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## SC TO EXAMINE PLEA SEEKING BAN ON PEOPLE CONVICTED OF OFFENCES FROM CONTESTING POLLS

# NO CONVICTED LAWMAKER

**'NOT APT TO BE ON EXPERT PANEL', EC TO SC ON FREEBIES**

New Delhi: The Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that being a constitutional body, it should be kept away from the panel of experts - representing a wide spectrum of governmental and non-governmental bodies -- proposed to deliberate on the validity of freebies which political parties announce to induce voters during polls. In the previous hearing in the matter, the top court had orally expressed its discontent with the EC for not taking a stand on the 'menace' of freebies offered by the political parties. The EC, in an affidavit, said: "It may not be appropriate for the commission being the constitutional authority to offer to be part of the expert committee, especially if there are ministries or government bodies in the body. There are continuous elections in the country and any opinion/view/comment during deliberations in a multi-member body might, in the event of being publicised, amount to pre-deciding the issue and disturbing the level playing field."



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to examine a plea seeking a lifetime ban on people convicted of offences from contesting elections and also becoming members of the Parliament and state Assemblies. Senior advocate Vikas Singh, representing petitioner, advocate Ashwini Upadhyay, submitted before a bench headed by Chief

Justice N.V. Ramana that even a constable can lose his job after conviction. Another counsel added that a convicted lawmaker could come back after the six-year ban and make laws. Upadhyay's PIL pointed out that, while judges and officials were suspended for such activities, politicians were condoned by the law. In December 2020, the Centre had filed an affidavit opposing the PIL seeking lifetime ban on politicians convicted of serious offences.

**BHIMA KOREGAON CASE: BAIL TO P. VARAVARA RAO ON MEDICAL GROUNDS**

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted bail to 82-year-old P. Varavara Rao, an accused in the Bhima-Koregaon case, rejecting the NIA's argument that neither age nor medical condition can become a factor for bail to an UAPA accused. Opposing Rao's bail plea, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) claimed before a bench that he is involved in "serious anti-national activities". The bench noted that the medical condition of Rao, who is currently out on interim bail on medical grounds, has not improved to such an extent over a period that the facility of bail granted earlier to him be withdrawn. Also, he had spent around two-and-a-half-year in custody. During the hearing, the top court shot a volley of questions at the NIA's counsel in connection with the case. The top court expressed its view to grant bail to Rao considering his advanced age and medical ailments.

It had said that disqualification under the Representation of the People Act of 1951 for the period of prison sentence and six years thereafter was enough for legislators. The Centre said unlike government servants, "there are no specific service conditions laid down in respect of elected representatives, even though they are categorised as public servants. Elected representatives are bound by the oath that they have taken, to serve the citizens of their constituency in particular and the country in general". However, in 2017 the EC, in its short affidavit submitted in the top court, submitted that plea made by Upadhyay is "not adversarial" in seeking directives for ensuring that trials of MPs and MLAs are concluded within a year and that such convicts are prohibited for life from the political process. The EC had agreed in the apex court that a ban would be in the spirit of fundamental rights of the Constitution, including the right to equality.

Ruckus in Mahakaleshwar Temple by BJP workers in presence of Tejasvi Surya

The incident took place at a time when the premise was packed with devotees. BJP Yuva Morcha workers thrash guards in presence of BJP MP and BJYM President Tejasvi Surya.

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Team Absolute | Bhopal  
Bharatiya Janata Party's Youth wing Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) fumed over the denial of entry at the premises of Ujjain's Mahakaleshwar Temple on Wednesday. A video of the incident has gone viral which shows angry workers creating ruckus inside the premises and jumping over barricades. If reports are to be believed, BJP MP Tejasvi Surya, who is also the president of the party's youth wing, was at the temple to pay a visit during the holy month of Saavan. While Surya was allowed to enter the temple, some of his supporters were denied entry, after which they created ruckus inside the temple premises. The incident took place at a time when the premises was packed with devotees. According to local reports, when police and security personnel tried to stop the BJP workers, they were also pushed and manhandled. Mahakaleshwar Temple, is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas, and also is one of the most important shrines for Shiv bhakts. The shrine is visited by thousands of devotees, especially during the holy month of Saavan. The incident took place at a time when the premises was choc a bloc with devotees. According to local reports, when police and security personnel tried to stop the BJP workers, they were also pushed and manhandled. Notably, entry to garbhgrihas of the Mahakaleshwar Temple in Ujjain is banned. There have, however, been instances when exceptions were made for politicians and VIPs.



## DGCA removes price cap on air fares

The decision to remove air fare caps has been taken after careful analysis of daily demand and prices of air turbine fuel. Stabilisation has set in and we are certain that the sector is poised for growth in domestic traffic in the near future."

Jyotiraditya Scindia, Civil Aviation Minister

said that all the airlines have been informed about the decision on Wednesday. The ministry had imposed lower and upper limits on air fare after the resumption of services in May, 2020 following the two-month nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of Covid-19. Thereafter, the limits were relaxed in a phased manner as per the improvement in air traffic in the country. The lower caps were meant as a relief for airlines struggling after the pandemic. At the same time, the upper caps on air fare were fixed ensuring that passengers do not have to pay a hefty amount for air travel. Earlier, discussions on removing the fare bands for domestic air fare were held among the stakeholders, including the government authorities and airlines. The airlines were of the view that removal of the pricing cap is required for the full-fledged recovery of domestic air traffic.

## JUSTICE U.U. LALIT APPOINTED AS NEXT CJ

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday appointed Justice U.U. Lalit as the next Chief Justice of India (CJI) with effect from August 27. A statement from the Ministry of Law and Justice said: "In exercise of the power conferred by clause (2) of Article 124 of the Constitution of India, the President has appointed Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, judge of the Supreme Court as the Chief Justice of India. Justice Uday Umesh Lalit will take over as the 49th Chief Justice of India on 27th August 2022". Current Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana will demit office on August 26 on superannuation. Justice Lalit was appointed as judge of the Supreme Court in August 2014 from the Bar. He will become the second Chief Justice of India to be directly elevated to the Supreme Court from the Bar, after Justice S.M. Sikri, who served as the 13th CJI in 1971. Justice Lalit has served as a Member of Supreme Court Legal Services Committee for two terms.



## CORBEVAX APPROVED AS HETEROLOGOUS VACCINE FOR PRECAUTION DOSE

Team Absolute | New Delhi  
The Centre on Wednesday approved Biological E's Corbevax as a heterologous precaution dose for adults above 18 years for restricted use with two doses of either Covishield or Covaxin. In a letter to states, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said: "Corbevax will be available as precaution dose after completion of 6 months or 26 weeks from the date of administration of the second dose of either Covaxin or Covishield vaccines for population above 18 years." This enables use of Corbevax as a heterologous Covid-19 vaccine for precaution dose administration in this age group, he said. The Centre, in the letter, also informed the states that there will be no change in existing guidelines for homologous precaution dose administration of Covaxin and Covishield vaccine. "In addition to the existing homologous precaution dose, the



option of a heterologous precaution dose with Corbevax would be available to all persons above 18 years of age," Bhushan said in the letter. "All necessary changes in regard to the administration of heterologous precaution dose using Corbevax, to those who are eligible and due for precaution dose have been made on the Co-WIN portal. This provision would be live from 12th August (Friday), 2022," he said in the letter. Meanwhile, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya also tweeted, "Further Strengthening India's arsenal against COVID-19. @MoHFW\_India approves Corbevax as #PrecautionDose for those above 18 yrs vaccinated with either Covishield or Covaxin, 6 months or 26 weeks after administration of 2nd dose. This provision would be live from 12th August".

## NEW OMICRON SUB-VARIANT BA 2.75 DETECTED IN DELHI

New Delhi: A new sub-variant of the Covid strain Omicron has been detected in a study of genome sequencing in the capital city. The Omicron sub-variant BA 2.75 has been detected in the study report of 90 samples sent for genome sequencing in Delhi's Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital. The report has detected the sub-variant of Omicron - BA 2.75, which has a higher transmission rate, LNJP Hospital Medical Director Dr Suresh Kumar told the reporters. The new sub variant has been detected in the study of 90 samples. This new sub-variant may infect people who have already antibodies and have been vaccinated earlier. Meanwhile, the new Covid cases are on rise in the city. Delhi on Tuesday reported two-fold rise in fresh Covid infection at 2,495 cases. The capital city also reported seven deaths which is highest in many months. The Covid positivity rate in the city was reported 15.41 per cent, while the number of active cases has risen to 8,506 in the city as per previous day report.

## Families reunited on the eve of Rakhi, courtesy ham radio operators

OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE -- INCLUDING THOSE LEFT BEHIND AT THE GANGASAGAR MELA -- HAVE BEEN REUNITED WITH THEIR FAMILIES, THANKS TO THE VAST NETWORK OF WBRC. EVEN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS NOW SEEK HELP FROM THESE HAM RADIO OPERATORS TO LOCATE FAMILIES OF PEOPLE LANGUISHING IN HOSPITALS AND SHELTER HOMES FOR YEARS. AMATEUR RADIO IS A HOBBY (REQUIRING LICENCE) AND HAMS NORMALLY OPERATE WITHIN THEIR OWN NETWORK. HOWEVER, IT WAS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT IN THE CASE OF WBRC. THIS ORGANISATION HAS BEEN ASSIGNED BY BOTH THE CENTRAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE CONNECTIVITY DURING NATURAL DISASTERS OR LARGE EVENTS LIKE THE GANGASAGAR MELA.



Team Absolute | Kolkata

On the eve of Raksha Bandhan, two families -- one from West Bengal and the other from Uttar Pradesh -- were reunited with missing family members, thanks to the efforts of the West Bengal Radio Club (WBRC), an organisation of ham radio enthusiasts, who have been carrying out this

mission of reuniting people roaming on the streets as vagabonds with their families. The hams from WBRC also operated during the devastating Nepal earthquake and were among the first to create communication links from the disaster sites. While working at such sites, WBRC members realised that there are thousands of people who are lost and are in need to be reunited with their

families. Their service is voluntary. "For nearly six months now, a youth had taken shelter under a tree next to the railway accounts office at Kharagpur. This was first noticed by our members Subhodip Roy and Joydip Swarnakar. The youth was reluctant to speak and it seemed that he suffered from a mental ailment. After I was informed, we activated our network and before long, the police provided a lot of assistance and the youth's mother Saswati Samui reached Kharagpur to take back her son," said Ambarish Nag Biswas, Secretary, WBRC. The second case is of a woman found by the police at Habra in the North-24 Parganas district of West Bengal. The woman knew no Bengali and spoke in a certain dialect. She was kept at a home in Habra and Nag Biswas was informed. "I spoke to her and using our network, came to know that she may be from western Uttar Pradesh. After some efforts, we located her family in Ghaziabad. Both her sons reached Habra on Wednesday with all necessary documents and took her back home. It's Rakhi Purnima on Thursday. It is the time for reunification of families. I am happy that a mother has been reunited with her son and a family has got their mother back," Nag Biswas said.

## Nitish becomes Bihar CM for 8th time



Patna | Agencies

Day after announcing a new grand alliance with the Rashtriya Janata Dal and other opposition parties after breaking away from the BJP, Nitish Kumar on Wednesday took oath as the Bihar Chief Minister for the eighth time. Along with him, Tejashwi Yadav, the RJD leader, took the oath of deputy CM. A swearing-in ceremony was held in the Rajendra Mandapam of the Raj Bhawan here where the two leaders took the oath. Tejashwi Yadav, after taking the oath, touched the feet of CM Nitish Kumar and took his blessings. Nitish Kumar also greeted Tejashwi Yadav warmly. After taking the oath, CM Nitish Kumar said: "After the 2020 Assembly election I did not want to become the chief minister of Bihar. Our party faced a loss after going with the BJP. The situation went worse in the last two months," Kumar said. Nitish Kumar, became the chief minister of Bihar in March 2000, November 2005, November 2010, February 2015, November 2015, July 2017, November 2020 and August 10, 2022. Tejashwi Yadav had taken the oath of deputy CM of Bihar in November 2015 and now on August 10, 2022.



