

# absolute india



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## RBI RAISES REPO RATE BY 50 BPS, SEES INFLATION OVER TOLERANCE LEVEL TILL Q3FY23

# INFLATIONARY IMPACT

The Reserve Bank of India has raised the repo rate by 50 basis points to 4.9 per cent, Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Wednesday, adding that inflation was likely to remain above the upper tolerance level for three quarters of this financial year. He was speaking at a press conference after the end of the three-day monetary policy review meeting that started on Monday.

- ▶ INDIA'S RETAIL INFLATION ACCELERATED TO 7.79 PER CENT IN APRIL, REMAINING ABOVE THE TOLERANCE LIMIT OF THE CENTRAL BANK RBI FOR A FOURTH MONTH IN A ROW.
- ▶ IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT THE RETAIL INFLATION WILL REMAIN ABOVE 6 PER CENT FOR ANOTHER FEW MONTHS.
- ▶ WHILE ESTIMATING INDIA'S OVERALL RETAIL INFLATION FOR FY23 AT 6.7 PER CENT, RBI SAID THAT THE 75 PER CENT OF THE INCREASE IN INFLATION PROJECTIONS CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE FOOD GROUP.
- ▶ INDIA'S RETAIL INFLATION HAS BEEN ABOVE RBI'S 6 PER CENT TOLERANCE LEVEL FOR FOUR MONTHS IN A ROW, WHILE WHOLESALE INFLATION IN THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN IN DOUBLE DIGITS FOR OVER A YEAR NOW.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Though the RBI raising policy rates in the ongoing monetary policy committee meeting was a "no brainer", as said by its Governor Shaktikanta Das in a recent interview, investors, however, awaited the actual degree of percentage hike before taking fresh positions and future course of action in the financial markets. In early May, the RBI, in a surprise off-cycle meeting, hiked the repo rate by 40 basis points (bps) to 4.40 per cent, amidst rising inflation concerns in the economy. Repo rate is the rate at which the central bank lends short-term funds to banks. In the same off-cycle meeting, the cash reserve ratio was hiked by 50 basis points to 4.5 per cent essentially to squeeze out some liquidity from the system. Das on Wednesday categorically said India's retail inflation is likely to stay above the tolerance level till third quarter of FY23 before moderating below 6 per cent. For FY23, RBI sees overall inflation at 6.7 per cent, with 7.5 per cent in Q1, 7.4 per cent in Q2, 6.2 per cent in Q3, and 5.8 per cent in Q4, taking into consideration the normal monsoon and average crude oil basket price of \$105 per barrel. Notably, wholesale inflation in the country has been in double digit for over a year now. Coming to growth, India's real GDP growth in FY23 is seen at 7.2 per cent, will be 16.2 per cent in Q1, 6.2 per cent in Q2, 4.1 in Q3, and 4.0 in Q4, with risks broadly balanced, Das said.

### RBI THROWS BALL ON STATES' COURT TO CURB INFLATION

New Delhi: A further reduction of state value added taxes on petrol and diesel across the country would certainly contribute to softening of the inflationary pressures as well as the inflationary expectations, said the Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday. To put things in perspective, amidst rising energy prices and inflation, the government on May 21 reduced the central excise duty on petrol by Rs 8 per litre and on diesel by Rs 6 per litre, reducing the price of petrol by Rs 9.5 per litre and of diesel by Rs 7 per litre. Those positive developments include expectations of a normal south-west monsoon and kharif agricultural season, the recent supply side measures taken by the government and the unfolding of their impact, lifting of the palm oil export ban by Indonesia, and signs of moderation in global industrial metal price indices.

### HOUSING LOAN LIMITS FOR CO-OPERATIVE BANKS DOUBLED

New Delhi: Taking into account the increase in prices since the housing loan limits were last revised and considering the customer needs, central bank Reserve Bank of India decided to increase the existing limits on individual housing loans by the cooperative banks. Accordingly, the limits for Tier I or Tier II urban cooperative banks shall stand revised from Rs 30 lakh or Rs 70 lakh to Rs 60 lakh or Rs 140 lakh, respectively, which essentially means doubling of the limit. The increased limits will apply for Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs), and Rural Cooperative Banks (RCBs) -- State Cooperative Banks and District Central Cooperative Banks. For RCBs, the limits will increase from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 50 lakh for such banks with assessed net worth less than Rs 100 crore; and from Rs 30 lakh to Rs 75 lakh for other such RCBs. A detailed circular will be issued separately, the RBI said in a statement.

### ANOTHER 60-80 BPS HIKE IN REPO RATE THIS YEAR: MOODY'S

New Delhi: Hours after the Reserve Bank of India raised key lending rates, or repo rate, by 50 basis points to 4.9 per cent, global financial services company Moody's Analytics said the central bank could hike the repo rate by another 60 to 80 basis points through the rest of the year. "High costs from elevated and volatile global oil prices, higher input costs owing to industry-specific shortages, trade restrictions as a consequence of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and a domestic heat wave have driven up consumer prices," the report said. Quoting the central bank, the report said that although domestic demand had gained some traction and the economy remained resilient in the face of these headwinds, inflation pressures have become more broad-based and that upside risks to inflation have "materialised earlier than anticipated. However, it's unlikely that these measures can do much to moderate inflation. And given that select food, grain, and vegetable supplies could see continued volatility before stabilising, a substantial cooling is not expected. Further, the impending pickup in goods and services spending will add to demand-driven pressures and aggregate price increases in coming months." The months ahead will likely see more fiscal and monetary policy coordination to mitigate the overall inflation hit to economic growth, the report added.

## Wearing face mask in plane, airport is mandatory: DGCA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Airlines must deboard any passenger before departure if they refuse to wear face mask inside an aircraft even after being warned, aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation said on Wednesday.



If any passenger refuses to wear mask or follow COVID-19 protocol in a flight mid-air, the airline may bar them from flying for a certain period of time by classifying them as "unruly passenger", the DGCA said in a circular. Besides, airport operators must take help of the local police and security agencies and levy fines on people not wearing face masks in terminals, it noted.

The circular followed a Delhi High Court order of June 3 which said the "DGCA should issue separate binding directions to all staff persons deployed at the airports and in the aircraft, including flight attendants, air hostesses, captains/pilots and others, to take strict action against passengers and others who violate the masking and hygiene norms".

All such persons as are found violating the norms must be fined and persistent defaulters must be placed on the no-fly list, the court had said. The DGCA's Wednesday circular said airlines must ensure the passengers wear masks properly on flights

and they are removed from faces only "under exceptional circumstances and for permitted reasons".

If a passenger needs an extra face mask, the airline must provide it, it noted.

"The airline shall ensure that in case any passenger does not adhere to above instructions even after repeated warnings, he or she should be de-boarded, if need be, before departure," it said.

In case any passenger refuses to wear mask or violates the COVID-19 protocol even after repeated warnings in flight mid-air, he can be treated as "unruly passenger" as defined in the DGCA regulations, the circular said.

The DGCA regulations give powers to airlines to ban passengers for a certain period of time after they have been declared "unruly".

Central Industrial Security Force and other police personnel deployed at the entrance of the airport must ensure that no one is allowed to enter the premises without wearing a mask, it said.

## INDIAN WOMEN'S CRICKET LEGEND MITHALI RAJ CALLS IT A DAY

Mumbai: India's greatest woman batter, Mithali Raj, capped her illustrious 23-year-long professional career by announcing retirement from international cricket on Wednesday, stating that the journey had been "most fulfilling". Mithali, who arrived on the international scene smashing 114 on debut at the age of 16, soon established herself as the mainstay of India batting. She went on to lead the side for most part of her illustrious career that also saw her captain the national side to two 50-over World Cup finals -- the only one to do so in India, male or female. Mithali, 39, announced her retirement on social media, posting a letter on twitter, which traced her more than two-decade-long journey. Mithali's consistency was legendary as she ended up scoring seven ODI centuries, and a mind-boggling 64 half-tons in a career which had just seven ducks. ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said Raj is a hero for cricketers around the world and hoped she would continue to contribute to the game in the years to come.



## 'Marathi as optional language in UP', BJP leader writes to Yogi

Team Absolute | Lucknow

BJP leader from Maharashtra Kripa Shankar Singh has sent a letter to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to offer Marathi as an optional language in Uttar Pradesh. Kripa Shankar Singh, who belongs to Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh, has been tasked with the campaign to woo north Indians in Maharashtra. According to sources, the chief minister has agreed in principle with the suggestion and a pilot project may be rolled out in Varanasi. The developments also come at a time when the Maharashtra Navmiran Sena has been opposing job opportunities for 'outsiders' in the state.

In a letter to the chief minister, Singh had requested the inclusion of Marathi as an optional language for secondary and higher secondary students in Uttar Pradesh. The letter also opines that it might help students in getting better jobs in



Maharashtra. "As you know, for the past 50 years I have been staying in Maharashtra and maintaining relationships in Uttar Pradesh, especially in Purvanchal. During this tenure of 50 years, I noticed that when students come to Maharashtra, they face a number of problems due to lack of knowledge of Marathi language. Not only this but there are many vacancies of state government or corporations that require knowledge of Marathi language," he explained.

## 'Playing with future of students', SC irked over 1,456 vacant seats in NEET-PG

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday slammed the Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) on 1,456 vacant seats in NEET PG-2021, saying if students are not given admission, then it will pass orders and also grant them compensation. A vacation bench comprising Justices M.R. Shah and Aniruddha Bose told the MCC counsel, "Even if the single course has remained vacant...it's your duty to see that they don't remain vacant."

The bench got irked to learn that 1,456 seats have remained vacant in medical colleges in the 2021-22 session. It said the MCC and Centre are playing with the life of students by not conducting a mop up round of counselling for students. "You're playing with the future of students..." said the bench, adding that in May, the authorities learnt that seats were vacant, so why didn't they conduct a mop up



round. The bench told the MCC counsel, "Why during the midst of the counselling, you're adding the seats? There must be a cut off that as on date there are a number of seats..." The MCC counsel submitted that orders in the matter would lead to cascading effect and requested the court to allow him to place an affidavit on record to explain the matter. The top court emphasized that the country needs doctors and super spe-

ciality medical professionals, and told the MCC counsel that if the students are not given admission, then it will pass an order and also grant them compensation. The top court directed officers concerned to remain present in the court tomorrow, when it will pass order in the matter. "We'll pass orders for paying compensation... Who's responsible for this situation? ...Call your officer tomorrow...", said the bench.

## Guinness record: 75 km road laid in 105 hrs 33 minutes

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) created a history by laying 75 km of bituminous concrete road in a single lane in 105 hours and 33 minutes, said Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday. The Minister for Road Transport and the Highways announced that a New Guinness World Record was created by the NHAI in laying 75 km of bituminous concrete road in a single lane on NH 53 in 105 hours and 33 minutes between Amravati and Akola. "The total length of the 75 km of single lane continuous bituminous concrete road is equivalent to 37.5 km of two-lane paved shoulder road and the work started on June 3 at 7.27 a.m. and was completed on



June 7 at 5 p.m.," he added.

The Minister said the bituminous

mix of 66,364 MT consisting of 2,070 MT of bitumen was used. He said the project was implemented by 720 workers including a team of independent consultants who worked day and night to complete this task. Gadkari said, before this, the Guinness World Record for the longest continuously laid bituminous road was for building 25.275 km that was achieved in Doha, Qatar in Feb 2019. The task took 10 days to complete. The Minister said the Amravati Akola section is part of NH 53, an important east-west corridor which connects major cities like Kolkata, Raipur, Nagpur and Surat. He said once completed, this stretch will play a major role in easing movement of traffic and freight on this route.

## INDIA RECORDS NEARLY 41% JUMP IN NEW COVID CASES

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India reported nearly 41 per cent spike in new Covid-19 cases in a span of 24 hours. A total of 5,233 fresh cases were recorded in a span of 24 hours as against 3,714 reported on the previous day, the Union Health Ministry said on Wednesday morning. In the same period, the country has reported 7 Covid deaths, taking the nationwide death toll to 5,24,715. Meanwhile, the active caseload of the country has also risen to 28,857 cases, accounting for 0.07 per cent of the country's total positive cases. The recovery of 3,345 patients in the last 24 hours took the cumulative

tally to 4,26,36,710. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.72 per cent. Meanwhile, India's daily positivity rate has gone up to 1.67 per cent, while the weekly positivity rate currently stands at 1.12 per cent. Also in the same period, a total of 3,13,361 tests were conducted across the country, increasing the overall tally to over 85.35 crore. As of Wednesday morning, India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage exceeded 194.43 crore achieved via 2,48,41,726 sessions. Over 3.46 crore adolescents have been administered with a first dose of Covid-19 jab since the beginning of vaccination drive for this age bracket.

