

# absolute india

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## Massive fire sweeps chilgoza pine forest in Himachal

▶ THE CHILGOZA PINE, A SLOW GROWING TREE WITH AN AVERAGE LIFE OF 150-200 YEARS, IS THE ONLY CONIFER WHICH BEARS HIGHLY NUTRITIOUS EDIBLE NUTS. IT IS ONE OF THE INDIGENOUS AND SOCIOECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT CONIFERS OF INNER DRIER REGIONS OF THE STATE.

▶ THE FOREST, LOCATED AT A 10-HOUR DRIVE FROM THE STATE CAPITAL SHIMLA, IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHILGOZA PINE FORESTS IN THE COUNTRY.

▶ SPREAD IN INNER DRY TRACTS OF TEMPERATE ZONES OF NORTH-WESTERN HIMALAYAS AT AN ALTITUDE FROM 1,800M TO 3,000M ABOVE THE SEA LEVEL, THE FOREST IS HOME TO THE HIMALAYAN TAHR, THE BLACK BEAR, AND THE BLUE SHEEP.

Vishal Gulati | Shimla

A massive fire has erupted in a huge stretch of chilgoza pine natural forest, an important conifer of the Western Himalayas, just ahead of the cold desert in Kinnaur district in Himachal Pradesh, posing threat to the endemic wildlife too. Locals on Sunday said the fire, in the past three days, has burnt down

thousands of native chilgoza, juniper, and birch trees in the Akpa-Jangi region of Pooh division with no major initiative by the government to bring it under control despite the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) being stationed there to man the Indo-China border that lies ahead. "Due to the massive forest fire, the only world famous and most endangered plant species chilgoza is under threat," local Chhering Tandup said.

## TRAIN VANDALISED IN BENGAL AS PROTESTS CONTINUE OVER PROPHET REMARKS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A mob vandalised a local train in West Bengal this evening during a protest against the controversial remarks of suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on Prophet Muhammad. A railway official said a group of around 1,000 people threw stones at the Lalgola-Ranaghat train local train at Bethuadahari railway station in Nadia district. The railway police and other police personnel have been deployed to the area to bring the situation under control. This comes after protests erupted in several parts of Howrah district on Friday over controversial remarks by Nupur Sharma and expelled BJP leader Naveen Jindal on Prophet Muhammad.



### GAUTAM GAMBHIR COMES IN SUPPORT OF NUPUR SHARMA

New Delhi: Cricketer-turned-politician Gautam Gambhir today joined the ranks of the supporters of Nupur Sharma, the now suspended national spokesperson of the BJP, whose derogatory comments on Prophet Muhammad had triggered a mammoth controversy with repercussions at home and abroad.



Under the hashtag "#LetsTolerateIntolerance", Mr Gambhir, who is also the MP from East Delhi, tweeted: "Silence of so called 'secular liberals' on the sickening display of hatred & death threats throughout the country against a woman who has apologised is surely DEAFENING!"

### HIGH TIME PM BREAKS 'SILENCE': SHASHI THAROOR

On the outrage and condemnation from a number of Muslim-majority nations over the controversial remarks on Prophet Muhammad and calls that Prime Minister Modi should have intervened in the matter when the comments were made, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said, "I believe it is high time the PM broke his silence on the proliferation of hate speech and Islamophobic incidents in our country, because his silence is interpreted by some as condoning what has been happening. I am sure he (Modi) understands that this kind of divisive rhetoric is undermining his own vision for India's development and prosperity," he said. Social cohesion and national harmony are a must for any nation to progress and grow, Tharoor asserted.



### NO PLACE FOR VIOLENCE IN DEMOCRACY: ANURAG THAKUR

"There is no place for violence in a democracy. Everybody should get an opportunity to put his point of view in a democracy. And when the problems can be resolved through talks, then there is no place for stone-pelting, arson and unruly behaviour. Leaders or organisations should not add fuel to the fire."

## Madhya Pradesh Panchayat Polls: 3,135 candidates elected unopposed

Team Absolute | Indore

A total of 3135 candidates were elected unopposed in the Panchayat elections from Madhya Pradesh on Saturday. During the Panchayat elections in the Indore district, candidates contesting from two wards of the Janpad Panchayat Sanwer won unopposed, both were supported by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). At the BJP office, Sanwer MLA and cabinet minister Tulsi Silawat welcomed the winners and offered them sweets. At the same time, 16 Women sarpanches were elected unopposed, apart from this 3117 panches of Sanwer and Depalpur were also elected unopposed. The last date for withdrawal of nomination papers was on June 10, after scrutiny of which the candidates elected unopposed were announced.



The election of the remaining candidates will be held in the Indore district in the first phase on June 25. These voting will be held for Panch, Sarpanch, Janpad members and Zilla Panchayat members.

## Five killed by heat wave at religious festival in Bengal

Kolkata | Agencies

At least five devotees have succumbed to extreme heat and several others fell ill as they were attending a religious festival at Panihati in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on Sunday. On Sunday morning, several devotees participated in the 500-year-old Danda Mahotsav at the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) temple at Panihati. The festival had been suspended for the last two years because of the Covid pandemic. However, as the religious festival resumed this year, public enthusiasm to participate was quite high. But because of the extreme heat and humidity, around 50 devotees fell severely sick and five, including a

woman, died.

The ailing have been admitted to local hospitals. The conditions of some of them are reportedly critical. Initially, it was estimated that three persons have died from the heat and humidity. The number later increased to five. Soon after the news of death of three persons flashed, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee took to Twitter, expressing condolences to families of the deceased. "Distressed to know of three devotees' death due to heat and humidity in Danda Mahotsav at ISKCON temple at Panihati. CP and DM have rushed, all help being



provided. My condolences to the bereaved families, solidarity to devotees," she said in her tweet. On getting the news, Trinamool's North 24 Parganas district president and state Forest Minister, Jyotipriyo Mullick rushed to the spot and supervised the rescue process. "The state government will render all assistance including medical aid," he said. Following the tragedy, the temple authorities have suspended the festival for the time being.



### SECOND DEATH IN KERALA DUE TO SCRUB TYPHUS

Scrub Typhus is an infectious disease caused by the *Orientia tsutsugamushi*, a mite-borne bacterium. It may be noted that chigger mites, the larval stage of mites, transmit the disease from rats, squirrels, rabbits and dogs.

Thiruvananthapuram: A 39-year-old woman, Sabitha died of Scrub Typhus disease in Parassal, Thiruvananthapuram district. She had been suffering from the disease for the past 15 days and passed away on Sunday morning. Earlier on Thursday, Ashwathi, a 15-year-old girl, died at Varkala in Thiruvananthapuram district due to Scrub Typhus. She was awaiting the results of her 10th standard board examination when she contracted the disease and passed away. State health minister Veena George has directed a special medical team to visit the native place where Ashwathi was admitted. However, even after the state health department took precautions, the second death has increased the worries of the health workers and the department.

### TWO CHINESE HELD IN BIHAR FOR CROSSING BORDER ILLEGALLY

Patna: Two Chinese nationals were arrested on Sunday for illegally crossing the India-Nepal border in Bihar's Sitamarhi district, the Sashastra Seema Bal said. The two Chinese nationals are identified as Lo Lung, 28, and Yung Hai Lung, 34. SSB personnel apprehended them over 300 metres inside Indian territory near pillar number 11/6. Nepalese passports, 3 ATM cards, cigarettes, and some other items were seized from them. The two were handed over to the Surshand police. During brief interrogation, the two Chinese nationals said that they came from China to Nepal via Thailand, and from Kathmandu, hired two bicycles to reach the Bihar border.

## BINNY BANSAL SELLS FLIPKART STAKE TO TENCENT AS CHINA HARDENS BORDER POSITION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Flipkart Co-founder Binny Bansal has sold his stake worth \$264 million (more than Rs 2,000 crore) in the homegrown e-commerce platform to Chinese Internet giant Tencent, at a time when the neighbouring country has once again hardened its positions along the Indian border. A query sent to Flipkart went unanswered. Sachin and Binny Bansal, who received their B.Tech degree in computer science & engineering from IIT-D in 2005, built one of the largest e-commerce marketplaces in India. Sachin led Flipkart as its CEO from its inception in 2007 till 2015, and took over as the Executive Chairman in 2016. He is currently leading and mentoring the startup and internet ecosystem in India and is an angel investor in several technology startups. Binny served as the Chief Operating Officer of Flipkart till January 2016 before being promoted as its Chief Executive Officer. He exited Flipkart in November 2018, and became a prolific angel investor. Flipkart, Amazon, Reliance's JioMart, and Tata-backed BigBasket have fired up India's online retail market that is forecast to grow at a CAGR of 19.8 per cent to reach \$85.5 billion by 2025, according to a report by Forrester. Flipkart raised \$3.6 billion (about Rs 27,000 crore) in funding led by Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC, CPP Investments, SoftBank Vision Fund 2 and Walmart in July 2021. The funding round had taken Flipkart's valuation to \$37.6 billion.

The news about Bansal selling Flipkart stock to Tencent came at a time when US Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, said on Saturday that China is hardening its positions along the Indian border. Addressing the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Austin said that China is taking aggressive and illegal approaches to the territories it claims in the South China Sea. Tencent bought Bansal's stake, via its European subsidiary called Tencent Cloud Europe BV, in October last year, and now holds 0.72 per cent stake in Walmart-owned Flipkart, according to media reports, which was later confirmed by reliable sources. Bansal now holds nearly 1.84 per cent stake in Flipkart.



### SONIA GANDHI ADMITTED TO GANGA RAM HOSPITAL

New Delhi: More than a week after testing positive for the coronavirus, Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Sunday was admitted to Ganga Ram Hospital for treatment. Congress General Secretary Randeep Surjewala tweeted, "Congress President Sonia Gandhi was admitted to Ganga Ram Hospital today owing to Covid related issues. She is stable and will be kept at the hospital for observation. We thank all the Congressmen & women as also all well wishers for their concern and good wishes." Sonia Gandhi on June 2 tested positive for Covid-19 infection. The report of Gandhi testing positive for Covid infection came a day after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) summoned her and Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case. The Congress president was scheduled to appear before the ED on June 8 but now she has been asked to appear before it on June 23.





# INDIA HAS 'STRONG PROTECTIVE SHIELD' OF COVID VACCINATION: MANDAVIYA

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi  
India now has strong protective shield of over 195 crore vaccine doses, said Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya as the cumulative vaccination tally crossed this figure on Sunday.  
"In the nation's collective fight against #COVID19 under PM @NarendraModi Ji's dynamic leadership, India now has strong protective shield of over 195 crore vaccine doses. Rapidly marching towards hitting the double century! Let's do it at the earliest!", he said in a tweet.  
As per the data, as of 7 a.m. on June 12, India had administered 1,95,07,08,541 total doses of the Covid-19 vaccine overall. This has been achieved through 2,50,27,810 sessions, and includes 91.69 crore total first doses and 83.37 crore total second doses administered to the beneficiaries aged 18 plus years.  
Among 15-18 years of age bracket, a total of 5.98 crore first doses and



4.69 crore second doses have been administered so far. Additionally, total 3.51 crore first doses and 1.94 crore second doses have been administered to the beneficiaries aged 12-14 years.  
As per the Health Ministry report, total 33,08,375 lakh precautionary doses have been administered to beneficiaries aged 18-59 years and about 3.54 crore precautionary doses administered to beneficiaries aged above 60 years, healthcare workers (HCW) and frontline workers (FLW) so far.  
Meanwhile, India's Covid-19 tally crossed 8 thousand mark for second day with 8,582 fresh infections on Sunday. The nation also reported 4 more Covid deaths, taking the nationwide death toll to 5,24,761.  
The active caseload of the country has also risen to 44,513 cases, accounting for 0.10 per cent of the country's total positive cases.