## FORGERY RACKET UNEARTHED AFTER HDFC BANK FINDS 33 ACCOUNTS WITH 2 COMMON PICTURES

New Delhi: The IFSO unit of Delhi Police's Special Cell has busted a gang of cheaters who were engaged in duping the HDFC Bank by opening accounts on the basis of forged documents, and arrested two people in this connection, police said on Wednesday.

The two arrested were identified as Navneet Prajapati and Somnath Prajapati. Of the two accused, Navneet Prajapati was already in judicial custody and then also arrested in the fake passport case of a relative of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. Deputy Commissioner of Police, IFSO-Special Cell, K.P.S. Malhotra said a complaint from the bank's Credit Control & Intelligence Department was received, wherein, it was alleged that during scrutiny of the suspicious bank accounts, they had found common photographs and signatures in 35 different saving bank accounts with different names and altogether total 2

common photos have been observed in 33 accounts.

"Further, it was observed that for saving accounts opened digitally, 12 accounts were processed with digital Aadhar verification as per laid down process and guidelines, however, a photograph of one individual was found in the all 12 accounts," he said. According to the DCP, the accused persons had availed multiple credit facilities and products i.e., credit cards, DCEMI, PL2CC/Jumbo Loan, two-wheeler loan, personal loan, and auto loan and caused wrongful loss to the tune of Rs 1.26 crore to the bank. A case under appropriate sections of law was registered by the police and an investigation was initiated. During the course of investigation, the official said, an extensive analysis of the financial trail and CDR was carried out and through the analysis, it was found that the accused persons were operating from Tughlakabad and

Dwarka areas.

On July 28, acting on specific information, the police conducted a raid and accused, Somnath Prajapati, was apprehended. During interrogation, he confessed his involvement in the offence and disclosed that he, along with his maternal uncle Navneet Prajapati, is engaged in creating fake documents especially Aadhar cards and then opening bank accounts.

Through the bank accounts, they availed personal loan, auto loan, credit card and DCEMI facility and never repaid the loan.

"It was revealed that his maternal uncle Navneet Prajapati is running in judicial custody in some other case for a forgery," the official said, adding Navneet was also taken on police custody remand.

During the sustained interrogation and confrontation with each other, they disclosed that they were running an Aadhar Updation Centre using

the ID some other agent that was authorised by UIDAI.

"To login in UIDAI, they were using silicon fingerprints and print out of the iris scan of the authorised agent. Whenever any illiterate came to them for any Aadhaar updation, N Prajapati captured the biometrics of that person but updated the photograph and address as suitable to him," the official said.

After Covid, when everything went online, they started opening bank accounts through online mode, in which the account holder credentials were verified through the API integrated with the Aadhaar database. "They had already updated the photograph and address in the database fraudulently. When the bank's API verifies the details provided by them, the details matched and the account gets opened without any physical verification or intervention," the official added.

## Rakshabandhan: Delhi Metro sets up 169 additional ticket machines

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation has set up 169 additional ticket office machines at the Metro stations to ensure smooth travel for passengers on the occasion of Rakshabandhan on Thursday.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As part of the additional ticket machines, there will be 65 customer facilitation agents and a standby train available on all lines except the Airport Line. Last year, the metro service began early on Raksha Bandhan to

accommodate the heavy rush, however, this time, DMRC is yet to announce any such time change. Notably, this year, the festival has arrived just 5 days before the Independence Day which means the metro stations will be equally well guarded by the security personnel and the frisk-

ing would take more time. "Additional time might be needed in view of enhanced security and frisking measures ahead of Independence Day. Please allow for some extra time in your commute. Your cooperation is kindly solicited," the DMRC said.

## INDIGENOUS VACCINE LAUNCHED TO PROTECT LIVESTOCK FROM LUMPY SKIN DISEASE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Wednesday launched the indigenous Lumpi-ProVadind vaccine to protect livestock from Lumpy Skin disease.

The vaccine has been developed by the National Equine Research Centre, Hisar (Haryana) in collaboration with the Indian Veterinary Research

Institute, Izzatnagar (Bareilly).

Describing this vaccine as a milestone for eradicating the disease, Tomar said that livestock, along with human resource, is the biggest asset of the country, and we have a big responsibility to preserve it and make it prosper.

Noting that yet another new dimension has been set by developing this vaccine under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), he congratulated the

scientists of both the institutes. Ever since the disease came to India in 2019, research institutes have been engaged in developing the vaccine.

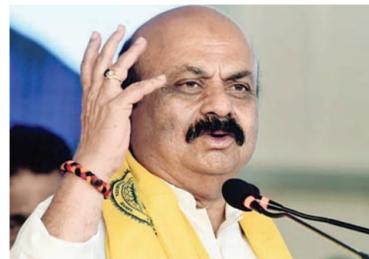
Tomar expressed happiness that scientists accepted this as a challenge and undertaking limited trials in a short period, have developed a vaccine 100 per cent effective complying with all standards, which will be effective in getting rid of the disease.

## CM change rumours rattle BJP in K'taka; top leaders in damage control mode

Bengaluru | Agencies

The ruling BJP in Karnataka is in damage control mode following rumours of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai being replaced. The BJP which is yet to recover from the wrath of party workers and Hindu activists following the murder of Praveen Kumar Nettare, a BJP Yuva Morcha member, now has the task of clarifying over the leadership issue when assembly elections are just 8 months away.

Sources in the BJP stated that the issue cropped up with the statement of Suresh Gowda, former MLA from Tumakuru constituency. Gowda, known as the blue eyed boy of Union Minister for State Shobha Karandlaje from Karnataka hinted that there could be changes in the leadership



before August 15. He said that the leadership change has been carried out before by the high command even though there is only a short time

left for the assembly elections.

Following this, the opposition Congress which has gained momentum after the massive birthday bash of Siddaramaiah organised by the party, hit out at the Karnataka BJP over the leadership change issue. The Congress on its social media handle stated that Karnataka will see its third CM soon as it had seen in the previous tenure of the BJP government. It said that senior leaders and cabinet members have chosen to be tight-lipped after the visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Bengaluru recently for the same reason.

Sources in the BJP revealed that Bommai does not enjoy the support he once used to. Amit Shah had declared that the assembly elections would be fought under the leadership of Bommai to the chagrin of many CM aspirants.

## AAP promises Rs 1k monthly allowance to Gujarat women if voted to power

Ahmedabad | Agencies

AAP chief and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday promised that if voted to power, his party will provide Rs 1,000 monthly allowance to Gujarat women.

Gujarat is slated to go to polls in the year end and Kejriwal has been announcing slew of "guarantees" to woo electorate.

Addressing a meeting here, Kejriwal said, "If a mother wants to give gift to her visiting daughter, she has to look at either her husband or son. Only if they give her money, she can give gift to her daughter, but if she will have Rs 1,000 in hand, she will not be dependent on male members of the family."

"If Rs 1,000 is given to each women, and if there are lakhs of beneficiaries, the amount will turn into crores, which will be back into economy by one or the other mode, whereas if the same amount (crores of rupees) is given to one industrial unit or corporate house as loan, neither it will generate enough employment, nor all money is going to come back in the economy, so it is bet-



ter to give money more hands," he claimed.

Kejriwal has also promised to increase pay grade of police personnel.

"I have learnt that Gujarat Police pay grade is the lowest compared to other states, I have received a letter written by

police personnel's daughter requesting to take up the pay grade issue. This indicates that people have a lot of hope from AAP."

During his day-long visit, he also promised Rs 3,000 monthly unemployment allowance.

## SWATANTRA DEV QUILTS AS LEADER UP COUNCIL, KESHAV MAURYA NEW LEADER

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh BJP state president and minister for Jal Shakti Swatantra Dev Singh has resigned as leader of Legislative Council. Sources said that he had resigned from the post, citing pre-occupation with his ministerial duties. The office of the principal secretary of the Legislative Council also confirmed it.

Deputy chief minister Keshav Maurya will be the new leader of the house.

However, the official confirmation of the resignation is yet to be received. Swatantra Dev Singh is on a tour of Bundelkhand. He had earlier resigned from the post of UP state president.

## 3 LeT terrorists killed in J&K's Budgam encounter

Srinagar | Agencies

Three terrorists have been killed in an ongoing encounter between terrorists and security forces at Waterhail area in Central Kashmir's Budgam district, officials said on Wednesday.

"All the three hiding LeT terrorists neutralised. Bodies being retrieved from the site, identification yet to be ascertained.

Incriminating materials, arms and ammunition recovered. A big success for us," Jammu and Kashmir Police quoting Additional Director General Police Kashmir zone Vijay Kumar tweeted. Earlier, police said three terrorists of terror outfit LeT (TRF) including terrorist Lateef Rather were trapped in the encounter.

Police said terrorist Lateef is involved in several civilian



killings including the killing of Rahul Bhat and Amreen Bhat.

The firefight had started after a joint team of police and security forces got an input about the presence of terrorists in that area.

Security forces cordoned off the area. Terrorists hiding there started firing drawing retaliation by the security forces.

There have been a series of encounters between terrorists and security forces across Kashmir over the last few months.

Many terrorists and their commanders have been eliminated. Most of the operations have been jointly conducted by the police and the army on the basis of specific intelligence inputs.

## Hindu activist says Idgah tower will be demolished, K'taka Police file FIRs



Bengaluru | Agencies

Karnataka Police have filed an FIR against a Hindu activist and leader for issuing a statement that Idgah tower located in the premises of controversial Idgah Maidan in Bengaluru will be destroyed, police said on Wednesday.

Chamarajpet police in Bengaluru have booked a case against Bhaskaran, the President of Vishwa Sanatan Parishad for issuing the statement to create communal discord in society.

Bhaskaran, who is waging a legal battle and is active in the agitations demanding that the controversial site must be handed over to the state government from the Wakf board, had said that he would get the Idgah tower demolished on the lines of

Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) recently declared that the controversial site belonged to the revenue department. Following the development, Congress local MLA Zameer Ahmad Khan had announced that while the Tricolour flag will be hoisted for the first time during the Independence Day, permission won't be given for celebration of the Ganesha festival.

Hindu activists have demanded that Idgah tower must be demolished as it would lead to complications while celebrating Hindu festivals.

The Wakf Board has stated that they would approach the court in connection with BBMP's decision of declaring it as a property of the

Revenue department.

Bhaskaran while talking to the media said that the Idgah Maidan should be utilised as a playground henceforth. He had given a deadline to the government to get the Idgah Tower demolished before December 6.

He further stated that if the government failed, then they were already in touch with Hindu organisations in Maharashtra, Kerala, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and also in different parts of Karnataka to gather a large number of people to demolish Idgah Tower.

Taking up a suo moto complaint against him, the police have stated that Bhaskaran had caused a hurt to the religious feelings which will spoil the peace in society.

## ALL IS NOT WELL IN GUJARAT BJP: SOURCES

ALL IS NOT WELL IN THE BJP UNIT OF GUJARAT AS DIFFERENCES ARE SIMMERING WITHIN THE PARTY OVER VARIOUS ISSUES, IF SOURCES ARE TO BE BELIEVED.

Ahmedabad: Party's tribal leader from Banaskantha demanding that only local candidates be nominated from the Danta Assembly seat and Rajkot District Panchayat's Executive Committee's chairman resigning from the post on Tuesday are two indicators of the undercurrent of tension.

Party senior leaders are down playing both episodes, say the sources.

Banaskantha district BJP Scheduled Tribe Morcha president Ladhubhai Parghi in a public meetings said: "Party should only nominate local tribal candidate from Danta Assembly constituency, if party fields local candidates, then 1.30 lakh Durgri Bhil tribals promise jubilant victory of party candidate, but if the party nominates candidate from outside or other tribes, we don't promise his victory."

It is an unwarranted statement from Parghi as the district president of S.T. Morcha party expects him to follow the party line. Being a leader, he should know the system of candidate selection, where local workers and leaders' views and opinions are considered. There is a possibility that Parghi might have made this



statement to send a signal to other aspirants, said Harsad Vasava, Gujarat BJP S.T. Morcha president.

