they also extract groundwater illegally, without requisite NOC from

the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA). The brick kilns also use prohibited fuel. Removal of topsoil adversely affects land fertility and lowers clay content. It also affects the forests of Thane Forest Division, the petition read. Considering the plea, the bench said: "We find merit in the stand of the applicant that brick kilns can be allowed only subject to the conditions as having been laid down by the Supreme Court. Further, in view of ESZ Notification dated September 11, 2019, a brick kiln at a prohibited distance from ESZ in terms of the said Notification cannot be allowed." "If any brick kilns violate the above conditions and other laid down norms, including illegal extraction of groundwater, the state PCB must close the same. CPCB and state PCB must conduct inspections in this regard," the green court directed. Disposing of the application, the tribunal also asked the MPCB to fix accountability for past violations of the polluter pays principle, following due process.

# Bar Association seeks suo moto contempt proceedings against Thackeray, Raut

The Indian Bar Association (IBA) has filed a public interest litigation seeking contempt of court proceedings against several political bigwigs in Maharashtra for certain alleged utterances pertaining to the judiciary, here on Wednesday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian Bar Association (IBA) has filed a public interest litigation seeking contempt of court proceedings against several political bigwigs in Maharashtra for certain alleged utterances pertaining to the judiciary, here on Wednesday. The respondents named are -- Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, his wife Rashmi Thackeray, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, state Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil, Sena MP Sanjay Raut, who is the Working Executive Editor of 'Saamana' Group of publications, Vivek Kadam, publisher and others. IBA Working President Ishwarlal S. Agarwal contended that the respondents are involved in a campaign to scandalise the entire judicial system only because judgments rendered by the courts do not suit them. "Their plans to keep their opponents in jail or to cause them harassment by misuse of power and

police machinery are failed due to the orders of this Court and the Supreme Court," Agarwal added. The plea said that on February 8, 2021, Raut had published an edit in the 'Saamana', containing "many sarcastic, filthy, scandalous, derogatory and highly defamatory statements" seeking to convey a public impression of how "many judges are acting as an agent of the political parties". "There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the judiciary of the country is under the heel (shoes) of the ruling party," said the PIL, quoting the 'Saamana' edit. Owing to such statements by the respondents, "the honest judges are under obvious tremendous pressure that there every order being scanned" and defamed by the (respondents) if they pass any order against the state or in favour of any Bharatiya Janata Party leader even if his case is legally sound and he is honest," said the PIL. Referring to another article by Raut in December 2020 in which he



alleged that the judiciary is under the control of the Central government and acting to protect only those who are 'pro-government', or helped only its 'blue-eyed boys' and the court refused to protect the personal liberty of the citizen who are against the Centre. In order to avoid an onslaught, attack on the judges and judiciary in general, and to ensure that the foundation of an impartial and independent judiciary is not shaken or eroded in the public minds, the PIL sought initiation of contempt proceedings against the

respondents. The PIL urged suo moto cognizance of contempt committed by the respondents which can attract a maximum punishment of six months simple jail term and/or fine, to cancel the permission (registration) of 'Saamana' Group of newspapers, and those holding Constitutional posts should be removed. Agarwal, 49, further said that the petition -- filed through Advocate Abhishek N. Mishra -- should be treated as his 'dying declaration' and sought security for himself, his lawyers and witnesses.

# LAWYER BLEW OFF MSRTC STAFFERS' MONIES TO BUY PROPERTIES, CAR

In a shock revelation, the prosecution informed a Mumbai court details about how lawyer Gunratan Sadavarte allegedly blew off nearly Rs 2 crore collected from the employees of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC), here on Tuesday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a shock revelation, the prosecution informed a Mumbai court details about how lawyer Gunratan Sadavarte allegedly blew off nearly Rs 2 crore collected from the employees of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC), here on Tuesday. The fresh disclosures came during the hearing of a police application seeking fresh police custody for Sadavarte -- currently in judicial custody, and the matter has been posted for Wednesday for arguments. Making a forceful plea for Sadavarte's police remand, Special Public Prosecutor Pradip Gharat said that a currency note counting machine has been recovered from the

accused lawyer's home, some three dozen incriminating documents and a green register detailing the manner in which the money would be collected from MSRTC's 250 bus depots in the state. Sadavarte was arrested soon after the April 8 attack on the residence of Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar along with over 115 MSRTC staffers and others from Pune and Nagpur involved in the incident. Last week, Gharat made the sensational claim in the court of how Sadavarte allegedly collected over Rs 2 crore from around 95,000 MSRTC employees though he conveyed an impression that he was fighting their case free of cost. The police investigations point to Sadavarte allegedly investing the col-

lected monies in buying prime properties in Parel and Byculla besides a high-end vehicle worth around Rs 23 lakh. As per the probe, around Rs 85 lakh was counted on the currency counting machine, an online bank payment was made to a Kerala dealer for the luxury vehicle which was delivered recently. He also acquired the two Mumbai properties in the past few months which needed to be further investigated and hence his extended remand was required, SPP Gharat argued in the court. The police also need to ascertain how the money collected from the MSRTC employees was actually utilised/diverted since at least one property mentions the name of the

entire Sadavarte family. In a related development, as per the orders of Bombay High Court, another group of around 300 MSRTC employees returned to work in Sangli -- after remaining on strike from October 28, 2021 demanding a pay hike and merger of the transport entity with the state government. While rejecting the merger demand, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government has warned that those staffers who took part in the attacks at the Pawar home would face dismissal from service, sending shockwaves among the MSRTC employees. Meanwhile, a Kolhapur court has kept the anticipatory bail plea of Sadavarte -- who is facing multiple cases in different parts of Maharashtra -- for hearing on April 21.