# 20 killed in 7 road accidents in Bihar

**Patna** | Agencies  
At least 20 people have been killed in road accidents at seven places in Bihar on Saturday, officials said.  
In Purnea district, at least nine persons lost their lives after a Mahindra Scorpio overturned and fell into a water pit. The car occupants, unfortunately, were unable to get out of the vehicle, and were drowned to death.  
The Scorpio occupants were returning from a marriage function and the driver of the vehicle lost control due to over-speeding.  
In another accident, three persons were mowed down by a speeding oil tanker in Danapur area in Patna district. The victims died on the spot. The third accident took place in Araria district when three youth riding a motorcy-



cle met with an accident at Dholbajja area. All the three died on the spot. They were on the way to attend a marriage function. One of the deceased was the groom's brother. The fourth mishap appeared at Pali Mor in Jahanabad district on NH-110 when a speeding car rammed a bike. One person died on the spot while two others were critically injured and referred to PMCH Patna.  
The fifth accident occurred in Banka district when a speeding container truck rammed on to an Alto car

that was coming from the opposite direction. The accident happened in Leelawaran village.  
One Alto occupant died on the spot while two others were referred to Bhagalpur medical college and hospital for treatment.  
The sixth accident occurred in Sheikhpura district when two persons were mowed down by a vehicle in Basant village.  
Also, in Jamui district, a 5-year-old child died when an e-rickshaw overturned. Three persons were also injured in that mishap.  
Following the deaths in road accidents, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has expressed condolence to the families of the deceased. He also announced Rs 4 lakh each to the family members of the deceased.

# Hot day in Delhi as mercury soars to 43.9 degrees C

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi  
It was a hot day in the national capital on Sunday with the maximum temperature recorded at 43.9 degrees Celsius in the Safdarjung monitoring station, officials said.  
As per the India Meteorological Department (IMD) update at 8.30 p.m., the city was having a relative humidity of 41 per cent and the weather was calm.  
The city observed sunrise at 5.23 a.m. and the sunset at 7.20 p.m. The maximum temperature in other areas of Delhi was recorded at -- Ayanaagar 44.4, Lodhi Road at 44, Palam at 44.1, Ridge at 45.8, Jafarpur at 44.6, Mungeshpur 46.2, Najafgarh 46.4, Pitampura 45.8 and Salwan Public School 43.2 degrees Celsius.



According to the IMD, the heat wave spell is likely to continue over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, east Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand for another day.  
"No significant change in maximum temperatures is very likely over Northwest India during next 2 days and gradual fall by 2-3 degrees Celsius thereafter," the IMD said.

# Andhra boy kills self after friends mock him over defeat in PUBG

**VIJAYAWADA** | Agencies  
A teenager allegedly committed suicide after his friends mocked him following defeat in online game PUBG.  
The incident was reported from Machilipatnam town of Andhra Pradesh's Krishna district on Sunday.  
The 16-year-old felt reportedly humiliated after his friends mocked him when he lost the online game. He came home and allegedly hanged himself to the ceiling fan.  
The boy is son of Shantiraj, a local leader of Congress party and was addicted to playing PUBG. He played the game with his



friends on Sunday. When he lost the game, his friends ridiculed him. He felt humiliated over this and resorted to the extreme step.  
Police shifted the body for autopsy and took up investigation. District Congress president Tantiya Kumari, who consoled the boy's fam-

ily, later demanded that the state and the central government should ban PUBG like games as it is claiming lives.  
PUBG was banned in the country in 2019 but recently it made a comeback with a different name.  
Last week, in Lucknow, a 16-year-old boy allegedly shot his mother using the licensed pistol of his father, who is in the Army, because she stopped him from playing online games like PUBG. The boy hid her body inside their house for three days using room freshener to mask the smell, according to UP Police. He also threatened his 10-year-old sister that he would kill her if she told anyone about the murder, police said.

Bulldozer is a symbol of state hooliganism, says Jayant Chaudhary



**Team Absolute** | New Delhi  
Following incidents of violence in Prayagraj, Hathras, Firozabad etc after Friday prayers in Uttar Pradesh and the subsequent police crackdown, RLD chief Jayant Choudhary on Sunday attacked the state government over the issue.  
Jayant Choudhary said, "The use of bulldozer is not the enforcement of the rule of law. Rather it has become a symbol of state sponsored hooliganism!"  
RLD chief's statement came at a time when a bulldozer was moved to the 'illegal' house of Prayagraj violence mastermind Mohammad Javed alias

Javed Pump. Taking action against those involved in the violence, the Uttar Pradesh Police have so far arrested more than 300 persons in the state. Of these, 91 people have been arrested from Prayagraj, 51 from Hathras, 71 from Saharanpur, 34 from Moradabad, 15 from Firozabad, six from Aligarh, 34 from Ambedkar Nagar and two from Jalaun district.  
All of them are accused of indulging in stone pelting, disturbing the atmosphere and instigating people. At present, the security arrangements in the violence-hit areas of all these districts are normal and the situation is under control.

# Presidential polls: BJP authorises Nadda, Rajnath for talks with other parties

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi  
The BJP on Sunday authorised party chief J.P. Nadda and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to consult other political parties for next month's Presidential election.  
In a statement, BJP national general secretary Arun Singh said, "In view of Presidential election, the BJP has authorised BJP chief J.P. Nadda and Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for consulting."  
"They will hold consultations with NDA partners, UPA constituents and even Independent Members of Parliament," Singh said.  
Singh further stated that Nadda and Rajnath Singh



will soon start process of consultation.  
Sources said that consultation will focus on proposed BJP led NDA nominee for the post of President of India.  
Presidential polls, if required, will be held on July 18 and counting of votes will take place on July 21.  
In an electoral college of around 10.86 lakh votes for the polls, the BJP and its alliance partners are a little short of the halfway mark.

# Terrorist responsible for killing J&K cop neutralised in encounter

**SRINAGAR** | Agencies  
The terrorist responsible for the killing of Jammu and Kashmir police personnel Reyaz Ahmad was among three LeT terrorists neutralized in an overnight encounter with security forces at Drabgam area in South Kashmir's Pulwama district, officials said on Sunday.  
"Yesterday, at about 1855 hrs, acting on specific information generated by Police regarding presence of terrorists in village Drabgam area of Pulwama, a joint cordon & search operation was launched by Police, Army (44RR) and CRPF (182/183Bn) in the said area," police said.  
During the search operation, as the joint party approached towards the suspected spot, the hiding terrorists fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party which was retaliated effectively leading to an encounter. "In the ensuing



encounter, three local terrorists of proscribed terror outfit LeT were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter," police said.  
They have been identified as Junaid Ahmad Sheergojri of Gadoora, Pulwama, Fazil Nazir

Bhat of Drabgam, Pulwama and Irfan Ahmad Malik of Arabal Nikas, Pulwama.  
"As per police records, all the three killed terrorists were part of groups involved in several terror crime cases including attacks on Police/Security Forces and civilian atrocities. The killed terrorist Junaid Sheergojri along with his associate Abid Hussain Shah of Monghama Pulwama, who stands neutralised on 30/05/2022, was involved in killing of police personnel Reyaz Ahmad at his residential house on 13th May 2022. Besides, he was also involved in recent attack on outside labourers at a brick kiln in Chadoora on 02/06/2022 in the outskirts of Pulwama-Budgam axis in which one labourer was killed and others injured," police said.  
Incriminating materials, arms and ammunition including two AK-47 rifles and one pistol have been recovered from the site of encounter.

# DCW issues notice over attack on woman who accused Raj Minister's son of rape

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi  
The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Sunday issued a notice to the Delhi Police in connection to an attack on the 23-year-old woman who has accused Rajasthan Cabinet Minister Mahesh Joshi's son of rape.  
On Saturday night, the woman was walking with her mother near the Kalindi Kunj Road when two unknown persons approached her and threw a blue liquid on her face, according to the police.  
She was immediately taken to the AIIMS Trauma Centre. The Commission said that it has received a complaint regarding the attack.  
The victim informed the DCW that the miscreants attacked her and threatened her to withdraw the rape case against Rohit Joshi, the son of Rajasthan Cabinet



Minister Mahesh Joshi.  
Termining the incident as a "very serious matter", the DCW has issued a notice and asked the Delhi Police to provide a copy of the FIR registered in the matter.  
The Commission has also asked to provide information about the steps taken by the police to ensure the safety and security of the complainant and her family, as well as a detailed action report by June 15.

# Cong's proposed march to ED office can't be permitted: Delhi Police

**Delhi Police on Sunday told the Congress party that its proposed rally to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office here on Monday cannot be permitted, citing certain reasons including law and order issues.**

**Team Absolute** | New Delhi  
Keeping in view the present communal situation in Delhi and heavy law and order/VVIP movements in the jurisdiction of New Delhi district, the said rally could not be permitted in the jurisdiction of New Delhi district," Deputy Commissioner of Police Amrutha Guguloth said in a letter to the All India Congress Committee (AICC).  
It also said that the police got the information about the rally through various sources -- that the Congress is planning to organise a rally from the AICC headquarters to the ED office, Paryawaran Bhawan, here.  
The police also noted that a call was given to the Congress supporters all over India to join the said rally.  
Denying the permission, the Congress has been requested to cooperate with the police.  
The Congress party had planned to



carry out a march in wake of its leader Rahul Gandhi's scheduled appearance at the ED office on Monday.  
The ED has summoned Rahul Gandhi on Monday and party chief Sonia Gandhi on June 23 in connection with the National Herald case, lodged against various Congress leaders, including the Gandhis, for allegedly misappropriating funds.

# Gambling racket busted in Delhi; 4 held



**Team Absolute** | New Delhi  
Four persons have been arrested here for allegedly running a gambling racket, the police said on Sunday.  
The accused have been identified as Vicky (30), Rohit (28), Shiv Dayal Singh (21) and Naveen (21).  
Deputy Commissioner of Police (outer district) Sameer Sharma said that a special drive is being conducted against the organised crime in the Outer district and for that, secret informers were deployed in the area to keep a tab on 'Bad Characters' present there.  
"On June 9, two police constables were on patrolling duty. When they reached near Sun Shine School, Aman Vihar, they saw one person shouting '10 ka 100'. There were three more persons who were present," DCP Sharma said.  
The police detained all four of them and a cash of Rs 4,020 was recovered from their possession.  
Accordingly, the police registered a case under sections 5, 9 and 55 of the Gambling Act at the Sultanpuri police station and all the four accused persons, including their kingpin Vicky, were arrested.