In another development, Rajkot District Panchayat's executive committee's president Sahdevsinh Jadeja has submitted his resignation to the party leaders. Sahdevsinh could not be contacted

for his comments, but sources from the party said District Panchayat President Bhubatbhai Bodar's too much interference in administration forced Jadeja to resign.

Downplaying the entire episode, BJP District Committee president Mansukhbhai Khachariya told IANS: "Party has not received any

resignation from Jadeja, there are baseless allegations that he is suffocating in the Panchayat because does not have free hand. The fact is in the past, he had discussed his resignation citing family and business related issues, but was convinced to continue till his tenure ends."





### Shivraj Mama ki Pathshala held on "Vijayi Vishwa TirangaPyara"

# CM CHOUHAN TOOK CLASS OF STUDENTS ON THE STORY OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL FLAG

- Information given at Bhopals Model School about the Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan, freedom struggle and rules for hoisting the Tiranga
- Chief Minister appealed to buy the national flag from own income and hoist it
- Students of the state virtually connected with Shivraj Mamas Pathshala

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that "Vijayi Vishwa TirangaPyara, JhandaUncha Rahe Hamara, Iski Shaan Na JaanePaye, ChaheJanBhale Hi Jaaye" was not just a song but the mantra of freedom struggle. India has always been culturally one. Our country has a glorious history. India was famous in the world for its prosperity. As a result of this many foreign powers like Portuguese, Dutch, British etc. came to India and we had to be enslaved due to lack of unity. The struggle against the British started in India in 1761 with the Sannyasi Rebellion and the Fakir Rebellion. The first freedom struggle was started by Amar Shaheed Mangal Pandey in 1857. Our country became independent as a result of the sacrifices of many martyrs in the long struggle for freedom. Our flag played a very important role in this freedom struggle.

Chouhan was addressing "Shivraj Mama ki Pathshala" organised at Model School, Bhopal. CM informed the students present in the class about the Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan, freedom struggle, story of development of the national flag and rules for hoisting the Tiranga.

Chouhan inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp. CM also released the leaflet developed by Model School Bhopal for Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan.



Chief Minister told the students that now there is a need to live for the country, not die for it. CM inspired the students to join with the activities of environmental protection and social welfare along with dedication towards the country. He said that the state government is making all possible efforts for the popularization of sports in the state.

Giving brief information about the freedom struggle, Chouhan highlighted the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Veer Savarkar, Chaphekar brothers, Chandrashekhar Azad, Pandit Ramprasad Bismil, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose along with Jallian Wala Bagh and the Civil Disobedience Movement etc.

Chouhan said that Prime Minister Modi has started the 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan' with an aim to encourage people to bring the Tiranga home and hoist it to celebrate the 75th year of India's independence with enthusiasm. Its purpose is to inculcate the spirit of patriotism in the hearts of the people and to celebrate the Amrit Mahotsav of Azadi with the spirit of public participation. Therefore, we should buy the national flag from our income and hoist it.

Chouhan threw light on the development

story of the national flag in an interesting way. In the development sequence of the flag, a pictorial presentation of the various changes that came in the flag was made. CM Chouhan informed the students about the following points:-

Margaret Noble, an Irish disciple of Swami Vivekananda, prepared a national flag with the girls of Nivedita Girls' School in Kolkata in 1905. Vajra was made in this flag, which was a symbol of power. A white lotus was carved in its centre which was a symbol of purity. The first national flag of India was hoisted on 7 August 1906 at Parsi Bagan Square Green Park in Kolkata. It had three stripes of red, yellow and green, with VandeMataram written in the middle.

Madame Bhikaji Cama and her fellow revolutionaries unfurled the national flag at the convention site of the Second Socialist Congress in Stuttgart, Germany, in August 1907. It was the first Indian flag to be unfurled on foreign soil. It was named 'Flag of India's Independence'.

A new flag was adopted in 1917 as a major part of the Home Rule Movement aimed at establishing self-government in India. It had five red and five green horizontal stripes and seven stars in the shape of a Saptarishi.

In April 1921 Mahatma Gandhi felt the need for an Indian flag. The spinning wheel was made in the centre of this flag. Gandhiji asked PingaliVenkayya to design a flag with a spinning wheel. In this flag, white colour was also added along with red and green.

The three-colour flag was prepared by PingaliVenkayya in the Congress session held in Karachi in 1931. This flag was adopted as the national flag of India. In this, red colour was considered as a symbol of sacrifice, white colour of purity and green colour as a symbol of hope. The spinning wheel, a symbol of the country's progress, was added to its centre.

On 22 July 1947, the Constituent Assembly adopted the national flag of independent India in its present form. It has saffron colour on the top which signifies strength and courage. It has white colour in the middle which symbolizes peace and truth. Green is the colour at the bottom which represents the fertility, growth and auspiciousness of the land. At the centre of the present form of the flag is a circle with twenty-four spokes. The purpose of this chakra is to show that there is life in motion.

Giving information about the length-width ratio of the Tiranga, the points to be kept in mind while hoisting the flag, the Flag Code of India, Chouhan said that the National Flag of India reflects the hopes and aspirations of the people of India. It is a symbol of national pride. Whenever the national flag is hoisted, it should be given a respectful place. It should be placed in such a place from where it is clearly visible. Where the flag is displayed in the open or is displayed at home by a person of the public, it may be flown during the day and night. The flag should always be flown with enthusiasm and lowered slowly with respect. If a trumpet is played while hoisting and taking off, care should be taken that the flag is raised and lowered at the same time as the sound of the trumpet. Chouhan also resolved the queries of the students regarding the development sequence of the national flag.

### CM PLANTS BANYAN, GULMOHAR AND SEMAL SAPLINGS



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan along with the members of Vidya Bharti Alumni Parishad planted Banyan, Gulmohar and Semal saplings in the Smart City Garden at Shyamla Hills. Priyanshu Pandey, Ashish Joshi, Parth Suryavanshi, Ritesh Tokse and Ashutosh Gupta of the Parishad also accompanied. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, daughter Amara Anshuman planted a sapling on her birthday.

Daughter Amara's father Shri Anshuman Khare, Consulting Editor of Swadesh News, his wife Bhumika and son Aahan also participated in the plantation.

Vidya Bharati Alumni Parishad is an organisation of students who have completed their studies from Saraswati Shishu Mandirs.

In this 8 lakh 51 thousand former students are registered. The organisation has been working in the country for years in the field of plantation, cleanliness, health and free education from Sanskar Kendras. At present, the organisation is providing free treatment facilities in tribal villages by conducting medical camps for the diagnosis of sickle cell anaemia.

Banyan has religious and medicinal value. According to Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of Banyan leaves, bark etc. Consumption of its decoction boosts the immunity.

Gulmohar is considered one of the most beautiful trees in the world. Flowers blooming in large clusters among its well-ordered leaves give a distinct attraction to the tree. It also abounds in medicinal properties. Semal is also called "Shimbal" and "Shalmali" in Sanskrit. It is considered very beneficial medicine in Ayurveda.

## Chief Minister will distribute bank loans to women SHGs

- Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will have direct dialogue with the women of the groups

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will interact directly with the women of self-help groups on 12th August. About 300 group member women from different districts of the state will reach Bhopal in this program to be held at the Chief Minister's residence. Chouhan will also distribute bank loans worth about Rs.200 crore to self-help groups. Self-help group members will also be connected virtual from all gram panchayats. The program will

be telecast live through Doordarshan, regional channels and social media.

Social and economic empowerment of poor women of rural areas is being done by connecting them with self-help groups under the State Rural Livelihood Mission. About 3 lakh 84 thousand self-help groups have been formed in 45 thousand villages of the state, to which about 43 lakh families are connected. Out of these, about 16 lakh 79 thousand families have been connected with agriculture and about 6 lakh 19 thousand families in other activities.

In the recently concluded Panchayat elections, about 17 thousand members of these self-help groups have been elected to the posts of Panch, Sarpanch, Janpad and Zilla Panchayat members. Of

these, 1907 Sarpanch, 429 Up Sarpanch, 46 Zilla Panchayat members, 381 Janpad members and 14 thousand 378 Panchs have been made. For the first time such a large participation of self-help groups has been seen in Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Adequate bank loans are being easily provided by the state government to self-help groups. Aajeevika Mart portal has been created for the purchase and sale of their products. About 6 thousand 700 products of groups have been uploaded on this. So far, these women have done business worth Rs 504 crore through the portal. Group member women have also prepared about 63 lakh tricolors in 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan'. Self-help groups are also doing the work of preparing school uniforms.

- Decision to continue short term crop loans to farmers at zero percent interest rate
- Meeting of the Council of Ministers held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A meeting of the Council of Ministers was held in Mantralaya on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. While strengthening the Madhya Pradesh Women's Finance and Development Corporation, the Cabinet gave approval for provision of separate budget line for establishment expenditure, formation of Mukhyamantri Nari Samman Kosh in the Corporation and Mukhyamantri Udyam Shakti Yojana under it. Under the Mukhyamantri Udyam Shakti Yojana,

2% interest subsidy will be given on the cases approved by the banks of the women beneficiaries of the State Rural Livelihood Mission and National Urban Livelihood Mission, Mukhyamantri Udyam Kranti Yojana and Chief Minister Women Empowerment Scheme. Along with this, approval was given to set up a Project Management Unit in SRLM/NULM and a Project Cell in the Corporation to establish marketing system and backward and forward linkage of the products of women entrepreneurs funded from the above schemes. In order to bring the Tejaswini groups formed by the Corporation into the Livelihood Mission fold, out of the amount available in the Tejaswini programme, Rs. 10 crore has been approved for the Rural Livelihood Mission.

The Cabinet has decided to implement Mukhyamantri Bal Ashirwad Yojana. Under the scheme, financial assistance (sponsorship) will be given to care leavers (after care) above the age of 18 years leaving child care insti-

tutions and orphan children up to the age of 18 years living with relatives or guardians. Under the scheme, care leavers will be given Rs. 5 thousand per month for a maximum period of one year at the time of internship and Rs. 5 thousand per month for a maximum of 2 years on getting vocational training. Also, careleavers who begin the course through NEET, JEE or CLAT will be given Rs 5000 per month for their livelihood expenses. All financial assistance for education or internship or vocational training in after care will be given for the stipulated time period or till the age of 24 years, whichever is earlier. Under the sponsorship, financial assistance of Rs 2 thousand will be given in the joint account of the legal guardian of the eligible children for a minimum period of one year and maximum up to 18 years and medical assistance under the Ayushman scheme. In this way, efforts will be made to rehabilitate the orphan children in the society by giving financial and educational support.

The Cabinet has decided to contin-

ue the scheme of giving short term crop loans to farmers at zero percent interest rate in the year 2022-23. This loan is given to the farmers from cooperative banks / Primary Agricultural Credit Co-operative Societies (PACS). The base rate for the year 2022-23 in the plan will be 10 percent. The due date for Kharif 2022 season will be 28 March 2023 and for Rabi 2022-23 season the due date will be 15 June 2023. 3 percent (general) interest subsidy for all farmers taking short term crop loans in Kharif and Rabi season under the prescribed base rate of 10 percent and 4 percent additional interest subsidy to the farmers who repay the loan till the prescribed due date will be given. This scheme is applicable from the year 2012-13. In this, the state government provides interest subsidy on short term crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh.

The Cabinet gave the fourth revised administrative approval for the Panch Diversion (Major) Project costing Rs. 3,395 crore 70 lakh rupees and irrigated area 1 lakh 26 thousand 647 hectares.

## GOVERNOR PATEL LAUNCHES TIRANGA RALLY



Bhopal: Governor Mangubhai Patel on Wednesday launched a motor cycle rally in "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign on the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence from Raj Bhavan. 75 students of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Hindi University, Barkatullah University and Rajiv Gandhi Technological University participated in the rally. The Tiranga rally started from Raj Bhavan and reached the respective universities while visiting various places in the city.