# Gupshup acquires Bengaluru-based conversational AI provider AskSid

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Leading conversational messaging platform Gupshup on Wednesday announced that it has acquired conversational AI provider AskSid that will strengthen Gupshup's AI-powered conversational solutions for e-commerce, retail and consumer goods industries. Bengaluru-based AskSid's full-stack AI solution including the Retail AI brain, strengthens Gupshup's customer experience (CX) offerings and will help make the entire shopping journey -- across pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase phases -- fully conversational. "Conversational commerce is about to transform shopping, both online and offline. Gupshup is building the most comprehensive conversational commerce solution and AskSid's deep-domain AI offering will help us bring even more advanced capa-

bilities to e-commerce and retail businesses worldwide," Beerud Sheth, Co-founder and CEO, Gupshup, said in a statement. "We welcome the AskSid team onboard and look forward to collaborating with major brands across the world to enable next-gen shopping experiences," Sheth added. AskSid is helping many global brands like AkzoNobel, Danone, Wolford, Akris and Himalaya Wellness deliver impactful shopping experiences to customers through AI-powered conversations, driving faster sales. The tech startup has operations in over 25 countries and supports over 100 languages. By automating 92 per cent of support conversations with a self-service model, AskSid customers have reported an average 25 per cent reduction in operational expenditure, while boosting order conversion rate by 30 per cent.



# CBI NABS PUNE CENTRAL GST SUPERINTENDENT FOR GRAFT

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday arrested a Central GST-1 Superintendent, based in Baramati in Maharashtra's Pune district, for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 10,000 from a complainant.



Superintendent Kuldeepak Sharma had demanded a bribe of Rs 20,000 to settle a labour contract matter. After negotiations with the complainant, Sharma's demand came down to Rs 10,000 for doing the work. Following the victim's complaint, the CBI sleuths laid a trap and nabbed Sharma red-handed as he accepted the Rs 10,000 bribe from the complainant. The CBI also carried out raids at his office and home premises in Baramati and recovered several incriminating documents and other items. He will be produced later before the Special CBI Court in Pune for remand, said officials.

Team Absolute | Pune

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday arrested a Central GST-1 Superintendent, based in Baramati in Maharashtra's Pune district, for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 10,000 from a complainant. The CBI said it had registered a case based on the complaint which alleged that the Central GST-1

# 6TH SCORPENE SUBMARINE 'VAGSHEER' LAUNCHED IN MUMBAI

'Vagsheer', the state of the art 6th Scorpene submarine under Project-75 was launched at the Mazagaon Docks on Wednesday as part of the 'Make In India' initiative.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Vagsheer', the state of the art 6th Scorpene submarine under Project-75 was launched at the Mazagaon Docks on Wednesday as part of the 'Make In India' initiative. The submarine was launched by Veena A. Kumar, wife of the Chief Guest and Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar in the presence of Mumbai South MP Arvind Sawant, Western Naval Command chief, Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, Vice Admiral S. N. Ghormade, Mazagaon Docks Ltd Chairman cum Managing Director Vice Admiral Narayan Prasad (retd) and other senior dignitaries and officials. Addressing the media, Kumar said that now 'Vagsheer'



will under rigorous sea trials for over a year before she will be commissioned into the Indian Navy as a fully combat worthy submarine. It is named after the Sand Fish, a deadly deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean, said

officials. The first submarine 'Vagsheer', of Russia, was commissioned into the Indian Navy in December 1974 and served till April 1997. In true nautical traditions, she has been reincarnated by the same name to the new sub-

marine built by MDL to once again guard the vast maritime borders and interests of India. The 'Vagsheer' is provided with the state of the art features utilised in all the Scorpene Class submarines with superior stealth features. These include advanced acoustic absorption techniques, low radiated noise levels, hydro-dynamically optimised shape, the ability to launch a crippling attack on the enemy using precision-guided weapons, etc. She can with use both torpedoes and tube launched anti-ship missiles while underwater or on surface. The stealth feature of this potent vessel is enhanced by the special attention to her characteristic underwater sig-

natures, which give her invulnerability unmatched by most submarines. The Scorpene Class submarines can undertake multifarious missions like anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine-laying, area surveillance, and more. It has been designed to operate in all theatres of operations, showcasing interoperability with other components of a naval task forces, making her a potent platform and marking a transformational shift in submarine operations. Prior to 'Vagsheer' four other submarines built by MDL - 'Kalvari', 'Khanderi', 'Karanj', and 'Vela' have been commissioned into the Indian Navy while the fifth 'Vagiri' is undergoing sea-phase trials.



# IT WAS A GUT PUNCH: RACHEL ZEGLER

Los Angeles | Agencies

The actor responded at the time by saying he has "never and would never assault anyone" and noting that he had a "brief, legal and entirely consensual relationship" with his accuser.

Elgort went on to star with Zegler in Steven Spielberg's 'West Side Story', which opened in theatres in December 2021.