## CHILDREN HAVE NATURAL TALENT, GIVE THEM FAVORABLE CONDITIONS: CM



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that every child has natural talent and potential. If we create favourable conditions for children, they can do wonders. Together we will make efforts to do better work, only then can good results come. Many people force children to become drug addicts. Chouhan said that children should not beg, arrangements should be made for their education, clothes, food etc. The society along with the government will have to come forward in this direction so that children cannot be forced to be

child labourers and they should be protected from being exploited. Better arrangements have to be made for their education and shelter. Chief Minister was addressing the closing ceremony of the Child Labor Prohibition Day and the 100th webinar of the organization at the Noronha Academy of Administration, organized by the Child Conservation Foundation today. Chouhan said that I am pained to see children begging or pleading for food. The efforts of the government alone are not enough for the welfare of the children, the society should also join hands. If people get the right platform, then they

leave no stone unturned. He said that in Bhopal, I had come out with a hand cart for the children of Anganwadi. We got ten truck loads of commodities and also provided cheques worth Rs 1 crore 86 lakhs. Chief Minister said that it should not be so in child labor that children should not even do household work. It is wrong to make them slog. Do not exploit them. We should try to free children from exploitation. I am happy that our young children have the urge to work for the progress of the nation and society along with moving forward on their own. I am committed to build a bright future for my children.

## MP to come up with policy document for eradication of child labour

Chouhan said, "Child development is such an issue that both government and society need to come together and work. There are people in society who tries to mislead the younger generation and indulge them in illegal activities like the consumption of drugs, etc."

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday said that the state government will be documenting a policy for the removal of child labour and begging from all the cities of the state. While addressing a gathering on the occasion of World Day Against Child Labour, Chouhan said, "Child development is such an issue that both government and society need to come together and work. There are people in society who tries to mislead the younger generation and indulge them in illegal activities like the consumption of drugs, etc. We should try to prevent such things for the betterment of the younger generation." "We won't let children beg in



any of the cities of the state. Every child has the immense capability. There shouldn't be child labour," Chouhan said. He further said, "We will further work on a policy document regarding it." World Day Against Child Labour was adopted on June 12 in 2002 by the United Nations body, International Labour Organisation. The International Labour Organization supports and provides basic education, medical and other services to the children. On this occasion, many events, and campaigns are also organized showing concern for the children who become victims of child labour across the world. The 'Universal Social Protection to End Madhya Pradesh to come up with policy document for eradication of child labour this year.

## BJP's marathon meeting to select Mayoral candidates continues

■ BJP's marathon meeting to select mayoral candidates for the local body polls is continuing and the names are likely to be announced on Sunday evening.



decades, the BJP is challenged in selection of candidates. While, in the past, BJP used to first announce its candidates and the Congress used to release its candidates' list after it. What is taking the ruling BJP so long to announce its mayoral candidates, despite being in power in all 16 municipal corporations in the state?

MP BJP's marathon meeting to select mayoral candidates for the local body polls is continuing and the names are likely to be announced on Sunday evening. The nomination of candidates for local body polls in Madhya Pradesh began on Saturday. The core committee of state BJP continued one after another brainstorming sessions to finalise its candidates. BJP stalwarts Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, state Home Minister Narottam Mishra, state BJP president V D Sharma, Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and any others, had held a meeting late on Saturday night. On Sunday, the core committee's meeting began in the morning and

is likely to continue till evening at the party's headquarters in Bhopal. BJP leader and the union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia reached the party office and after half-an-hour, he left the office. Chief Minister Chouhan is also expected to attend the meeting. While the party's stalwarts continued their meetings -- one after another session -- a large number of BJP workers, who are aspirants for mayoral posts, assembled and are waiting for their turn to meet the committee members. MP BJP president V D Sharma has claimed that names of mayoral candidates will be announced after the core committee meeting gets over. A political observer told IANS that for the first time in the past two

Experts are of the view that the BJP is just not ruling party in the state but in all Municipal Corporations in the state therefore, the party's stalwarts don't want to leave any loophole in candidates selection and also to avoid anti-incumbency. Another reason behind delay in selection of candidates is that, the senior leaders are pushing for their favourite candidates for mayoral posts. Sources told IANS that the committee has almost finalised mayoral candidates for 10-11 municipal corporations, but is stuck in five-six seats, which includes -- Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior. While BJP is stuck in discussions, the Congress had announced its mayoral candidates for 15 of the 16 municipal corporations on Thursday night.

## CM PLANTED SAPPLINGS OF BANYAN, NEEM AND KARANJ



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Banyan, Neem and Karanj saplings along with the members of Piramal Foundation in Smart Garden today. Sachin Chaturvedi, Vice Chairman, Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis, Bhopal was also present. Along with CM Chouhan, Chaturvedi and the Foundation's Vishal Pandit, Ashish Karale, Mohammad Safdar and Himanshu Gupta also planted saplings. Chouhan was informed about the environment-protection and awareness efforts of the organisation. CM was also presented his portrait made by Pandey. Banyan has religious significance, as well as according to Ayurveda, it is possible to cure many diseases from it. Similarly, neem abundant in antibiotic elements is known as the supreme medicine. Karanj plant is considered important in Ayurvedic medicine. It is also used in religious works.

## Shivraj to meet Amit Shah, other ministers in Delhi today

■ Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be visiting New Delhi on Monday, the chief minister's office (CMO) said in an official statement on Sunday.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be visiting New Delhi on Monday, the chief minister's office (CMO) said in an official statement on Sunday. During the visit, Chouhan will meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah and some other Union Cabinet ministers. The CMO informed that during the meeting with Union Cabinet ministers, Chouhan will hold a discussion over development issues in Madhya Pradesh. Apart from Shah, the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister will also meet Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat to hold a discussion on the development of Centre's 'Nal Se Jal' scheme in the state. Meanwhile, he will also meet some other Union Cabinet ministers. "MP CM will visit Delhi tomorrow (Monday). We will be meeting with Union Cabinet ministers Amit Shah, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and some others to discuss several development projects in the state," Chief Minister's office said in the official communication. Last time, Chouhan had visited New

Delhi along with his two Cabinet colleagues to discuss the legalities of the OBC reservation issue with Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and senior party leaders. OBC reservation is at the centre stage in Madhya Pradesh's politics, especially when the local body and three-tier panchayat polls are to be held. The state Congress unit had on Friday appointed Congress MLA Siddharth Kushwaha as president of Madhya Pradesh Congress OBC department. Recently, the party had given the ticket to Kushwaha for mayor elections from Satna. Notably, the BJP has not yet appointed any leader as OBC Morcha president after the removal of Bhagat Singh Kushwaha from the post. The contribution of OBC category is, however, a big issue in the upcoming urban body elections in the state.

## HOW MANY POLL DEFEATS ARE TOO MANY? FOR THIS INDORE MAN 17 NOT ENOUGH

The family of this businessman - Parmanand Tolani - with a non-political background is known for its unique tradition of contesting elections for two generations without any electoral victory and constantly losing deposits every time.

Indore: Hope is the last thing that one loses, it is said, and a 62-year-old real estate businessman from Indore in Madhya Pradesh is perhaps on a mission to prove that. Despite having lost his security deposit 17 times earlier in different elections, the sexagenarian has filed his nomination paper for the mayoral elections in Indore scheduled next month. In fact, the family of this businessman - Parmanand Tolani - with a non-political background is known for its unique tradition of contesting elections for two generations without any electoral victory and constantly losing deposits every time. Officials said that Parmanand Tolani filed his nomination on Saturday as an independent candidate for the post of mayor in Indore Municipal Corporation, for which polling is to be held on July 6. Talking to media persons on Sunday, Parmanand Tolani, popularly known as "Indori Dhartiapakad", said, "This will be the 18th election of my life as a candidate. I have contested a total of 17 elections. They included polls for the post of mayor, as well as Lok Sabha and Assembly elections." The real estate businessman said that despite forfeiture of deposits every time, he has not given up and continues to follow his "family tradition" by contesting elections again. "My father, Metharam Tolani, fought different elections continuously for 30 years during his lifetime. After his death in 1988, I started contesting elections from 1989 onwards," he said. He said that he had once fielded his wife Laxmi Tolani in the civic elections as the mayoral candidate, then the seat was reserved for women candidates.

## SCINDIA PAYS COURTESY VISIT TO CM

Bhopal: Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia paid a courtesy visit to Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday. CM welcomed the Union Minister with a bouquet of flowers on his arrival at the CM residence.



## Panchayats settle for monetary incentives to elect office-bearers unopposed

► CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN OFFER TO ELECT GRAM PANCHAYAT REPRESENTATIVES UNOPPOSED AND GET MONETARY REWARDS RANGING FROM RS 5 LAKH TO RS 15 LAKH DURING THE ONGOING THREE-TIER PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS HAS RECEIVED GOOD RESPONSE FROM THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's offer to elect gram panchayat representatives unopposed and get monetary rewards ranging from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 15 lakh during the ongoing three-tier panchayat elections has received good response from the people of the state. As many as 496 gram panchayats across the state have so far elected their representatives unopposed. Up to 75 per cent have elected women for the post of Sarpanch or for the entire panchayat panel (including Sarpanchs and Panchs), as per the data provided by the State Election Commission (SEC). Officials said that this number will go up in the coming days which can be at least around 1,000-1,500 by the end of the polls. In total, there are 23,012 gram panchayats across 52 districts of the state, out of them elections would be held to elect the representatives of 22,921 panchayats as the tenure of the remaining 91 panchayats will end by November. Narmadapuram (Hoshangabad) district is on the top of the list where 36 gram panchayats elected their representatives unopposed; Sagar district stood second with 35 gram panchayats electing their rep-

resentatives unopposed. As per the data provided by the SEC, Chief Minister Chouhan's home district Sehore is placed third with 33 gram panchayats electing their representatives unopposed with unanimous consensus, while Harda district in fourth position with 32 gram panchayats doing the same. Some other districts where the representatives of gram panchayats have been elected unopposed are Chhindwara (29), Jabalpur (26), Seoni (22), Shivpuri (11) and Guna (10), among others. The three-tier panchayat polls in the state will be held in three phases between June 25 and July 8. The gram panchayats that elect their representative unopposed would be considered as 'Samras Panchayats' and will be given special incentives. Chouhan on May 27 had announced that if a sarpanch is elected by consensus, an incentive of Rs 5 lakh will be provided to that panchayat, Rs 7 lakh if the entire panchayat is elected unopposed and Rs 12 lakh if a woman representative gets elected unopposed. "Similarly, if women are elected unopposed to all the posts (Sarpanch and Panchs) in the panchayat, an incentive amount of Rs 15 lakh will be provided to the panchayat. Development projects of such panchayats will get priority," Chouhan had announced. The first such instance came to light when villagers under the Singayal panchayat of Aaron in Guna district elected women representatives to all 12 posts, including Lalita Singh, wife of former Chambal dacoit Malkhan Singh, as Sarpanch. A senior IAS officer, posted in the higher education department of the state government, believes that gram panchayat elections are more critical these days as closely connected people become opponents during the elections. "In villages, people are socially, culturally connected with each other. But, it is also a fact that in the race for grabbing the posts (Panchs and Sarpanch) and for their social dignity, even neighbours turn into enemies of each other," the officer said, requesting anonymity. Citing her own experience as an election supervisor in the panchayat election in Assam, a few years back, the officer said: "The biggest challenge was to conduct a peaceful election. Because, people who live under one roof and are neighbours or relatives, sometimes stood to oppose each other and this creates a critical situation for officials on election duty."

