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## 'TO ENSURE UNIFORM APPROACH'

### SC REFERS ISSUE OF GUIDELINES FOR DEATH PENALTY TO 5-JUDGE BENCH

The Supreme Court on Monday said in death penalty cases, the accused is scarcely expected to place mitigating circumstances on the record and this tilts the scales heavily against him, and therefore, it is necessary to have clarity to ensure a uniform approach on the question of granting real and meaningful opportunity to such convicts.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice U.U. Lalit and comprising Justices S. Ravindra Bhat and Sudhanshu Dhulia, said: "It is also a fact that in all cases where imposition of capital punishment is a choice of sentence, aggravating circumstances would always be on record, and would be part of the prosecution's evidence, leading to conviction, whereas the accused can scarcely be expected to place mitigating circumstances on the record, for the reason that the stage for doing so is after conviction. "This places the convict at a hopeless disadvantage, tilting the scales heavily against him." "This court is of the opinion that it is necessary to have clarity in the matter to ensure a uniform approach on the question of granting real and meaningful opportunity, as opposed to a formal hearing, to the accused/convict, on the issue of sentence," it added. The apex court referred the suo



moto matter to the constitution bench to frame guidelines for courts, while examining mitigating factors for the convicts in death penalty cases. During the hearing, the bench noted that it was suggested that the social milieu, the age, educational levels, whether the convict had faced trauma earlier in life, family circumstances, psychological evaluation of a convict, and post-conviction conduct, were relevant factors at the time of considering

whether the death penalty ought to be imposed upon the accused. The bench said noticing the lack of a uniform framework in this regard, the present suo motu case was initiated wherein this court has indicated by its orders the necessity of working out the modalities of psychological evaluation, the stage of adducing evidence in order to highlight mitigating circumstances, and the need to build institutional capacity.

#### 'LARGER BENCH DECISIONS WOULD PREVAIL IRRESPECTIVE OF JUDGES' TAKING MAJORITY VIEW'

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday ruled that the majority decision of a bench of larger strength would prevail over the decision of a bench of lesser strength, regardless of the number of judges taking the majority view.

A five-judge constitution bench, headed by Justice Indira Banerjee, said: "In view of Article 145(5) of the Constitution of India, concurrence of a majority of the judges at the hearing will be considered as a judgment or opinion of the court. It is settled that the majority decision of a bench of larger strength would prevail over the decision of a bench of

lesser strength, irrespective of the number of judges constituting the majority."

Justice Banerjee authored the judgment on behalf of herself and also for Justices Surya Kant, M.M. Sundresh, and Sudhanshu Dhulia. Justice Hemant Gupta, in his separate and concurring judgement, said that a decision delivered by a bench of largest strength is binding on any subsequent bench of lesser or coequal strength.

According to this apex court judgment, in a seven-judge decision of 4:3, the majority view would prevail over the unanimous view of a five-judge constitution bench.

## Ex-MP MLA arrested for threatening to blow up Parliament

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Crime Branch of Delhi Police has arrested former Madhya Pradesh MLA Kishor Samrite for on charges of threatening to blow up the Parliament with explosives, a senior officer said on Monday.

According to the police, Samrite had sent one package to the Parliament containing a threat letter, some flags, a copy of the Constitution and few gelatin sticks. "He had threatened that if his 70 demands were not met, he would blow up the Parliament House on September 30," said Special Commissioner of Police (Crime), Ravinder Yadav.

Accordingly, a case was registered at the Parliament Street police station and a

probe was initiated into the matter.

Yadav said the accused, a former Samajwadi Party MLA who later joined the Bahujan Samaj Party, was arrested from Bhopal on Monday.

The 59-year-old former legislator from Lanji Assembly constituency in Madhya Pradesh had first joined the NSUI before moving to the Janata Dal. In 2007, he joined the Samajwadi Party and won the by-elections from Lanji.

"He remained an MLA for 10-11 months," the Special CP said. Yadav said the former legislator was previously booked in several cases related to rioting, arson, extortion etc. Samrite will be produced before a court in Delhi on Tuesday.

## RANA KAPOOR, GAUTAM THAPAR CHARGE SHEETED BY CBI IN BANK FRAUD CASE

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday filed a chargesheet against Rana Kapoor, the then MD and CEO, Yes Bank Ltd, and Gautam Thapar, Chairman, Avantha Group and Oyster Buildwell Pvt Ltd in connection with a Rs 466.51 crore bank fraud case.

The CBI had registered the case against Oyster Buildwell Pvt Ltd, Gurugram, and others on June 2, 2021 on the complaint from Yes Bank Ltd. It was alleged that the accused had committed criminal breach of trust, cheating, criminal conspiracy and forgery for misappropriation of public money, during the period from 2017 to 2019.

The CBI had gathered a lot of evidence and after making a water tight charge sheet, they have finally furnished it before the competent court, an official said.

## UK's Queen Elizabeth II laid to rest after grand farewell

Ashis Ray | London

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II on Monday afternoon began her last journey a 25 mile stretch westward from Westminster Abbey in central London to Windsor Castle in the county of Berkshire, where she spent much of her time in recent years.