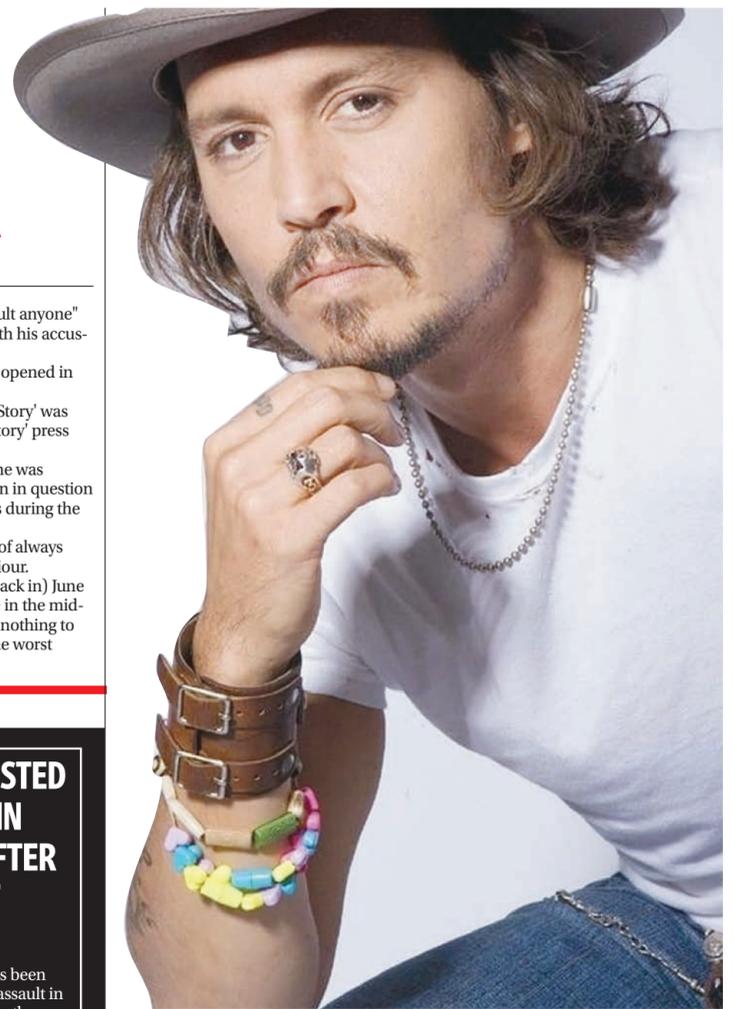
Magazine writer Adrienne Gaffney observed that the female cast of 'West Side Story' was frequently asked to speak on Elgort's alleged actions throughout the 'West Side Story' press tour.

Zegler responded to the observation by saying she did not understand why she was always on the receiving end of Elgort-related questions "even though the person in question was present". Elgort participated in many group panels during the press tour.

"It was a real gut punch, honestly," Zegler said of always being asked to answer for Elgort's alleged behaviour.

"I reverted back to this brain space I was in (back in) June of 2020, when the accusation surfaced. We were in the middle of the first wave of lockdown, and there was nothing to do but doom-scroll. Those days were some of the worst mental health days I've ever had."

Actress Rachel Zegler spoke critically to Elle magazine about how her press tour for 'West Side Story' was often overtaken by questions regarding Ansel Elgort's alleged sexual assault. Elgort was accused in June 2020 of sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl in 2014, reports 'Variety'.



## Johnny Depp says Amber 'grossly embellished' drug use by him

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Johnny Depp accused Amber Heard of giving "grossly embellished" accounts of his substance abuse while giving evidence.

The 58-year-old actor is suing his ex-wife for defamation over a Washington Post op-ed she wrote, in which she referred to herself as a victim of domestic violence, and she has counter sued her former spouse, with the legal battle currently taking place in Virginia.

On Tuesday, Depp took the stand at Fairfax County Courthouse, and though he admitted to developing an addiction to pain medication following an injury on the set of 'Pirates of the Caribbean 4', taking his mother's "nerve pills" from the age of just 11, and indulging in various substances over the years to "numb myself of the ghosts, the wraiths that were still with me from my youth", he insisted the 'Aquaman' star had made some "plainly false" allegations relating to his use of drugs and alcohol.

Highlighting various long periods of sobriety over the years and explaining how he had detoxed from the prescription drugs, he told the court: "The characterisation of my 'substance abuse' that's been delivered by Ms. Heard is grossly embellished. 'And I'm sorry to say, but a lot of it is just plainly false. I think that it was an easy target for her to hit. Because once you've trusted somebody for a certain amount of years, and you've told them all the secrets of your life, that information can of course be used against you," reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The actor also looked back on the early days of his relationship with Amber and admitted she seemed "too good to be true", though he was aware of things that "might be a bit of a dilemma at some point".

## EZRA MILLER ARRESTED OVER ASSAULT IN HAWAII, WEEKS AFTER FIRST ARREST

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Ezra Miller has been arrested for second-degree assault in Hawaii, less than four weeks after the 'Flash' and 'Fantastic Beasts' star was arrested for disorderly conduct and harassment in Hilo, Hawaii.



According to 'Variety', Miller was arrested early Tuesday morning after an incident at a private residence in Pahoehoe. Patrol officers responded to a report of an assault that occurred at a get-together in the Leilani Estates subdivision in lower Puna.

According to the Hawaii Police Department, Miller allegedly became irate after being asked to leave and threw a chair, striking a 26-year-old woman on the forehead and resulting in an approximate half-inch cut. The woman refused treatment for the injury.