## Arrest is not enough, criminals will get strictest punishment: CM

■ Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan met the injured woman and handed over the incentive amount  
■ Meeting of top officers convened early in the morning

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that strictest action will be taken against anti-social elements who are committing crimes against women. Necessary instructions have been given to the Commissioner of Police, Bhopal regarding the incident in Bhopal yesterday. CM gave necessary instructions in a meeting of top officers at the CM residence on Sunday morning. Chouhan today visited. Seema's residence in Shivaji Nagar and inquired about her health. In an incident on Saturday, Seema was seriously injured after she was attacked with a blade by some miscreants. Chouhan gave an incentive of Rs. one lakh to the injured woman. Chouhan said that the courage of Smt. Seema is commendable. She courageously confronted the objectionable and obscene acts of the miscreants. The treatment of Seema will be done by the state government. CM Chouhan said that resisting injustice is an inspiration for other people. Seema who opposed the incident is also an inspiration to other women. The Chief Minister has also given necessary instructions to Collector Bhopal for providing assistance to Seema's son and daughter who study



in Bhopal. He said that the accused in the incident have been arrested. Instructions have been given to Police Commissioner Bhopal and other officers for strictest action against them. CM Chouhan also interacted with Seema's husband and other family members. Chouhan said that three criminals are involved in the incident. They have committed a terrible crime. The main culprit does the work of driving auto. He just got released from jail a few days ago. He has been arrested. Also the license of his vehicle has been cancelled. Seema has done an act of courage. I respect and congratulate her. She has emerged as an inspiration against injustice and violence. Chief Minister said that plastic surgery of Smt. Seema would also be done in consultation with doctors. Earlier this morning, Chief Minister Chouhan called a meeting of top officers at the CM residence and expressed concern and grief over this incident of violence in the capital yesterday. He said in displeasure that I am very upset by this incident.



EDITOR'S SPECS

## BJP's hassle of prez candidate

The ruling BJP at the Centre will decide its presidential candidate with an eye on the next general election to be held in 2024. The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Thursday announced the schedule for election for the next President. The BJP is just short of 50 per cent of the Electoral College and is hopeful of getting support of Biju Janata Dal and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) in next month's Presidential polls. Currently opposition parties collectively have 51.1 per cent share of Electoral College while the BJP and its alliance partners have 48.9 per cent. The difference is mere two per cent which can be easily managed by winning support of opposition parties not comfortable in standing with Congress. While the BJP strategists will manage the support of party candidates, the party leadership is looking for a suitable candidate which can balance the social equation with an eye on the next parliament election in 2024. Party sources said that amid all speculation and names doing rounds for the presidential candidate, the leadership may nominate a candidate either belonging to Other Backward Class (OBC), a woman, Scheduled Tribe or South Indian to win that particular section of votes in General Election 2024. Amid the demand of caste-based Census, political parties know that OBC constitutes over 40 per cent of the country's total population, while women account for nearly half of India's population. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has on several occasions said that women are the new vote bank of the BJP. BJP sources said that the party might nominate either an OBC or a woman for the post of President or go for a woman OBC candidate. According to a senior party leader, several names are doing rounds but right now no one knows what top leadership is thinking.

# 'EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED'

Over the years, financial markets have grown used to expecting the unexpected. Almost any passage of time in the history of financial markets is replete with events which have taken market participants by surprise.

Navneet Munot

However, it would be fair to say that 2020s have just taken this to an altogether different level. In a lighter vein, one could wonder how the first quarter of last few years has made it a habit of making a mockery of beginning-of-year forecasts. While 2020 was a year which began under the looming threat of geo-political tensions between US and Iran; by the end of the first quarter, the thing that had turned the world upside down was, after all, a virus. At the start of 2022, while all eyes were on the spread of Omicron; by the end of the first quarter, the event that actually shook everyone was a geopolitical one (Russia-Ukraine war). Indeed, one would want to turn back the clock or rather, the calendar, to the beginning of this year with a hope that diplomacy and good sense prevailed and the world avoided this human tragedy, still unfolding in Ukraine. While turning time back and forth can only be wishful thinking, it certainly does happen twice a year - in some countries. Yes, indeed, I am referring to 'daylight saving time', which basically involves the practice of setting ahead clock by an hour at the beginning of summer and setting it back by an hour at the beginning of winter in most western countries. Interestingly, while this idea was floated in the early twentieth century, it only took off during World War I as countries scrambled to save energy by making better use of daylight. This wasn't the only new idea to take off in the aftermath of a war. For instance, widespread

manufacturing of antibiotics, like penicillin in US, took off only during World War II. Stainless steel rose to prominence during World War I as the British military sought an alternative to other metals, which were prone to damage from heat and friction. While different forms of computers are used across all industries today, the world's first large scale electronic computer was built during World War II. Rapid progress in radar technology during World War I paved the path for civil aviation industry to take off. This list goes on and on and includes wristwatches, synthetic rubber, Pilates etc. In fact, it is not just the military conflicts that have triggered innovations. The competitive spirit during the Cold War too led to rapid development of space technology which had a lasting impact on the world. Indeed, while wars do reflect the worst in humanity, the desperate circumstances surrounding them have historically triggered or kick-started many path-breaking innovations/developments, arising from ingenuity of the human mind. As the war drags on in Ukraine, there are jitters being felt across all walks of life. Scourge of inflation means that Central Banks have had to tighten monetary policies, even as global growth outlook is clouded by geo-political uncertainties. However, what's worth remembering is that if one goes by history, the world will not only find a way to tide over this crisis but would also come up with game-changing ideas along the way. Looking back at Covid and its repercussions, as things stand, next few years could actually define the course of history for a

prolonged period of time. First few months of this ongoing conflict have already shown that going forward there could be less reliance on physical warfare and more on the economic one. This, in turn, could result in formation of newer economic blocs and change the course of globalisation as we know it. Supply chains disrupted due to the pandemic have been further strained owing to the conflict and countries around the world are increasingly averse to the idea of economic dependence on countries with divergent security interests and differing ideologies. In this regard, India stands out as one of the natural alternatives to fill the void left on the front of food security, by Russia and Ukraine, and in manufacturing, by the post-pandemic China+1 tilt. Apart from the threat to food security, another major fallout from the war has been the threat to energy security. The sharp spike in energy prices has had a crippling effect on many economies. Consequently, this could compel everyone to rethink how energy is produced and consumed; and more importantly, lay emphasis on reduction of dependence on fossil fuels. This, in turn, could accelerate tailwinds for renewable energy at a time when concern over climate change is already making the world sweat. Goes without saying that this change will not happen overnight as the immediate focus will be on energy security instead of clean energy. For instance, the recent power crisis has made India turn once again to coal. Notwithstanding the recent softening of commodity prices; years of underinvest-

ment may keep prices structurally elevated. Higher commodity prices, energy transition, supply chain re-alignment, along with the political desire for higher defence spending, by almost every country, could trigger a significant capex push. In a side story of sorts, the fate of US dollar has become the cynosure of all eyes in the world of finance. Recent turn of events, coupled with the US's declining share in global trade and changing geo-political equations have raised apprehension about dollar's hegemony. However, the US dollar has benefited from the apparent lack of alternative at this point in time. The relative preference of most countries to politically align with US, instead of an alternative like China, along with relative ease of access to American capital markets and a hawkish US Fed have aided the dollar's cause. All said and done, one may have to "reserve" one's judgement on the world's reserve currency for now. India's sizeable forex reserves should help stave off significant threat to rupee stability. While India won't remain insulated from global developments, India continues to remain better positioned as compared to other emerging markets at this point. Rapid digitalisation, strong tax buoyancy (growth in tax collections nearly double that of Nominal GDP growth for FY22), Services exports at record high (FY22), healthy balance sheets of corporates and banking sector, policy reforms, formalisation of economy and push for privatisation & capex hold India in good stead. On the flipside,

key risks to watch out for happen to be the spike in commodity prices (particularly oil), impact of tightening global liquidity and increase in food and fertiliser subsidy bill. For Indian equities, strong retail participation (63 per cent increase in demat accounts in FY22) and robust Mutual Fund flows have cushioned the downside from recent FPI selling spree. However, it's equally noteworthy how last couple of years have been a baptism by fire for investors, as sharp gyrations in financial markets and numerous unforeseen events have kept investors on toes. Considering rapidly evolving geo-political landscape, change in course of globalisation; and with Central Banks retreating into their role of reining in inflationary expectations instead of doing 'whatever it takes' to support asset markets, volatility is likely to remain elevated. Investors' equanimity and patience will continue to be tested in the foreseeable future but don't we know from history that the formula for wealth creation equates sound investment + time + patience. In a world where new geo-political alliances are being formed and existing ones are being tested; sound financial plan and prudent asset allocation still continue to remain the best allies for investors to counter the formidable foe of volatility in financial markets. (Navneet Munot is HDFC Asset Management Company's MD & CEO. The views expressed are personal.)

## international

## CHINA LAUNCHES EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR HEAVY RAIN, FLOOD



Beijing | Agencies  
Floods exceeding warning levels may occur in some rivers due to torrential rain. In the face of heavy rain, the Ministry launched an emergency response for seven provincial-level regions including Fujian, Jiangxi, Hunan, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, and Yunnan. It also urged relevant government bodies to closely monitor the changes in rain and floods, ensure reservoir safety, and strengthen flood control and prevention.

## UN Commission in Ukraine to probe Russian war crimes

Kiev | Agencies  
The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine has arrived in Kiev to investigate Russian war crimes in the wake of its continued invasion. In a social media post on Saturday, deputy head of Ukraine's parliament Olena Kondratiuk said: "The UN Independent International Commission has arrived in Ukraine to investigate the crimes related to Russian aggression. Erik Mose is the head of the commission; Jasminka Dzumhur and Pablo de Greiff are also members of the commission." Kondratiuk stated that the Commission was created in order to record human rights violations, violations of international humanitarian law,



and other crimes in the context of the aggression against Ukraine by Russia, reports Ukrayinska Pravda. The Commission's main goals are establishing a list of suspects, gathering evidence, and preparing relevant materials. The members of the

early March. The investigation will be conducted according to international standards. The head of the commission said that the members will gather information about war crimes committed in Ukraine and in turn report it to the UN Human Rights Council. The Commission will also deliver a report to the UN General Assembly at its 77th session. In a report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said that it had documented several cases of Russian military forces committing laws-of-war violations against civilians in occupied areas of the Chernihiv, Kharkiv, and Kiev in the period between February 24 and March 14. The crimes included rape, executions, unlawful violence and threats against civilian and looting civilian

## Any attempts to sideline Russia in int'l politics doomed to fail: Spy chief

Moscow | Agencies  
Sergei Naryshkin, head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, said that any attempts to sideline his country in international politics are doomed to fail, adding that no peace agreement that excludes Moscow can be successful in the long run. "Russia is a traditional guarantor of international peace and security. No peace, neither global nor regional, can be solid, stable, or lasting without Russia," RT quoted the spy chief as saying on Saturday. The attempts of the "liberal totalitarian regimes" in the West to sanction and cancel Russia only demonstrate their obsession with being the centre of the world and making other nations bend to their will, Naryshkin added. These views harboured by Western leaders are flawed, and Russia's "1,000-year history is proof of that", he was quoted as saying by RT.



Earlier on Saturday, Russian State Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said the Western sanctions policy is pushing nations that do not participate in the "sanctions wars" into forming their own economic bloc, which could end up being stronger than the existing G7 group. Put together, eight nations that have either refrained from taking part in Western sanctions or are themselves on the receiving end -- China, India, Russia, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, Iran, Turkey -- surpass the G7 nations when it comes to GDP based on purchasing power parity, Volodin said, citing IMF data.