There she was to be laid to rest at the royal chapel next to her beloved husband Prince Phillip, who predeceased her in 2021. Only members of the British royal family, led by her successor King Charles III, attended the private ceremony.

Earlier, in an hour long church service at the Abbey, which has existed and expanded since 960 AD and is located in central London, Elizabeth, who reigned for 70 years, was given the grandest of final farewells. She had got married at the same Abbey 75 years ago.



President of India Droupadi Murmu was present at the proceedings.

## TWO-TIME PUNJAB CM AMARINDER SINGH JOINS BJP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Senior Congress leader and one of the most ardent advocates of change in the party, Shashi Tharoor, has got the nod from party chief Sonia Gandhi to run for president in next month's internal election. His opponent will be Ashok Gehlot, sources said.

Amarinder Singh expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Shah and BJP chief Nadra for reposing trust and confidence in him. He assured that he will give in his best to strengthen the party in Punjab. Amarinder Singh, a veteran of many political and military battles, left the Congress last year after resigning as the Chief Minister.



## RACE FOR CONGRESS PRESIDENT SHASHI THAROOR WILL CONFRONT ASHOK GEHLOT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, also seen as a Gandhi family loyalist, will visit Delhi on October 25 and file his nomination the next day. Though Tharoor is the first to throw his hat in the ring, he is not the Gandhi-



backed candidate for the October 17 election, say sources. This is the first time in two decades a non-Gandhi will be contesting in the election. Tharoor reportedly conveyed his decision to contest at his meeting this afternoon with



Sonia Gandhi, who is back after a medical checkup abroad. Rahul Gandhi, who is currently leading the party's "Bharat Jodo" yatra, has firmly refused to return as president despite unrelenting demand from a section of

Congress leaders. Gehlot has been one of the leaders pressing for his return.

Meanwhile, Congress' state units have been passing resolutions to make Rahul Gandhi the next party President, including in Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, among others. However, Congress' Central Election Authority (CEA) has said that such resolutions will not have any bearing on the election process. Madhusudan Mistry, Chairman of CEA, said, "These resolutions have no bearing on the election process."

## Buzz of merger with Vistara as Air India wants to establish itself as world-class global airline

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Among the ambitious plan of the Tata owned Air India to raise its market share substantially to at least 30 per cent in the domestic market, there is a buzz within the aviation industry on the possibility of its merger with Vistara, a joint venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines.

On September 15, Air India unveiled its comprehensive transformation plan, to establish itself, once again, as a world-class global airline. It said that over the next five years, it will strive to increase its market share to at least 30 per cent in the domestic market while significantly growing the international routes from the present market share. The plan is aimed at putting Air India on a path to sustained growth, profitability and market leadership.

Air India clocked a market share of 8.5 per cent in August while carrying 8.61 lakh passengers. On the other hand, Vistara has maintained its second position in terms of the market share during the last two months July (10.4 per cent) and August (9.7 per cent).

Apart from this, Air India has talked about its fleet expansion plan by intro-



ducing five widebody and 25 narrow-body aircraft. The airline has also said about getting back its grounded aircraft in service.

On the other side, Vistara has 55 aircraft and the number will increase to 60 in the upcoming months. In the winter schedule starting from October end, Vistara will add more flights to Europe as it has planned increasing capacity to Frankfurt and Paris.

When asked about the possibility of a merger, an industry insider said that

there was speculation about the merger particularly after Air India's announcement of the transformation plan. There will be clarity on this only in the coming months. The ambitions of Air India to have 30 per cent market share from the current existing market share of 8.5 per cent gives enough support to the buzz of a merger with Vistara," he said.

When contacted, both the airlines refused to comment on the possibility of merger.

► CURRENTLY, THE TATA GROUP OPERATES FOUR AIRLINES -- AIR INDIA, AIR INDIA EXPRESS, AIRASIA INDIA AND VISTARA. AIR INDIA AND VISTARA OPERATE ON BOTH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ROUTES. WHILE AIRASIA FLIES ON ONLY DOMESTIC ROUTES, THE AIR INDIA EXPRESS OPERATES ONLY ON THE INTERNATIONAL ROUTES.

► AIR INDIA AND AIRASIA HAVE A COMBINED MARKET SHARE OF 13 PER CENT IN INDIA. THE GROUP ALREADY PLANNED TO MERGE AIRASIA INDIA WITH AIR INDIA EXPRESS.

► AIR INDIA HAS SPREAD ITS WINGS TO BECOME A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE WITH A NETWORK ACROSS THE US, CANADA, THE UK, EUROPE, FAR EAST, SOUTH EAST ASIA, AUSTRALIA AND THE GULF. THE AIRLINE ALSO HAS AN EXTENSIVE DOMESTIC NETWORK, INCLUDING FAR-FLUNG AREAS OF INDIA'S NORTH-EAST, LADAKH, ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS.

## PUNJAB CM DEPLANED IN FRANKFURT; AAP TRASHES 'DRUNK' ALLEGATIONS

Chandigarh | Agencies

Punjab Chief Minister and AAP leader Bhagwant Mann was deplaned in Frankfurt from a Delhi-bound Lufthansa flight as he was "too drunk to walk".

However, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has refuted the allegations against Mann, saying the Chief Minister returned to Delhi as per schedule.

According to media reports, Mann, who was on an eight-day trip to Germany till September 18, delayed his departure as he was reportedly in 'an inebriated state'.

However, AAP has strongly denied the charge, saying Mann was not deplaned at the Frankfurt airport. The party termed it as false and frivolous propaganda by political rivals.



A passenger in the flight said in a message, "The CM was not steady on his feet as he had imbibed excessive alcohol and had to be supported by his wife/security."

"Our political opponents are spreading these rumours to defame our CM. They cannot digest that Mann is working hard to bring investments to Punjab. The CM returned as per schedule," the party's

chief spokesperson in Punjab, Malwinder Singh Kang, told the media here.

Officials in the Chief Minister's Office claimed that Mann could not board the flight because of emergent health concerns.

Meanwhile, Mann went to Delhi Chief Minister Kejriwal's official residence upon his arrival in New Delhi amid the brewing row on Monday.

The Lufthansa Group in a statement said the flight departed late due to "a delayed inbound flight and an aircraft change".

"Our flight from Frankfurt to Delhi departed later than originally planned due to a delayed inbound flight and an aircraft change," it said in a statement.

It added, "For data protection reasons, we do not provide any information regarding individual passengers."





# BJP LIKELY TO WITHDRAW SUPPORT FROM MEGHALAYA'S MDA GOVT

Shillong | Agencies

The BJP may withdraw support from the NPP-led Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government soon, sSenior BJP leader and former Minister Alexander L. Hek said on Monday.

He said that the decision of the party's State Executive Committee and the Core Committee has been communicated to the central leaders and this is the right time to withdraw support from the MDA government headed by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma.

BJP's national General Secretary, Organisation, B.L. Santhosh was also present in the meetings of the State Executive Committee and the Core Committee, held last week, Hek told reporter.

Replying to a query about the reasons behind the decision to quit the ruling coalition almost at the end of the full five year term, Hek, who was earlier minister in the Sangma ministry, said: "Everything would be disclosed and explained in detail at an appropriate time".

BJP national Vice-President and



BJP state Vice President Bernard N. Marak.

Marak was arrested from Uttar Pradesh on July 25 for allegedly running a brothel in the West Garo Hills district. BJP workers and leaders had earlier organised protests in Tura demanding a fair probe in Marak's case, while the party workers in West Garo Hills organised a signature campaign demanding the removal of the Superintendent of Police and Deputy Commissioner of the district.

In defence of Marak, BJP leaders claimed that the farmhouse in the brothel case has been operational since 2019 but the raid was carried out just six months prior to the Assembly elections in Meghalaya to malign Marak and to damage his political career. However, NPP Rajya Sabha member and state President W.R. Khariukhi had termed the BJP's threat as a farce. Sangma, who is also the NPP's national President, had stated that Ao's statement was personal and added that it should not be taken as BJP's official stand since top leadership of the BJP will communicate with him if it has any concern which was not the case so far.

party's Meghalaya in-charge M. Chuba Ao earlier said that the party may withdraw support from the MDA within a month.

The BJP with two MLAs is a junior ally of the National People's Party (NPP) dominated six-party coalition government.

Ao had said that that the party has been studying the reports on the various corruption allegations against the

state government and the CBI would handle the charges once they acquire all the papers.

Even though the NPP, headed by Chief Minister Sangma, is an important constituent of the BJP-led North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), its relation with the saffron party is gradually souring over various issues, specially after the arrest of

# Gangster shot dead outside court in Rajasthan's Nagaur, 4 injured

Jaipur | Agencies

A gangster, accused in a murder case, was shot dead outside the court complex in Rajasthan's Nagaur on Monday, while four other people, including a lawyer, were injured, police said.

The attack took place on Sanjeev Sethi, who is lodged in Nagaur jail, at around 1.30 p.m. was escorted out by the police after his court appearance. He died on the spot, while four other people - three accomplices and a lawyer - were injured. Two of the injured gang members, who are in a critical condition, have been referred to Jodhpur, police officials said.

On instructions of Director General of Police M.L. Lather, ADG, ATS and SOG, Ashok Rathod left for the spot. Meanwhile, police have put a blockade around the district and efforts are being made to identify the accused and arrest them.

Acting ADG, Law and Order, V.K. Singh said that Sethi, a murder accused, was



returning from Nagaur court after being presented when unknown assailants, who came in a black-coloured SUV, came and fired at least nine bullets.

He said efforts have been started to nab the accused with police probing links of the victim to identify those responsible.

Nagaur MP Hanuman Beniwal has strongly condemned the incident and raised questions on the police's efficiency, noting that the residence of the

District Collector and District Superintendent of Police is just 50 metres from this court complex and their offices just 100 metres away from this location.

"In this whole matter, the responsibility of the police and administration should be fixed... increasing crime in the state is a matter of concern and the law and order of the state is on ventilator... such incidents are proof of jungle raj in Rajasthan," he claimed.

# UP inspector sent to lines for slapping complainant

Baghpat (UP) | Agencies

An inspector, who was caught on camera slapping a man who had come to the police station to lodge a complaint about his missing niece, has been sent to the Police Lines and a department probe has been ordered against him.