Governor Patel distributed the national flags to the officers and employees of Raj Bhavan and extended his best wishes on Independence Day in advance.

## Convocation ceremony of Bhoj (Open) University

# ALWAYS REMEMBER PARENTS AND MOTHER LAND TO PROGRESS IN LIFE: GOVERNOR

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor and Chancellor Mangubhai Patel has appealed to the students to always remember their parents and motherland. Always remember the pledges and resolutions you have taken today and implement them in your life. Governor Shri Patel was addressing the 6th Convocation of Bhoj (Open) University.

Patel said that the convocation is the completion of the teaching period and the beginning of the service period. Education is our soul, it makes us cultured. He said that wherever you are in life, always cooperate with underprivileged people and motivate their children for education according to your ability. Education is the only way by which every goal can be achieved. Patel said that the objective of setting up Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University is to provide education through correspondence and educational facilities in those tribal and backward areas of rural and remote areas of the state, who due to some reason are regularly attending higher education. He said that students should be aware of their duties along with success in future life. Being educated is not enough, well-educated conduct is also must.

Governor said that I am happy that Bhoj University is working for sickle cell in 5 villages of Dharampuri Block for the welfare of



the deprived sections. He asked the students to form groups and cooperate in organizing sickle cell camps for the underprivileged sections in their villages.

Higher Education Minister Mohan Yadav said that education and ordination are completed only after convocation. This university

is playing a great responsibility by giving opportunities to the aspiring students of education from remote areas. The state government has opened study centers of Bhoj University in all government colleges of the state. A degree in Bhoj (Open) University is as important as any other universities. Yadav

said that Bhoj University has made its place in the country by starting courses Shri Ramcharitmanas.

Vice Chancellor of National Law Institute University Prof. V Vijay Kumar highlighted the contemporary importance of National Education Policy-2020. He said that this policy has been brought with an aim to develop skills required for employment and business. It has a system of multidisciplinary courses. Along with this, the education system has been restructured through the National Education Policy. This will lead to all round development of the students. Along with the traditional education system, it also focuses on vocational education.

Vice Chancellor of Bhoj University Prof. Jayant Sonwalkar said that Bhoj University is determined to provide easy and accessible education to students by continuously following the principle of 'Aapki Shiksha - Aapke Dwar'. He said that with the aim of providing easy and accessible education to the students living in remote areas by Bhoj (Open) University, about 206 lectures of graduation level were telecast through Doordarshan, which can be viewed on YouTube Classroom, DDM also.

On this occasion, Governor Patel and Higher Education Minister presented degrees to the students of all the faculties. Along with this, he also released the souvenir of the university.

## PUBLIC WILL GET ENTRY IN RAJ BHAVAN FROM THE ENTRANCE NUMBER ONE

Bhopal:

On the occasion of Independence Day, on August 13, 14 and 16, the Raj Bhavan will be open for visit by public. Entry will be available from the entrance number-1 of Raj Bhavan.

The exit will be from the entrance number-2. Vehicles will not be allowed to enter the Raj Bhavan.

Parking will be available outside Raj Bhavan. The entry of the general public will be restricted in the Raj Bhavan on Independence Day - 15 August.

The general public will be allowed to enter the Raj Bhavan from 4 pm to 9 pm on the days fixed for the tour.



## EDITOR'S SPECS

## Nitish Kumar: Pivot of Opposition unity!

Nitish could emerge as the pointsman in the opposition unity if a non-Gandhi is propped up for a joint opposition. The Bihar coup is directly linked with Nitish Kumar's smartly crafted national ambition without mentioning it from his side, but letting speculation around. Bihar has 40 Lok Sabha MPs and the joint opposition could get a majority of seats which may also impact the Uttar Pradesh politics. Nitish is a prominent OBC Kurmi, and the community can impact the BJP prospects as they have been key to BJP's success in Uttar Pradesh. If a Kurmi OBC is propped up then with Yadavas a joint force could be formed to take on the BJP with the help of minorities. Though the NDA won majorly from Bihar during the Lok Sabha polls in Bihar in 2019, Nitish Kumar's withering away from the BJP could impact the new political formation. While Kumar may be silently working for a bigger leap to the Centre, there are others also in the race. Any division in OBC only can stop BJP in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, which has a combined strength of 120 MPs, and the BJP is quite strong in the region. Political analysts say that arithmetically it may seem to be good, but the 'Hindu' politics is tilted towards the BJP. The BJP, despite stiff opposition, got a sizeable number of OBC votes and saying that the OBC will shift towards the opposition is very early to predict, say analysts. Though BJP has rejected this contention, Sushil Modi claimed that Nitish Kumar is aiming to become the Prime Ministerial candidate for the opposition in the 2024 Lok Sabha election and challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

# QUIT INDIA: ARUNA ASAF ALI HOISTED TRICOLOUR AT MUMBAI'S GOWALIA TANK IN 1942

## Quaid Najmi

On August 8, 1942, after Gandhiji's historic 'Quit India' call to the British Raj at Mumbai's Gowalia Tank maidan, the police immediately swooped in to arrest all the top leaders of Indian National Congress (INC) present there in an attempt to crush the movement.

The following day (August 9, 1942), a plucky 33-year-old woman Aruna Asaf Ali - who later defied even Gandhiji - managed to sneak in there and hoisted the Indian Tricolour, raising slogans of Vande Mataram, shaking the Britishers.

This was at a time when most crestfallen Indians felt that all was lost, and with the top INC leadership behind bars, the 'Quit India' movement would be stillborn. But, it was largely credited to Aruna's dare-devilry - under the noses of the Britishers - that sparked a new life into the crusade which ultimately saw the collapse of the foreign rule in just five years - August 15, 1947 - and a grateful nation later decorated her with a Bharat Ratna (1997) posthumously.

Born with a silver spoon into an elite Bengali Brahmin family in Kalka (Punjab) on July 16, 1909, little Aruna Ganguly was educated in the prestigious Sacred Heart Convent School for girls in Lahore (now, Pakistan), and then graduated from the All Saints College, Nainital (now, Uttarakhand).

Her father, Upendranath Ganguly was a prominent restaurateur and her mom was Ambalika Devi Sanyal, hailing from a reputed Brahmo family, while her younger sister Purnima Banerjee was later a member of the Constituent Assembly of India - which adopted the Constitution of India - and also served as Uttar Pradesh MLA.

Aruna's uncle Dhirendranath Ganguly was a renowned photographer, later one of the earlier Bengali film actors, producer-director-writer

and was conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Award (1975), while her second uncle was Prof. Nagendranath Ganguly who was married to Mira Devi - the daughter of India's first Nobel laureate, Rabindranath Tagore, but their relations were largely strained.

After graduation, Aruna worked as a teacher with Gokhale Memorial School in Calcutta and also met a prominent INC leader, Barrister Asaf Ali - Independent India's first Ambassador to the US, later Switzerland and also served as Odisha Governor twice, and jailed several times, including in August 1942 in Mumbai.

Their marriage in 1928 raised many eyebrows, not only because of the religious differences, but also the fact that Aruna was just 19 and Ali was 40, so her family quickly disowned her as 'dead'.

Since Ali was a prominent member of the INC, she also joined the party, the couple 'witnessed' the bomb thrown into the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi in April 1929 by Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt which injured many Britishers, and then they (Aruna-Ali) participated in the Salt Satyagraha of 1930 after which she was arrested. The next year, the famed Gandhi-Irwin Pact, which among other things called for scrapping the tax on salt, lifting the ban on INC, and release of all political prisoners, was signed. But, Aruna - charged with being a vagrant - remained in jail, only to be released after an agitation by women co-prisoners, the general public and Gandhi's direct intervention. In another stint in Tihar Jail and later in solitary confinement at the Ambala Jail, she fought for better amenities to the prisoners which led to several reforms subsequently.

Post-jail terms, though of an indomitable spirit, she remained physically weak and was largely inactive for almost 8-10 years.

However, it was her famed streak with the Tricolour on August 9, 1942 that shot her into history books, presiding over the remaining AICC



Session, dodging police bullets and then vanishing underground.

While in hiding, Aruna ran a small band of revolutionaries fighting the Britishers who announced a whopping Rs 5,000 award for information, and Gandhiji penned a personal letter to her.

"I have been filled with admiration for your courage and heroism. You are reduced to a skeleton. Do come out and surrender yourself and win the prize offered for your arrest. Reserve the prize money for the Harijan (People of God) cause," said the hand-penned note.

Aruna defied Gandhiji's plea, later her properties were confiscated and sold, but she continued to edit the INC's fiery publication 'Inquilab' along with a Congress stalwart Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia -

who was one of the broadcasters of the Secret Congress Radio run by another plucky woman, Dr. Usha Mehta. She came out of hiding only in 1946 after the arrest warrant against her was cancelled, but despite other political differences and earning criticism from Gandhiji, she treasured his hand-scrawled note till the end. At one point, Gandhiji openly castigated her for supporting the Royal Indian Navy Mutiny (Feb. 1946) - when the demand for Pakistan was peaking - and the revolt which started in Mumbai spread to ports in Karachi, Calcutta and Madras, almost jeopardising Great Britain's commitment to give India full

Independence in August 1947.

Post-Independence, she headed Gandhiji and joined the INC, but after his martyrdom, she hopped to Socialist Party (1948), followed by a few years with Communist Party of India (CPI) in mid-1950s, and turning a full circle by returning to the INC in 1964. Though a Communist at heart, she devoted her energies to the media through the Link publishing house (founded post-Independence) with a weekly magazine and the Patriot daily newspaper which was patronised by the high and mighty, starting from Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

She launched the National Federation of Women (1954) and served as the first woman Mayor of Delhi in 1958.

After rejoining the INC, she became close to the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi though she criticised the Emergency (1975-1977). In 1983, Aruna led a 100-strong group of volunteers to Amritsar's Golden Temple in 1983 to espouse social harmony at the peak of militancy there which led to Operation Blue Star (June 1984) and culminated in the assassination of PM Indira Gandhi (October 1984).

Later, she even enjoyed good relations with the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, while continuing with her media and social activities. Having lost her husband in 1953, Aruna lived a full and active public life, always at her modest one-bedroom flat in New Delhi, till her demise on July 29, 1996, aged 87, in New Delhi. She earned many accolades, honours and awards capped off with the Bharat Ratna (1997), besides several roads, institutions all over India, a postage stamp in honour of Asaf Ali (1989) and her (1998), and the All India Minorities Front's annual 'Dr. Aruna Asaf Ali Sadbhavana Award' to eminent personalities in her memory.

## international

## CHINA AGAIN THREATENS TO TAKE TAIWAN BY FORCE IF NECESSARY

Beijing | Agencies

Amid the continuing tensions over Taiwan, China on Wednesday again threatened to take the democratic self-governing island by military means if necessary.

"We will work with the greatest sincerity and exert our utmost efforts to achieve peaceful reunification," dpa news agency quoted a white paper on the Taiwan issue published by the Chinese government as saying.

"But we will not renounce the use of force, and we reserve the option of taking all necessary measures. Use of force would be the last resort taken under compelling circumstances. We



will only be forced to take drastic measures to respond to the provocation of separatist elements or external forces should they ever cross our red lines.

"Let there be no doubt, we will tolerate no foreign inter-

ference in Taiwan, we will thwart any attempt to divide our country, and we will combine as a mighty force for national reunification and rejuvenation." "The historic goal of reuniting our motherland must be realized

and will be realised," it said. China has repeatedly made similar threats regarding Taiwan in the past.

The latest tensions were triggered last week by a visit to Taipei by Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, who travelled there despite Beijing's fierce opposition.

In response, China launched war games including live-fire drills in six maritime areas around Taiwan.

The Chinese leadership rejects such official contact by other countries with Taiwan because it regards the island as part of its territory.

Taiwan, on the other hand, has long seen itself as independent.

## MISSILE ATTACK NEAR UKRAINIAN NUKE PLANT KILLS 11

Kiev: At least 11 people were killed in missile attacks overnight in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region not far from the Russia-occupied Zaporizhzhya nuclear plant, the local military said on Wednesday.