## 8 KILLED, 27 INJURED IN LANDMINE EXPLOSION IN SYRIA

Damascus: Eight people lost their lives and 27 others were injured in a leftover landmine explosion in the southern Syrian province of Daraa, state news agency SANA reported. The explosion took place on Saturday, Xinhua news agency reported. Citing medical sources, SANA said the landmine was part of the leftovers of rebel groups who used to rule the town of Deir Adas in the northern countryside of Daraa. The report said the injured people were taken to hospitals in the area. Several people lost their lives in recent similar incidents in formerly rebel-held areas across Syria, while humanitarian workers urged for speedier removal of explosive remnants and effective warnings to prevent such tragedy.

## Kim Jong-un extends full support to Putin amid Ukraine war

Seoul | Agencies  
North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Sunday expressed full support for Russian President Vladimir Putin, despite international condemnation for Moscow's ongoing invasion of Ukraine. The Russian people have "achieved great successes in accomplishing the just cause of defending the dignity and security of their country, while braving all sorts of challenges and hardships", Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) quoted Kim as saying in a message to Putin on the occasion of Russia Day. "The Korean people extend full support and encouragement to them." Kim's apparent reference to the unprovoked attack against Ukraine as a "just



cause" for defending Russia's security is the latest sign that illustrates decades-old close bilateral ties between the two countries, reports Yonhap News Agency. Pyongyang has recently stressed its close ties with Moscow despite growing criticism from the international community on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Kim also expressed conviction that the friendly relations will continue to strengthen in all areas and in the "journey for defending the international justice and ensuring the global security", the KCNA reported. In 2019, Kim held his first summit with Putin in Russia's far eastern city of Vladivostok.

## Queue chaos at Stockholm airport as people rush to travel

Stockholm | Agencies  
Inbound traffic to the main international airport of the Swedish capital was diverted as the main terminal was overcrowded with massive queues at the security gates. Already at 4:30 a.m., road traffic to Terminal 5 of Stockholm Arlanda International Airport was temporarily diverted on Saturday. Later, it was decided that the express train between Stockholm City and Arlanda Airport would not stop at the terminal, Swedish Television (SVT) reported. According to Swedavia, the company that runs Arlanda Airport, the congestion is due to a sharp increase in passenger numbers following the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, the



company has had trouble recruiting and training staff to man the security gates. The security vetting of new employees is another bottleneck. Although this has been a problem for the last few weeks, the situation was extraordinary on Saturday and Swedavia predicted that the congestion would persist, Xinhua news agency reported. "There will be a high load on Arlanda this summer. If you can check-in digitally, you should do so. Otherwise, it is good to keep track of when your airline opens the check-in," David Karlsson at Swedavia's press department told SVT. "We have seen that people are here 6-8 hours before their flight leaves, long before the check-in opens. And this worsens the congestion," he said.



## FOR PROPHET REMARKS, BJP LEADERS SUMMONED BY POLICE IN MAHARASHTRA

▶ THE MUMBAI POLICE HAVE ALSO SUMMONED HER TO RECORD A STATEMENT ON JUNE 25 IN CONNECTION WITH HER REMARKS ABOUT THE PROPHET DURING A TV DEBATE TRIGGERED A HUGE CONTROVERSY.

Thane | Agencies

The Bhiwandi police in Maharashtra have summoned suspend-

ed BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma to record a statement on Monday in connection with her alleged objectionable remarks against Prophet Mohammad, an official said on Sunday.

Besides, expelled BJP functionary Naveen Kumar Jindal has also been asked by the Bhiwandi police in Thane district to record his statement on June 15 over his alleged controversial tweets against Prophet Mohammad, senior police inspector Chetan Kakade told reporters.

The Bhiwandi police had registered a case against Sharma following a complaint lodged by a representative of the Raza Academy on May 30, he said.

They had also registered a case against Jindal, the

official said.

Earlier, the Mumbai police in Thane asked Sharma to appear before them on June 22 to record her statement over her remarks.

The Mumbai Police have also summoned her to record a statement on June 25 in connection with her remarks about the Prophet during a TV debate triggered a huge controversy.

The police had asked for a video of the debate from the news channel concerned.

The BJP had on June 5 suspended its national spokesperson Nupur Sharma and expelled Delhi BJP media head Jindal after their alleged derogatory remarks against the Prophet led to an outrage in India and Gulf countries.

Maharashtra sees 2,946 new Covid cases, 2 deaths; active tally at 16,370

MUMBAI RECORDED 1,803 FRESH CASES AND TWO COVID-RELATED FATALITIES IN THE LAST 24 HOURS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra on Sunday reported 2,946 fresh coronavirus cases, including 1,803 in Mumbai, and two fatalities, while the number of active cases rose to over 16,000, the health department said in a bulletin.

With the fresh figures, the state's COVID-19 tally rose 79,10,577 and the toll to 1,47,870.

On Saturday, the state had recorded 2,922 COVID-19 cases and one fatality.

The number of active cases stands at 16,370. Gondia is the only district in the state which didn't have any active case as of Sunday.

Mumbai recorded 1,803

fresh cases and two fatalities.

The case fatality rate in the state stands at 1.86 per cent.

A total of 1,432 patients recovered from coronavirus infection in the last 24 hours, taking the cumulative number of recoveries in Maharashtra to 77,46,337.

The recovery rate in the state is 97.92 per cent.

A total of 42,922 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours, taking the number of samples conducted so far in the state to 8,13,21,768, the bulletin said. Maharashtra's COVID-19 figures are as follows: Cases 79,10,577, death toll 1,47,870, active cases 16,370, tests 8,13,21,768.

## Southwest monsoon advances over Mumbai

Southwest monsoon further advanced into the remaining parts of central Arabian Sea, most parts of Konkan, including Mumbai, some parts of Madhya Maharashtra and some more parts of Karnataka on Saturday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Southwest monsoon further advanced into the remaining parts of central Arabian Sea, most parts of Konkan, including Mumbai, some parts of Madhya Maharashtra and some more parts of Karnataka on Saturday.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that conditions are favourable for further advancement of monsoon into some parts of north Arabian sea, remaining parts of Konkan, some parts of Gujarat, most parts of Madhya Maharashtra, entire Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, some parts of Telengana, Andhra Pradesh, and northwest Bay of Bengal during the next 48 hours.

With this, the monsoon starts covering what IMD identifies as 'monsoon core zone', i.e., the area that lies mostly in central India from west to east coast and largely dependent on monsoon rainfall for agriculture.

After onset over Kerala on May 29, three days ahead of its normal date in

June, there was a slow progress of southwest monsoon owing to lack of system that could push it forward. Then, after almost a week of slow progress, IMD had declared on June 9 that conditions were favourable for the advancement of southwest monsoon further.

"Conditions would continue to become favourable for further advancement of monsoon into some more parts of north Arabian Sea, Gujarat, some parts of Marathwada, some more parts of Telengana, Andhra Pradesh, most parts of Bay of Bengal, entire Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim, some parts of Odisha, Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar during the subsequent 2-3 days," the IMD forecast said.

## PM Modi to visit Maharashtra on June 14

Prime Minister Narednra Modi will visit Maharashtra to inaugurate the Jal Bhushan Building and Gallery of Revolutionaries at Raj Bhavan in Mumbai on June 14, said the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narednra Modi will visit Maharashtra to inaugurate the Jal Bhushan Building and Gallery of Revolutionaries at Raj Bhavan in Mumbai on June 14, said the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

During his visit, the Prime Minister will inaugurate Jagadguru Shri Sant Tukaram Maharaj Temple in Dehu, Pune, and Jal Bhushan Building and Gallery of Revolutionaries at Raj Bhavan in Mumbai. In the evening, the Prime Minister will

participate in Dwishatabdi Mahotsav (200 years' celebration) of 'Bombay Samachar' (now Mumbai Samachar) at Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai.

Sant Tukaram was a Warkari saint and poet, famously known for Abhanga devotional poetry and community-oriented worship through spiritual songs known as Kirtans. He lived in Dehu. A Shila Mandir was built after his demise, but it was not formally structured as a temple. It has been rebuilt in stone masonry with 36 peaks, and also has an idol of Sant Tukaram.

In Mumbai, PM Modi will inaugurate the Jal Bhushan Building and Gallery of Revolutionaries at Raj Bhavan. Jal Bhushan has been the official residence of the Governor of Maharashtra since 1885. Upon completing its lifespan, it was demolished and a new building was sanctioned in its place. The foundation stone for the new building was laid by the President of India in August 2019. All distinctive features of the old

building have been preserved in the newly constructed building.

In 2016, the then Governor of Maharashtra, Vidyasagar Rao had found a bunker in Raj Bhavan. It had earlier been used by the British as a secret store for arms and ammunition. The bunker was renovated in 2019. The Gallery has been developed in the bunker as a one of its kind museum to commemorate the contributions of freedom fighters and revolutionaries of Maharashtra. It is a tribute to Vasudev Balwant Phadke, the Chapekar brothers, Savarkar brothers, Madam Bhikaji Cama, V.B. Gogate, Naval Mutiny in 1946, among others.

Celebrating the Dwishatabdi of Mumbai Samachar, the printing of this paper as a weekly started on July 1, 1822 by Fardunjee Marzbanji. It became a daily in 1832. The newspaper has been in publication continuously for 200 years. To commemorate the oldest running paper in India, a postage stamp will also be released on the occasion.

## Maharashtra govt to set up electronic park in Ranjangaon industrial area

Subhash Desai, who inaugurated the Electronic Cluster Foundation of the Mahratta Chamber of Commerce Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA), said the electronic park will see the presence of all major electronic giants.

Team Absolute | Pune

THE MAHARASHTRA government has decided to set up a world-class electronic park in Ranjangaon industrial area near Pune. Subhash Desai, minister for industries and mining, while speaking to The Indian Express in Pune on Saturday,

said this park will be spread over 600 acres and will involve a wide range of activities, from the manufacturing of chips to components.

Desai, who inaugurated the Electronic Cluster Foundation of the Mahratta Chamber of Commerce Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA), said the electronic park will see the presence of all major electronic giants. "We have been talking to many companies which represent the entire value chain of the electronics industry. They have expressed interest in the project," he said.

The basic facility for the cluster will be set up by the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation, and work for it will begin soon. The state government will allocate a substantial

budget for the same to begin the work.

The minister said that in the past two years, the state has seen investments worth Rs 6 lakh crore. During the minister's visit to Davos, the state had seen the signing of MoUs worth Rs 80,000 crore. "We want to develop the state as a major hub for electronic industries," he said.

The Electronic Cluster set up by MCCIA is established under the Central government's cluster base approach to set up Electronic Manufacturing Clusters (EMCs). Pune was identified for the development of a brownfield cluster. MCCIA had initiated a Special Purpose Vehicle with the objective of promoting the development of EMC by setting up a Common Facility

Centre (CFC) in Pune.

This CFC will help the electronics industries in Pune and surrounding areas in terms of the latest technology, cost competitiveness, faster turnaround time etc, enabling the region to become a preferred destination for electronics designed manufacturing. "This will help in developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem, drive innovation and catalyse economic growth by increasing employment opportunities and tax revenues. The state-of-the-art facility is at a prime location in Bhosari MIDC with about 27000 sq ft built-up areas with latest technology equipment," it said.