Police arrested Miller at 1.30 a.m. after the actor was located on the roadway during a traffic stop at the intersection of Highway 130 and Kukula Street in Keaau.

Miller was released at 4.05 a.m. after conferring with the County Prosecutor's Office, pending further investigation. The investigation remains active, reports 'Variety'.

## CAMILA CABELLO AUDITIONED FOR 'X FACTOR' TO MEET HARRY STYLES



Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Camila Cabello shot to fame after auditioning for the talent show 'X Factor' in 2012, subsequently landing a place in Fifth Harmony, and she revealed the deciding factor in her trying out for the programme was her crush on the 'As It Was' hitmaker Harry Styles, who himself had got his big break in 2010 when he was put in One Direction on the UK version of the competition.

Speaking to James Corden during the 'Carpool Karaoke' segment of 'The Late Late show', Cabello said: "I was like, Well, One Direction will be at 'X Factor'. I don't know if they'll be at 'The Voice', so let me audition for 'X Factor'." "Literally, this is really embarrassing, and I can only say this because obviously that was like, 10 years ago, but I literally was like, I'm auditioning for X Factor because I will marry Harry Styles. Like, I will." I really believed that at the time. "I didn't think we were going to get married but I was like, I'm gonna audition for 'X Factor', we're gonna meet and I'm gonna become a singer and we'll probably fall in love! That's the first time I've ever confessed the real intention behind me auditioning for 'X Factor!'"

## PAMELA ANDERSON SPEAKS UP FOR PETA, SENDS METHANE OFFSET KITS TO MPS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Hollywood star Pamela Anderson has joined forces with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India to send methane offset starter kits to members of parliament of India. The kits consist of vegan foods and a Gowma vegan leather card holder which are said to reduce methane emissions. Anderson has also penned a letter on PETA India's behalf urging the legislators to eat only eco-friendly vegan foods, ditch leather, and promote animal-free living in their constituencies. She writes, "I've loved India ever since I participated in Bigg Boss and adopted my beloved dog companion Pyari, who was found at a construction site in Mumbai." "So, it worries me that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has warned India will suffer from more frequent and intense heat waves, severe rainfall, and other extreme weather conditions due to climate change if global emission trends don't change", she added. Anderson points out that the United Nations has warned that a global shift towards animal-free eating is necessary to combat the worst effects of the climate catastrophe and that animal agriculture is responsible for nearly one-fifth of all human-induced greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to harming the planet past the point of no return, the meat, egg, dairy, and leather industries are abysmally cruel to animals, who are forced to spend miserable lives in intensive confinement before their throats are slit in slaughterhouses.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Actors Ben Affleck and Matt Damon are re-teaming on a new feature film, which will centre on the sports marketing executive who relentlessly pursued basketball legend Michael Jordan in the mid-1980s.

The film is from Amazon Studios, Skydance Sports and Mandalay Pictures and Affleck will direct, star and co-write, reports 'Variety'. The 'Argo' director will play Nike co-founder and billionaire Phil Knight. Damon will star as Sonny Vaccaro - whose pursuit of Jordan to partner with the shoe brand seemed impossible at the time, but would become the most significant relationship between an athletic brand and player in the global, multi-billion-dollar sneaker industry. The film will follow Vaccaro's conquest and introduce audiences to Jordan's parents, in particular his powerful and dynamic mother, as well as former coaches, advisors, friends and those close to Jordan, reports 'Variety'. The collaboration marks the first time Affleck will direct Damon. Both men will do a pass on Alex Convery's original script, which appeared on the 2021 Black List.

Affleck just appeared in the Hulu viral sensation 'Deep Water', and is reported to appear in the upcoming DC Films project 'The Flash' as Batman. Damon will next appear as one of many notable actors in Christopher Nolan's 'Oppenheimer' from Universal Pictures. Both Affleck and Damon are producers on the biblical film 'Apostle Paul' starring Hugh Jackman.

Ben Affleck, Matt Damon to star in film about Nike's quest to sign Michael Jordan

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Alessandra Ambrósio



## IPL 2022: DELHI THRASH PUNJAB BY 9 WICKETS

Mumbai | Agencies

In the run-up to their match against Punjab Kings, Delhi Capitals didn't get adequate practice. They had to spend time in hotel rooms, put through rounds of testing, saw a change of venues and six members of their camp, including Mitchell Marsh and then Tim Seifert testing positive for Covid-19 on the morning of the match, bringing a cloud of uncertainty over them taking the field for a crucial game.

In spite of all the off-field troubles, Delhi set aside feelings of confusion as well as nervousness to put up a sterling all-round performance, save for some fielding fumbles, to thrash Punjab Kings by nine wickets at the Brabourne Stadium on Wednesday. For everything that went wrong for them off-field, every single thing, right from the toss to scoring the winning run worked in Delhi's favour.

After the bowlers put up an impressive show to bowl out Punjab for just 115, David Warner and Prithvi Shaw's fourth consecutive fifty-plus stand, leading to an opening partnership of 83, made short work of the chase, complet-



### Brief scores:

Punjab Kings 115 all out in 20 overs (Jitesh Sharma 32, Mayank Agarwal 24; Axar Patel 2/10, Lalit Yadav 2/11) lost to Delhi Capitals 119/1 in 10.3 overs (David Warner 60 not out, Prithvi Shaw 41; Rahul Chahar 1/21) by nine wickets

ed with 57 balls to spare. Punjab would rue their aggressive batting approach causing them to self-implode spectacularly to register the lowest score of IPL 2022. Warner and Shaw came out all guns blazing by bringing up the half-century of their partnership in 3.3 overs, the fastest fifty by a team in IPL 2022. Shaw had initial difficulty against in-swing from Vaibhav Arora but took three boundaries in the opening over.