"A tragic night in the Nikopol area the Russian army killed 11 people and injured 13," the head of the Dnipropetrovsk military administration Valentyn Reznichenko said in a Telegram post.

Both of the affected areas are on the opposite bank of the Dnipro River to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear plant, which has been shelled several times in recent days, reports dpa news agency.

The small town of Marhanets was worst hit, with 20 multi-storey buildings damaged including two schools, a dormitory and a cultural centre, Reznichenko said. Ten people were killed in the town and 11 others injured, seven of them seriously, he said. In another village close to Nikopol city, another woman died in her home as a result of the attack and a couple was injured.

The two villages are on the north bank of the Dnipro River's Kakhovka reservoir.



## N.Korea sends letter to China slamming Pelosi's Taiwan trip

Seoul | Agencies

North Korea's ruling Workers' Party (WPK) sent a formal message to the Communist Party of China denouncing US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan last week as a "shameless provocation", Pyongyang's state media reported Wednesday.

In the "solidarity letter" sent to the party's central committee the previous day, the WPK also called the US House of Representatives' trip a "serious infringement" of Beijing's sovereignty, according to Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

The WPK then expressed "full support" for the CPC and the Chinese government in their "just and legitimate" steps to "resolutely repulse the US arbitrariness" and pledged to continue offering full



support over the Taiwanese issue, Yonhap News Agency quoted the KCNA as saying in its report.

Last week, Pyongyang's foreign ministry was quick in responding to Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, calling it an "impudent interference" into the internal affairs of another nation. North Korea has recently stressed its strong ties with China amid the heightening Washington-Beijing tensions.

## 9 dead, 7 missing in record rainfall in S.Korea

Seoul | Agencies

Nine people have been confirmed dead and seven others remain unaccounted for in this week's record rainfall that battered Seoul and South Korea's central and eastern regions, officials said on Wednesday, adding that more than 2,500 homes and buildings were flooded.

A total of 525 mm of rain pounded Seoul from Monday to Wednesday morning, while Yangpyeong, 45 km east of the capital, recorded an accumulated 526.2 mm of rain during the period, according to the Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA).

Nine people were killed -- five in Seoul, three in Gyeonggi and one in Gangwon -- while seven others went missing, four of them from Seoul and the three others from Gyeonggi, and 17 were injured, according to government data.

A total of 2,676 houses and buildings were inundated, most of them in Seoul, reports Yonhap News Agency.

About 570 people from 398 households, mostly from the wider Seoul area, have been displaced, which left them staying at local schools and gyms. A further 1,253 people from 724 households across the country have

temporarily evacuated, officials said.

The three-day downpours also left many public facilities out of service, with six cases of flooded railroads reported in the wider Seoul area, and caused temporary suspension of services in sections of some railway and subway lines. Much of the disrupted public services were back on track as of Wednesday, including the operation of the Seoul Subway Line. Authorities, however, closed sections of some highways in Seoul as of Wednesday morning, including the Olympic and Gangbyeon Northern highways that directly run through the city. The KMA said it has lifted the downpour warning in the wider Seoul area and Incheon, west of Seoul, as of early Wednesday. The agency, however, maintained a heavy rain warning for Chungcheong province in the central region, where precipitation may reach between 50 and 80 mm per hour. Meanwhile, President Yoon Suk-yeol apologised to the nation on Wednesday morning after widespread criticism that the capital city lacks adequate flood control measures. He said the government must come up with fundamental measures to respond to similar events in the future even while carrying out emergency restoration work and assisting victims.

## US COURT SIDES WITH HOUSE IN FIGHT OVER TRUMP TAX RETURNS

Washington | Agencies

The US House Ways and Means Committee can use a federal law to gain access to the tax returns of former President Donald Trump, a federal appeals court in Washington has ruled.

Tuesday's decision from a three-judge panel of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in a long-running legal dispute would allow committee Chairman Richard Neal to get Trump's personal records from the Treasury Department, reports dpa news agency.

The former President, who intervened after the incumbent Joe Biden administration said it would comply with the request, had argued Neal and Democrats intended to use the returns against him politically or attempt to enhance IRS oversight of the presidency in a violation of the separation of powers.

But the D.C. Circuit panel wrote that they could only analyse what Neal wrote in his request, not statements by other members of Congress about what they may do with Trump's returns once they have them. "The mere fact that individual members of Congress may have political motivations as well as legislative ones is of no moment," the opinion, written by Senior Judge David B. Sentelle, states.

"Indeed, it is likely rare that an individual member of Congress would work for a legislative purpose without considering the political implications." The committee argued it needed the returns



to properly assess tax administration, including the program that requires presidential returns be audited. The decision follows years of litigation seeking Trump's returns under a 1976 law that gives congressional committees the power to review individual returns. The law gives Neal, as committee chairman, the power to request those returns. Neal praised the decision in a statement Tuesday, arguing "our position has been affirmed by the Courts".

"I'm pleased that this long-anticipated opinion makes clear the law is on our side. When we receive the returns, we will begin our oversight of the IRS's mandatory presidential audit program," Neal said. The committee tweeted: "We expect to

receive the requested tax returns and audit files immediately."

The decision on Tuesday affirmed a lower court ruling that dismissed Trump's lawsuit that seeks to block the Treasury Department from releasing to the committee his personal returns and returns of several of his businesses. While the committee seemed confident it would obtain the returns soon, Tuesday's opinion noted "the possibility of further appellate review in both this case and Mazars", a case from the House Oversight and Reform Committee seeking Trump's personal financial information. A separate order issued Tuesday stayed the decision for seven days, allowing Trump to seek rehearing in the D.C. Circuit or appeal. The committee has not previously requested the tax returns of a sitting or former President.

However, Trump himself also broke with long-standing tradition by refusing to release his tax returns before or after winning his campaign for office, citing ongoing audits.

The first president to release his returns, Richard Nixon, did so while under audit.

The litigation started in 2019, while Trump was still in office. Neal and the committee requested access to his returns, which the Treasury Department refused to provide after calling Neal's reasons pretextual. Neal reissued the request in 2021, which the Biden administration said it would comply with.

Trump then intervened in the case, reiterating arguments from when he was in office.



# SHARAD PAWAR HAILS NITISH KUMAR'S MOVE, SAYS BJP 'FINISHING OFF' ALLIES

Pune/Mumbai | Agencies

Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar on Wednesday hailed the move by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to dump his ally Bharatiya Janata Party to form a new government with other opposition parties.

The NCP supremo also accused the BJP of "finishing off its regional allies" after tying up with them to grab power, referring to the recent developments concerning the Maha Vikas Aghadi in Maharashtra, earlier with the Shiromani Akali Dal in Punjab and now the latest with the Janata Dal (U) in Bihar.

"The BJP's speciality is to join hands with a regional party during elections, but ensure that the local ally wins fewer seats. We have witnessed this with the SAD in Punjab and Shiv Sena in Maharashtra," said Pawar. He referred to BJP President J. P. Nadda's recent assertion that regional or family-led parties have no



future and they would cease to exist, with only the ideology-driven BJP surviving in the country.

"From this (Nadda's statement), it's clear that the BJP eliminates its allies gradually. This was even Nitish Kumar's complaint," pointed out Pawar, adding that SAD leader Prakash Singh Badal had allied with the BJP but today his party (SAD) is

almost annihilated in Punjab. "Now, the BJP is planning how to weaken the Shiv Sena by creating a rift in the party - Eknath Shinde (who rebelled in June) became the CM, and others (BJP) helped him," Pawar said.

The NCP, Shiv Sena and the Congress were allies in the 31-month old MVA government, which crashed on June 29 after the Shinde-led

revolt, which now some BJP leaders are claiming credit for.

In an apparently pre-emptive decision, Nitish Kumar on Tuesday walked out of the JD(U)'s alliance with the BJP in Bihar, resigned and formed a new government with the support of the Opposition Grand Alliance comprising the Rashtriya Janata Dal and the Congress.

# Independents, smaller parties fume after being 'ignored' in cabinet expansion

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Legislators from smaller parties and Independents supporting the new government expressed dismay on Wednesday after they were 'dropped' from the mini-cabinet expansion carried out on Tuesday by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, 41 days after he was sworn-in along with Bharatiya Janata Party's Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis.

At least two -- Bacchu Kadu and Rajendra Patil-Yadavkar -- expressed a grouse against Shinde-Fadnis for not giving them any representation in the 20-member ministry comprising 10 Shiv Sena rebels and 10 BJP MLAs.

Earlier, the 18 Independents and smaller parties who supported Shinde were assured of adequate representation, and now they have been promised inclusion in the next round of cabinet expansion likely after the Monsoon Session of the Legislature starting on August 17.

Incidentally, both Kadu and Patil-Yadavkar of the Prahar Janshakti Party, were ministers in the Maha Vikas Aghadi government headed by ex-CM Uddhav Thackeray.

"I was promised that I would be joining the ministry. It would be wrong to say that I am not upset. Now, we are informed of another cabinet expansion where we shall be included," said Kadu.

Patil-Yadavkar said he was puzzled why he was overlooked, but he had no complaints or expectations, saying "if it



has to happen, it will happen". The state legislature comprises 288 members of which the sanctioned strength of ministers is 43, meaning that there are still 23 vacancies to be filled, though there has been a huge clamour from the Shinde group and the BJP for

ministerial berths. On Tuesday, Shinde faced severe flak for his 'gents only' cabinet, ignoring several women hopefuls while taking on board at least 3 'tainted' legislators.

# Rupee gains 14 paise to close at 79.52 against US dollar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian rupee appreciated by 14 paise on Wednesday to close at 79.52 against the US dollar due to fall in crude oil prices and inflows of foreign investors.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, rupee ended at 79.52 against the US dollar as against 79.66 on the previous trading session on Monday. Indian financial markets were close on Tuesday on account of Muharram. "Some exporter flows and oil demand kept the pair steady. Speculators were on sidelines ahead of the US inflation report scheduled later in the evening. Over the near term, we expect USD-INR to remain range-bound between 79.00 and 80.00 levels on spot," said



Anindya Banerjee, VP, Currency Derivatives & Interest Rate Derivatives, at Kotak Securities Ltd.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies was at 106.00.

Brent crude oil prices were trading at \$95.38 by the end of Indian market hours.

On the domestic equity

front, domestic indices ended on a flat note, with Sensex falling 35.78 points or 0.06 per cent at 58,817.29, and Nifty closing 9.65 points or 0.06 per cent up at 17,534.75.

On Monday, foreign investors bought Indian shares worth Rs 1,449 crore, whereas domestic institutional investors sold shares worth Rs 141 crore.

# Outdoor media mogul presented IIFA trophy by Salman, Varun, Ananya

Team Absolute | Mumbai

One of the important awards given out during the IIFA Awards 2022 at Yas Viceroy Hotel, Abu Dhabi, was the one presented to a man who has literally launched a thousand faces.

Yogesh Lakhani, Chairman and Managing Director, Bright Outdoor Pvt. Ltd., was felicitated by Salman Khan, Varun Dhawan and Ananya Pandey for providing outdoor media solutions to the film industry since 1987.

From the three mega Khans -- Salman, Shah Rukh and Aamir -- to Akshay Kumar, Hrithik Roshan, Katrina Kaif, Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh, Shahid Kapoor, Arjun Kapoor, Ranbir Kapoor and Ayushmann Khurrana, Bright has launched Bollywood's most famous faces in public spaces.



The outdoor media mogul's association with IIFA goes back to the show's inception more than two decades ago. Every 10 years when IIFA unveils a new trophy, the show organisers also felicitate Lakhani.

Recalling his old association, Lakhani said: "The first time around when I was felicitated by IIFA, I was awarded the trophy by Amitabh Bachchan. It was a big day for me, to be felicitated by the biggest icon of the Hindi film industry. I felt so appreciated by this gesture."

Talking about his IIFA 2022 award, Lakhani said: "It felt great to receive this trophy from Salman Bhai. He's my very good friend and I think I can proudly say that I am his good friend too. I have some great memories with Salman Bhai and whenever we meet we have a friendly banter going on and it is very contagious for everyone around us. He's a gem of a person."