The video clip that has gone viral on social media shows Omvir approaching inspector Birija Ram, the in-charge of Binauli police station, with a complaint about his niece who had gone missing. The inspector is seen slapping the complainant and then getting busy on his phone.

"My niece has been missing since September 13 and we urged the local police to



trace her. The in-charge assured us that she might have gone on her own and would return. On September 17, we again went to the police station and asked Birija Ram about my niece, but instead of helping us, he slapped me in front of many people," Omvir told reporters. Baghpat SP Neeraj

Kumar Jadaun said, "We took cognisance of the matter after the video started doing rounds on social media. I ordered a probe which revealed that Birija Ram misbehaved with the victim's family. He was immediately sent to the Police Lines and a department inquiry has been initiated against him."

# IT'S OFFICIAL, MAHARAJA HARI SINGH'S BIRTHDAY NOW PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN J&K

Srinagar: The J&K government on Monday issued a formal order declaring Maharaja Hari Singh birthday as a public holiday.

"To commemorate the birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh, September 23 of every year shall be observed as holiday in government offices and educational institutions across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir under the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881 (Central Act 26 of 1881)," a government order said on Monday.

On September 15, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha had said that Maharaja Hari Singh's birthday will be celebrated as a public holiday.

Sinha had said this during his meeting with a delegation comprising prominent political leaders, members of the Yuva Rajput Sabha, civil society members, among others, at the Raj Bhavan.

# Whoever wants to join BJP can go, I can even lend my car: Kamal Nath

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Leaders who see a better future with the BJP and if their thoughts match with the saffron party, can go there. People are working for the Congress of their own will and no one is pressurised to do so, said veteran Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath.

Nath made this statement while replying to a bunch of questions from mediapersons in Bhopal. Nath, who is also leading the party in Madhya Pradesh as MPCC chief since 2018 and under whose leadership the party had won the last assembly elections, added that he will offer his car to those wanting to go to the BJP.

Nath's comment came amid the Congress's failure to prevent an exodus from the party as eight of its Goa MLAs last week joined the long list of Congress leaders who have switched to the BJP in recent years, including over 22 from Madhya Pradesh.

When asked about the exodus, Nath told reporters, "What are you thinking? Congress will be finished? You are saying some people want to join the BJP. Whoever wants to join the BJP can go. We don't want to stop anyone."

"I am not one who believes in buttering anyone. Those



(Congress leaders) see their better future and their thoughts gel with the BJP, they can go. I can't stop them. I would even lend them my car to go and join the BJP," he added.

There is a long list of Congress leaders, including from Madhya Pradesh, who have switched to the BJP in the last one and a half years. In a recent setback to the Congress in the state, Nath's close aide Arunoday Choubey, a former MLA from Madhya Pradesh, also resigned from the party a few days back.

# Foreign currency worth Rs 6.05 cr seized at Amritsar airport

Amritsar | Agencies

Customs department detained two persons and claimed to have seized foreign currency worth Rs 6.05 crore at Sri Guru Ram Dass Ji International Airport in Amritsar. Eighty packets of foreign currency, which was found concealed in specially made cavities, was recovered by the Customs officers.

On late evening of Sunday, during the course of security check of baggage of the outgoing international passengers by airline's staff on x-ray machine at international departure at SGRDJI Airport, Amritsar, some suspicious images in a bag were observed. The airline's staff alerted the Customs officers on duty.

According to information, the



Customs officers carried out profiling of the passenger and he was found to be suspicious after he kept the suspected bag at airline's counter as checked-in baggage, and proceeded for immigration check. Thereafter, the passenger was intercepted and asked whether he was carrying any excessive Indian or foreign currency with him, either in check-in-baggage or hand bag to which he replied in negative.

However, his checked-in-bag, which was on Customs hold was called by the airline and examination of the same resulted into recovery of 80 packets of foreign currency which was found concealed in specially made cavities. The Customs officials claimed that the passengers could not produce any evidence for its lawful acquisition, possession and exportation.

# UP RAPE SURVIVOR SUCCUMBS TO BURN INJURIES

Pilibhit (UP): A Dalit girl, who was allegedly gang-raped and set on fire by two men, succumbed to her injuries on Monday.

The body will be handed over to her family after autopsy, said a police official.

According to police, the incident took place in Kunwarpur village. The accused had later poured diesel and set her afire. She was battling for her life at the hospital but succumbed to her injuries after 12 days.

The two accused have been arrested.

# Punjab mulling to revert to old pension scheme: Mann

**▶ IN A MAJOR RELIEF TO THE EMPLOYEES OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT, CHIEF MINISTER BHAGWANT MANN ON MONDAY ANNOUNCED THAT PUNJAB IS CONSIDERING TO REVERT TO THE OLD PENSION**

Chandigarh | Agencies

The Chief Minister said he has asked the Chief Secretary to explore

the feasibility and modalities of implementation of the scheme that is likely to give major relief to the employees.

Reiterating the firm commitment of his government to ensure the well-being of the employees, Mann said no stone will be left unturned for this noble cause.

He said employees are the backbone of the government and every effort will be made to ensure their welfare.