## FIRE BREAKS OUT AT HOME MINISTRY IN NORTH BLOCK, NO CASUALTIES

New Delhi: A fire broke out at the first floor of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in North Block. The fire brigade department received a call about the incident at around 12:20 a.m. on Wednesday, after which seven fire engines were sent to the spot to douse the fire. Fire was in telephone exchange at upper ground floor room number B2A and B2B of MHA. The room had computer, air conditioner, wires, telephone exchange accessories and other items," said the fire official. The exact reason for the fire was not yet to be ascertained, however, it is being said a short circuit could be the possible cause of the fire. No one was hurt in the incident. The fire was brought under control by 1:15 a.m.



# EYE ON PANCHAYAT POLLS, MAMATA MAKES BIG PROMISES FOR NORTH BENGAL

Eyeing the West Bengal panchayat polls next year, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday makes big promises for north Bengal, a tough turf for her Trinamool Congress since the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Kolkata | Agencies

In 2019, Trinamool candidates conceded defeat in all the eight constituencies in north Bengal. In the 2021 Assembly polls, despite bagging a landslide victory, the party's performance was extremely poor in the two north Bengal districts of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar, where it managed victory in just three out of 12 Assembly constituencies.

While attending a mass wedding function of the people from the tribal communities from these two districts at Alipurduar on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said that despite a lot of work done by the state government for these two districts, her party could not perform well in the past elections.

"However, despite that I am determined to pursue the development activities here. Now we have decided to focus on home tourism in the region now. Anyone willing to set up home



tourism units here will get a financial assistance of Rs 1,00,000 each from the state government," she said.

Understanding that the Jalpaiguri-Alipurduar belt has become a strong BJP bastion since the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Banerjee also launched a scathing attack against BJP and Union government on various issues.

"The Union government is holding back central funds for various development projects including the one for 100-day work. Before every election, BJP promises re-opening of the closed tea gardens in this region. But after winning the polls they just vanished. Now, they are speaking of separate statehood for north Bengal," she said.

A total 510 tribal couples participated in the mass wedding function on Wednesday which was organized by the West Bengal Police. The Chief Minister herself danced with the tribal women on the occasion.

# Regional parties have turned into family outfits: Nadda

Kolkata | Agencies

Regional parties throughout the country have turned into meagre family outfits for whom politics is not a medium to serve people but self-interests, BJP national president, JP Nadda said here on Wednesday.

"Take the example of West Bengal. The ruling party in the state, Trinamool Congress, has become a family outfit of 'aunt and her nephew'. So are the cases in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, where first the father, and then his son managed the affairs of the biggest regional political forces in these two states. In Kashmir, it is the affair of the father and daughter. Similar things are happening in Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Telangana," Nadda said while addressing the state executive body of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) here.

"Similarly, the Congress from a family outfit of 'mother and son' has become an outfit of 'sister and brother'. So you should feel lucky that you are associated with BJP where such family affairs do not happen," he added.

Speaking on the occasion, he dismissed West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's claims that the Central government is holding back legitimate dues of the state. "The West Bengal government has not sent the details of statements on expenditure or utilization certificates of the central funds



that they received. Had the Union government released fresh funds without receiving the statements of expenditures of the previous funds it would have done an unethical thing. The motive of the state government is clear. Give funds but do not demand accounts of expenditure," Nadda said.

He also criticised the state government for running the different central government schemes in different names in West Bengal.

Addressing the meeting, Nadda told the state BJP leaders to start reaching out to the people highlighting the issues like corruption, misrule, violence and crime against women without remaining frustrated with the series of election debacles in the last couple of years. He even gave an example of

# Four arrested for Bettiah bus gang rape

Patna | Agencies

A day after a minor was allegedly raped in a bus in Bihar's West Champaran, four accused were arrested on Wednesday, police said.

In an FIR registered in the women police station of Bettiah in West Champaran, the victim said that she boarded the Patna-Bettiah bus in Motihari and the driver, conductor, and helpers of the bus gang-raped her in the moving bus.

She alleged that the accused served her food lashed with sedatives and when she consumed the food, she became unconscious. The accused then gang-raped her.

When the bus reached Bettiah bus stand, the driver, conductor and helpers locked the bus and fled from the spot. When the victim gathered some consciousness, she knocked on the door and win-



dows to attract the attention of passers-by. Some of them spotted her, freed her from the vehicle, and also informed local police about the incident. A police team reached the bus stand and took her to the Town police station to register an FIR. The case was then transferred to women police station Bettiah.

The SHO of women police station said that an FIR under relevant sections of gang rape was registered and four accused arrested in this connection. Further investigation is on, she added.

# 20 DETAINED AFTER RAJ MINISTER RECEIVES THREAT CALL DEMANDING RS 70L

Jaipur: Rajasthan police on Wednesday detained around 20 persons for an alleged threat call to Congress MLA and state cabinet minister Govind Ram Meghwal demanding Rs 70 lakh.

Meghwal is presently camping at a Udaipur resort as part of the party's plan to avoid poaching ahead of the June 10 Rajya Sabha elections. According to the police, the person who made the threat call introduced himself as a member of the SPU gang of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, stating that the entire family of the Congress MLA will be killed if the amount remains unpaid. Dreaded gangster Lawrence Bishnoi is presently lodged at the Tihar Jail in Delhi. He is in the news after his alleged links with the recent murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala. The threat call to Meghwal had come from a Malaysia number on Tuesday night. After the cyber team of the police probed the matter, a person named Sunil Vishnoi, a native of Bikaner, was identified, following which a search operation was launched that led to the detention of 20 persons on Wednesday. Sunil Vishnoi is presently working in Malaysia. Police investigation revealed that he runs a Facebook page in the name of S.K. Meena.

# Little girl tied on rooftop for not doing homework, FIR lodged

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A shocking video of a little girl in Delhi left on the terrace amid scorching heat with her hands and legs tied went viral on social media on Wednesday, prompting the police to take cognisance of the matter.

In the video, the minor girl could be seen weeping continuously under the scorching sun.

"First it was said that the video was shot in the Karawal Nagar area. However, on inquiry it was found that no such incident was reported from there," a police officer said.

On further inquiry, the police learnt that the address was in the area under the Khajuri Khas police station, but there also no such incident was found to be reported.

"The address was incomplete, hence special teams were sent to verify it on the ground. After cumbersome efforts,



the address and the family were traced," said the officer.

girl had tied her on the roof as a punishment for not doing homework. It was learnt that the mother of the

# K'taka: Nun alleges molestation in convent

Bengaluru | Agencies

A nun on Wednesday claimed she has been sexually harassed at a convent in Karnataka's Mysuru city, and appealed for help, saying she is getting life threats for voicing out her woes.

The nun, who works at a convent for specially-abled children, has released a video regarding excesses on her. She also spoke about about two murders, sexual harassment and corruption taking place in the convent.

The victim feared that she might be forced to get admitted to a hospital for "mental treatment".

Mentioning the name of three of her female colleagues, she has stressed



that if her body is found, it has to be treated as a murder case. She had written a letter to the State Human Rights Commission. The victim claimed that after she came out with allegations, four men attacked her and admitted to a men-

tal hospital. However, she managed to escape and lodged a complaint with the police. The school management has denied all allegations, saying the nun is mentally unstable and showing aggressive behaviour since two months.

# INJURED MONKEY, BABY TURN UP AT BIHAR CLINIC FOR TREATMENT!

Patna: A private doctor in Bihar's Rohtas had two unexpected patients turn up at his clinic - a female monkey and its baby, as per a video going viral on social media.

As per the video, the female monkey, holding its baby to its chest, reached the clinic of Dr S.M. Khan in the Shahjuma locality on Tuesday and perched at its entrance.

Khan said that he understood that the female monkey was seeking help and it complied as he signalled it to come inside in the clinic, where there was a patient already.

The female monkey climbed on the bench and showed its wound. It was injured on its head, while the baby was also having injuries in leg. Accordingly, Khan gave the injection of tetanus and also spread ointment on the wounds of both the monkeys. By that time, a large number of people assembled outside the clinic to see the unique incident. After treating his "patients", the doctor asked onlookers to move away so that the monkeys could leave unhindered. Contacted for comment, Rohtas' Civil Surgeon said that no such incident had come to his notice.

# 'Fringe is BJP's core' says Rahul Gandhi over Prophet row

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday hit out at the BJP for calling their former spokespersons as fringe.

Citing examples of past statements of some top BJP leaders, Rahul Gandhi said that "Fringe is BJP's core".

Rahul Gandhi's remarks came in the wake of a major global pushback mostly from Gulf countries in protest against comments made by BJP spokespersons Nupur Sharma and Naveen Kumar Jindal, who were removed from the party later.

The Congress has been on attacking mode since the Indian embassy in Doha issued a statement on the row.

The Congress alleged that the Indian embassy has been used for the BJP and questioned the silence of the Prime Minister on the issue. Party spokesperson Pawan Khara, addressing a press conference on Wednesday, attacked the government on the whole issue.

"This government has failed to win the confidence of every community, thanks to selective silence and selective outrage." He said,



"the fact that the embassy attached a mail of the statement of the BJP is unacceptable."

# CENTRE HIKES COARSE GRAINS MSP TO ENCOURAGE CROP DIVERSIFICATION, MILLETS FAVOURED

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Wednesday approved the increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for all mandated Kharif crops for marketing season 2022-23, which is about 47 to 130 per cent higher compared to 2014-15.

"The government has increased the MSP of kharif crops for marketing season 2022-23, to ensure remunerative prices to the growers for their produce and to encourage crop diversification," Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told media persons after the cabinet meeting.

The MSP for paddy common and paddy grade A has been increased to Rs 2,040 and Rs 2,060 per quintal compared to Rs 1,940 and Rs 1,960, respectively in marketing season 2021-22. The MSP for same was Rs 1,360 and Rs 1,400 per quintal in 2014-15, indicating a 50 per cent and 47.14 per cent rise, respectively, from that year till current year, he said.

Similarly, for jowar (hybrid) and jowar (Maldandi), the rates for this year are Rs 2,970 and Rs 2,990 per quintal, respectively, compared to Rs 2,738 and Rs 2,758 per quintal in 2021-22. It is higher by 94.11 per cent and 92.90 per cent, respectively, compared to the prices in 2014-15 at Rs 1,530 and Rs 1,550 per quintal, respectively.

For grains such as bajra, ragi, and maize, the rates for



new MSP were announced at Rs 2,350, Rs 3,578 and Rs

1,962, respectively compared to Rs 2,250, Rs 3,377 and Rs

1,870 per quintal, respectively last year. This is 88 per cent, 130.80 per cent, and 49.77 per cent more, respectively, compared to the 2014-15 prices at Rs 1,250, Rs 1,550 and Rs 1,310, respectively.

Ragi, a major millet crop, has been incentivized for promotion as it is after India's push that the UN has announced the year 2023 as the International Year for Millets. Amongst lentils, tur (arhar), moong, and urad have been assured the MSP of Rs 6,600, Rs 7,755 and Rs 6,600, respectively compared to 2021-22's MSP of Rs 6,300, Rs 7,275 and Rs 6,300, respectively. The government claimed these prices are 51.72 per cent, 68.58 per cent, and 51.72 per cent higher compared to 2014-15 prices of Rs 4,350, Rs 4,600 and Rs 4,350, respectively.

Amongst the oilseeds, groundnut, sunflower seed, soyabean (yellow), sesame and nigerseed have been given the increased MSP of Rs 5,850, Rs 6,400, Rs 4,300, Rs 7,830 and Rs 7,287, respectively compared to 2021-22 MSPs of Rs 5,550, Rs 6,015, Rs 3,950, Rs 7,307, Rs 6,930, respectively, per quintal. Compared with 2014-15 prices of Rs 4,000, Rs 3,750, Rs 2,560, Rs 4,600 and Rs 3,600 per quintal, this year's prices are higher by 46.25 per cent, 70.67 per cent, and 67.96 per cent, 70.21 per cent and 102.42 per cent, respectively. The MSP offered for cotton (medium staple) and cotton (long staple) is Rs 6,080 and Rs 6,380, respectively, compared to 2021-22's MSP of Rs 5,726 and Rs 6,025, respectively, and Rs 3,750 and Rs 4,050, respectively, in 2014-15.