# NUPUR SHARMA ROW: SC CLUBS, TRANSFERS ALL FIRS TO DELHI POLICE

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Mumbai

The Supreme Court on Wednesday transferred all the FIRs lodged against suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma over her controversial remarks on Prophet Muhammad to Delhi Police.

The top court gave her the liberty to approach the Delhi High Court for quashing of the FIRs, and also declined to entertain a plea moved by the West Bengal government for a court-monitored SIT probe.

A bench comprising justices Surya Kant and J.B. Pardiwala ordered clubbing of all the FIRs registered across the country against Sharma, which will be probed by the Delhi Police.

The top court in the process brushed aside vehement opposition by the West Bengal government, which wanted its police to be part of the SIT with the Delhi Police or a court-appointed SIT.

The bench allowed Sharma to move the Delhi High Court seeking quashing of the FIRs lodged or to be lodged for her alleged remarks in the



future.

It added that all the FIRs to be lodged in future in connection with her remarks will be transferred to Delhi Police. The top court made it clear that protection from arrest to Sharma will continue in all pending and future FIRs. The bench also noted that an FIR has been registered by the Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSO) unit of Delhi Police, which is a specialised

agency, and suggested that it should carry out the investigation.

Senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy, representing the West Bengal government, objected to the transfer of FIRs to Delhi Police by saying that the first FIR against Sharma was registered in Mumbai, and argued that the accused cannot be allowed to pick the jurisdiction.

Senior Advocate Maninder Singh, appearing for Sharma, said the top

court's intervention is required, as his client has received life threats after the TV debate where she made the alleged remarks.

On July 19, the top court had ordered that no coercive action can be taken against Sharma in FIRs already registered and also in future FIRs in connection with her remarks.

The top court had said: "Meanwhile, as an interim measure it is directed that no coercive action shall be taken against Nupur Sharma pursuant to the impugned FIRs."

Sharma had moved the Supreme Court seeking stay on her arrest in the nine FIRs filed against her for her remarks on Prophet Muhammad and also sought clubbing/quashing of the FIRs with the FIR registered in Delhi.

On July 1, the top court had minced no words in slamming Sharma, whose remarks on the Prophet sparked a nationwide controversy. The top court had said that her loose tongue has set the entire country on fire and her irresponsible remarks shows that she is "obstinate and arrogant".

# Goa set for panchayat polls on Wed, 5,038 candidates in fray

Panaji | Agencies

Election to 186 village panchayats in Goa will be held on Wednesday, with 5,038 candidates in fray representing 1,464 wards.

According to State Election Commissioner, W.V. Ramanamurthy, counting of votes will be taken up on August 12.

While the 186 village panchayats in Goa have a total of 1,528 wards, 64 candidates have already been elected unopposed.

A total of 8,27,099 voters are eligible to cast their votes, including 4,01,725 male voters and 4,25,372 female voters, along with two belonging to the third gender.

The State Election Commission (SEC) has reserved 21 seats (1.37 per cent) for Schedule Castes,



187 seats (12.32 per cent) for Schedule Tribes and 307 (20.10 per cent) for Other Backward Classes.

Along with adequate police force, more than

10,000 polling staff have been deployed for the smooth conduct of the elections. Around 30 out of 1,566 polling booths have been identified as vulnerable and sensitive.

# CBI arrests engineer in bribery case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday said that it has arrested an engineer of Utility Powertech Ltd., Solapur (Maharashtra), for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs one lakh.

A senior CBI official said that an FIR was registered on the basis of the complaint lodged against Govind Kumar, the engineer of Utility Powertech Ltd. Kumar allegedly demanded a bribe of Rs 2,50,000 from a contractor to return his security deposit.

After negotiations, the accused reduced the amount to Rs two lakh and agreed to accept an initial amount of Rs one lakh.

Kumar has been working in UPL since 2015 on a contract basis and was looking after the safety and accounts related issues in the absence of a regular accountant.



The CBI laid a trap and caught the engineer red handed while accepting Rs one lakh from the contractor. "Searches were conducted at the premises of accused in Solapur which led to recovery of incriminating documents. The accused was produced before the Competent Court at Solapur and was remanded to 14 days judicial custody," said the official.

# GOA CONGRESS DEMANDS 'WHITE PAPER' ON EMPLOYMENT

Panaji | Agencies

Claiming that Goa government could give regular jobs to only 115 candidates out of 1,16,379 persons registered with the employment exchange, the Congress has demanded the government to release a 'White Paper' on the employment scenario in the coastal state.

Amit Patkar, President of Goa Pradesh Congress Committee, on Tuesday also sought the intervention of Governor P.S. Sreedharan Pillai in the matter.

"As per the reply received by our MLA during the Assembly session, it has come to light that there are 1,16,379 unemployed persons in Goa who are registered with the employment exchange. From February 2019 to July 2022, the state government has provided employment to only 115 persons on regular basis, and to 1,749 persons on contract basis. The reply exposes the complete failure of the government to provide employment to the Youth," Patkar said in a memorandum submitted to Pillai.



According to Patkar, the level of frustration is growing alarmingly among the educated youth, who are now taking to drugs and other vices.

"The government should release a 'White Paper' on the employment scenario in Goa, presenting the true facts and figures. We have also urged the Governor to direct the government to take up the

recruitment process through the Staff Selection Commission," Patkar told mediapersons. He also said the government has failed to keep up with its promise of providing government jobs to the youth of Goa. "It is unfortunate that the government has shown complete negligence towards the various reports published by different agencies and Union ministries highlighting the rising unemployment rate in Goa," he said. "The report prepared by the Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy (CMIE) put the unemployment ratio of Goa at 13.4 per cent in May 2022, as against the national average of 7.12 per cent," Patkar said.

"During the 2017 Assembly elections, the BJP had promised to provide 50,000 jobs to Goans. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant had announced to provide jobs to 10,000 Goans during the local body polls and the last Assembly elections. He recently made a statement of providing two lakh job opportunities in the next five years," Patkar said, adding that the government should come clear over this.



## Young Amanda Seyfried felt pressure while shooting nude scenes

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress-singer Amanda Seyfried has opened up on the pressure she felt over shooting nude scenes at a young age. Seyfried wishes there were intimacy coordinators back when she started as she remembers being put in uncomfortable situations, reports 'Deadline'.

"Being 19, walking around without my underwear on, like, are you kidding me? How did I let that happen?" she said in an interview with 'Porter'.

"Oh, I know why: I was 19 and I didn't want to upset anybody, and I wanted to keep my job. That's why." Seyfried started her career with soaps like 'As the World Turns' and 'All My Children'. She would also have a pivotal role in the season-long mystery on 'Veronica Mars' where she played the role of Lilly Kane right before starring in 'Mean Girls.' According to 'Deadline', it was in this last movie that Seyfried previously revealed she felt "grossed out" by boys coming up to her asking her for a weather forecast as her character could predict rain using her breasts.

"I was like 18 years old. It was just gross," she told 'Marie Claire' magazine earlier. Seyfried's comments come after 'Game of Thrones' actor Sean Bean said he was not a fan of intimacy coordinators as they "spoil the spontaneity" of the scenes.

"I think the natural way lovers behave would be ruined by someone bringing it right down to a technical exercise," he told 'The Times of London'.

"It would inhibit me more because it's drawing attention to things."

'Deadline' further states that Bean's comments sparked disapproval from 'West Side Story' star Rachel Zegler who said that "spontaneity in intimate scenes

can be unsafe".



## Steven Seagal pictured at Russian prison camp after 50 Ukrainians were killed there

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Steven Seagal has visited a Russian jail in Ukraine amid the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. The actor has been photographed at the Russian-controlled prison camp where 50 Ukrainian prisoners were recently killed, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Photos surfaced of Seagal standing inside the wrecked prison and sitting down on a bench examining some shrapnel.

There is also a picture of the 70-year-old star talking to Ukrainian prisoners through metal bars.

The visit to the Russian-controlled jail in Olenivka, Ukraine came just days after an explosion killed at least



50 people there on July 29. The

jail housed hundreds of Ukrainian prisoners at the time of the blast.

As if it's not jarring enough, Seagal, who is a vocal supporter of Russian president Vladimir Putin, was banned from entering Ukraine for five years in 2017 after Putin gave him citizenship and personally handed him his Russian passport in 2016, after he vocally supported Russia's annexation of Crimea.

He has also praised Putin for being "one of the greatest world leaders, if not the greatest world leader, alive today."

His support to Russia created controversy among Americans, who saw it as treachery to the United States.

## Miranda Kerr walks barefoot on grass to help with jet lag

Los Angeles | Agencies

Model Miranda Kerr walked "barefoot on the grass" to help her "reconnect" after a long flight. The 39-year-old Australian model, who has Flynn, 11, with former-husband Orlando Bloom and Hart, four, and two-year-old Myles with spouse Evan Spiegel, shared the way she copes with jet lag which is to take the time to "rebalance" herself, reports aceshowbiz.com. "I like to go for a walk outside when I arrive and, if possible, go barefoot on the grass to reconnect, ground myself and have a bit of time to rebalance," Miranda said, speaking to PORTER.

"Melatonin is also great to help get you in the time zone." Meanwhile, Miranda recently revealed that she travels light when she goes on holiday with her family and has learned to mix and match a limited number of pieces to create "endless" outfits. She said, "Start with easy crochet cover-ups in black or white. They're so easy to pack and never wrinkle. Then throw in denim shorts and mix and match any of your swimsuits to create endless outfits." "Bring a simple white cotton shirt and a great pair of flats, and you're set." When it comes to shoes, Miranda opts to pack comfy Nike sneakers and neutral sandals and heels. "I like to mix high and low," she added. She urged people to slow down and cherish their vacation time for the sake of their mental health.



## 'SNL' star Kenan Thompson to host Emmys this year

Los Angeles | Agencies

The Television Academy has finally found a host for this year's Emmy Awards ceremony, which is set to be held on September 12 at the Microsoft Theatre in Los Angeles, California.

'Saturday Night Live' star Kenan Thompson will be hosting the ceremony, reports 'Variety'.

Thompson, who is the longest-running cast member in 'SNL' history, was named after a lengthy search by television network NBC, the Academy and Emmys producers Done+Dusted and Reggie Hudlin to find an A-list name that might shake things up. According to 'Variety', the telecast will air live on NBC, and stream on Peacock as well. "Being a part of this incredible evening where we honour the best of the television community is ridiculously exciting, and to do it on NBC - my long-time network family - makes it even more special," Thompson said in a statement accessed by 'Variety'. "Like all TV fans, I can't wait to see the stars from my favorite shows."

"Kenan is well-regarded as one of funniest, likeable and accomplished performers of the last two decades and his tenure on 'Saturday Night Live' speaks for itself," said Jen Neal, exec VP of Live Events for NBCUniversal Television and Streaming. "We know he'll bring an excitement and professionalism to the Emmy Awards that a show of this stature deserves."



## Ezra Miller back on 'The Flash' set amid controversies

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Ezra Miller is still very much part of 'The Flash' movie despite their mounting issues. The actor was reportedly recently back to work on the film set amid their legal controversies.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the 29-year-old returned to the set for additional filming earlier this year, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"Miller participated in regularly scheduled additional photography over the summer, apparently without incident," the site reported.

Miller has been facing several allegations while they are staying low-key. Back in March, the 'Fantastic



Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore' star was arrested in Hawaii for disorderly conduct following an alleged physical altercation with patrons after having hurled obscenities at clients at a karaoke bar.

In April, Miller was taken into custody for second-degree assault by Leilani Estates Subdivision police authorities in Pahoa for allegedly throwing a chair, which hit a 26-year-old woman and left a half-inch cut on her forehead, after being told to leave during a private get-together.