The total cost for construction of the centre is expected to be nearly Rs 67 crore.

## From Abu Salem to Chhota Shakeel, how SRK talked his way out of gangster threats

It was during the filming of Mahesh Bhatt's 1998 film, 'Duplicate', when Shah Rukh Khan had his first brush with the underworld and the story of how he got away without any harm being done to him has been recounted by film journalist Anupama Chopra in her book, 'King of Bollywood: Shah Rukh Khan and the Seductive World of Indian Cinema'.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

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Back in January 1997, the same month when music mogul Gulshan Kumar was murdered, Rakesh Maria, former Maharashtra DGP who was instrumental in cracking the 1993 Bombay bombings case, dialled up Bhatt to pass on the information that a sharpshooter hired by dreaded gangster Abu Salem was on the prowl looking for an opportunity to kill the superstar.

The reason? SRK had not signed a film being made by a producer close to Abu Salem.

The Mumbai Police gave Shah Rukh a bodyguard, Mohan Bhise, and advised the actor to limit his movements; he was made to change cars and his routes to work every day.

Talking to Chopra, Shah Rukh recalled an incident from the wedding of a famous cricketer at that time. At the wedding, a fan came up to him and asked for an autograph, and just as he was pulling out his pen, Shah Rukh panicked and pushed Gauri away. He feared the pen might be a gun!

Interestingly, SRK says in the book that he did not fear for his life as much as those of his wife and children. "I had this strange misplaced confidence that I will not get shot,"

Shah Rukh said.

One day, when Shah Rukh was returning from Khandala after shooting for 'Dil To Pagal Hai', he got a call from Abu Salem, who first abused him in Hindi. The actor did not lose his cool. He kept up a polite tone, but spoke only in English.

Salem then said he was angry because SRK had refused to do a film being made by a Muslim producer. He said SRK should have shown his own community some support.

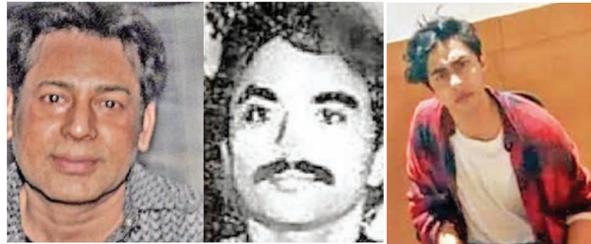
Shah Rukh calmly replied that he was already working with Mansoor Khan, Abbas-Mustan and Aziz Mirza. Moreover, Mahesh Bhatt's mother was also a Muslim. Maria, incidentally, had coached SRK about how to handle the gangster.

In Shah Rukh's own words, he told Salem: "I don't tell you who to shoot so don't tell me which film to do."

Hearing this, the gangster backtracked. Abu Salem said SRK did not have to worry and he could move around without security. The police, though, refused to take any chances and did not withdraw SRK's bodyguard.

Abu Salem thereafter would keep calling up Shah Rukh and make small talk, but without forgetting to tell him each time that he knew exactly where he was and where his security detail was positioned. Ignoring the ominous shadow of Salem, SRK continued shooting for 'Duplicate' on the streets of Mumbai.

Mahesh Bhatt at that time had stated that SRK had a "flirting with death attitude". He would do the most hilarious scenes (in 'Duplicate') despite the "harsh reality knocking at his door".



Soon, members of the Chhota Rajan gang also started calling SRK, but, in the words of Chopra, "they withdrew with surprising decency". A small-time gangster named Gongaa Bhai then offered SRK the lead role in a film based on his own life. Shah Rukh Khan confided him by replying in English, "I am not able to conceive the kind of emotional graph that I can develop." Stumped, the Gongaa Bhai gave up after a year spent pursuing the superstar.

Finally, it was Chhota Shakeel who called because he was offended by the line 'Paun jannat tale' in the song 'Chaiyya Chaiyya' from 'Dil Se'. The gangster said he considered the line, which translates in English to 'heaven is beneath my feet', as being un-Islamic. SRK replied calmly that the line actually was 'Paun jannat hale' (My feet are going to heaven!).

## FROM SLUSH FINANCING AND EXTORTION TO DRUGS, THE 'BOLLY-MAFIA' NEXUS AS THICK AS EVER

For over five decades, the attraction between Bollywood and underworld is a grim reality, but oft with fatal consequences - though there are some glaring differences in the game pre-and-post 2000 eras.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

For over five decades, the attraction between Bollywood and underworld is a grim reality, but

"This created frictions with a large number of films being released every year, rival gangsters trying to safeguard their box-office interests, which led to dire threats, blatant extortions, warning shootouts or dastardly killings," said a prominent film producer of a major production house, who has witnessed all in Bollywood in the past seven decades.

With several producers, directors, actors, financiers or music barons becoming holy spirits in the pre-2000 era, and the living ones in sheer fear, there was a clamour from many quarters to infuse some decorum and "clean money" into Bollywood.

Gradually, with liberalisation, banks started part-financing films, foreign productions houses set up shops, mega-corporates also jumped into the lucrative film-making business along with their television channels, music companies and cinema chains, all professionally-run.

More important, compared with just a handful of foreigners who gained entry to Bollywood or locals working in films abroad in the pre-2000s, the turn of the century saw many foreigners thronging to the Indian entertainment industry with its unique glamour quotient, the sheer reach among the audiences and of course good remuneration for all, while Indian actors also made splashes in foreign films.

These in turn, boosted even the regional films in Marathi, Gujarati, or Bhojpuri - though the South Indian film industry remains unique in itself and now proudly rubs shoulders with Big Brother Bollywood as an equal.

"Drugs have always been an integral part of the glamour industry... But many feel that post-2000, its influence increased all round. With certain types of restrictions and the digital era being implemented, there was a need for a lot of working cash on a daily basis... How to get it...?" said another Bollywood director, preferring anonymity.

There were stray incidents of Bollywood celebs being involved in narcotic-related cases, like Fardeen Khan long ago, and then the infamous drugs case arising out of the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput two years ago, and recently the trapping of Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan in an alleged contraband case which turned out to be "fake", as was widely assumed.

Hoping to demolish "the drugs citadel in Bollywood", the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) fanatically went after the alleged drug-mafia active in the film industry, but ended up netting small baddies and streetside peddlers, with the big ones in hiding and guffawing...

Recent years have seen the names of international models, starlets, their kin or Indian filmy friends being linked to drugs with raids carried out in Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, Raigad, adjoining Goa and other places, though the big fish remain elusive, as always.

A prominent film financier apprehends that with filmmaking and distribution shifting to the new breed of OTT platforms, making content and uploading it from anywhere in the world, is poised to revolutionise the traditional modes of film financing and worries of a new lifeline to the so-called "hush money" supply, so desperately needed by the entertainment industry players.

"Things have changed a lot in the current century... Merely having monetary resources in the bank does not guarantee a big-bang entry to the entertainment industry, many other visible or invisible forces also work," he added glumly.

Moreover, now the potential investors are "bullish", looking at quick returns on their investments... no longer are they prepared to wait for months or years to earn profits and would rather explore other quick-buck options like the stock markets.



## Christina Ricci praises Jenna Ortega as Wednesday Addams in upcoming series

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Jenna Ortega is set to play Wednesday Addams - a role Christina Ricci famously played in the 90s movies in Netflix's upcoming 'Addams Family series' titled 'Wednesday'.

On Saturday night, Ricci shared with Variety what it was like stepping back into the Addams Family world. According to Variety: "It's super fun. I loved working with Tim (Burton). I worked with Gwendolyn Christie, it was amazing. And Jenna is incredible," she said during 'Yellowjackets' FYC Event.

"I saw some of the wardrobe photos before I went (to set) so I knew (what she looked like in character) and I was like, it's such a great modern take on Wednesday. It's so true tonally to the heart and soul of (the original), but it's then it's incredibly modern and it's great."

The upcoming series depicts Wednesday as a teen, while 'The Addams Family' and 'Addams Family Values' portrayed her as a young girl.

Luis Guzman guest stars as Wednesday's father Gomez. Ricci's role has not yet been revealed.



**Tom champions bisexual Loki: MCU 'has to reflect the world we live in'**



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood actor Tom Hiddleston said that the Marvel Cinematic Universe must "reflect the world we live in."

That's why the actor is so happy his Disney+ series, 'Loki', finally made it clear within the MCU that his eponymous anti-hero is bisexual.

Hiddleston was in a conversation with Lily James during their conversation as part of Variety's 'Actors on Actors' series, reports 'Variety'.

"Back from my early days of researching the character in the ancient myths, the identity of Loki was fluid in every aspect and in gender, in sexuality," Tom said when she mentioned that Loki is the first explicitly queer character in the

MCU. "It's a very ancient part of the character and I think I thought about it. It hadn't emerged in the stories we've told. And I was really pleased and privileged, actually, that it's come up in the series." Actor continued: "It's a small step. There's so much more to do. But the MCU has to reflect the world we live in. So it was an honour to bring that up. It was really important to me. It was really important to (director) Kate Herron and (showrunner) Michael Waldron, and I'm pleased that we could bring it into our story."

Loki came out on the third episode of the series after telling Lady Loki that he's had a romantic past with both princes and princesses. That line of a dialogue was the extent to which 'Loki' addressed the character's bisexuality.

## ACTOR SIMON PEGG SAYS REHAB SAVED HIS LIFE FROM RUIN BY ALCOHOLISM

London | Agencies

Actor Simon Pegg became an alcoholic after writing about his difficult childhood in his 2009 memoir, 'Nerd Do Well', and he now thinks that his time at the rehabilitation centre actually saved him from death. The movie star -- who became dependent on the "sensational of being numb", rather than the "chemical addiction" to alcohol -- said: "(I) just didn't know how to escape it."

Pegg was drinking alcohol at breakfast at the peak of his addiction struggles, and he now admits that his past behaviour makes him feel sick, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Asked if he drank in the mornings, the actor said: "Sometimes. In the worst times I look back now and it makes me feel sick."

Simon eventually entered rehab in a bid to regain some control over his own life. Asked whether he would be dead today if he hadn't entered rehab, he told The Times newspaper: "100 percent, because, and I don't think it's too dramatic to say, that is the ultimate end of that line of flight."

Pegg said writing his memoir reopened his childhood struggles, including his parents' divorce. Actor who has also battled depression since the age of 18, shared: My relationship with both [stepfather and stepmother] was really difficult. They were young and immature. They had their own issues. And I was the walking, talking remnant of another relationship.

## Sandra Oh admits fame made her 'very sick'

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Grey's Anatomy' star Sandra Oh has revealed that fame had a detrimental impact on her health. She shared: "When 'Grey's Anatomy' came my life changed very much. And it's tricky to imagine, because this is almost 20 years ago, so the context is very different, but the stress is the same, or the confusion is the same."

Oh joined the show in 2005, and she's recalled how it changed her life, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She told Variety: "I think my whole body was very, very sick. Even though you keep on working, right? It's just like, 'Oh, I can't sleep. Oh, my back hurts. I don't know what's wrong with my skin.' I learned that I had to take care of my health first. But that's not only your body, right? That is your soul. That is definitely your mind. You know what I mean? Because you can't ultimately depend on anyone else. You have to somehow find it within yourself." Oh feels her work is actually much more demanding than some people may realise. She said: "Our work is not just shooting; this is a very enjoyable part of our job. We get to sit and we chat, but this is a whole day of work. And it's a certain type of output that can be depleting. And now, as I'm deeper into my career, the more time I realise that I have to spend with my creative self: That could be sleeping, that could be walking in the woods, that could be meditating, that could be actually going to class, that could be all those things."