## AL-QAEDA SHOULD STAY IN LIMITS: MP HOME MINISTER

Responding to Al-Qaeda's threat to launch suicide attacks across the country, Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra on Wednesday said those thinking to attack India should know that they would be erased.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Responding to Al-Qaeda's threat to launch suicide attacks across the country, Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra on Wednesday said those thinking to attack India should know that they would be erased.

The terrorist outfit's threat comes in the wake of a controversy triggered by former BJP spokesperson Nupur

Sharma's "offensive" comments on Prophet Muhammad.

Mishra said that no terrorist organisation would be tolerated in India.

"The country is safe under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Those thinking to attack India should know that they would be erased," Mishra said while talking to

reporters in Indore.

The minister said: "Al-Qaeda should stay in its limits. If it is thinking about attacking India, it shall be eliminated."

Al-Qaeda, in a threat letter, wrote: "The saffron terrorists should now await their end in Delhi, Mumbai, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. They should find refuge neither in

their homes nor in their fortified Army cantonment."

It said that the "hearts of Muslims all over the world are bleeding," and are filled with feelings of revenge and retribution.

Nupur Sharma had allegedly made controversial remarks against Prophet Muhammad following which she was suspended by the party.

The "controversial" statement made by her set off an international furore. Several Muslim nations, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Indonesia, and Iran, as well as the Organisations of Islamic Cooperation of Islamic Cooperation have officially protested against statements and demanded an apology.

## DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE COMMENCED WITH DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT: CM

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that people's representatives and government officials should join with dedication and commitment in the implementation of public welfare schemes and development activities.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that people's representatives and government officials should join with dedication and commitment in the implementation of public welfare schemes and development activities. It should be ensured that there is no delay in the works. Poverty and migration are the main problems of Alirajpur district. The State Government is implementing schemes related to all the aspects necessary to improve the standard of living of the people. By ensuring public participation in this, schemes can be made more result-oriented. It is necessary to make the School Chale campaign a mass campaign. The schemes and development activities which are already in operation will not be affected by the model code of conduct. Their continuous effective implementation should be ensured. For better work in the aspirational development blocks, arrangements should be made for the ranking of development blocks in the districts on the basis of various indices. Chouhan was reviewing virtually Alirajpur district from the residence office at 6:30 am.

Chouhan expressed his displeasure over the delay in the construction of 5 girls education complex in Alirajpur. He

said that it is painful that the work sanctioned in the year 2016 is not completed till the year 2022. Chief Minister immediately directed the Principal Secretary Public Works Neeraj Mandloi to be connected through video conferencing and directed to blacklist the concerned contractor and take action against the officials concerned. Chouhan made an objection on the pending construction of three roads due to non-receipt of forest department's approval. He said that better coordination should be ensured between the construction agencies and other concerned departments at the district level. We are living in 21st century, construction agencies should work accordingly. The delay in work increases the cost and the general public has to face hardship for a long time. He expressed the need for improvement in the aspirational development blocks Udaygarh and Sondwa.

Chouhan congratulated the district administration for securing top place in the state with a score of 84.17 in CM Helpline and issuing approval of 89 percent houses in Awas Plus scheme. Chief Minister also praised the organisation of Ladli Laxmi Cricket Premium League match on Gaurav Diwas of the district. It was informed that cricket matches of Ladli Laxmis were organised at the block

level in the district. The cricket match of the winning teams was held at the district headquarters in the night under floodlights, in which the winning team was given a prize of Rs. 17 thousand and the runner-up team was given a prize of Rs. 13 thousand.

Chouhan reviewed the innovations in the district, activities conducted in aspirational development blocks, Ration Aapke Dwar, Ujjwala Yojana, activities conducted for treatment and control of sickle cell anaemia, health system, school education, drinking water supply, operation of Anganwadis, rural housing, Amrit Sarovar, Ayushman Bharat Yojana, organisation of Gaurav Diwas and reviewed the law and order situation.

Chouhan directed that teachers should be motivated to discharge their responsibilities, even after this, if they do not perform their duty in a disciplined manner, then their services should be terminated.

Chouhan asked the reason for the villagers facing problem of drinking water by mentioning their names. Chief Minister said that wherever there is water, drinking water should be supplied daily.

As many as 104 Amrit Sarovars are to be constructed in the district. Of these, 75 percent work of 34 Sarovars has been completed. The Chief Minister Shri Chouhan directed to develop Amrit Sarovars as places of patriotism and cultural pride as per the intention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It was told that there are 21 doctors available in Alirajpur. CT scan has started. Services of Sonologist and Surgeon are also available. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that 85 percent institutional deliveries take place in the district. Target to make it cent percent should be fixed.

## Devraj and his parents call on

Bhopal: Six-year-old Devraj, who had undergone liver transplant and his parents called on Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at the latter's residence. On the initiative of Chief Minister Chouhan, liver transplant of Devraj of Dhabla Dhir village of Shajapur district was successfully carried out in a private hospital in Bhopal. Devraj has recovered fully now. Devraj and his parents had come to the Chief Minister's residence to express their gratitude to Chief Minister. Chouhan greeted Devraj by



feeding him sweets and wished him a healthy and long life. It may be noted that 6-year-old Devraj was suffering

from Wilson's disease of liver. Liver transplant was to be done for the treatment. The financial condition of Devraj's parents was not such that they could get their son treated. Chief Minister Chouhan came to know about this situation from the media, so he decided to get Devraj's treatment done at government expense. Devraj's liver transplant was successfully carried out at Bhopal's Bansal Hospital Chouhan had also visited the hospital himself to know about the well being of Devraj.

## Uttarakhand bus mishap prompts MP govt to look into road safety issues

The death of 25 tourists in a bus accident in Uttarakhand has prompted the Madhya Pradesh government to look into road safety issues in the state. The government has decided to set up a three-member panel to prepare a report on road accidents, especially of the passenger buses.



Arvind Singh Bhadoria (cooperative and public service minister), who will be tasked to review the activities conducted for road safety. Besides reviewing the causes of road accidents in the state, the committee will also be looking for necessary measures to be adopted for this purpose. A decision on this was taken during the discussion on Uttarakhand bus accident. At least 25 people from Madhya Pradesh were killed after the bus they were travelling in fell in a deep gorge on Sunday. All those who died in the accident were from Panna-Chhatrapur districts of Madhya Pradesh.

During a discussion with the cabinet ministers on Tuesday, Chief Minister

Shivraj Singh Chouhan expressed his concern over bus mishap in Uttarakhand. He stressed upon the need to examine the cause of accidents and also sought suggestions to rectify.

The chief minister also expressed the need to analyse the causes of recent road accidents in different districts -- Betul, Khandwa, Rewa and Panna. Subsequently, he directed to constitute a panel of three ministers to prepare a report on road safety issues in the state. A recent bus mishap incident took place on Tuesday in Rewa district where a bus carrying around 30 passengers overturned, leaving more than 15 people injured.

## UMA BHARTI ONCE AGAIN TAKES ON SHIVRAJ GOVT ON LIQUOR ISSUE

Bhopal: Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Uma Bharti has once again opened a front against the Shivraj government on the issue of sale of liquor in residential colonies.



In fresh agitation, Bharti on Tuesday night sat in front of a liquor shop in Bhopal to protest against sale of liquor.

Bharti's action surprised a large gathering of people who had gathered to buy liquor from a wine shop located near Ashima Mall in the Misrod police station area. She along with her supporters sat in protest, which prompted the owner to down the shutter of the shop. Local police rushed to the spot.

After a half-an-hour protest, Bharti left the spot after warning the police officials and the liquor shop owners that she will come back in the next three days and will protest throughout the night. "I oppose the state government's decision to open liquor shops at public places. Women are suffering; families are getting destroyed because of this liquor and drug," Bharti said.

Bharti said for the last one-half-month she was waiting for the state government to take some action but they did not pay heed to her concern. "I have sent this message to Delhi also and a solution will come soon. I had asked the government not to allow the sale of liquor nearby schools, residential colonies and at public places. I waited long enough and now this is the time for action," Bharti said.

Notably, one-and-half-month back, Bharti had smashed liquor bottles at a wine shop in Bhopal, and she had criticised the Chief Minister.

Earlier, talking to IANS, Bharti had said that she will protest against use of liquor and drugs on a mass level. Bharti had warned her own party (BJP) that if the state government does listen to her, people will give them a befitting reply during the elections.

## Global President of Heartfulness Institute Daji Shri Kamlesh Patel calls on CM



Team Absolute | Bhopal

President of Heartfulness Institute Param Pujya Daji Kamlesh Patel called on Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at his residence office. Daji is the fourth Guru of the Sahaj Marg Parampara and the Global Leader and President of Heartfulness Institute. The institute conducts yoga activities, natural health therapy and meditation training programmes. Practicing meditation with the Heartfulness Meditation method leads to the experience of inner peace and happiness within a short period of time. Chouhan also meditated according to this method under the guidance of Param Pujya Shri Daji. Activities related to green

development programme, soil and water conservation, solar energy development and moral value based education are being done by the institute in many countries of the world. The institute is also working in collaboration with the United Nations.

Chouhan sought information about the activities conducted by the institute for the intellectual development of children, their receptivity and development of advanced consciousness. The possibilities of conducting this programme in some schools of the state were also discussed. Discussion was also held on tree plantation, water conservation, use of water, conservation of endangered plant species and conducting natural farming related activities on selected mountains of the state under the guidance of the institute. Chief Minister Chouhan informed about the ongoing activities in the field of clean and green energy including solar energy in the state. Ruchivardhan Mishra, Sanjay Sehgal, Babulal Jat, Neil Kelkar and Gajendra Gautam also met Chief Minister Chouhan. The effect of Brighter Minds programme of the institute on the receptivity of children was also demonstrated in front of Chief Minister Chouhan. It may be noted that the first center of Heartfulness Institute in the state was established in 1987 at Ganj Basoda, Vidisha. At present 150 centers, 12 ashrams and 400 trainers are working in the state.

### INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED BY SEC

## Make planned management of ballot boxes for the general election of three-tier panchayats

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Secretary State Election Commission Rakesh Singh has directed all the Collectors and District Election Officers to assess the phase wise requirement of useful ballot boxes available in the districts and make maximum use and management of the available ballot boxes as per the instructions issued by the commission. In the three-tier general election year-2022 by the State Election Commission, the elections for all the posts are being conducted through ballot paper/ballot box in three phases.

There is a provision to provide one ballot box at each polling station. At present, these instructions are being changed keeping in view of the number of voters per polling station. In Panchayat General Election-2022, if the number of voters is up to 500 at each polling station, then one big ballot box should be given, if there are 501 to 700 voters two big ballot boxes and if there are more than 700 voters then two big ballot boxes should be given.

Adequate gap has been kept in the polling dates in the election schedule for the general election year 2022 of three-tier panchayats. In case elections are conducted in 2 or 3 phases in the districts, the ballot box used for the first phase should be used in the second phase and similarly the ballot box used for the second phase should also be used in the third phase. After the voting/counting of votes in the development blocks included in

any one phase, the ballot boxes used in those development blocks will be sent for voting in the next phase. For this, a suitable plan for inter-transportation within the district should be prepared. In special circumstances, if the District Election Officer decides to count the votes at the Block Headquarters, then immediately after the counting of votes, arrangements should be made to send the ballot boxes for the next phase of election (before distribution of material) to the respective development block. The need for large and small ballot boxes for different phases of Panchayat general election should be assessed on the basis of classification of the number of voters. According to the number of voters in the development blocks included in each phase, the need for phase wise ballot boxes should be calculated on the basis of the number of polling stations. After calculating the number of ballot boxes required phase wise in each district, the actual requirement should be assessed considering the maximum number of ballot boxes to be used in any one phase of the three phases as the minimum requirement of the district. If a district does not have small ballot boxes / in case of shortage, a large ballot box should be given instead of a small ballot box.

Keeping in view the emergent requirement of the polling station, adequate num-

ber of reserve ballot boxes (small/large) should be provided to each zonal/sector officer. For this, while assessing the need of the district, a minimum of 10 percent ballot boxes should be kept in reserve and the material should be given to the zonal / sector officers during distribution.