In June, it was reported that Miller was accused of housing a mother and her three young children in their allegedly drug-and-gun-filled Vermont farmhouse.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Model Chrissy Teigen shared the first sonogram of her unborn baby and took the opportunity with the image from the ultrasound to take a dig at former President Donald Trump, whose Florida property was raided by the Federal Bureau of Investigations. Teigen captioned the image: "Me hearing the FBI raided mar a lago." The model announced that her husband John Legend, with whom she has six-year-old daughter Luna and four-year-old son Miles, were expecting another addition to their brood via IVF in another Instagram post, a mirror selfie with Chrissy clad in black knickers.

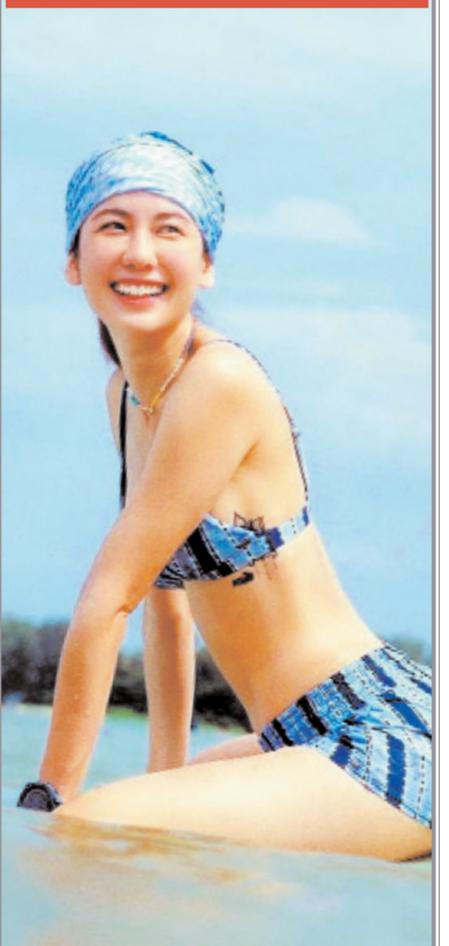
Teigen wrote: "The last few years have been a blur of emotions to say

Chrissy Teigen trolls Donald Trump with first sonogram of her baby

the least, but joy has filled our home and hearts again. 1 billion shots later (in the leg lately, as u can see!) we have another on the way. Every appointment I've said to myself, 'ok if it's healthy today I'll announce' but then I breathe a sigh of relief to hear a heartbeat and decide I'm just too nervous still. "I don't think I'll ever walk out of an appointment with more excitement than nerves but so far, everything is perfect and beautiful and I'm feeling hopeful and amazing. Ok phew it's been very hard keeping this in for so long!"

The "Ordinary People" hitmaker, real name John Stephens, recently shared how he and his wife will never forget the "loss" of their son Jack, who was stillborn at 20 weeks in 2020.

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Pattrakorn Tungsupakul



## Bhavani Devi bags gold at Commonwealth Fencing Championship

She won the gold medal in the ongoing Commonwealth Fencing Championship 2022 in London on Wednesday. The 42nd ranked Indian fencer defeated second seeded Australian Veronika Vasileva 15-10 to defend her Commonwealth Fencing title in the senior women's Sabre individual category finals. The Commonwealth Fencing Championship 2022 is her 10th international tournament of this year and she has been able to perform commendably in these high profile tournaments.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian ace fencer CA Bhavani Devi on Wednesday won a gold medal at the Commonwealth Fencing Championship 2022 in the Senior Women's Sabre Individual category. According to information received

*"It is a huge feeling to defend my title. It was a tough final and I am glad I could add another Gold medal for India this year. It has been a great journey for me this year and I would like to continue this momentum for the upcoming tournaments. The support back home has been great for me throughout."*

CA Bhavani Devi, Gold Medalist, Fencing



here, she defeated Veronika Vasileva of Australia 15-10 to win the title in London. "BHAVANI DEVI IS COMMONWEALTH FENCING CHAMPION @IamBhavaniDevi wins GOLD at Commonwealth #Fencing Championship 2022 in Senior Women's Sabre Individual category. She won 15-10 against Vasileva in the Sabre final. Hearty congratulations, Bhavani.#IndianSports," the Sports

Authority of India (SAI) wrote on Twitter. Bhavani Devi scripted history by becoming the lone Indian fencer to qualify for Tokyo Olympics after she reached the quarter-final of the 2020 Fencing World Cup in Hungary. She qualified through the adjusted Official Ranking Method (AOR). At Tokyo Olympics 2020, she won her opening match against Tunisia's Nadia Ben Azizi.

## MEG LANNING TO TAKE PERIOD OF INDEFINITE LEAVE FROM CRICKET

Canberra: Meg Lanning, the captain of Australia women's cricket team, said on Wednesday that she will take a period of indefinite leave effective immediately.

Meg has cited personal reasons to take a break from the game, with no timeline set for her return. Her decision comes after Australia won the gold medal in women's T20 cricket event at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. Under her captaincy, Australia also emerged victorious in T20I and ODI World Cups, as well as in a home Ashes series. "After a busy couple of years, I've made the decision (to) take a step back to enable me to spend time focusing on myself. I'm grateful for the support of CA and my teammates and ask that my privacy is respected during this time," said Meg on her stepping back from the game.

It means that Meg will miss the upcoming edition of The Hundred women's competition where she was due to represent the Trent Rockets. Cricket Australia (CA) said it will continue to support Meg, with a decision on her participation in the upcoming Australian domestic summer to be made in due course.



## Qatar WC to start a day earlier to give hosts opening game

The upcoming football World Cup is to start a day earlier than planned to allow hosts Qatar playing the first match.

Berlin | Agencies

DPA and other media have learnt that the council of the world governing body FIFA is dealing with an according request. The match between Qatar and Ecuador on November 20 would start at 7pm (1700 GMT) at Al Bayt Stadium.

FIFA is yet to comment on the issue. Under the original tournament format the game would have been the third of four matches scheduled for the first day, November 21, starting with the Netherlands v Senegal and the other games being England v Iran and the United States v Wales.

Under the requested change the Netherlands game would then move from a 1pm kick-off slot to the 7pm slot originally for Qatar v Ecuador, while the England and US games would not be affected. The request was made after an according agreement of both teams and the South American confederation CONMEBOL. It also apparently won't lead to changes of release dates for players.

The host nation has played the first match between 1958 and 1970, and again since the 2006 tournament in Germany. The 1974-2002 tournaments were



opened by the defending champion who however is no longer automatically qualified. There was no official opening game between 1930 and 1954.

## Three-time champion Murray bundled out in Montreal

Montreal | Agencies

Three-time champion Andy Murray has lost in straight sets in the first round of the National Bank Open here.

Murray, who won the tournament in 2015 following earlier victories in 2009 and 2010, finally got underway against American Taylor Fritz in Tuesday evening's feature match after they were delayed a day earlier by rain in Montreal, reports DPA. The Scot was overwhelmed by the 10th seed's power in the first set before fighting back hard in the second, with his frustration getting the better of him as he smashed his racket on the court several times. Fritz ultimately proved too strong, his 6-1, 6-3 maiden



victory in Canada setting up a second-round encounter against compatriot Frances Tiafoe. Earlier, British men's number one Cameron Norrie bounced back from losing the final of the Abierto de Tennis Mifel days earlier with a 6-4, 6-4 defeat of Brandon Nakashima. The world number 11 took just one hour and 13 minutes to achieve the win and will face Botić van de

Zandschulj in the second round. Jack Draper set up an encounter against Stefanos Tsitsipas with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over fellow qualifier Hugo Gaston, while British number two Dan Evans dropped a set en route to a win over Filip Krajinovic. Evans will now play Russia's Andrey Rublev, who had a bye in the first round.

## HUGE BOOST FOR INDIA CRICKETERS IN LATEST ICC T20I RANKINGS

Dubai | Agencies

Pakistan captain Babar Azam has managed to hang on to his No.1 batting spot in T20Is despite the fact that several India stars have made giant strides on the latest ICC Men's Player Rankings released on Wednesday.

India cruised to a 4-1 series triumph in the recently-completed T20I series against the West Indies and several of their best performers cut into Babar's lead at the top of the batter rankings. Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant were among the biggest movers as the race for the top ranking heats up ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup in Australia later this year. Iyer hit an impressive half-century during the fifth and final match of the series in Florida and was duly rewarded by jumping six places to 19th overall on the batter rankings.

Pant finished the series as the equal second leading run-scorer on 115 runs, with his quick-fire 44 in the fourth match seeing the left-hander jump seven places to 59th. Emerging opener Suryakumar Yadav was the leading run-scorer during the series with 135 runs, but the decision to rest him for the final match meant he missed out on the chance to overtake Babar at the head of proceedings.

Yadav remains in second place on the T20I rankings, with Babar now holding a lead of 13 rating points ahead of the eagerly awaited meeting



between India and Pakistan at the Asia Cup in Dubai later this month. The series against West Indies also saw a group of India's bowlers rewarded with big moves up the latest T20I rankings for bowlers. Young spinner Ravi Bishnoi was India's leading wicket-taker during the series with eight scalps and

that helped the 21-year-old jump 50 places to 44th overall on the most recent list for bowlers.

Team-mates Avesh Khan, Axar Patel, and Kuldeep Yadav were also big movers, while veteran quick Bhuvneshwar Kumar dropped one place to ninth after just three wickets during the West Indies series. South Africa's recent 2-0 series triumph over Ireland away from home also saw a host of their players rewarded on the latest set of T20I rankings, with in-form opener Reeza Hendricks moving up two spots to 13th on the list for batters.

Spinner Keshav Maharaj moves up 10 spots to 18th overall on the bowler rankings, while South Africa team-mate Dwaine Pretorius jumps seven places to 26th on the list for all-rounders.

There were no changes to the Test rankings with no red-ball matches held over the last week, while there were some minor movements in the ODI ranks following the opening two matches of the series between Zimbabwe and Bangladesh.

In-form all-rounder Sikandar Raza has been a shining light for Zimbabwe in recent times and the experienced 36-year-old has made some eye-catching moves on the latest ODI rankings.

Raza has scored consecutive unbeaten centuries against Bangladesh and that has seen the right-hander jump 10 spots to 29th on the batter rankings and an impressive seven places to fourth on the list of all-rounders.

## Wouldn't be surprised if Pandya leads the T20 team in future: Scott Styris

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former New Zealand all-rounder Scott Styris believes one shouldn't be surprised if India all-rounder Hardik Pandya will be captaining the T20 side in future. In the last couple of months, Pandya's graph as a leader has been on the rise.

It all started with him leading Gujarat Titans to IPL 2022 trophy in their maiden season of the tournament. Pandya was then made the deputy to Rishabh Pant during the drawn 2-2 T20I series against South Africa at home in June.

In the absence of many regulars, Pandya captained India to 2-0 T20I series victory over Ireland in June and led India to a massive 88-run victory over the West Indies in the fifth T20I at Florida, USA to seal a 4-1 series triumph.

"I think it's an intriguing discussion because again, six months ago, I don't think it's something we all thought would even be talked about, but Hardik Pandya has made every poster winner, as



Saba (Karim) says. And you know, you see it a lot in football, where players of character and personality are often given the armband to be captain to also allow them to show some responsibility."

"So, I don't mind this for Hardik Pandya to be given some leadership in this side, whether it now be the vice-captain or in the future as a captain because quite rightly what is the direction this Indian team wants to go, whether it's T20 in terms of its brand, how do they want to play the game?"

"Because Hardik Pandya certainly has the personality of today's player, where they want to go out and expand and show their skills and really just show off to everybody with how good they are. And I think that sort of leadership actually breeds itself and lends itself throughout the team to everybody playing with that style. So, I wouldn't be surprised maybe not for this tournament, but in the future that we do see Hardik Pandya leading this T20 team," said Styris on 'Sports Over The Top' show on Sports18.

## NZC agrees to release World No.1 ODI bowler Trent Boult from central contract

Wellington | Agencies

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) have agreed to release World No.1 ODI bowler Trent Boult from his central contract to allow the experienced pacer to spend more time with his family and be available to play in domestic leagues around the world, reports the world cricket governing body (ICC).