## Uma Thurman, Henry Golding board 'The Old Guard 2'



Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Uma Thurman and Henry Golding are set to join Charlize Theron in Netflix's 'The Old Guard 2'. The 'Kill Bill' and 'Crazy Rich Asians' stars join previously announced returning cast members Theron, Kiki Layne, Matthias Schoenaerts, Marwan Kenzari, Luca Marinelli, Veronica Ngo and Chiwetel Ejiofor, who reprise their roles from the original movie, reports 'Variety'.

According to 'Variety', 'The Old Guard' followed a



covert team of immortal mercenaries who have to fight to keep their identity a secret when they find themselves exposed and an unexpected new member is discovered.

It's yet to be revealed how Thurman and Golding play into the new story, but both stars certainly have action experience.

Following his breakout performances in 'Crazy Rich Asians', 'A Simple Favor' and 'Last Christmas', Golding entered the realm of high-octane movies with 'Snake Eyes' and 'The Gentlemen'.

The actor will next be seen in the new adaptation of Jane Austen's 'Persuasion', starring opposite Dakota Johnson. Meanwhile, Thurman is a genre icon after starring as the Bride in the 'Kill Bill' franchise.

Following its July 2020 launch, 'The Old Guard' has become one of Netflix's most popular action films to date, with a reported 186 million hours viewed in its first 28 days of release. The highly-anticipated sequel will be directed by Victoria Mahoney.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Chelsea Healey



## 2ND T20I

# SOUTH AFRICA BEAT INDIA BY FOUR WICKETS

Cuttack | Agencies

South Africa beat India by four wickets in the second T20I to go 2-0 up in the five-match series at the Barabati Stadium, here on Sunday.

A disciplined bowling performance helped South Africa restrict India to 148/6 in 20 overs despite Dinesh Karthik's late flourish (30 not out off 21 balls).

Apart from Karthik, Shreyas Iyer (40 off 35), Ishan Kishan (34 off 21) were the main scorers as most of the Indian batters failed to deliver against Proteas bowlers and lost wickets at regular intervals.

Anrich Nortje (2/36) was the most successful bowler for South Africa while Kagiso Rabada, Wayne Parnell, Dwaine Pretorius, Keshav Maharaj picked one wicket each.

In reply, Heinrich



Klaassen played a brilliant knock (81 off 46) and led South Africa to a convincing win. Besides Klaassen,

Temba Bavuma (35 off 30) and David Miller (20 not out off 15) also scored vital runs for the visitors while

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (4/13) was the pick of the bowlers for India.

**Brief scores:** India 148-6 in 20 Overs (Shreyas Iyer 40, Ishan Kishan 34; Anrich Nortje 2/36) lost to South Africa 149-6 in 18.2 Overs (Heinrich Klaassen 81, Temba Bavuma 35; Bhuvneshwar Kumar 4/13) by 4 wickets

## CAVANI NETS BRACE AS URUGUAY ROUT PANAMA

Montevideo (Uruguay): Edinson Cavani scored twice as Uruguay cruised to a 5-0 win over Panama in their international friendly here on Saturday. The outgoing Manchester United striker opened the scoring in the 39th minute at the Centenario stadium with a low finish after Giorgian Arrascaeta's assist.

Cavani doubled the lead just after half-time by converting a penalty after he was brought down by Alex Rodriguez. Nicolas de la Cruz, Maxi Gomez and Diego Rossi added second-half goals as Uruguay gave their fans a reason to celebrate in the team's last home match before the World Cup, reports Xinhua.

The Celeste have been drawn in Group H for football's showcase tournament, alongside Portugal, Ghana and South Korea. The World Cup will be played in Qatar from November 21 to December 18.

## Olympic Champions Belgium beat India 3-2 in a closely-fought battle

Antwerp | Agencies

In a brilliant battle of equals, hosts Belgium beat Indian Men's Hockey Team 3-2 in their second leg of their double-header this weekend at the FIH Hockey Pro League here.

It was Abhishek (25') who scored the match's first goal while Mandeep Singh (60') scored a late goal for India. Nicolas de Kerpel (33') and Alexander Hendrickx (49', 59') were the goal scorers for the hosts. With this win, Belgium have pushed India to the third place in the pool standings while Netherlands continues to lead the table in this season's prestigious FIH Hockey Pro League.

It was hosts Belgium who got off to a flying start, showing their will to bounce back after losing to India 4-5 in a tense shootout on Saturday. After a few attempts, Belgium found an early opportunity in the 7th minute through a PC but a poor variation denied them a lead. Three minutes



later, Jarmanpreet's assist to Sukhjeet Singh at the top of the circle opened up a brilliant chance for India to take the lead but Sukhjeet's shot went over the goalpost. Both teams played the next few minutes with caution, rotating the ball tactfully creating space but neither team were successful in scoring a goal.

After showing patience in their game, India finally broke the deadlock in the 25th minute when Gurjant teamed up with Lalit Upadhyay to set up a brilliant goal by Abhishek. Ahead by

1-0 at half-time, India came out of the ten-minute half-time break with a clear intent to increase their lead.

Though, India fought back to the final second, with Manpreet Singh setting up India's second goal when he assisted Vivek Sagar in the circle. A quick-thinking Vivek pushed the ball to Mandeep Singh who deflected the ball past Belgium's keeper to narrow the lead to 2-3. But unfortunately, with just 30 seconds left, India's excellent fight back ended in disappointment.

## Germany, Hungary level in UEFA Nations League



Budapest | Agencies

Hungary and Germany levelled 1-1 in the UEFA Nations League Group A3 third round at the Puskas Arena here in front of 67,000 football fans.

The Hungarian team took the lead on Saturday night with a quick goal from defender Zsolt Nagy in the sixth minute, but it only took the Germans three minutes to answer thanks to a strike

from midfielder Jonas Hofmann.

The early set score remained unchanged as Hungary, who secured a surprise win against England one week ago, were not awed by the Mannschaft and kept attacking, but the Germans always hit back.

With Saturday's encounter, Germany extended their unbeaten streak to 12 matches led by Hansi Flick since last

## KIYG 2021: Maharashtra, Haryana win five gold each

Panchkula | Agencies

After winning five gold each, hosts Haryana and defending champions Maharashtra will battle it out one last time on Monday, hoping to annex the Khelo India Youth Games, 2021 crown.

Amazingly, on the penultimate day too, both collected five gold medals each to maintain the status quo of the last couple of days, with Maharashtra holding a solitary gold advantage.

At the time of writing, Maharashtra had 42 gold, 35 silver and 30 bronze while Haryana had 41 gold, 35 silver and 42 bronze. This includes the mallakhamb pole gold won by Maharashtra that is yet to reflect in the official medals tally.

Haryana will, however, enter the final day with utmost confidence as 20 gold are up for grabs in boxing. They have as many as 12 boxers in the finals while Maharashtra have only four.

They are also in both the handball



finals and would fancy at least one gold. The boys are up against Delhi and their girls against Himachal Pradesh.

Maharashtra too are in both the kho-kho finals and are expected to take these gold. Neither Haryana nor Maha are in the other finals, the two basketball matches and the Boys table tennis and football summit clashes. The day started with archers Riddhi (girls recurve) from

Haryana and Maharashtra's Aditi Swami (girls compound) opening the gold medal account for their respective states. Swimmer Apeksha Fernandes grabbed two gold medals in 200m butterfly and 50m breaststroke and table tennis star Diya Chitale defeated Delhi's Lakshita Narang 4-3 in the Girls singles final and Rishabh Ghubde added a gold for Maharashtra in boys pole mallakhamb.

## Netherlands come from behind to draw with Poland

Rotterdam | Agencies

The Netherlands and Poland drew 2-2 in a hectic UEFA Nations League encounter here on Saturday, with the home team coming back strongly from 2-0 down.

After a 2-1 win against Wales in Cardiff with a totally different squad, the Netherlands' coach Louis van Gaal returned to the line-up that beat Belgium 4-1 in Brussels on June 3. There were only two exceptions: captain Virgil van Dijk was replaced by Stefan de Vrij, while goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen was not fit enough to start, meaning Mark Flekken earned his second consecutive cap.

Poland was without star striker Robert Lewandowski, rested by coach Czeslaw Michniewicz ahead of Tuesday's home game



against Belgium in Warsaw. With Lewandowski in the stands, Piotr Zielinski and Krzysztof Piatek started up front for Poland, reports Xinhua. The Netherlands still leads Group 4 in League A of the Nations League with seven points from three matches. Belgium, who drew 1-1 in Wales, is second with four points, Poland is third with four points and Wales is fourth with one point.

## Indonesia Masters: Viktor Axelsen, Chen Yufei clinch singles titles

Jakarta (Indonesia) | Agencies

Olympic champions Viktor Axelsen and Chen Yufei clinched the respective men's and women's singles titles at the BWF Indonesia Masters 2022 at the Istora Senayan, here on Sunday.

Denmark's Axelsen needed just 41 minutes to secure a comfortable straight-game victory over his rival, third-seeded Chou Tien-chen of Chinese Taipei.

The Dane wrapped up proceedings 21-10, 21-12 against the world number four, clinching his third individual title of the season in the process. He had previously clinched victory at



both the prestigious All England Open, as well as at the European Championships in Madrid. Meanwhile, the Chinese

shuttler Chen was tested by Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon, who was seeking a rare victory over the Chinese.

## 2nd Test, Day 2: Pope, Lees lead England's fightback after Mitchell powers NZ to 553

Nottingham | Agencies

Ollie Pope (51 not out) and Alex Lees (34 not out) helped England to a steady start, taking them to 90/1 at stumps on Day 2 of the second Test after New Zealand posted 553 in their first innings on the back of a fantastic 190 from Daryl Mitchell, here on Saturday.

Resuming the play on Day 2, both Mitchell (overnight 81 not out) and Blundell (overnight 67 not out) continued from where they left. They continued to frustrate the England bowlers as boundaries flowed from the bat with regularity.

Mitchell got to his century soon, his second in as many matches, as New Zealand pushed past 350. A few overs later, Blundell brought up two milestones of his own going past 1000



Test runs as well as his third Test hundred. In the meantime, Mitchell switched gears and launched into the England bowlers, taking their partnership past 200.

It was Jack Leach, who brought some respite for England as Blundell charged and miscued the ball to mid-on. This was Leach's first wicket at home in exactly 1000 days, his last one coming against Australia in the 2019 Ashes in September 2019.

That was the lone positive for England in the first session where New Zealand added 94 runs and strengthened their hold on the game.

The Black Caps' domination continued after the break as well with the first two overs of the second session fetching 26 runs. Michael Bracewell looked to attack from the get-go while Mitchell was smashing big ones with ease against Leach. In no time, he reached 150 a milestone he had never achieved before in Test cricket.

### Brief scores:

New Zealand 553 (Daryl Mitchell 190, Tom Blundell 106, Michael Bracewell 49; James Anderson 3-62, Ben Stokes 2-85) lead England 90/1 (Ollie Pope 51 not out, Alex Lees 34 not out; Trent Boult 1-18) by 463 runs.