Based on the number of voters at the polling station for each district from the Commission level, a detailed assessment and analysis of the phase wise requirement of ballot boxes has been done. Thereafter, there is a shortage of ballot boxes in 14 districts namely- Dhar, Dewas, Khandwa, Burhanpur, Narmadapuram, Betul, Harda, Narsinghpur, Seoni, Balaghat, Sidhi, Umaria, Anuppur and Katni. Orders are being issued to supply essential ballot boxes to these districts through inter-district transport from nearby districts.

After the calculation is done on the basis of standards, if there is a shortage of ballot boxes in any district, then the commission should be informed about the demand for additional ballot boxes in 2 days.

At present, the status of the ballot box in the districts is 58 thousand 254 big ballot boxes and 44 thousand 758 small ballot boxes. Total polling stations are 71 thousand 643. Polling will be held in 27 thousand 49

### MAKE AT LEAST 5 "MODEL POLLING STATIONS" IN DISTRICTS: SEC

State Election Commissioner Basant Pratap Singh has asked the Collectors and District Election Officers to make at least five polling stations in the district as model polling stations. Model polling stations can be made in these polling stations by making necessary arrangements on the polling day. Build the polling station on the ground floor of the building. Decorate the entrance with archway, rangoli, balloons and flowers etc. Arrange shady waiting rooms, chairs to sit/ clean carpet etc for voters. Make arrangements for drinking water, toilets and convenient access roads. Apart from making separate queues for men and women, senior citizens, elderly, sick and Divyang voters should be given priority in voting. Make separate entrance and exit gates. Arrange for ramps and wheelchairs and first aid boxes. Establish a facilitation centre near the polling station and distribute 100 percent voter slips to each and every voter of the model polling station.

polling centres in the first phase, 23 thousand 988 in the second phase and 20 thousand 606 in the third phase.

## PLANTATION MAKES OUR LIFE HEALTHY AND JOYFUL ALONG WITH SAVING THE EARTH: CM



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan along with Global President of Heartfulness Institute Pujya Daaji Shri Kamlesh Patel planted saplings in the Smart City park. Daaji is the fourth guru of the Sahaj Marg tradition and the global leader and president of the Heartfulness Institute. Chouhan planted Peepal, Neem and Parijat saplings.

While discussing with the media representatives, Chief Minister said that if the entire society takes a pledge that everyone will have to participate in the tree-planting campaign to leave the earth safe for the coming generations, then our this small effort will help the earth and with this we will make our life healthy and joyous.

Pujya Daaji, while interacting with the media representatives, said that tree plantation is good for the entire human race. Trees not only give us oxygen, but also absorb negativity from the surroundings and provide all the positive effects. It is also believed in our culture that sleeping under a Peepal tree reduces anger. Thus every plant has its own significance. We should acquire this type of knowledge regarding trees.

Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, Bhopal's social worker Prasanna Jain also planted a Parijat plant on his birthday. Peepal purifies the environment. It has religious and Ayurvedic significance. Neem has antibiotic elements, is known as a medicine. Parijat is also called Harsingar, which is also a good medicine.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Cong workers' not leaders fighting 2022 polls

Despite speculative reports of more Congress MLAs and politicians switching over to the BJP, die hard party workers and leaders are confident of giving a tough fight to the ruling party. Sources from the party said that the BJP will make all-out efforts to make Congress faceless in the coming elections, clearing its way to a thumping majority in the Assembly polls due in December 2022. Even if BJP is successful in its poaching strategy, the Congress is determined to put up a tough fight. According to the party sources, senior leaders fear that half-a-dozen MLAs, three to four state level leaders are in touch with BJP leaders. They may switch side any time before the election. The BJP will also attempt to win over a few leaders in each district and major cities, to demoralise the Congress cadre. Party cadre and hardcore Congressmen are competent to overcome any crises, assured Arjun Modhwadia, senior party leader. Not Just Rathva or Modhwadia, but even district level leaders and workers are ready with counter strategy for poaching. Amreli District Congress Committee President Dhirajlal Raiyani is confident that none of the four sitting MLAs will quit the party, because all are likely to be repeated. Raiyani further said even after such propaganda and few leaders recently quitting the party, the workers' morale is not down. Two days ago, a protest demanding employment was organised in Amreli in which at least 700 to 1,000 workers participated. On Tuesday, Savarkundla city working committee meeting took place attended by 250 members. Even if the BJP manages to poach few more leaders, still there will be little impact on the party cadre, he said with confidence.

SPIRITUAL SOUL WHO ILLUMINATES THE WAY OF SALVATION

Lalit Garg

Women over the years have presented a strong phase in the field of spirituality and created ideal definitions of life. Such is the name of a great personality, a spiritual master, energy, committed to the highest traditions, rites and values of spirituality - Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibhaji. The main Terapanth sect of Jainism and its current Acharya Shri Mahashraman chose his 49th initiation day to declare a new Sadvipramukh on the post vacant from the demise of Sadvipramukha Kanakaprabhaji. He has created a historical event not only in Terapanth society but in the entire spiritual world by declaring Sadvipramukh nomination day on this occasion and declaring Chief Sadvhi Vishrutavibhaji as the ninth Sadvipramukha of Terapanth Dharmasangh. An unprecedented event took place in the history of Terapanth society, when Sadvhi Vishrutavibha as Sadvipramukha has been given this great responsibility of meeting more than 550-600 Sadhvis and Samanis (female devotees) were there for the proper development of women's society. Sadvipramukh is the one who gives right direction to women society, Sadvhi and Samani community, establishes new dimensions and all these qualities are easily present in Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha. They are a symbol of sacrifice, penance, brilliance, intellectuality, management skills, and are synonymous with their talent and effort. The women of this new era are not only a house leader; she is educated, spiritual and does best in all fields of life. Women have also made a special contribution in the field of religion and for that the contribution of Sadvipramukhas in Terapanth is unforgettable. It is the good fortune of Terapanth Sangh that in the form of Sadvipramukh, got such a Sadvivara, whose personality is not only full of ideal standards like intellectual and studious, but whose nature is industriousness, conscientiousness, service spirit, fervour of devotion towards Guru and society. Acharya Tulsi, Acharya Mahapragya and Acharya Mahashramana - By passing on the strict criteria of three Acharyas, you have not only acquired experience, maturity, but have also earned fruitful successes through your style of work and dedication. Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha has not only crossed hundreds of Sadhvis in terms of position, but she has been standing on the front line at every stage of all round development and success. The reason for this is that she is a firm believer, devoted and deter-



mined to the principles and beliefs established by the Acharyas. She is such an extraordinary achievement of the Terapanth Dharmasangh, which is not possible for everyone to reach. She is an epitome of gentleness, cleanliness, tolerance, creativity, devotion, dedication, vitality and positive thinking. Staying undisturbed, she has set great destinations of success through her well planned and continuous effort. It is certain that the one who explodes his power travels through the wings of consciousness to the infinite sky. Touches new horizons of success. Seeing the life, personality, character and leadership of Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibhaji from any angle, at any moment, it seems like a light house. The intense light emanating from it is ripping through the dense blackness and reaching far and wide and is creating a bright future giving new vision and new direction to many. Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibhaji was born on 27 November 1957 in the famous Modi family of Ladnun town, the capital of Terapanth. Your worldly father's name was Shri Janvari Malji and mother's name was Smt. Bhanwari Devi. Growing up in a family full of eight brothers and five sisters, there was less playfulness and more seriousness in your life. Acharya Shri Tulsi, the ninth superintendent of Terapanth, introduced the Saman category in the year 1980, on 19 December 1980; one of the six Mumukshu sisters who were initiated for the first time was Mumukshu Savita. Your new name is Samani Smitpragya. She got the opportunity to travel abroad for the first time in the Saman class and even after that many times she got the opportunity to visit many countries. Some of the names of

those countries are as follows- America, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, England, Bangkok, Canada, Holland, Hong Kong etc. For 12 years in the Saman category, you studied, did spiritual practice, operated the arrangements, travelled around the country and abroad and tried to live every moment of life with joy. You climbed the ranks on 18 October 1992. Acharya accepted the initiation of Sadvhi from Shrimukh of Shri Tulsi. On the day of Kartik Krishna Saptami, twenty one grand soul accepted sainthood. Acharya Tulsi named Samani Smitpragya - Sadvhi Vishrutavibha. The personality of Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha is a radiant personality. She is receptive, wherever she see something transcendent, she take it and enrich them. It is said that if the eyes are open, then the whole life is a school - one who has the yearning to learn, learns from each person and every incident. For one who has this art, it is not impossible to acquire or learn anything. Emerson said - "Every person whom I meet is superior to me in some way or the other, and that is where I learn from him." Lokaah Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu, this is one of the main mantras of Sanatan Dharma, which means, May all beings of this world be happy and peaceful. Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha has made the spirit of this mantra the goal of her life. Her desire is to remove the darkness in front of humanity by becoming an ally in furthering the human welfare works of Acharya Mahashraman. 'Tamaso Ma Jyotirgamaya' - Lead me from darkness to light. The journey of light is the eternal aspiration of man. The purpose of this

journey is the search for light. Light comes to those who seek it. Some personalities are sources of light. She is self-illuminated and continuously distributes light to others. There is a powerful aura around the Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha. Her whole life is exposed by intense restraint, devotion and self-realization. Her conscience, which is lit by self-light, is capable of giving light to many. Her contemplation, speech, conduct, creation, address, service - all these are such open airs, from which the light-rays keep erupting continuously and are obliging the entire human race. Her life is embodied in the three strong pillars of knowledge, philosophy and character. Her inner personality is thousand times purer and purer than his outer personality and is alluring and magnetic. She is a personality builder, the spiritual and cultural consciousness of India is reflected in his thoughts. Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha is a name that lives on the role of philosophy of life according to the principles of Lord Mahavira. This saintly consciousness has given a meaningful identity to the time, energy, labour and thinking by devoting itself to the cause of the entire mankind. Despite being tied to a particular sect, your unrestricted work has given the right direction to the entire nation in the direction of human unity, communal harmony, nationalism and altruism. This unique personality, confined in the whiteness of pure purity, seems as if purity itself has come down to earth. His ideals are awakened with the passage of time, objectives remain in motion, principles become practices and resolutions reach the end. Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha has a wealth of knowledge of various subjects. There is power in her speech and writing. Having administrative ability, leadership ability, she is a strong powerhouse. They are such an extraordinary achievement of Jain rule which is not possible for everyone to reach. They have drawn the indelible lines of their duty on the present day, they will be inscribed in golden letters in history. To liken his colossal personality with any simile is to make her personality limitless. All that can be said about them is that they are wonderful and indescribable. One aspect of her many abilities and vast personality is the indwelling of a true seeker in her. Not only the entire Terapanth Dharmasangh-Jain society but the entire humanity feels proud of the inspirational Sadvipramukha Vishrutavibha of such wonderful life and wonderful works.

international

SKOREA, US, JAPAN AGREE TO BOLSTER SECURITY TIES AGAINST NKOREA

South Korea, the United States and Japan agreed on Wednesday to bolster their united front against North Korea's threats, as their senior government officials gathered here amid reports that the secretive regime is all set for a nuclear test. It marked the first trilateral meeting of the regional powers' No. 2 diplomats in half a year, coming on the heels of a string of ballistic missile launches by the North, Yonhap news agency reported. In a joint statement, South Korea Vice Foreign Minister Cho Hyun-dong and his American and Japanese counterparts -- Wendy Sherman and Takeo Mori -- "strongly condemned" Pyongyang's behaviour as "unlawful" acts. They made clear that the three sides remain committed to advancing trilateral security cooperation to counter the North's evolving threats. Sherman reaffirmed Washington's "steadfast commitment" to the defence of its Asian allies, including "extended deterrence." The officials



urged Pyongyang to cease destabilizing acts and return to the negotiating table, citing their shared goal for the complete denuclearisation of Korea through diplomacy and dialogue. They expressed hope that the Kim Jong-un regime will respond positively to international offers of help in its fight against Covid-19. During the talks that took place two weeks after President Joe Biden's trip to Seoul and Tokyo, the three sides also discussed ways to enhance cooperation on a range of global issues, including support for Ukraine, economic security and the promotion of "a free and open Indo-Pacific," according to the statement. They decided to hold the next face-to-face three-way session in

Tokyo in the fall. The previous day, Cho had bilateral talks with Sherman on the allies' coordinated response to North Korea and follow-up measures to the summit accord between Biden and President Yoon Suk-yeol. The presidents had their first summit in Seoul last month. Later in the day, Cho and Mori held a separate meeting to discuss ways to mend fences between Seoul and Tokyo, as their relations have long been strained due primarily to disputes over shared history. The two sides agreed to maintain "close communication" to resolve pending issues, according to Cho's ministry. Meanwhile, Sherman had a separate meeting with Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Dmytro Senik, who was also visiting Seoul this week. The deputy secretary "provided an update on US assistance to Ukraine, including security, humanitarian and economic assistance, as well as budgetary support and aid for long-term efforts," the State Department said in a statement.