The Chief Minister said his government had already taken several pro-employees initiatives in the last few months. He said his government has introduced a poli-

cy for the regularisation of the contractual employees in the state.

Likewise, Mann said his government has also embarked a major recruitment drive in government so that the youth can get jobs on one hand and performance of departments can be optimised by overcoming shortage of staff on the other.

Pertinently, the old pension scheme for employees was discontinued in 2004 and ever since then the employees are being given a new pension scheme. However the employees have been demanding the restoration of the old pension scheme.

# From Oct, pvt companies have to reserve 75% jobs for locals in J'khand



Ranchi | Agencies

In Jharkhand, it will now be mandatory to appoint 75 per cent local people in private sector jobs with a salary of up to Rs 40,000. Every establishment and company, where more than 10 employees work, will be bound to enforce the law from October.

While reviewing the work of Labour Planning, Training and Skill Development Department on Monday, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren directed the officers to implement the new law in all companies and establishments from next month. The district commissioners of all the districts of the state were also present at

this meeting.

The Labour and Planning Department had already issued the gazette notification of the rules for 75 per cent reservation for locals in the private sector on July 29. However, this provision will be applicable from October.

The companies have been given three years to implement the law. That means in the next three years, they will have to ensure that 75 per cent of the total strength of the staff working are the local people of Jharkhand. This law will have to be applied even if workers are hired through outsourcing in a private establishment or company. Non-compliance will attract a fine of up to Rs 5 lakh. This law will not be applicable for appointments above Rs 40,000 per month. It can also be relaxed for jobs that require specialized skills.

# CASE AGAINST RAJASTHAN DOC FOR CRUELTY TOWARDS DOG

Jaipur | Agencies

A case of animal cruelty has been registered against a Jodhpur-based famous doctor after a video of a dog, tied to his car, running on the streets went viral on social media.

The video triggered a barrage of comments from netizens who expressed their anger at the cruel act.

Officials confirmed that Jodhpur's famous plastic surgeon Dr Rajneesh Galwa tied a rope around a dog's neck and tied him to the car. He then drove around the city roads with the dog running behind it.

While running, the dog fell several times and got injured and bled. When some youths saw this, they intercepted the car with their bike and set the dog free. In his defence, the doctor working in Mahatma Gandhi Hospital, Jodhpur, said that this dog was creating a nuisance in front of his house and hence he was going to leave him in the corporation's ward.

Aparna Bissa, vice-president of Pukar Animal Care Society, told the media that when the doctor was stopped and interrupted for his act, he argued with the youths.

When the ambulance of the NGO



working for the animals reached the spot, the doctor fought with them as well. After that, the local police were informed who with the help of youths and NGO workers, got the dog freed. Arpana, who also reached

the spot, gave complete information to animal rights activist Maneka Gandhi. Maneka Gandhi spoke to the policemen who reached the spot. Later, the dog was sent for treatment. Rajneesh Galwa has a house in

Shastri Nagar, the posh colony of the city. He is a plastic surgeon at Mahatma Gandhi Hospital.

A case has been filed against the accused doctor under relevant sections.





## PM MODI TO INAUGURATE UJJAIN'S MAHAKAL CORRIDOR ON OCT 11

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate newly-constructed corridor of Mahakaleshwar temple in Ujjain on October 11, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Monday.

While reviewing the project during a visit to Ujjain, the chief minister said: "The first phase of ambitious project of Ujjain Mahakal Corridor is nearing completion. Prime Minister Modi will visit Ujjain to offer prayer at the temple and to inaugurate the project on October 11."

The project - Ujjain Mahakal Corridor - has been divided into a two phases in which the temple complex will be expanded nearly eight times its present size from 2.82 hectares to 20.23 hectares by August 2023.

Work under the first phase includes 900-metre long corridor filled with scores of installations, a theme park, a heritage mall, E-transport facilities, among others.

In the second phase, the government has planned to transform Maharajwada school Bhavan to a heritage Dharamshala, as well as linking of Rudra Sagar and Shipra river, beautification of the front lake area, construction of multi-level parking with a space to fit 350 cars, a



railway underpass and the development of a 210-meter suspension bridge over Rudra Sagar, amongst others would be undertaken. Moreover, a dynamic light show will be given a spot near the iconic Ram Ghat. As per the state government, the work will be completed by 2028.

Notably, the BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government, earlier in January this year, had approved an initial fund of Rs 500 crore for the development of the corridor. Touted to transform into India's most technologically advanced religious site, the government has planned to expand the Ujjain Mahakal Temple Corridor. The

monumental project is being developed under the MP government's larger plan to transform Ujjain into a 'Smart City'.

On December 12, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had inaugurated his dream project - the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor - at his parliamentary constituency Varanasi. Conceptualised by the Prime Minister himself, the corridor located near the iconic Dashashwamedh Ghat, sought to clear the pathway to the ancient temple by removing properties clogging the corridor in a litigation-free manner, while preserving existing heritage sites.