The dynamic duo then took a boundary each off Kagiso Rabada to pile more misery on Punjab. Arora came under further attack as Warner carted him for

back-to-back boundaries while Shaw swung him hard over long-on for six. Warner took two more boundaries off Rabada before amassing 17 runs with Shaw off Arshdeep Singh's opening over to effectively seal the fate of the match in power-play.

Earlier, from 33/0 in 3.3 overs, Punjab's batting went nowhere as Axar Patel, Khaleel Ahmed, Kuldeep Yadav and Mustafizur Rahman picked two wickets each. Mayank Agarwal began the innings with an upish cut through point off Shardul Thakur. He then picked three more fours off Thakur's second over, two on the off-side followed by a leg glance as Punjab raced to 27/0 in three overs. Punjab were dealt with another big blow in power-play when Liam Livingstone danced down the pitch to loft straight down the ground but missed the ball completely and was stumped by Pant off Axar. In the next over, Jonny Bairstow pulled a short ball from Ahmed straight to long leg. Jitesh Sharma tried to steady Punjab's innings with some boundaries off Ahmed, Rahman and Kuldeep. But he was trapped lbw on 32 off 23 balls by Axar while moving across to sweep.

Malappuram | Agencies

A dominant Punjab ran riot against Rajasthan, thrashing them 4-0 in the Group A clash of the 75th National Football Championship for the Santosh Trophy at the Kottapadi Stadium in Malappuram here on Wednesday.

Three second-half strikes which included a brace from substitute Tarun Slathia meant Punjab picked up their first win of the tournament.

Rajasthan made the brighter start of the two. Amit Godara's attempt from outside the box in the second minute was saved by a diving Harpreet Singh. The corner led to another attempt from outside the box, this time from youngster Sahil Khan, but the goalkeeper once again thwarted the attempt.

Those two quick fire attempts woke up the Punjab



players who then went on to boss the remainder of the first-half. Their first chance fell to Manvir Singh who drifted in from the left. A chipped pass was expertly controlled by the winger but brave goalkeeping from

Rajasthan's Gajraj Singh ensured it remained goalless.

The second half was completely one-way traffic as Punjab's players had numerous chances to increase their lead. The insurance goal came via a spot-kick in the

63rd minute. Manvir Singh cut in from the left and was tripped inside the box by Trilok Lohar. Skipper Parmjit Singh stepped up and coolly sent the goalkeeper the wrong way to give Punjab a 2-0 lead.

The goal seemed to kill the little resistance the Rajasthan players were putting in. Substitute Tarun Slathia then came on and made an immediate impact. He latched onto a lofted ball, held the defender at bay and swept the ball past Gajraj using his left foot to triple the advantage.

The win meant Punjab roared back into contention in Group A. They will gain a lot of confidence from this victory and it will be needed when they face home side Kerala on Friday. For Rajasthan, it was a day to forget and they will need to get back in the right frame of mind ahead of their clash against West Bengal on Sunday.

## Asian Wrestling

### India's Greco-Roman contingent finishes campaign with five medals

Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia) | Agencies

Harpreet Singh and Sachin Sahrawat bagged a bronze each as Indian Greco-Roman wrestlers concluded their campaign at the Asian Wrestling Championships 2022 with five medals, here on Wednesday.

A former Asian Championships silver medalist, Harpreet defeated Korea's Sejin Yang 4-2 in the quarter-final before going down to Iran's Rasoul Sadegh Garmisiri in the semis by fall

in the 82 kg weight category. In the bronze medal match, Harpreet was declared the winner after Jafar Khan from Qatar suffered an injury.

Meanwhile, the remaining four Greco-Roman wrestlers -- Gyanender (60kg), Sachin Sahrawat (67kg), Vikas (72kg), and Ravi (97kg) - in action on Wednesday, lost in the quarter-finals.

Earlier on Tuesday, three Greco-Roman wrestlers - Sunil Kumar (87kg), Arjun Halakurki (55kg) and Neeraj (63kg) - had won bronze medals for India in their respective weight divisions,

an olympics.com report said. Overall, 10 Indian Greco-Roman wrestlers participated in the continental showpiece. At the last edition, Indian Greco-Roman wrestlers failed to win any medals.

Indian women's freestyle wrestlers will begin their campaign at the ongoing Asian Wrestling Championships on Thursday. On the other hand, Indian men's freestyle wrestlers, including Tokyo Olympic medallists Ravi Kumar Dahiya and Bajrang Punia, will take the mat on Saturday.

## MADRID OPEN: NAOMI OSAKA, MONICA PUIG RECEIVE WILDCARDS

Madrid | Agencies

The former World No 1 Osaka was a quarterfinalist at the WTA 1000 tournament in 2019. After playing a limited number of matches in 2021 while dealing with mental health struggles, the 24-year-old gave notice of her resurgence with a run to the Miami final last month.

Following her loss to Iga Swiatek there, Osaka declared her intention of committing to the clay season and using that as a springboard to chase down a return to No 1.