NASA to launch 3 research rockets from private Australian space port

Sydney | Agencies US space agency NASA is set to launch three rockets into space from a private space port in Australia for scientific research. The rockets will be launched between June 26 and July 12 from the Arnhem Space Centre, which is owned and run by Equatorial Launch Australia, the Guardian reported. This is going to be the first time that NASA is launching rockets from a commercial facility outside the US, and the first NASA rockets launched from Australia since 1995. The mission aims to investigate heliophysics, astrophysics and planetary science phenomena only observable from the southern hemisphere, the report said. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese arrived in Darwin after a two-day visit to Indonesia on Wednesday night and will make the



space announcement with the NT Chief Minister, Natasha Fyles, on Thursday before returning to Sydney. "We can trace Australia's celebrated connection to the space industry back to the 1950s and as a nation we have to build on that legacy," Albanese was quoted as saying. "This project will bring together global and local industry to take Australia's space sector into a new era," he added. According to NASA's Heliophysics Division direc-

BRICS COUNTRIES PLEDGE TO DEEPEN COOPERATION ON INTELLIGENT CUSTOMS

Beijing: Customs authorities of BRICS countries vowed to deepen cooperation on intelligent customs at a virtual meeting, media reported. Customs cooperation between BRICS countries has seen fruitful results since the establishment of the cooperation mechanism in 2013, while bilateral trade has maintained steady growth, said Sun Yuning, deputy head of the General Administration of Customs of China, Xinhua news agency reported. China's bilateral trade with BRICS countries totalled 490.42 billion US dollars in 2021, up 39.2 per cent year on year, higher than the overall level of China's foreign trade in the same period, official data shows. All parties should gradually improve the intelligence level of customs infrastructure, supervision methods and administrative management, and form cross-border coordinated governance among border administration departments, Sun said. Against current risks and challenges, the participants on Tuesday pledged to ensure that the customs authorities of BRICS countries continue to work together to safeguard the international supply chain and promote rapid economic and trade recovery among BRICS countries.

Russia claims US and British companies sending mercenaries to Ukraine

Moscow | Agencies Private military companies (PMCs) from the US and Britain are involved in the selection and dispatch of mercenaries to Ukraine. This was stated by the official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Maria Zakharova, RT reported. "For them (mercenaries) shipments are attracted by the PMCs in the USA and Britain, and, of course, there are no sanctions, restrictions against them... there is no question," she said at a briefing. Zakharova added that in the situation with mercenaries, international institutions, including the OSCE, the Council of Europe and NATO, are "joyfully silent", RT reported. Meanwhile, the Russian Defence Ministry has accused Ukrainian "militants of the nationalist battalions" of deliberately setting fire to a large granary in Mariupol's sea port while fleeing from



Russian forces. According to a ministry statement, the alleged act of arson was down to the unwillingness of the "militants" to leave grain supplies for Mariupol's residents. As a result, according to the military, more than 50,000

tonnes of grain were destroyed, RT reported. "This inhuman crime demonstrates to the entire world community the 'true face' of the Kiev regime, which, in fact, uses the methods of food terrorism against its own people," it claimed. The ministry said the destruction was committed as the "so-called civilised West" continues to support Kiev while accusing Russia of stoking a global food crisis, RT reported. The ministry stressed that Russian forces during their "special military operation" support the civilian population, treat it humanely and "do not strike at the social infrastructure of the country, unlike the Ukrainian armed formations". Since the launch of the Russian military operation in Ukraine, Moscow and Kiev have accused each other of various war crimes, while denying their own liability. The Donetsk People's Republic authorities had reported earlier that the firefighters failed to save the grain stock despite several days of efforts.

IRAN RETURNS VEHICLES, MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO AFGHANISTAN

Kabul: Iranian authorities have returned to Afghanistan dozens of vehicles and military equipment which were transported to Iran during the change of regime in Afghanistan last August, the Afghan Ministry of Interior confirmed on Wednesday. Among the items were 32 military vehicles, 17 non-military cars, 57 AK-47 assault rifles, 42 machine guns, 32 rounds of rocket-propelled grenades, along with an amount of ammunition, according to the ministry's statement. The statement said, the items were handed over to the security officials of the Afghan caretaker government in the bordering Afghan town of Islam Qala, in western Herat province on Tuesday, Xinhua news agency reported.



SHIV SENA, CONGRESS, BJP ANNOUNCE CANDIDATES FOR MLC POLLS

Maharashtra's ruling Shiv Sena, and Congress and opposition Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday announced the names of their candidates for the upcoming June 20 biennial elections to the state Legislative Council.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra's ruling Shiv Sena, and Congress and opposition Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday announced the names of their candidates for the upcoming June 20 biennial elections to the state Legislative Council.

The Sena has fielded former minister Sachin Ahir and Amasha Padvi for the June 20 polls, said Tourism Minister Aditya Thackeray.

Contrary to expectations, the party has not fielded two senior leaders - Industry Minister Subhash Desai and former minister Diwakar Raote.

Chandrakant Handore and Mumbai party President Bhai Jagtap, according to a statement from AICC.

BJP State President Chandrakant Patil said the party's nominees are its Leader of Opposition in the Council Pravin Y. Darekar, ex-minister Prof. Ram S. Shinde, state organisation leader Shrikant Bhartiya, women's wing leader Uma G. Khapre and sitting member Prasad M. Lad.

Belying speculation, the party has decided against nominating BJP national Secretary and ex-minister Pankaja Munde, the daughter of former Union Minister, the late Gopinath Munde, and BJP ally and ex-minister Sadabhau Khot.

stituent, Nationalist Congress Party's list of two nominees is expected shortly.

The polls for the 10 MLC seats will be held on June 20, 10 days after the much keenly contested Rajya Sabha elections for 6 seats, due on Friday, June 10.

The biennial polls shall be held to fill up the vacancies of retiring members including Legislative Council Chairman Ramraje Naik-Nimbalkar, Ravindra Phatak, Sanjay Daund, Surjitsinh Thakur, Vinayak Mete, Darekar, Desai, Raote, Lad and Khot.

All the 287 members - currently one vacancy in the 288-member Assembly - constitute the electoral college for both these indirect polls.

BJP names 5 candidates for June 20 MLC polls: Pankaja Munde not in list

THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY ANNOUNCED THE NAMES OF FIVE CANDIDATES FOR THE UPCOMING JUNE 20 ELECTIONS TO THE MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HERE ON WEDNESDAY, BUT FORMER MINISTER PANKAJA MUNDE'S NAME DID NOT FIGURE IN THE LIST.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bharatiya Janata Party announced the names of five candidates for the upcoming June 20 elections to the Maharashtra Legislative Council, here on Wednesday.

Earlier, there were speculations that the party may nominate Pankaja Munde, the daughter of late BJP leader Gopinath Munde, for the MLC polls, to be held on June 20.

State Party President Chandrakant Patil said the BJP central office has cleared the Leader of Opposition (Council) Pravin Y. Darekar, ex-minister Prof Ram S. Shinde,

state organisation leader Shrikant Bhartiya, women's wing leader Uma G Khapre and a sitting member Prasad M. Lad.

Contrary to expectations, the party has decided against fielding BJP national secretary and ex-minister Pankaja Munde, the daughter of former union minister the late Gopinath Munde, and BJP ally and ex-minister Sadabhau Khot.

Downplaying the development of Munde, Patil said that in politics there are never any 'full-stops' but only 'commas', indicating some other responsibility may be in store for her.

The polls for the 10 MLC seats shall be held on June 20, ten days after the much

keenly contested Rajya Sabha elections for six seats, due on Friday, June 10. The retiring members include Legislative Council Chairman Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar, State Industries Minister Subhash Desai, Diwakar Raote (both from the Shiv Sena), LoP Darekar, Prasad Lad, Maratha leader Vinayak Mete and former Minister Sadabhau Khot.

Members of the State Legislative Assembly constitute the electoral college for these polls. The BJP has 106 MLAs in the 288-member House. It has the strength to comfortably get four of its elected to the Upper House of the Legislature.

Maharashtra HSC 12th Result 2022:

94.22% students pass, girls outperform boys, check pass percentages here

Maharashtra HSC 12th Result 2022: This year, girls outperformed boys as the pass percentage of girls was 95.35 per cent, while that of the latter was 93.29 per cent.

passed the HSC or Class 12th exams of the Maharashtra board.

This year, girls outperformed boys as the pass percentage of girls was 95.35 per cent, while that of the latter was 93.29 per cent, Maharashtra board's chairperson Sharad Gosavi said.

Maharashtra HSC Result 2022: Streamwise pass percentage

Science stream 98.30 per cent, Arts 90.51 per cent, Commerce 91.71 per cent, Vocational streams 92.40 per cent

Maharashtra HSC Result 2022: Region-wise

Konkan division 97.21 per cent, Nagpur 96.52 per cent, Amaravati 96.34 per cent, Kolhar 95.25 per cent, Lathapur 95.07 per cent, Nashik 95.03 per cent,

Aurangabad 94.97 per cent, Pune 93.61 per cent and Mumbai 90.91 per cent

As many as 14,59,664 students registered for the

Maharashtra Board Class 12th exams this year. Out of those registered, 14,39,731 students appeared for the exams and 13,56,604 of them passed.

Maharashtra board's chairperson said they are not comparing this year's result with that of 2021, as the exam was not conducted last year in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Last year, the overall pass percentage was 99.63. The results were then declared based on the formula of 30:30:40, where 30 per cent weightage was given to the average of the best three subjects in the Class 10 exam, 30 per cent weightage to Class 11 marks and 40 per cent weightage was given to the internal assessment in Class 12," he said.

"We can compare the results of 2020 (90.66 per cent) and 2022 (94.22), as both the exams were conducted offline," Gosavi added.

81% Rise In Daily Covid Cases In Maharashtra, Mumbai Cases Almost Double

TUESDAY'S DAILY RISE IN COVID CASES WAS HIGHEST SINCE FEBRUARY 18 WHEN THE STATE HAD RECORDED 2,086 NEW CASES.

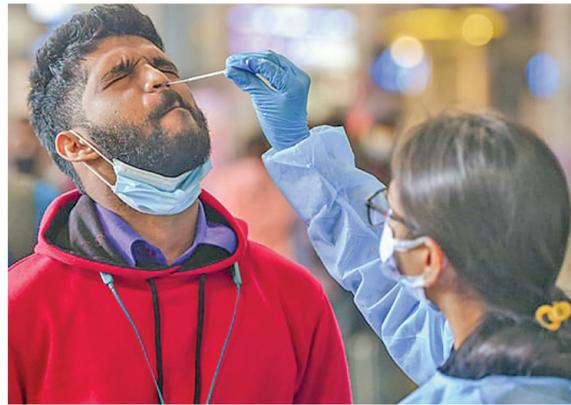
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra on Tuesday recorded 1,881 new coronavirus cases, 81 per cent more than the previous day and highest since February 18, and also reported one case of B.A.5 variant, the state health department said.

Mumbai alone accounted for 1,242 new cases, almost double the Monday's count.

No new pandemic-related death was reported during the day.

On Monday, the state had recorded 1,036 infections while Mumbai had reported 676 cases. It may be noted that generally fewer cases are recorded



ed on Mondays as fewer tests are carried out during weekends.

On Tuesday, Maharashtra's COVID-19 case tally rose to 78,96,114, while the death toll remained unchanged at 1,47,866.

Tuesday's daily rise in cases was highest since February 18 when the

state had recorded 2,086 new cases.

As per the latest report of 'whole genomic sequencing' from BJ Medical College, Pune, a 31-year-old woman from Pune was found positive for B.A.5 variant, the official release said. "The woman was asymptomatic and recovered in home isolation," the

release added.

On May 28, for the first time in Maharashtra four patients of B.A.4 sub-lineage and three cases of B.A.5 sub-lineage of the Omicron variant of coronavirus were found.