## LIBEMA OPEN: ALEXANDROVA BEATS SABALENKA TO CLINCH WOMEN'S SINGLES TITLE

Hertogenbosch (Netherlands):

Ekaterina Alexandrova clinched the Libema Open women's singles title after beating top seed Aryna Sabalenka 7-5, 6-0 in the final, here on Sunday. The 25-year-old Alexandrova came into 's-Hertogenbosch amid a strong 2022 campaign. Her win over Sabalenka was her second top 10 win of the season and her 20th victory of the year. She leaves The Netherlands with her first grass title, first title since winning 2017 Shenzhen, and a strong 20-11 record on the year. Alexandrova lost just one set en route to her first final of the season. She talked wins over Dayana Yastremska, Anhelina Kalinina, Caty McNally, and Veronika Kudermetova. She lost a total of just five games in her last two matches heading into Sunday's showdown.

## IPL Media Rights cross Rs 100-crore mark per match, overall value touches 41,000 cr

Mumbai | Agencies

The e-auction of the media rights for the Indian Premier League (IPL) cycle 2023 to 2027 began on Sunday with reports suggesting that the value of rights for every match of the tournament has crossed the 100-crore mark on combining value for TV as well as digital price, marking it a rare milestone in the rights auction.

According to a Cricbuzz report, with the value per match crossing the Rs. 100-crore mark, the overall value of the media rights has touched Rs. 41,000 crore as of now, with two parties, whose names are yet to be known, not willing to give up on the digital rights of the mega event.

"At Rs. 54.5 crore per match, the value of the television rights have gone up to Rs. 22,345 crore while at Rs.



46 crore per match, the digital bid has gone up to Rs. 18,860 crore. The combined value of the of rights so far is Rs. 41,205 crore," said the report. "Having crossed the Rs. 100 crore barrier, the overall value has shot up to Rs. 41,000 crore at this stage, given that the number of games in the 2023-27 cycle will be a minimum of 410. That is Rs. 5000 crore more than the overall base price of the full rights package. The base price for all packages was around Rs 90 crore," further

ther said the report.

The report further mentioned that there is a strong chance for digital rights value to come very close to the price of the television rights. "That is a major development and the overall price is expected to breach the glass ceiling. As is well known, the base price for the TV was fixed at Rs. 49 crore and for digital it is INR 33 crore. So far, the digital is believed to have gone past Rs. 46 crore while the bidding value for the TV remains at Rs. 54.5 crore," added the report.

Apart from packages A and B, which are television and digital groupings for the Indian broadcast region, there are two more packages in fray as well - like package C, which has 18-game non-exclusive special matches (base price of Rs. 11 crore) and package D, which is rest of the world rights (base price of Rs. 3 crore).

## FIH PRO LEAGUE: INDIAN WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM LOSE 0-5 TO BELGIUM IN THEIR SECOND MATCH

Antwerp (Belgium) | Agencies

Indian women's hockey team lost 5-0 to the hosts Belgium in the second leg of their FIH Hockey Pro League 2021/22 tie at Sportcentrum Wilrijkse Plein here on Saturday.

Barbara Nelen (2'), Charlotte Englebert (4'), Abi Raye (19'), Stephanie Vanden Borre (23') and Ambre Ballenghein (36') scored a goal each for the hosts Belgium.

The match started in almost a similar fashion as yesterday, with Belgium's Barbara Nelen giving the hosts an early lead in the second minute. India were caught off guard in the counterattack, leaving the right flank completely open for Barbara, who comfortably found the back of the net from the far post.

Two minutes later, the hosts doubled their lead through Charlotte Englebert. In the closing minutes, India earned their first Penalty Corner of the match, but missed out on converting it, thus trailing 4-



0 at the end of the first half. India even earned a Penalty Corner in the 59th minute, but Deep Grace Ekka's slap shot went wide and missed out on scoring,

thus going down to a 0-5 loss. The Indian women's hockey team will next face Argentina on June 18 and 19 in Rotterdam, Netherlands.



## Ayushmann on World Day Against Child Labour 'Children Belong To Schools, Not Factories'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**A**yushmann Khurrana is one of the finest actors of tinsel town. The actor is known for stirring conversation on taboo subjects like sperm donation, LGBTQIA love, the plight of people of the northeast region and many more. On World Day Against Child Labour, actor Ayushmann Khurrana, who is roped in by the UNICEF as their Celebrity Advocate for the global campaign Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC), has chalked out an agenda for the elimination of child labour in our country.

Shedding light on the ill effects of child labour, Ayushmann says, "Children belong to schools and playgrounds, not workshops, factories, agricultural fields or as domestic labourers. Child labour violates their rights and deprives them of their education, growth and opportunities. It also makes them vulnerable to injuries, exploitation and abuse."

Speaking about the importance of education and how one can take action to wipe out child labour, Ayushmann added, "Children who have the opportunity to go to school regularly, have a better earning potential in the future, helping end the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Each one of us has a role to play to end child labour. We can take action to end child labour from our businesses, our homes and our communities."

Ayushmann feels children at risk need to be protected at any cost. He says, "Support vulnerable children and their families to access education and social protection schemes. Raise awareness around the lasting negative impact of child labour. Call CHILDLINE 1098 if you see a child labour or any other child in distress." On the work front, the actor has films like 'Doctor G' and 'An action hero' in his pipeline.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

**A**ctress Mahima Chaudhary, who recently opened up about battling breast cancer, joined veteran actor Anupam Kher for a photoshoot, where she is seen with tears in her eyes and is followed by glimpses of her smiling and laughing.

Mahima has recently recovered from breast cancer and is currently filming for her comeback film 'The Signature' co-starring Anupam. The clip shows a glimpse of Mahima in her post-cancer look and how she opted for a wig in later parts of the video.

Anupam wrote: "Sometimes you gotta laugh through the tears, smile through the pain so that you can live through the sorrows!" These wonderful pics are shot by @manichintamani on the sets of #TheSignature.

#MahimaAndI #AgainstAllOdds #Hero #LifIsBeautiful."

'The Signature' is touted as a "beautiful story of a common man" and is helmed by Gajendra Ahire.

**MAHIMA JOINS ANUPAM FOR PHOTO SHOOT: LAUGHS THROUGH THE TEARS**

## Chiranjeevi, Salman honour Kamal Haasan for the success of his film

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**K**amal Haasan, Vijay Sethupathi and Fahadh Faasil's recently released film, Vikram have managed to impress the audience greatly. It is doing wonders at the box office. The action thriller, directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj, is now among the top three grossers of 2022 after KGF: Chapter 2 and Valimai.

Kamal Haasan's much-awaited film Vikram was released in theatres on June 3 in multiple languages. Within two weeks of release, the film is inching closer to minting Rs 300 crore at the box office worldwide.

Ever since the news of this film becoming the highest Tamil grossing film of all time in the UK emerged, Telugu superstar Chiranjeevi on Sunday honoured Kamal Haasan in the presence of Bollywood superstar Salman Khan for the "spectacular success" of the movie.

Sharing pictures from the celebration, Chiranjeevi wrote, "Absolute joy, celebrating & honouring my dearest old friend @ikamalhasan for the spectacular success of



#Vikram along with my dearest Sallu Bhai @BeingSalmanKhan @Dir Lokesh & team at my home last night. What an intense & thrilling film it is!!Kudos My friend!! More Power to you!"

For the unversed this movie also fea-

tures popular south star Suriya in a cameo role. Ecstatic by the success of the film, the protagonist and producer, Kamal Haasan has gifted special presents to the entire cast and crew of the flick.

## SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI AND NAVYA NANDA'S POST SPARK DATING RUMOURS YET AGAIN!



Team Absolute | Mumbai

**B**ollywood actor Siddhant Chaturvedi who won our hearts with this stellar performance in Gehraiyaan and Gully Boy is an avid social media user.

The actor, through his posts, keeps his fans and followers updated about his personal and professional life.

Recently, he shared a video on his social media handle, which sparked relationship rumours with Big B's granddaughter Navya Naveli Nanda.

On Saturday, Siddhant posted a video of himself where he

was seen getting ready in his vanity van. The clip opened with his team member making him wear a silver chain. Sharing the video, the Gully boy actor captioned the post as, "Her Noodles".

Replying to the post, Ishaan Khatter asked the question on everyone's mind and wrote, "Who dis mystery woman?"

His reference to 'noodles' has left everyone wondering if it has a connection with Navya.

Apart from his Phone Bhoost co-star, netizens also commented on Siddhant's referring to the 'noodles' of their post.

For the uninitiated, Navya had shared a post wherein she was posing with cuppa noodles. In the caption, she

wrote, "Made some noodles today".

To note, the reports about Siddhant and Navya dating have been doing rounds on the internet for quite some time.

The two even grabbed attention when pictures and videos of the two spending time with each other at the Karan Johar's birthday bash went viral. Although they arrived separately, these videos suggest that they had a good time at the party.

On the work front, Navya is busy managing her business and has no plans to foray into acting. While Siddhant is gearing up for Gurmeet Singh's horror-comedy Phone Bhoost starring Katrina Kaif and Ishaan Khatter alongside him.



## VICKY, KATRINA, AND FARAH KHAN'S FUN BANTER IS ALL THINGS HILARIOUS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**V**icky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif are undeniably one of the most loved couples in B-town. The two have been grabbing attention ever since their wedding. The two, often leave their fans in awe of their adorable social media posts.

Recently, it was their fun social media banter that left us in splits. On Saturday, Filmmaker and choreographer, Farah Khan took to her social media handle and shared a picture with the Uri: The surgical strike actor. She tagged Katrina Kaif and wrote, "sorry @katrinaikaif he s found some1 else (sic) @vickykaushal #croatia." Replying to her, Kartina shared the same pic and wrote, "Your allowed @farahkhan (red heart emojis)".

Vicky Kaushal also shared Farah's story on his Instagram handle and gave a witty reply. He wrote, "We are just 'good friends'." On the work front, Vicky and Katrina have some interesting projects in the pipeline. While Vicky will star next in Govinda Naam Mera alongside Kiara Advani and Bhumi Pedneker. He will also be seen with Sara Ali Khan in Laxman Utekar's upcoming yet-to-be-titled film. Apart from this, he also has Meghna Gulzar's Sam Bahadur. On the other hand, Katrina will be next seen in Tiger 3 with Salman Khan. She also has movies like Phone Bhoost, Jee Le Zaraa, and Merry Christmas in her kitty.

## R. MADHAVAN'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT FILM TAKES OVER TIMES SQUARE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

**A**ctor R. Madhavan's directorial debut 'Rocketry: The Nambi Effect' lit up the Nasdaq Billboard at Times Square as the team showcased the film's trailer on the big billboard.

Madhavan and his team have embarked on a 12-day promotional tour across the US. One of the highlights so far has been the city of Stafford, Texas declaring June 3 as Nambi Narayanan Day.

This is also where the ISRO genius Nambi Narayanan, on whose life the biographical drama is based, met up with astronaut Sunita Williams for a personal interaction.

The trailer of this film played on the Nasdaq Billboard at Times Square, the world's largest billboard. Present to watch and beam it live in person from 8:45 PM and 9 PM on June 11, were the actor-writer-producer-director of the film, R Madhavan, along with the ISRO space scientist Nambi Narayanan were present.



## INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Shreya Dhanwanthary