## AGE LIMIT FOR MPPSC EXAMINATIONS HIKED BY THREE YEARS: CHIEF MINISTER

Decision taken to rectify the injustice done to the students due to the circumstances of Covid

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that many students were deprived of appearing in competitive examinations due to Covid-19. Doing justice to the students, the maximum age limit for MP Public Service Commission examinations is being increased by 3 years for one time.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the recruitment examinations could not be conducted regularly due to the circumstances of Covid. That's why many students became overage. The students had also urged that they are facing injustice due to these circumstances. The state government has decided that there should be no injustice to the students who have become overage as the examination was not conducted. For this, the maximum age limit has been increased by 3 years for one time. The side of the students is justified, this decision has been taken in their interest.

## SP suspended for abusing student over the phone in Jhabua

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Superintendent of Police (SP) of tribal dominated Jhabua district in Madhya Pradesh has been suspended for abusing and threatening a polytechnic student over the phone on Monday. The development came hours after an alleged audio clip of a telephonic conversation between the student and the top cop of the district surfaced on social media.

Taking cognizance of the matter, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan ordered Madhya Pradesh Director General of Police Sudhir Saxena to probe the matter. SP Arvind Tiwari was transferred from Jhabua to the police headquarters in Bhopal and later suspended.

"The viral audio has been examined and it was found that Jhabua SP Arvind Tiwari started abusing a student when he was seeking his help. Therefore, he (SP) has been suspended with immediate effect," the Chief Minister said later.

Chouhan stated that it was verified that the voice in the audio clip was of the then Jhabua SP. "I can't tolerate anyone using such abusive words against children. I have decided to



suspend him," he added. In the audio, a polytechnic student (as per the state government) called SP Arvind Tiwari to complain that around 30-40 students of another group have barged into the junior students hostel rooms and were beating them up. The student was heard saying, "Sir, please provide security for us as 30-40 students of other groups have come to our hostel and they are beating the juniors."

In reply, Tiwari said, (as the government claimed), "Are you here for studies or fighting? I will put everybody in the police station." When the student kept pleading for help, Tiwari used abusive words. Later, the student uploaded the recorded conversation between him and the SP on social media. Asked about the audio clip, Tiwari said a student had called him following a clash between two groups of students in a polytechnic college in Jhabua.

## J.P Agarwal, new in-charge of MP Congress, reviews Assembly poll preparedness

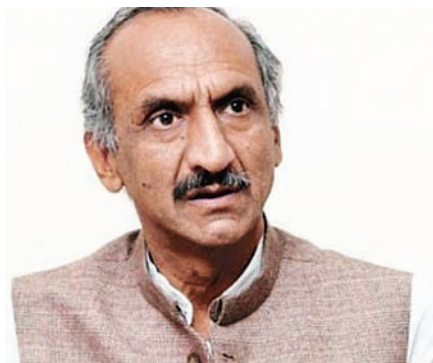
Team Absolute | Bhopal

Newly appointed in-charge for Madhya Pradesh Congress Jai Prakash Agarwal, during his three-day visit here, chaired a series of meetings with party leaders and workers to take stock of the preparedness for the upcoming Assembly elections in 2023.

Besides, the senior party leaders or MPCC members, Agarwal also met the members of different cells of the party, including youth and women wing.

"During the meeting, he (Agarwal) inquired about our preparations. After giving a patient hearing, he advised us on how to proceed and expand the party's base in the state. He shared different ideas for different age group people," said a senior member of the women wing of the Congress.

Known for making effective reconciliation among the warring section/faction, the veteran began his operation during his first visit to the state. As an in-charge of the party, Agarwal not only chaired meetings at Congress headquarters, he also reached out to senior party members at their residences in Bhopal. He visited the party leaders, who have



expressed their disappointment on some issues within the party.

Meanwhile, in a major development in the state Congress, a proposal was passed at the meeting in which AICC president Sonia Gandhi was given responsibility to appoint Madhya Pradesh Congress president.

The meeting, held at the MP Congress Committee office on Saturday, was chaired by the newly appointed state in-charge Agarwal and organisational election in charge R.C. Khutia.

## Teenage girl gang-raped by 6 in Rewa

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Five people have been arrested on the charge of gang-raping a 17-year-old girl in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district, police said on Monday.

A search for the sixth accused is underway.

As per police, on Saturday morning, the man went to the girl's house, met the family and took the girl to a temple. After darshan, they were strolling in a jungle just behind the temple when six men accosted them. They overpowered the youth, thrashed him, and dragged the couple two to the bushes where they took turns to rape the girl.

The criminals threatened to kill them if they dared to shout for help or tell anyone about it. After an hour of torture, the rapists left, reminding the couple of their threat.

Subsequent to an FIR, the district



police swung into action and claimed to have arrested five suspects, including two minors, within 24 hours of the

complaint.

According to SP Rewa, three suspects were arrested from Rewa and

two were apprehended from Mumbai, while the search for sixth is underway. On Monday, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan sought reports from Rewa district police. During a digital meeting with district collector and SP, the chief minister instructed them to take strict action against those involved. "I am directing you not to listen to anyone and destroy all those involved in the gangrape incident. They do not deserve any leniency, even if they are minors," Chouhan said during the meeting. A senior police officer, who is leading the investigation, told reporter that houses of five suspects have been demolished using bulldozers and the same action against the sixth accused. Notably, the couple was to get married after three months, after the girl (victim) turned 18. The incident comes a week after a three-year-old girl child was sexually assaulted in the state capital Bhopal.