The daily infection rise in Mumbai at 1,242 was the highest since January 29 when the financial capital of India had reported 1,411 new cases.

Mumbai has been driving the state's coronavirus figures in the last few days. There are 8,432 active cases in Maharashtra now.

The districts of Nandurbar, Dhule, Jalna, Akola, Buldhana and Gondia have no active cases as of Tuesday.

As many as 878 patients recovered since previous evening, taking the tally of recovered patients in the state to 77,39,816. The recovery rate in the state is 98.02 per cent.

As many as 35,694 tests were conducted since previous evening, which raised the tally of coronavirus tests conducted so far to 8,11,12,952.

Maharashtra's coronavirus figures: New cases: 1,881, New Deaths: zero, Active cases 8,432; New Tests 35, 694.

EX-SERVICEMAN SHOTS DEAD ESTRANGED WIFE NEAR COURT COMPLEX

The police arrested the ex-serviceman, identified as Deepak Pandurang Dhawale (44), and his brother, Sandeep, following the incident near a court complex at Shirur in the Pune district.

Team Absolute | Pune

An ex-serviceman allegedly shot dead his estranged wife and attacked her mother near a court complex at Shirur in the Pune district on Tuesday ahead of a hearing on alimony, said the police.

The police arrested the ex-serviceman, identified as Deepak Pandurang Dhawale (44), and his brother, Sandeep, following the incident. The deceased has been identified as Manjula Rangnath Zambre (35). She had been living at Pamer in Ahmednagar district and came for the hearing scheduled in the family court along with her mother.

As per the information given by the Pune rural police, Dhawale lived in Ambernath in Mumbai. The couple, who have two daughters ages 14 and 10, have been separated from each other since 2020, when Dhawale



retired from the Army, according to the police.

According to the police, Deepak and Sandeep drove to Shirur from Ambernath in the latter's rickshaw. Deepak fired gunshots at Manjula

and her mother after an argument on the premises of the irrigation department, which is located next to the court sometime before noon, said the police. Superintendent of police for Pune rural jurisdiction Dr Abhinav

Deshmukh said: "Primary probe suggests that Deepak fired four rounds at his wife. As her mother tried to stop Deepak, he hit her with the butt of the pistol."

Initially, the Pune rural police said that Manjula's mother had also suffered bullet injuries but later clarified that she had not received any bullet injury.

Inspector Sureshkumar Raut, in-charge of Shirur police station, said: "Manjula died of bullet injuries. Her mother has serious injuries but she is out of danger." Deepak and his brother Sandeep were placed under arrest from Ranjangaon area of Pune after they fled following the attack, said the police. Deshmukh said: "Probe suggests the pistol that Deepak was carrying is a licenced weapon. He is believed to have acquired a firearm licence and the weapon when he was serving in Jammu and Kashmir."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a reply opposing former home minister Anil Deshmukh's plea seeking to be released for a day from prison to enable him to cast his vote in the upcoming, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has told the special PMLA court on Tuesday that he is the main accused in a money laundering case and that prisoners

cannot demand voting rights. The ED also opposed a similar appeal by NCP minister Nawab Malik who was arrested in February in another money laundering case. The ED said, "...it is pertinent to mention that prisoners do not have voting rights under the Representation of Peoples

(RP) Act. The right to vote is a statutory right created under Section 62 of the RP Act and the law is settled that the right to vote being a statutory right is subject to the restrictions prescribed in the RP Act." Special judge RN Rokade will hear arguments on the plea on Wednesday.

The ED has submitted chargesheets against Deshmukh and Malik. Deshmukh has been in jail since arrest on November 2.

In his plea, Deshmukh has said the only voters in these elections are MLAs and the voting is to be conducted inside Vidhan Bhawan.

"...there is no likelihood of the applicant's (Deshmukh) presence" influencing voters or interfering with the process. It said Deshmukh, a

sitting MLA from Katol (Nagpur), was seeking permission to go to Vidhan Bhavan under escort on his own expense.

Malik who moved his plea on Monday, is in treatment at Criticare Asia Hospital. He sought to be taken in an ambulance to vote in the elections and then be taken back to hospital. Malik's plea said undertrial MLAs have been permitted to vote for elections of President of India and Council of States by the courts. "The applicant is duty bound to cast his vote...to ensure that the residents of his constituency have a voice in electing a representative to the Council of States," his plea said. Malik is an MLA from Anushakti Nagar in Mumbai.

MAHARASHTRA GOVT SUPPRESSING VOICE OF OBC'S: BJP MLC

Mumbai: OBC leader Gopichand Padalkar has slammed the Maharashtra government over the issue of OBC reservation.

He has expressed his displeasure over the inaction of Maharashtra government regarding the issue.

"The state government has deliberately not taken any steps regarding the issue of OBC reservation in local body elections. It is nothing but suppressing the voice of OBC's," he said.

"In the last 105 local body elections at least 4 OBC corporators would get elected per Zila Parishad but now you can calculate how many OBCs will get representations. As these elections will be held without OBC quota it sets a very dangerous precedent for the future if OBCs don't get any representation," said Padalkar. OBC reservations for local body polls in Maharashtra still haven't received the apex court's nod since it did not comply with the triple test.

In March last year, the Supreme Court had laid down the triple test or conditions that state governments need to satisfy before they can notify quotas for OBCs in local body elections.

Maharashtra continues its investment momentum, signs deal worth INR 80,000 cr at WEF, Davos

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra delegation has had a successful visit to Davos at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2022. The state signed over INR 80,000 cr (USD 10.5 Billion) in investment intentions with 24 companies and 3 MoUs of strategic co-operation. Renew Power will invest an astonishing INR 50,000 Cr (USD 6 bn) in Renewable Power generation of 10-12 GW in the state, while Asia Pulp and Paper, an Indonesian firm, will be investing INR 10,500 Cr (USD 1.5 Bn) in Raigad district.

In the total 10 editions of Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, under the leadership of Hon. Chief Minister, Shri Uddhav Thackeray, there have been 122 MoUs signed, totaling INR 2.2 lac crore, potentially generating 4 lac job opportunities in the state. In the previous 9 editions, 98 MoUs were signed in last 2 years, which are now at various stages of implementation. This is a testament to state's commitment towards industrial development. Additionally, in last two years from October 2019 to December 2021 Maharashtra received 26% of total FDI, which



was the highest in India.

Honorable Minister of Environment & Climate Change, Aadiya Thackeray, Honorable Minister of Industries Shri Subhash Desai and Honorable Minister of Energy, Nitin Raut, ACS to Hon Chief Minister Ashish Kumar Singh, ACS Industries Baldev Singh, MD of MSEDCL, Vijay Singhal, CEO of MIDC P Anbalagan and Jt CEO MIDC, PD Malikner were present during the ceremony along with industry representatives. The Maharashtra delegation inaugurated the Maharashtra Pavilion at the World Economic Forum (WEF), Davos on 22nd May 2022. On the subsequent days, the delegation held and participated in several bilateral meetings, discus-

sions, and forums with Global business and political leaders, and experts representing the different sectors. The delegation, on behalf of the Government of Maharashtra, promoted Maharashtra as an ideal investment destination by detailing the business and growth opportunities in the state, while also sharing the state's vision on youth & technology led development, and the state's core objectives on green, renewable and sustainability focused development. Thackeray was invited to receptions hosted by META (Facebook), Google and Prime Minister of Belgium, Alexander de Croo. Maharashtra was represented on a global stage as an ideal investment and tourism destination and the state's commitment towards sustainability

was reaffirmed. The state also signed a MoU with the Global Plastic Action Partnership ("GPAP") and initiated the Maharashtra Plastic Action Partnership (Maharashtra PAP), which will serve as a roadmap for sustainable development in the state. Maharashtra was the first state to ban single use plastic in 2018 and has been at the forefront in sustainable development with aggressive policies and action plans to balance development and climate change. Earlier this year, Maharashtra was the first state to be awarded the prestigious Inspiring Leadership Award at the COP26 summit held at Glasgow. Additionally, the state Government signed a MoU with Byju's for introducing digital content in the state and municipal schools in Maharashtra. Furthermore, the state also signed a strategic co-operation agreement with World Green Building Council for knowledge sharing and helping the state achieve its net zero emission targets and for the capacity building of state authorities in Environmental Sustainability Governance.

Flyrocks injure five Six houses damaged in a blast that was triggered to dig up a well on Mula Mutha riverbed

Team Absolute | Pune

At least five persons sustained minor injuries and tin roofs of six houses were damaged in a blast that was triggered to dig up a well on Mula Mutha riverbed in the Kharadi area of Pune in Maharashtra. The police have arrested one person.

The incident took place around 6 pm Monday on the riverbed, near Samadhan Colony, in Kharadi. The police arrested Kharadi native Ajay Ramlu Dasari (26), who had excavated the well.

The controlled blast was triggered using explosives in the riverbed, and under the impact of the explosion several pieces of rocks landed on the roofs of nearby houses, the police said.

Sub-inspector Arvind Kumre, Chandan Nagar police station, said, "At least five persons sustained minor injuries and roofs of five to six houses suffered damage. None of the people who sustained injuries required hos-



pitalisation." After the case was registered, the police have arrested one of the persons who triggered the blast, and a search is on for others, he added.

In the First Information Report registered on Tuesday, the police have invoked Indian Penal Code sections 435 (causing damage due to explosive substance), 286 (negligent conduct with respect to explosive substance), 336 (negligent or rash act endangering personal safety of others) along with provisions of The Explosive Substances Act.



# Julia Garner

is top contender to essay Madonna in upcoming



Los Angeles | Agencies

Ozark star Julia Garner is currently the frontrunner for the role of 'Take a Bow' hitmaker Madonna in an upcoming biopic at Universal Pictures, reports 'Deadline'.

The Emmy-winner has been the top contender for the role since the start of the year but insiders add the reason an offer hasn't gone out yet is there are still several things in play which include the budget as well as some creative factors which include how long the film is.

'Deadline' further states that Madonna is directing the film based on a script by Diablo Cody and has been meticulous in the casting process putting talent through a boot camp that included testing on dancing and singing.

The studio has made it clear it needed at the very least a name audiences recognise and Garner has been that person for some time given her leading lady status following star making roles in Ozark and most recently Inventing Anna.

She is currently filming the Paramount thriller 'Apartment 7A'.

# 'Stranger Things 4' is Netflix's no. 3 most popular TV season

Los Angeles | Agencies

The debut of the first seven episodes of 'Stranger Things' Season 4 marked Netflix's biggest premiere weekend ever, drawing in 287 million hours viewed in just three days.

According to 'Variety', now, after the season's first full week of availability, its success continued and broke another, and bigger, record: It's Netflix's third most popular English-language TV season ever.

Netflix calculates that list based on viewership during a title's first 28 days of availability, meaning the 'Stranger Things' Season 4 still has 18 days to move even higher up the chart, reports 'Variety'.

According to the streamer's newly released weekly Top 10 rankings, 'Stranger Things' Season 4, Volume 1 has also smashed the record for most-viewed show in a week among Netflix's

English-language TV series, with 335 million hours watched from May 30 to June 5.

That title was previously held by the second season of 'Bridgerton', which racked up 251.74 million hours viewed for the week of March 28 to April 3 - its first full week on the streaming service.

With those impressive stats, 'Stranger Things 4' easily retained its No. 1 position on Netflix's Top 10 list for English-language TV series during the May 30-June 5 viewing window.

According to 'Variety', that trend continued this week: Season 1 led the pack, coming in second place after being viewed for 75.1 hours between May 30 and June 6. Season 2 followed in the No. 3 position with 58.3 million hours viewed, with Season 3 as No. 4 with 47.4 million hours. All in all, 'Stranger Things' was viewed for a collective 515.8 million hours during this viewing period.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood icon Marilyn Monroe's biopic 'Blonde' is among four Netflix original films in the Venice Film Festival mix.

As Venice artistic director Alberto Barbera begins to lock in his selection, Variety understands there are four Netflix original films in the Venice mix.

The streamer's Venice titles include Andrew Dominik's Marilyn Monroe drama 'Blonde' starring Bond girl Ana de Armas as the Hollywood icon; Noah Baumbach's 'White Noise' with Greta Gerwig, Adam Driver and Jodie Turner-Smith, which is based on the 1985 novel of the same name by Don DeLillo; 'Bardo, False Chronicle of a Handful of Truths', which chronicles the story of a Mexican journalist and documen-

tary filmmaker going through an existential crisis; and Romain Gavras' modern tragedy 'Athena'.