The remaining three main-draw wildcards have been awarded to rising teenage talents: Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk (19 year), China's Zheng Qinwen (19 year) and the Czech Republic's Linda Fruhvirtova (16 year), a WTA report said on Wednesday.

Four-time major champion Japan's Naomi Osaka and former Olympic gold medalist Puerto Rican Monica Puig are among the five players who have received main-draw wildcards for the 2022 Madrid Open, which begins on April 28.

Kostyuk debuted in the Top 50 at the end of 2021 after reaching three semifinals on the WTA Tour that season, while Zheng has rocketed into the Top 100 this year and collected a notable victory over Sloane Stephens in Charleston.

Meanwhile, Fruhvirtova turned heads in Miami by reaching the fourth round as a wildcard ranked No.279, upsetting Elise Mertens and Victoria Azarenka en route.



### Vijayveer Sidhu wins men's Rapid-Fire Pistol T4 trials, Rhythm Sangwan bags double gold



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Punjab's Vijayveer Sidhu won the men's 25M Rapid Fire Pistol (RFP) T4 trials on day six of the National Selection Trial 3 & 4 for Pistol events, while Haryana's Rhythm Sangwan bagged a double gold at Dr Karni Singh

Shooting Range here on Wednesday.

Vijayveer fought off a spirited challenge from India international Anish Bhanwala and Adarsh Singh to win the gold medal match with 32 hits to his name. Anish and Adarsh, both representing Haryana came second and third with 28 and

21 hits to their name respectively. Rhythm Sangwan won both the Women's and junior women's 25M RFP T4 trials, shooting 569 to top the respective fields. Also winning gold on the day was Udhayveer Sidhu of Punjab who won the junior men's 25M RFP T4 competition.

### WIMBLEDON 2022: RUSSIAN, BELARUSIAN PLAYERS BANNED FROM TOURNAMENT

London | Agencies

Russian and Belarusian players will not be allowed to compete at Wimbledon 2022 because of the invasion of Ukraine, the organisers confirmed in a statement on Wednesday.

With this decision, men's world number two Daniil Medvedev of Russia and women's world number four Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus are the highest-ranked players to be affected. Ian Hewitt, Chairman of the All England Club, said that in the circumstances of such unjustified and unprecedented military aggression by Russia, it would be unacceptable for the Russian regime to derive any benefits from the involvement of Russian or Belarusian players with 'The Championships'.

With this decision, men's world number two Daniil Medvedev of Russia and women's world number four Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus are the highest-ranked players to be affected. However, Ian Hewitt said that if circumstances change materially between now and June, we will consider and respond accordingly.



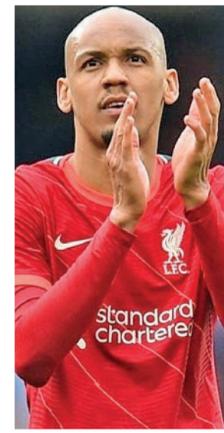
### Manchester United win is great for confidence, says Fabinho

London | Agencies

Liverpool's midfielder Fabinho believes his side's 4-0 win over Manchester United can provide the team added confidence in their hunt for the quadruple.

Liverpool are still in with a chance of the Quadruple having beaten Man City to reach the FA Cup final, with the Carabao Cup long secured and the Premier League and Champions League still in play.

Liverpool followed up their 5-0 victory at Old Trafford earlier in the season with another memorable display against their fierce rivals on



Tuesday night. Luis Diaz's fifth-minute goal set them on their way and he was joined on the scoresheet by Sadio Mane and Mohamed Salah, whose brace took his season total to 30. Fabinho felt there were multiple positives to take from the team's work against United. "Now, we play just important games. Of course the three points is always important, but we want to play good football, we want to play our best football, to be on the highest level of intensity, play with quality on the ball because we have a lot of quality in this team," he told Liverpoolfc.com.

### Proposal emerges to make county cricket a multi-format tournament: Report

London | Agencies

County cricket could see a radical change -- including the 18 sides competing across three formats to crown the overall champion -- as England great Andrew Strauss is planning a major shake-up of domestic cricket following the Test side's Ashes debacle.

Strauss, who was England cricket's managing director on an interim basis before Rob Key took over recently, will be conducting a "high performance review" of domestic cricket, and a report in [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk) said that it has emerged that a "(multi)-format similar to that used to decide the women's Ashes could be put in place to decide the county champions".

The report said that if such a thing happens, it would be "the most radical changes to English cricket since the one-day game's launch in 1963, with the merger of the County Championship, One-Day Cup and T20 Blast in a format similar to that used to decide the women's Ashes".

Strauss's high-performance review is scheduled to begin next month following Rob Key being appointed managing director of



England men's cricket this week. Strauss' review would include reviewing of the "whole professional game" with emphasis being on a red-ball reset by improving the standard of Championship cricket.

Former England Test captain Joe Root, who stepped down recently following series losses in Australia and the Caribbean, has been critical of the County system, saying, "Anyone that's coming into this Test team at the minute is doing it in spite of county cricket, not because of county cricket. There are definitely things that need to change."

### Mumbai Indians looking for collective effort to get off the mark: Jaydev Unadkat

Mumbai Indians left-arm pacer Jaydev Unadkat has called for a "collective effort" from the five-time champions to get their first win of IPL 2022 ahead of their match against defending champions Chennai Super Kings on Thursday.