## CM Chouhan planted saplings with students and social workers

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan today planted saplings of Moulshree, Neem and Kachnar in Smart City Park, Shyamla Hills. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, members of social organisations and students also planted saplings. The teachers and girls of Canyon Higher Secondary School also planted saplings. Continuous work is being done by the school for environmental protection.

Chief Minister Chouhan also interacted with the school girls (nieces). CM asked the girls about their studies, the girls told that they are studying regularly and want to be like you.



Mama, tell me from where do you get the inspiration to do so much work. Chouhan said that inspiration comes from the inner soul. Chief Minister narrated to the girls the story of the dialogue between

Yudhishtira and Yaksha, in which it has been said that whatever life is there, it should be meaningful. Make life purposeful. One of the questions asked in the context of the conversation

described in the story of Yudhishtira and Yaksha is "What is the greatest wonder of the world?" The answer is that "Everyone who is born has an inevitable death", but man behaves as if he has come here to stay forever. That is why man should spend as much life as he has in good works.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that Swami Vivekananda used to say that man is not just an effigy of flesh and blood but is the master of infinite powers. He can become whoever he wants to. Chouhan said that be it medical, engineering or any other field, first make a roadmap and then work hard. With determination one can reach the destination of success.

## There should be no obstacles in implementation of mid-day meal scheme: CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan

CM Chouhan holds virtual discussions with officials of four districts including capital

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan held discussions with the Bhopal Police Commissioner, along with Collectors, Superintendents of Police and officers of Rewa, Panna, Jhabua on different topics through video conference this morning. CM Chouhan gave instructions after talking on various topics that came to his notice. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains also joined virtually.

Instructions for strict implementation of mid-day meal scheme in Panna

Chief Minister Chouhan, in the sequence of discussion with the districts through video conference, first obtained information from the Panna Collector regarding the obstructions and complaints received in the mid-day meal scheme in some areas of the district last month. Chouhan said that other districts should also make perfect arrangements for distribution of mid-day meal. There should be no obstacles in the implemen-



tation of the plan. The complaints received should be resolved immediately. Collector Panna informed that the work of distribution of mid-day meals is going on regularly in 1800 schools of the district. There was a brief interruption in some centres due to mapping errors and technical issues, which have been rectified.

Instructions for stringent action against culprits of the criminal act in Rewa

Chief Minister Chouhan, while describing the criminal incident in Rewa on September 16 as heinous and inhuman, directed for stringent action against the guilty persons. CM Chouhan said that the



culprits involved in this incident should be demolished economically. The Superintendent of Police Rewa was instructed to set an example by taking the most strict steps. The Superintendent of Police said that 5 youths guilty of the incident have been arrested.

Arrange GPS in school vehicles

Chief Minister Chouhan received information from the Police Commissioner, Bhopal about the checking of vehicles of other schools, the character of the drivers and the arrangements made by the schools in connection with the criminal incident with a girl student in a school bus last week.

## RSI CR ASSISTANCE TO KIN OF SOLDIER KILLED IN TERROR ATTACK IN TRIPURA

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has directed state officials to provide an assistance of Rs 1 crore to the family of Border Security Force soldier Girjesh Kumar Udde killed in a terror attack in Tripura last month.

Chouhan and Union minister Fagga Singh Kulaste met Udde's family members at the latter's native village Chargaon in MP's Mandla district on Sunday and described them as true patriots, a state government official said.

Udde was part of the BSF's 145th battalion's patrolling party that was attacked by terrorists on August 19, causing grievous injuries to him.

He was later taken in a chopper to Agartala where he died, the official said. On Sunday, Chief Minister Chouhan met the soldier's family members including his wife Radha Devi.

The chief minister assured that one of the family members will be given a government job. He directed Mandla Collector Harshika Singh to start the process of giving an assistance of Rs 1 crore to the martyred soldier's family, the official said.

The CM said a government excellence school at Bijadandi in Mandla will be named after the soldier.