## MARILYN MONROE BIOPIC LEADING NETFLIX PACK OF VENICE HOPEFULS

According to 'Variety', Venice has of course in recent editions become a privileged launching pad for Netflix's Oscar hopefuls given the Cannes Film Festival requires that competition titles receive a French theatrical release followed by a 15-month wait before launching the movie on its service.

Last year, Venice debuted Jane Campion's Netflix original 'The Power of the Dog', which is one of seven titles to have premiered from the Lido and gone on to score best director Oscars during Venice's past nine editions.



# 'Doctor Strange'

screenwriter gives shoutout to 'RRR'

Los Angeles: C. Robert Cargill, screenwriter for Benedict Cumberbatch-starrer 'Doctor Strange', has heaped praises on the Indian film 'RRR', helmed by S.S. Rajamouli.

Sharing a poster of 'RRR's' on Twitter, he wrote: "Friends came over last night to initiate me into the cult of RRR (RISE ROAR REVOLT) and I'm here to report I am now fully, truly, deeply a member."

"This is the craziest, most sincere, weirdest blockbuster I've ever seen. I'm pretty sure Jess and I are watching it again this week."

Starring Ram Charan and Jr NTR in the lead roles, the film since its release has earned over Rs 1,150 crore at the box office. It is based on the lives of revolutionaries Komaram Bheem (Jr NTR) and Alluri Seetharama Raju (Ram Charan) in pre-Independence India.

The movie also features Ajay Devgn, Alia Bhatt, Shriya Saran, Samuthirakani, Olivia Morris, Alison Doody, and Ray Stevenson.

Bradley Cooper, Matt Bomer spotted kissing on 'Maestro' set

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood stars Bradley Cooper and Matthew Bomer have been caught on camera locking lips during the filming of the Leonard Bernstein biopic 'Maestro'.

The Oscar-nominated actor and the Golden Globe-winning star were re-enacting a romantic scene for the upcoming movie on the streets of New York City. They were pictured sharing a tender smooch in front of camera, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Cooper, who portrays the legendary Broadway composer, donned a beige trench coat over a white dress shirt and black trousers with a green polka dot bowtie.

Bomer, meanwhile, sported a dark red-and-blue tie and black slacks under a gray wool jacket. Both of them had their hair slicked back

with gel to match the 1950s style.

'Maestro', which is also directed by the 'A Star Is Born' helmer, appears to capture Bernstein's life at different stages, including in old age. The 47-year-old actor was previously featured sporting white hair to portray old Bernstein in first-look photos shared in late May.

The biopic is said to focus on his marriage to actress Felicia Montealegre. Though he married the Chilean-American stage and TV performer, he then acknowledged his homosexuality. Throughout the course of their marriage, he had brief extramarital liaisons with young men, which several family friends have said his wife knew about.

'White Collar' alum Bomer is said to portray a clarinet player with whom Bernstein had a brief romance.



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Amber Turner

# BTS album 'Proof' set as 48-title anthology

Team Absolute | Mumbai

K-pop superband BTS has confirmed that its latest album 'Proof' will stretch across three CDs and consist of 48 tracks.

It will drop on Friday, reports 'Variety'.

The album and the composition of the disks are intended to represent the past, present and future of the nine-year-old band, agency Big Hit Music said.

Within the mix are three new songs: 'Yet To Come', 'Run BTS' and 'For Youth'.

It is BTS's first physical album since last year's CD single 'Butter' and 'Permission to Dance' and was teased in April with the tagline 'We are Bulletproof'.

According to 'Variety', the Yonhap news agency reports that the three CDs break down as follows: the first,

with 19 tracks, is largely an assembly of hits, including 'Danger', 'Fire', 'DNA', 'Boy With Luv' featuring Halsey, 'Spring Day', 'Fake Love', 'Dynamite' and 'Butter'; the second consists of subunit tracks; the final disc is dedicated to Army, the group's activist fans and will include the three new tracks and songs and demo versions of some of the band's past hits.



The band has so far revealed relatively few promotional events and is not planning a press conference for the album release. It will introduce its new songs Monday via YouTube channel Bangtan TV and pre-record a segment for Mnet's program 'M Countdown' at the Jangchung Arena in Seoul.

The show will air on June 16.

A 35-second teaser for 'Yet To Come', subtitled 'The Most Beautiful Moment' is already available on the Big Hit website and the band's social media platforms.





## Mithali Raj, pioneer of women's cricket, bids adieu to her record breaking international career

▶ MITHALI FINISHED INTERNATIONAL CAREER WITH A STAGGERING 10,868 RUNS - THE MOST IN WOMEN'S CRICKET. SHE SCORED 7805 ODI RUNS IN 232 MATCHES, AT AN AVERAGE JUST OVER 50 WHILE HAS 2364 RUNS IN 89 T20IS, AS WELL AS 699 RUNS IN 12 TESTS, INCLUDING A CENTURY AND FOUR HALF-CENTURIES.

▶ THE 39-YEAR-OLD MITHALI, WHO CAPTAINED INDIA TO THE FINAL OF THE ICC WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2017, ALSO HOLDS THE RECORD FOR THE MOST MATCHES (28 MATCHES) CAPTAINED IN WOMEN'S WORLD CUPS, BREAKING AUSTRALIAN LEGEND BELINDA CLARK'S RECORD DURING THE ICC WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2022 IN MARCH.

▶ AS A SKIPPER, MITHALI HAS 89 WINS OUT OF 155 - THE MOST BY ANY PLAYER IN WOMEN'S ODIs. HER 155 MATCHES AS CAPTAIN IS ALSO THE HIGHEST IN WOMEN'S ODIs.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Legendary India batter Mithali Raj on Wednesday called time on her storied international career, bringing an end to a glorious 23-year career. Having made her debut as a 16-year-old in 1999, Mithali's career has spanned nearly 23 years across four different decades during which time she

Like all journeys, this one too must come to an end. Today is the day I retire from all forms of international cricket. It was an honour to have led the team for so many years. This journey may have ended but another one beckons as I'd love to stay involved in the game I love and contribute to the growth of women's Cricket in India and world over."

became the central cog in the growth of the women's game in the country and beyond.

She also led India to four consecutive Asia Cup triumphs -- 2005-06, 2006-07, 2008, 2012. However, perhaps Mithali's most significant achievement as captain came in 2014 as India sealed a historic Test series victory in England, with Mithali guiding the team home with an unbeaten 50 in the second innings.

The batter also became the second youngest centurion after she scored a century on ODI debut in 1999. At 16 years and 205 days, she became the youngest centurion in women's internationals. The record was only broken 22 years later in 2021, when Ireland's Amy Hunter achieved that feat on her 16th birthday. The veteran has also most runs in a series by captain. In the 2014-17 ICC Women's Championship, Mithali scored 535 runs in 17 matches, the most by an India captain in an ODI series. The 39-year-old Mithali also played most matches (232) and hit most fifties (64) in women's internationals ODIs. Mithali is also the only Indian woman to score a double century in Tests. Her score of 214 (v England in 2002) is the second-highest individual score in women's Tests.

### PARA SHOOTING WORLD CUP

## Avani Lekhara wins gold with world record, secures 2024 Paris Paralympics spot

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Tokyo Paralympics champion Avani Lekhara secured a spot at the 2024 Paris Paralympics after winning the gold medal in the Para Shooting World Cup in women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 in France on Tuesday.

The 20-year-old won the gold with a record score of 250.6, breaking her own world record of 249.6. Poland's Emilia Babska bagged the silver medal with a total of 247.6, while Anna Normann of Sweden got bronze with a score of 225.6.

Lekhara's achievement came after the shooter and her coach were initially denied visas, however, the issue was resolved by the Sports Ministry.

After securing the Paris 2024 berth, an elated



Lekhara tweeted, "Proud to bring home the gold in the R2 10M Air Rifle SH1 event with a WR score & India's 1st Paris 2024 Quota, at the Chateauroux2022. My 1st Int. event since the @paralympics. A big thank you to everyone who has supported me!" Avani Lekhara, the

new World Record holder in the R2 - women's 10m air rifle standing SH1. The Indian shooter just crushed the former record (249.6) by scoring 250.6 in the Chateauroux2022 World Cup, in France! Shooting Para Sport wrote on its Twitter handle.

### UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

## England finally earn first point after 1-1 draw with Germany



Munich | Agencies

England football captain Harry Kane helped his team pick up a point, scoring a second-half penalty to draw the Group 3 UEFA Nations League match against Germany 1-1 here.

Jonas Hofmann's second-half strike looked like it would condemn England to a second successive loss in the tournament, but Kane made sure that would not be the case, picking himself up to score his 50th goal for the country after being brought

down in the box five minutes from time. Nico Schlotterbeck had caught the back of Kane's ankle as he chased a ball from Raheem Sterling, and the skipper then fired his spot-kick into the bottom left corner, according to england-football.com. England's last trip to Munich saw them record one of their most famous victories, Michael Owen scoring a hat-trick in a 5-1 success on the way to qualification for the 2002 World Cup. But Tuesday's encounter was a much tighter affair. Germany had the better of the first half, with Kyle Walker and Kieran Trippier making important interventions in their own box.

### INJURED KL RAHUL, KULDEEP RULED OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA T20IS

## Rishabh Pant to lead India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

KL Rahul, India's captain for the T20I series against South Africa and left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav on Wednesday were ruled out of the five-match series on the eve of the opening match here due to injuries to right groin and right hand respectively.

Wicket-keeper Rishabh Pant, who was named as Rahul's deputy for the series, will now lead India in his absence while Hardik Pandya, who captained Gujarat Titans to IPL 2022 title, has been named his deputy.

It means that Pant, 24, will lead India for the very first time at his home ground, Arun Jaitley Stadium, on Thursday.

Rahul had been named captain for the series against South Africa after regular skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli were rested after being named in the Edgbaston Test squad from July 1-5.



"Team India Captain KL Rahul has been ruled out of the T20I series against South Africa owing to a right groin injury while Kuldeep Yadav will miss out in the T20I series after get-

It's a very good feeling. Hasn't come under very good circumstances. At the same time, I am feeling happy. I would like to thank BCCI for giving me this opportunity to lead the Indian side. I will try to make most of it.

Rishabh Pant

ting hit on his right hand while batting in the nets last evening," said the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said in an official statement.

Rahul had batted at the practice session on Monday but wasn't present during the nets session on Tuesday. Rahul has also been named in India's Test squad for the Edgbaston Test against England from July 1-5. Kuldeep, meanwhile, was present at both practice sessions and

even batted for some time on Tuesday. "The All-India Senior Selection Committee has named wicket-keeper Rishabh Pant as Captain and Hardik Pandya as vice-captain for the home series against South Africa," added the BCCI.

At the same time, the selection committee has not named a replacement for both Rahul and Kuldeep. Both cricketers will now report to the National Cricket Academy (NCA) where the medical team will assess them further and decide on the future course of treatment.

India's T20I squad: Rishabh Pant (Captain & wicketkeeper), Hardik Pandya (vice-captain), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper), Deepak Hooda, Shreyas Iyer, Dinesh Karthik (wicketkeeper), Venkatesh Iyer, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Ravi Bishnoi, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Harshal Patel, Avesh Khan, Arshdeep Singh and Umran Malik

## HARMANPREET KAUR TO LEAD INDIA ODI TEAM IN SRI LANKA

Mumbai | Agencies

Hours after Mithali Raj's international retirement, Harmanpreet Kaur on Wednesday was named India's ODI captain for their upcoming tour of Sri Lanka. The Indian women's team will play three T20Is and as many ODIs in Dambulla and Kandy respectively during their Sri Lanka tour, beginning on June 23. Earlier in the day, Mithali announced her retirement from international cricket, following which, Harmanpreet, India's T20I captain, has taken over the reins in ODIs. Smriti Mandhana has been named as her deputy. A big name missing from the list is veteran fast bowler, Jhulan Goswami, while Sneha Rana, who featured in this year's World Cup, is also missing from both the squads. Middle order batter Harleen Deol,



who's played just the one ODI, has been called up in the 50 over squad while Jemimah Rodrigues returned to India's T20I squad. This will be Jemimah's first international since the T20I series against Australia in

T20I squad: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Shafali Verma, Yastika Bhatia (wk), S Meghna, Deepti Sharma, Poonam Yadav, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Simran Bahadur, Richa Ghosh (wk), Pooja Vastrakar, Meghna Singh, Renuka Singh, Jemimah Rodrigues, Radha Yadav

October 2021. Also returning to the T20I mix is Radha Yadav, who last played in July 2021. On the other hand, opening batter S Meghna recently scored 73 for the Trailblazers in the Women's T20 Challenge and

ODI squad: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Shafali Verma, Yastika Bhatia (wk), S Meghna, Deepti Sharma, Poonam Yadav, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Simran Bahadur, Richa Ghosh (wk), Pooja Vastrakar, Meghna Singh, Renuka Singh, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Harleen Deol

has been rewarded with a place. Bowling all-rounder Simran Bahadur, who featured in India's tour of New Zealand just before the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in 2022, has been added to both the squads.