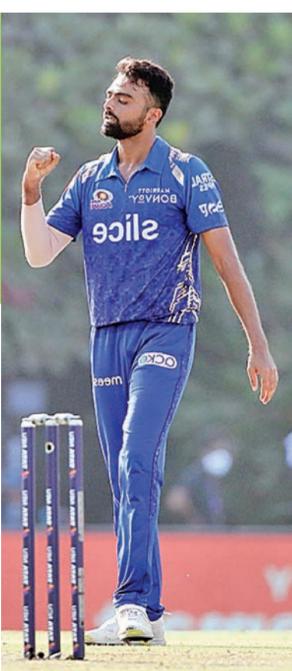
Mumbai | Agencies

The ongoing tournament has been far from ideal for Mumbai, who are at the bottom of the points table with six defeats in as many matches while Chennai have just one win in six games. The Rohit Sharma-led side need to win every single match, starting from the one against Chennai at the DY Patil Stadium, to avoid an early exit from IPL 2022.

"There has to be a collective effort and that is what we are looking for. At the moment, there's no point of looking at the bigger picture to be honest. The stage that we are in, we are just looking to put some things right, the missing pieces right first and just to get off the mark. Once we do that, the other things follow," said Unadkat in pre-match virtual press conference.

Unadkat, who has picked four wickets in the tournament, feels Mumbai have to think short-term instead of looking at the bigger picture. "So for now, rather than looking at the bigger picture and looking at 'We have to win eight out of eight' or something like that, it's about winning that one game. How we're going to do a couple of things differently maybe, from what we did in the last few games. We were close, but not over the line, so maybe just rectify those things first."

Amongst the problem areas for Mumbai in bowling, the death overs phase has been a concern. In IPL 2022, Mumbai have the worst economy rate amongst all teams, at 13.30. Unadkat admitted that death overs bowling has been a problem area for Mumbai in IPL



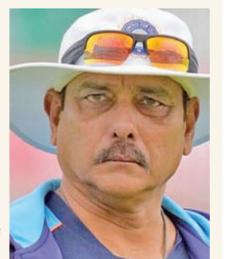
2022 due to them not being able to click as a bowling unit.

### VIRAT KOHLI SHOULD TAKE A BREAK FROM CRICKET TO OVERCOME LEAN PATCH: RAVI SHASTRI

Mumbai: Former India men's cricket team chief coach Ravi Shastri has opined that Virat Kohli should take a break from the sport in order to overcome his lean patch.

Kohli, the former India skipper in all three formats, stepped down from captaincy roles last year. He has not scored a century in any format since November 2019. He has had an equally dismal time in the ongoing Indian Premier League with just 119 runs in seven matches at an average of 19.83.

On Tuesday, Royal Challengers Bangalore's Kohli was out first ball in the IPL game against Lucknow Super Giants at the DY Patil Stadium, though skipper Faf du Plessis played an absolutely flawless 96-run innings to guide his team to victory. With that disappointing outing in the middle, Kohli set a dubious record, going 100 competitive games without a century. Kohli has now gone 17 Tests, 21 ODIs, 25 T20Is, and 37 IPL matches without reaching the three-figure mark, according to a tweet put out by cricket statistician Mahzer Arshad. India are set to travel to England for a one-off Test in July, to complete their prematurely abandoned WTC23 series last year, and Shastri, who worked closely with Kohli during his time as India's head coach, believes the former captain is "overcooked" and is in need of a break. "I am going straight to the main guy here. Virat Kohli is overcooked. If anyone needs a break, it's him," Shastri said on the Star Sports show on Tuesday, after Kohli's first-ball duck. Kohli last scored a century in the Kolkata Test in 2019, against Bangladesh.





## Rakul Preet Singh:

# Being an actor has still not settled in my head

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rakul Preet Singh, who currently awaits the release of her upcoming film 'Runway 34', has talked about her journey in acting in films. She said that being an actor has still not settled in her head and that she thinks she has not achieved a lot yet. The 31-year-old actress made her Telugu and Tamil debut with the bilingual 'Keratom' in 2011. She has gained stardom in Telugu and Tamil cinema with successful films including 'Venkatadri Express', 'Loukyam', 'Pandaga Chesko', 'Sarrainodu', 'Dhruva', 'Rarandoi Vedula Chudham', 'Spyder' and

'Theeran Adhigaaram Ondru'. Rakul made her Hindi film debut in 2014 with 'Yaariyan' and tasted success with 'De De Pyaar De' in 2019.

Talking about her 11 year acting journey, Rakul in a conversation with IANS said: "I don't look back to begin with because I don't think there is a point in looking back. I am not a person who evaluates 'oh I have come so far' because I still don't think I have achieved a lot. I have still a lot more to do."

"Me being an actor has still not settled in my head and I don't want it to settle because I want myself to keep craving for more."

Rakul calls herself a "very greedy actor, who wants to do more."



## As my father hugged me, I burst into tears: Ram Charan

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Ram Charan, who broke into the pan-India scene with Rajamouli's 'RRR', is currently promoting his next film, 'Acharya'.

In a recent candid conversation with one of the scribes, the 'Rangasthalam' actor revealed how much he treasured his time spent with his father, Megastar Chiranjeevi while filming 'Acharya'.



Ram Charan, who had the opportunity to spend every minute of the film's production with his father, revealed how emotional he was at one point.