The decision does not mean an end to Boult's international career -- a veteran of 78 Test matches and more than 130 white-ball games. But NZC has made it clear that they will give priority at selection to players that are currently contracted.

Boult said the ability to spend more time with his family over the coming years was influential in coming to his decision. "This has been a really tough decision for me and I'd like to thank NZC for their support in getting to this point," he was quoted as saying. "Playing cricket for my country was a childhood dream and I'm so proud of everything I've been able to achieve with the Black Caps



over the past 12 years. "Ultimately this decision is about my wife Gert and our three young boys. Family has always been the biggest motivator for me and I feel comfortable with putting it first and preparing ourselves for life after cricket." The left-arm has taken an impressive 169 wickets for New Zealand from a 93-match 50-over career that commenced more than 10 years ago.

## INJURED OSAKA RETIRES FROM CANADIAN OPEN

Toronto | Agencies

Former world No. 1 Naomi Osaka retired from her opening match at the Canadian Open in Toronto due to injury, sending veteran Kaia Kanepi through to the second round. Osaka pulled out of the match trailing 7-6 (7-4), 3-0 due to a back injury.

"I felt my back from the start of the match, and despite trying my best to push through it I just wasn't able to today," Osaka said afterwards, reports DPA. "I'd like to pay credit to Kaia for playing well and want to wish her all the best for the rest of the tournament."

Estonian Kanepi, who continued a good run after reaching the final of the Citi



Open in Washington last week, will next face eighth seed Garbine Muguruza. In the last match of the day, third seed Maria Sakkari came out of a two-hour battle with Sloane Stephens on top as she defeated the American 6-2, 4-6, 6-2. In other action, 2019

champion Bianca Andreescu knocked out in-form Daria Kasatkina, who last week won the Silicon Valley Classic, 7-6 (7-5), 6-4, to reach the second round. Earlier, defending champion Camila Giorgi defeated 2021 US champion Emma Raducanu 7-6 (7-0), 6-2.

## Mumbai Indians goes global as owners unveil names of franchises in UAE, SA T20 Leagues

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Reliance Industries Limited, the owners of five-time IPL champions Mumbai Indians, on Wednesday unveiled the name and brand identity of their two new franchises in UAE's International League T20 and Cricket South Africa T20 League.

For the UAE League, 'MI Emirates' will be the name of the franchise while in South Africa, it will be 'MI Cape Town'. Both teams will don the iconic blue and gold of the Mumbai Indians franchise in the IPL as the franchise and owners go global in the T20 franchise league world.



As per the official statement, the names of the franchises in UAE and SA T20 Leagues were chosen as they call out the specific regions from where the teams will be based. "The teams, 'MI Emirates' or phonetically

'MY Emirates' and 'MY Cape Town' respectively, are dedicated to fans across both the Emirates and Cape Town." "The new entities take the iconic Mumbai Indians identity and weaves in the local influence. The

global expansion of #OneFamily will bring to the leagues the ethos and the values that have helped elevate Mumbai Indians to be one of the most loved teams in franchise cricket," further said the statement.

"It gives me great pleasure to welcome 'MI Emirates' & 'MI Cape Town', the newest additions to our #Onefamily. For us, MI goes beyond cricket. It embodies the ability to dream, be fearless and foster a positive attitude in life."

"I am sure that both MI Emirates and MI Cape Town will embrace the same ethos and take MI's global cricket legacy to even greater heights!" said Nita M. Ambani, Director of Reliance Industries.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen's mother Subhra Sen turned a year older on 9 August. To celebrate the occasion the actress hosted a party. The former Miss Universe also went live on her Instagram account and accepted fans' birthday wishes for her mother.

However, what made heads turn was the presence of Rohman Shawl, Sushmita's ex-beau with whom she separated in December last year. During

## Sushmita Sen parties with ex-boyfriend Rohman Shawl

the live session, Shawl was having a conversation with Sushmita's daughters and other members. Interestingly, Shawl hid when he realised



that he was on camera and ensured to stay out of the frame. For the unversed, Sushmita and Rohman started dating in 2018 and

announced their breakup in December 2021, but have been cordial with each other.

The actress's personal life became a hot topic after the news of her relationship with entrepreneur Lalit Modi came out. On 14 July, Lalit Modi took to his social media and announced that he is dating the former Miss Universe.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Sushmita Sen made her OTT debut with Ram Madhvan's Aarya. After a successful two seasons, the actress is gearing up for the third season of the series.

## Vijay Deverakonda on relationship rumours bothering him

### BEING A PUBLIC FIGURE IS A COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Aakruti Bagla | Mumbai

Vijay Deverakonda's highly anticipated and awaited film, Liger is gearing for a grand release on August 25. He is leaving no stone unturned in promoting the film. The film will feature him in the role of a boxer who has a speech impairment. Apart from him, the film also stars Ananya Panday and Mike Tyson in key roles.

Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna are rumoured to be dating for quite some time now. Reacting to the same, earlier today (9 August) in an interview, Rashmika reacted to this news and urged the fans not to believe everything that is written about her.

In a freewheeling chat ahead of Liger's release, Vijay Deverakonda was asked whether the constant news about his dating life bothers him. Reacted to the same, Vijay quipped, "I am comfortable with these not necessarily true stuff written as it does not bother me. I think it's just collateral damage of being a public figure. When people love you and want to know more about you, they are just interested in your life. So if news articles are coming about it, I am ok. I would rather be who I am and have these rumours written about me than be a nobody and have nothing written about me."

For the unversed, Vijay and Rashmika are known for their crackling chemistry in films like Geetha Govindam and Dear Comrade.

On the work front, Rashmika has films like Goodbye, Mission Majnu, and Animal in her kitty. While Vijay has Khushi and Jana Gana Mana (JGM) in his pipeline.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shilpa Shetty, the 90's queen is back into action after Hungama 2. The actress is currently shooting for Indian Police Force, helmed by Rohit Shetty, alongside Sidharth Malhotra.

The Indian Police force is high on action sequences, and as per BTS shared by Rohit Shetty, seems that the cast is working very hard to make give the best to the viewers.

But looks like the actress has injured while shooting for the same. Taking to Instagram on Wednesday, Shilpa posted a photo as she sat in a wheelchair inside a hospital. The actor was seen smiling and flashing a victory sign with both her hands

## Shilpa Shetty Kundra gets badly injured while shooting

"Out of action for 6 weeks, but I'll be back soon stronger and better. Till then, dua mein yaad rakhiyega (Keep me in your prayers). Prayers always work. With gratitude, Shilpa Shetty Kundra."

For the unversed, Shilpa was recently seen in Nikamma alongside Abhimanyu Dassani and Shirley Setia. However, the flick tanked at the box office.



## AAMIR KHAN APPEALS AUDIENCE TO WATCH HIS LATEST RELEASE IN THEATRES

'Film-making is a team effort. It's not just me'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Aamir Khan is quite worried as his much-anticipated film, 'Laal Singh Chaddha,' hits theatres today. The official Hindi adaptation of Tom Hanks' 1994 Hollywood film 'Forrest Gump' is set to be released at a time when the Internet is abuzz with boycott demands. On Wednesday, the actor attended a promotional event. When addressing the continuing boycott buzz around his picture, 'Laal Singh

Chaddha,' he asked the public to visit the theatres and watch the film "it is a product of years of hard work of a lot of people". Khan also expressed apologies and stated that he did not wish to do anyone harm. "I don't want to hurt anyone. I think if some people don't want to watch my film, I will respect that," the actor said, the actor stated, adding that the film isn't just about him but is a collaborative effort.

"But I would like as many people as possible to watch the film. We have

put in a lot of hard work. Film-making is a team effort. It's not just me," Aamir added. 'Laal Singh Chaddha,' written by Atul Kulkarni, also stars Kareena Kapoor Khan, Naga Chaitanya, and Mona Singh in prominent parts. The film will be released in theatres with Akshay Kumar's 'Raksha Bandhan,' which is also facing boycott demands. Earlier, at a function, Akshay Kumar urged fans to see the film since the film industry contributes to national development.

"Boycotting films in a free country like India doesn't make sense because cinema as an industry also contributes to nation building," the actor had said

on Monday, adding "If you don't feel like watching the movie, then don't. It's a free country and the film is out there, so if someone wants to watch it or not, it's up to them."

The actor, who was in town to promote 'Raksha Bandhan,' also urged people not to participate in such practices "We are on the verge of making our country the biggest and the greatest. So I would just request them don't get into it and I would also request you (reporter) don't get into all this. It'll be better for our country only," he added.

Meanwhile, Aamir praised Akshay's film, which opens today opposite 'Laal Singh Chaddha.' 'Raksha Bandhan' is also coming. I have seen the trailer and it is a beautiful story. I hope both the films do well," the actor said.

Khan, whose previous big screen venture, Thugs of Hindostan, had a lacklustre box office performance in 2018, says his mind is in "overdrive" mode. "I'm really nervous about the release. I have not slept for 48 hours... My brain is in overdrive. I play chess online and read books to keep myself busy. I guess I can only sleep after 11th August. I believe both Advait Chandan (director) and I will sleep like a log post the release of the film," the 57-year-old actor said.

## Rubina Dilaik finds it a bit challenging to dance in front of Madhuri Dixit

Team Absolute | Mumbai

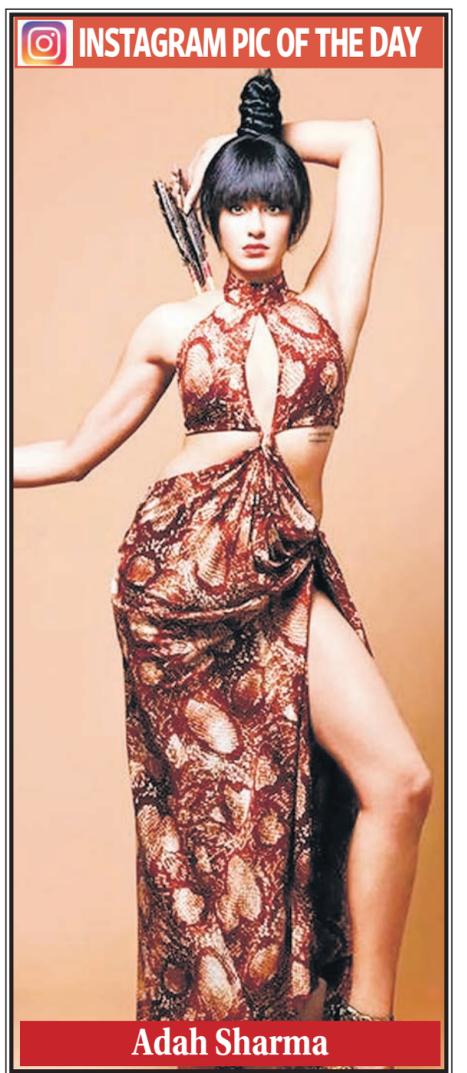
'Bigg Boss 14' winner and actress Rubina Dilaik says that she is excited but nervous too as she has to show her dancing talent in front of Bollywood's twinkle toes Madhuri Dixit.

Rubina has already been confirmed as one of the contestants on the dance reality show 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 10'. The show is coming back after five years with names like Karan Johar, Nora Fatehi and Madhuri in the panel of judges. She said: "After doing 'Bigg Boss' and 'Khatron Ke Khiladi', I was prepared to tick another box on my list, dancing! And there cannot be a better platform than 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa'."

"Being an actor, I've performed on screen before but dancing in front of the impeccable panel of judges and especially the queen of dance, Madhuri Dixit ma'am will be a new challenge for me, and I love challenging myself."

Well looking forward to giving her best, she adds: "I eagerly look forward to learning new dance styles and improving my dancing skills. I hope, I continue to entertain my fans and well-wishers and live up to their expectations."

Other contestants that are going to be seen on the show includes actor Dheeraj Dhoopar, Paras Kalnawat, 'Bigg Boss 11' winner Shilpa Shinde, Nia Sharma, 'Nach Baliye 7' winner Amruta Khanvilkar and Niti Taylor.



Adah Sharma