## IST T20I: HAZLEWOOD, WARNER AND FINCH LEAD AUSTRALIA TO CONVINCING 10-WICKET WIN OVER SRI LANKA

Colombo | Agencies

A sensational bowling effort by Josh Hazlewood (4/16) followed by a dominating batting performance by David Warner (70 not out off 44) and Aaron Finch (61 not out off 40) led Australia to a convincing 10-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the first ODI of the three match series at R Premadasa Stadium, here on Tuesday.

Apart from Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc (3/26) also picked crucial wickets as Australia bowled out Sri Lanka for 128-10 in 19.3 overs. With such a low total to defend, Sri Lanka didn't have many options but to attack with spin upfront. So, Maheesh Theekshana opened the bowling and Wanindu Hasaranga bowled the fifth over, only for the latter to concede 19 runs in what was the most expensive over in the match.

David Warner raced to a 32-ball fifty as Aaron Finch played second fiddle, bringing

up his fifty off 37 balls much later in the rain-punctuated game. Australia brought up their 100 in the 12th over and were able to overhaul the under-par target in 14 overs with 10 wickets in hand.

Earlier, put into bat first, Sri Lanka were off to a solid opening partnership as they scored 59 for 0 in the Powerplay. Pathum Nissanka (36) was the first to be dismissed, ending his 61-run stand with Charith Asalanka but it didn't affect Sri Lanka innings much as hosts got to 100 for 1 in the 12th over.

But, Hazlewood returned in the 14th over and produced Sri Lanka's downfall.

### Brief scores :

Sri Lanka 128 all out in 19.3 overs (Asalanka 38; Hazlewood 4-16, Starc 3-26) lost to Australia 134/0 in 14 overs (Warner 70 not out, Finch 61 not out) by 10 wickets

## IND V SA: WON'T BE EXPECTING ANYTHING EASY, SAYS SA SKIPPER BAVUMA



New Delhi | Agencies

South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma insisted that his team is not expecting things to be easy ahead of the start of five-match T20I series against India on Thursday.

This is the third time South Africa will play a bilateral T20I series against India after October 2015 (won 2-0 by the Proteas) and September 2019 (drawn 1-1). Earlier this year, South Africa won Test series 2-1

and ODI series 3-0 in their backyard. "It's obviously not an exciting series that is lined up for both India and South Africa. There are fresher, newer faces, guys who have a point to prove and a stake to claim for their places in the Indian team. We won't be expecting anything easy and are not thinking that everything happened the same way as it was in South Africa back home," said Bavuma in the press conference on the eve of the series opener at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

## JOE ROOT RISES TO SECOND SPOT IN ICC TEST RANKINGS

India speedster Jasprit Bumrah (fourth) in bowling. Ashwin remains second on the all-rounder rankings behind team-mate Ravindra Jadeja, with Jamieson dropping one place to eighth on the latest rankings update.

London | Agencies

Reigning Test Cricketer of the Year, England's Joe Root is the big mover on the latest ICC rankings, with the former England captain rising two spots to sit in second place behind Australia's Marnus Labuschagne.

With Root in sublime form, as he displayed in the first Test against New Zealand where his unbeaten century guided England to a five-wicket win at Lord's, the battle for prestige among the top-five batters in the world has intensified further.

That unbeaten 115 at Lord's also saw the right-hander become the second

England player and 14th overall to register 10,000 Test runs.

The 31-year-old moves within just 10 rankings points of Labuschagne and could close the gap even further when the second Test between England and New Zealand commences in Nottingham on June 10.

With Root's rise, it also sees a small re-shuffle within the top five as Australia's Steve Smith drops one place to third on the latest rankings.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam jumps a spot to claim fourth place, while New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson -- who managed scores of just two and 15 at

Lord's -- drops two places to fifth.

There are also some changes in the latest Test bowler rankings, with towering New Zealand pacer Kyle Jamieson the biggest mover on the back of his six wickets for the match against England.

Jamieson rises two places to claim third, with Pakistan quick Shaheen Shah Afridi (fifth) dropping one spot apiece.

Australia captain Pat Cummins remains the top-ranked bowler with 901 rankings points, some 51 points ahead of veteran India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin with 850 points.





## A HEARTFELT NOTE FROM REEL LIFE MITHALI RAJ TO REAL-LIFE MITHALI RAJ

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As legendary India batter Mithali Raj announced her retirement from cricket, actress Taapsee Pannu, who would play the famed cricketer in the upcoming film 'Shabaash Mithu,' sent a heartfelt statement.

Taapsee turned to social media, where she posted a black-and-white photograph of herself with Raj and wrote: Youngest ODI captain for an Indian cricket team. -The only Indian cricketer to captain the team in 4 world cups and reach finals twice! -Youngest cricketer to score 200 in a Test match. -Highest scoring Indian cricketer in debut international match."

The actress added in another post: "-The only Indian cricketer to score 7 consecutive 50s in ODI. -23 years from hustle to glory. Some personalities and their achievements are genders agnostic. You changed the game, now it's our turn to change the perspective! Etched in history OUR CAPTAIN forever @M\_Raj03."

'Shabaash Mithu' will be released in theatres on July 15. The film is based on the life of Mithali Dorai Raj, the legendary captain of the Indian women's cricket team, and was directed by Srijit Mukherji and written by Priya Aven.

Mithali has 7 straight 50s in ODIs and has guided India to 4 World Cups in her 23-year career. The narrative follows her as she grows from an 8-year-old kid with a dream to a cricketing icon.



## Saiyami Kher takes part in Juhu Beach clean-up

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Saiyami Kher joined hands with environmental activist Afroz Shah for a beach clean-up activity called 'Run For The Oceans'. The actress took part in an early morning beach clean-up drive at Juhu Beach in Mumbai which was supported by Afroz and several volunteers who joined hands together for this important cause.

Saiyami said, "Mumbai has a rich coastline which is a jewel of the city. We as the citizens who make up this city need to do our part to keep the beaches clean not only for its recreational purposes but also for the fact that it's the seas and oceans that are impacted largely by our ignorance when we don't keep our beaches clean."

"Plastic, rubbish and more such harmful things are often disposed off affecting the cleanliness and overall health of the ocean and the marine life. I wanted to do my very small effort by joining this amazing cause with Afroz to contribute a small effort that can go a long way".

On the work front, Saiyami will be seen in Ashwiny Iyer Tiwary's web series 'Faadu'. It is a love story that also features Pavail Gulati and Abhilash Thapliyal. Apart from this, Saiyami Kher is a part of Tahira Kashyap's upcoming film 'Sharmaji Ki Beti' and R. Balki's 'Ghoomer'. She will also be seen in the new season of 'Breathe: Into The Shadows' and 'Highway', a south film co-starring Anand Deverakonda.

## It was very difficult for me to unlearn my Martial arts: Vidyut Jammwal

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The first action-packed trailer for Vidyut Jammwal's film Khuda Haafiz: Chapter 2 has been released. In a press conference director Faruk Kabir explained that it was always a collaborative effort between him and Vidyut Jammwal that allowed them to pull off such a stunning business. People may know Vidyut Jammwal as an action hero, but Faruk wanted to explore the actor's other side, which is emotional, which is why he wanted Vidyut to play this part and pull him as an emotional actor as well. Vidyut Jammwal revealed that he had to forget a lot of stuff in terms of martial arts training in order to play the role of Sameer, an ordinary man which was quite challenging for him.

According to Vidyut anyone who cares about his wife and child should watch the film. The actor later continues that he doesn't want to come across as arrogant, but he does feel responsible after a while because he is looked up to by millions of people. As a result, he is looking forward to doing things better and working on things that are coming up within himself. The trailer shows Vidyut and his girlfriend Nargis (played by Shivaleeka Oberoi) pursuing their ambition of raising a child, and they are soon gifted with an adopted daughter Nandini.

Nandini, on the other hand, is abducted, and Vidyut's character resolves to embrace his dark side. Faruk Kabir wrote and directed Vidyut's film Khuda Haafiz 2, which hits theatres on July 8.



## Shekhar Suman, Archana Puran Singh reveal the tears behind the laughter

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular actors and TV personalities Archana Puran Singh and Shekhar Suman, who are coming together for the upcoming comedy show 'India's Laughter Champion', got emotional during the launch of the show and recalled those times when they lost their loved ones yet smiled on-camera as professionals.

While both of the veterans are known for laughing their hearts out on-screen, Archana recalled how in the last 10 years on those days when she went through turmoil in her personal life, she kept her grief aside, being part of a comedy show. Archana said, "I have been appearing in 'Comedy Circus' since 2007. After that, I also did Kapil's show (The Kapil Sharma Show) from 2019. For all these years, people loved and remembered me for my loud laughter and being funny. Well, I am that, no doubt but no one sees the tears behind the laughter. People would think of the blessed life I have of getting paid for laughing. But there are so many trouble times, moments of sorrow I went through." She went on adding, "There were days when I stepped in to the set and doubted if I will be able to even smile when I have to laugh. I was very close to my mother-in-law and I was on set, shooting when she passed away. I came to know, I took a pause but then came back and worked, laughing as a professional because the show must go on. You see the laughter, not the tears behind it. It's painful."

Sharing his personal anecdotes, Shekhar Suman said, "When I was shooting for 'Dekh Bhai Dekh' I was going through a lot emotionally. I got to know that my elder son is terminally ill and the doctor said that we will not be able to save him. It was unimaginable how difficult it was for me to be part of a comedy show as an actor at that time. Every time the phone rang during my shooting, I thought there was an emergency or that was the end. I lost my son while filming for 'Dekh Bhai Dekh', in fact as a father that was the hardest."

"But as an artiste, we are not supposed to bring our grief to the set, as a performer we are to be remembered for our craft, not for the sorrow. As Archana said that we had to be professional and run the show," he signed off.

'India's Laughter Champion', hosted by Rochelle Rao, is starting on June 11 on Sony Entertainment Television.

## Adivi Sesh decides to organise fund raiser to support military aspirants

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Adivi Sesh and Saiee Manjrekar met the press after the enormous success of Major to share their experience and how they handled the success. While dealing with the media, Adivi Sesh expressed his delight at the success, mentioning that Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan's mother donned the same saree she wore when Major graduated. He also stated that major Sandeep's mother was overjoyed and hugged Adivi. When asked how she managed to pull off the part, Saiee stated that she didn't just want to play it; she also wanted to live it. She had only attempted to offer her hundred percent. The event's centrepiece was Adivi's decision to organise a fund raiser to support students interested in joining the military. The film is based on Maj. Sandeep Unnikrishnan's life, who fought terrorists and was killed in action during the 2008 Taj Palace Hotel attacks in Mumbai, India.



## Very curious to see Tom Hanks' reaction to: Aamir Khan

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan, who is gearing up for the release of his upcoming film 'Laal Singh Chaddha', says he is curious to see Hollywood star Tom Hanks' reaction to the Bollywood adaptation of the iconic movie 'Forrest Gump'. Talking about the same, Aamir says: "Forrest Gump is an iconic film. I am very curious to see how Tom Hanks reacts after watching the film. He is a wonderful actor". Interestingly, Aamir Khan had once met Tom Hanks during a meeting with Steven Spielberg. Back in the day, Spielberg was filming a movie along with 'Forrest Gump' star Tom Hanks in Germany. Spielberg further introduced Aamir to Hanks and referred to him as the "James Cameron of India". 'Laal Singh Chaddha', produced by Aamir Khan Productions, Kiran Rao, and Viacom18 Studios, also stars Kareena Kapoor Khan, Mona Singh, and Chaitanya Akkineni.



## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Samantha Ruth Prabhu