The 'Magadheera' actor shared, "Dad and I used to eat dinner together and then get up the next day to start working out together."

"We then began to work on the sets, before wrapping up the shooting portion and returning home together. I had a

feeling I needed to cherish these moments but couldn't express it," Ram Charan said.

After a few days of working together, Chiranjeevi reportedly opened up to Charan and said, "We will never be able to relive these moments, Charan. What a blessing it is to be on the same journey!! I intend to make the most of this situation." "I was baffled. I was crying as I hugged him", Ram Charan disclosed.



## ROCKING STAR YASH TAKES A BREAK WITH FAMILY

Team Absolute | Bengaluru

Kannada superstar Yash, who attained pan-India stardom after massive success of 'KGF: Chapter 1' and 'KGF: Chapter 2', has chosen to take a break with his family after four years of hectic schedule.

Yash, a complete family man, is a caring husband to his actress wife Radhika Pandit and a dear father to his two children. The duo often shares their picture perfect family photos which steal the hearts of their fans. Radhika Pandit has shared a beach picture of Yash playing with his two kids - daughter Arya and son Yathrav. The fans loved the adorable moments of the actor with his kids.



## RUPESH KATARIA: I ENJOY A HECTIC BUT WORTHY LIFESTYLE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Rupesh Kataria, who is currently seen playing an antagonist, Munna Doshi in TV show 'Tera Mera Saath Rahe', might portray grey shaded characters but in real life he is opposite to his on screen personality. He says: "I enjoy essaying negative characters. As it gives you a lot of scope to showcase your craft and have major screen timing. But in real life I'm very much into hospitality. I enjoy staying grounded. I always look for a peaceful environment and distance from controversies." Rupesh known for featuring in shows such as 'Yeh Jadu Hai Jinn Ka' and 'Kitani Mohabbat Hai 2' also owns a restaurant in Mumbai. He adds: "For being secured financially one can't always depend on an acting career. As actors, life is very uncertain. So, I have my own restaurant. My team looks after it and I make sure to devote my time after shoots. I enjoy a hectic but a worthy lifestyle."

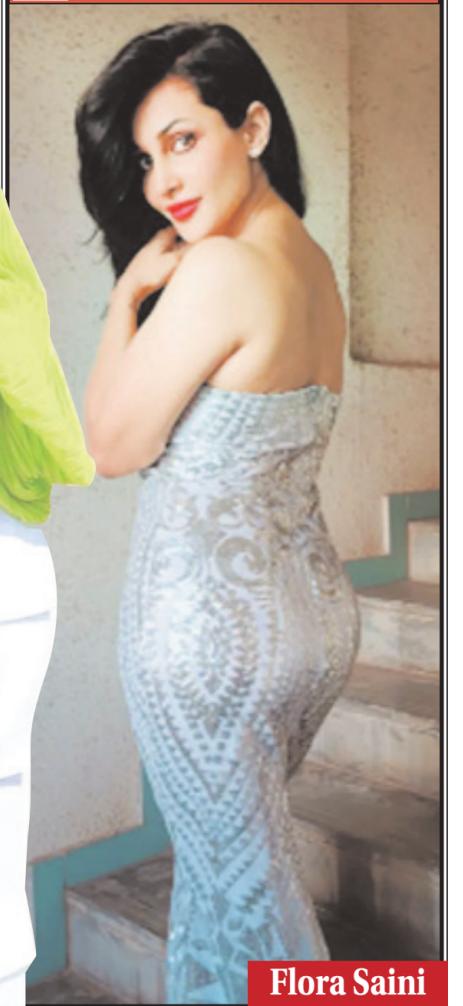
life is very uncertain. So, I have my own restaurant. My team looks after it and I make sure to devote my time after shoots. I enjoy a hectic but a worthy lifestyle."

difficult because acting is not just from the outside, it is very internal and imagine when you're body is like you yourself are going through so many emotions above that you have to play so many emotions on screen and then come

## Mrunal Thakur credits television journey for acting career in Bollywood

back home." Mrunal is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film 'Jersey', a sports drama film written and directed by Gowtam Tinnanuri, being his Hindi directorial debut and the remake of his 2019 Telugu film of the same title.

## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Flora Saini

## MANDAKINI TO MAKE A COMEBACK WITH MUSIC VIDEO

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former actress Mandakini, who shot to fame with this Raj Kapoor classic, 'Ram Teri Ganga Maaili', is returning to the screen albeit with a music video, 'Maa O Maa', which will also mark the debut of her son Rabbil Thakur.

The actress will start shooting by the end of April.

The music video will see playback singer Rishabh Giri going behind the mic. The lyrics to the song have been penned by Sajjan Agarwal with music composed by Babli Haque & Meera.

Talking about the music video, Mandakini said: "I'm very happy to associate with



director Sajjan Agarwal ji. I have known him for a long time but finally we're working

together. 'Maa O Maa' is a very beautiful song and I instantly fell in love with it.

The best part of this song is that my son is playing the lead. At the end of this month, we will start with the shooting of this song."

The music video will be directed by Sajjan Agarwal.

Talking about working with Mandakini, the director said, "I'm very happy Mandakini ji is making her Bollywood comeback through my video 'Ma O Maa.' Working with her is like a dream come true. She is a legendary actress and I'm sure this will be a great association with her and Rabbil Thakur." The music video will be produced by Kailash Raigar Guru under the banner of Filmy Clap Production house and will hit the airwaves soon.