## Cheetahs Brought From Africa Savour First Meal In India, Appear Playful

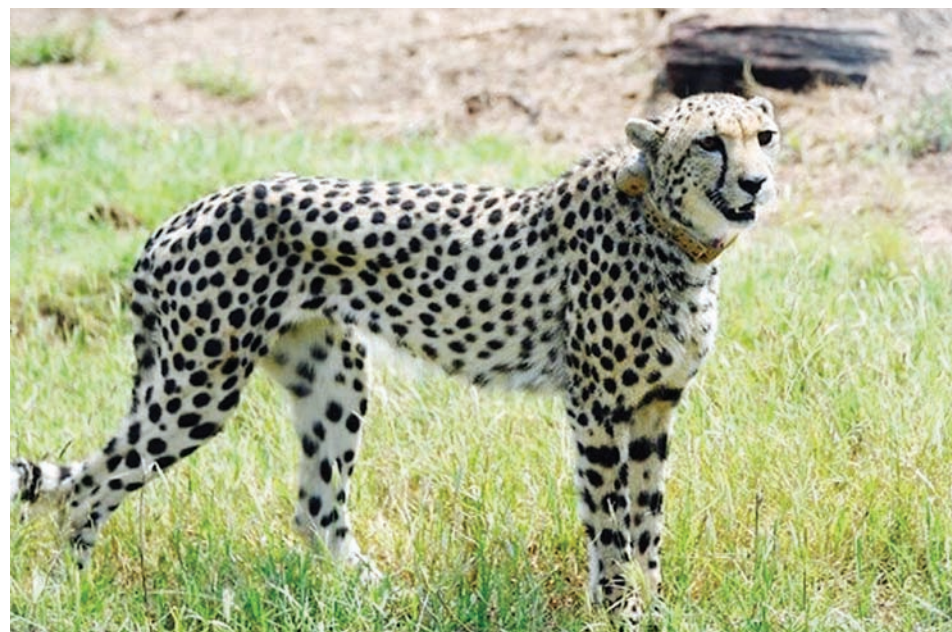
Team Absolute | Sheopur

Siblings Freddy and Alton, two of the eight cheetahs brought from Namibia, were seen frolicking in their quarantine enclosure in Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park on Monday, a day after all of them were served food for the first time since their arrival in India.

Sisters Savannah and Sasha also looked cheerful. The four other cheetahs - Obaan, Asha, Cibili, Saisa - also appeared in good spirits, KNP officials said.

The eight felines - five female and three male and aged between 30 to 66 months - were on Sunday evening served food for the first time since their arrival from the African country to India on Saturday, an official said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday released these cheetahs brought from Namibia, 8,000 km away from their native place, into a quarantine enclosure at the KNP in Sheopur district as part of a project to revive the population of the ani-



mal which became extinct in India in 1952.

On Sunday evening, each of the eight cheetahs was served two kg of buffalo meat. Only one of them ate less, the official said, adding that there was nothing concerning about it.

The cheetahs looked cheerful and active on Monday, said the official who is part of the team keeping a close watch on the movements of the animals.

These animals are believed to take food once in three days, he added.

The new guests are still observing the new surroundings with curiosity, the official said.

On Monday morning, Freddy and Alton were seen running in a playful mood and drinking water often in their enclosure.

The eight cheetahs were given their names in Namibia. "Right now we don't have plans to rename them," the official said. At the time of their release on Saturday, the big cats looked hesitant. But the initial hesitation appeared to be gradually fading on Monday, he said.





EDITOR'S SPECS

ANOTHER NEW FRONT IN UP

A fresh attempt is being made in Uttar Pradesh ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections to form a front of smaller parties.

The coalition that will maintain an equal-distance from BJP and Congress will be like the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha (BSM) that was conceptualised in the state ahead of the 2022 Assembly polls.

The parties that are expected to be a part of this coalition include Shivpal Yadav's Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party-Lohia (PSPL), the All India Majlis-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), and Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) led by Om Prakash Rajbhar.

PSPL national spokesperson Deepak Mishra said, "PSPL national president Shivpal Yadav has always called for opposition unity and has also stated in no uncertain terms that our party will not enter into any alliance with the SP. For PSPL, any association with the Congress or the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) is unlikely to last in the prevailing state of affairs. Hence, a third front without these four parties is what the party workers and senior leaders are looking at."

SBSP president Om Prakash Rajbhar said, "When a party like the BJP has entered into alliances with more than 50 parties, the opposition will also have to join hands to challenge them. I do not think people should have any problem understanding this."

The AIMIM has already announced that an alliance of the opposition parties was needed if like-minded political parties want to oust the BJP from power in 2024. Sources said that Shivpal Yadav was likely to emerge as the leader of the proposed front because Om Prakash Rajbhar had lost credibility after he dumped AIMIM before the Assembly polls and joined hands with SP.

STRATEGIC MISTAKE MAY COST AKHILESH DEAR BY LOSING YADAV, MUSLIMS AND RAJBHAR VOTES

Vinod Kumar Shukla

It appears that national president of Samajwadi Party Akhilesh Yadav has failed to reconcile to the fact that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has won the 2022 Assembly elections and has been running the government in Uttar Pradesh for the second consecutive terms with Yogi Adityanath at the helm once again. The SP chief seems to be involved in gimmicks like offering Deputy chief minister Keshav Prasad Maurya to break 100 MLAs of the party to get Samajwadi Party's support as chief minister of the state. But he is ignoring the possible disintegration of his own alliance as moves of Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) chief Om Prakash Rajbhar and his uncle and Jaswantnagar MLA Shivpal Singh Yadav are in no way for the goods of the SP.

Rajbhar is continuously criticizing Akhilesh Yadav and he was rewarded with a Y category security. Whatever limited reach Rajbhar has in Uttar Pradesh but he made a dent on Assembly seats in around half a dozen districts in Uttar Pradesh where performance of the BJP dipped due to Rajbhar voters. Balia, Ghazipur, Azamgarh, Mau, Ambedkarnagar and even to an extent Varanasi were some of the districts where SBSP claimed some votes of the BJP but Akhilesh Yadav is letting him go out of the SP alliance. Azam Khan too is not happy with Akhilesh Yadav and hobnobbing with Shivpal Singh Yadav. Khan has been expressing his grievances poetically ever since he was arrested on various corruption charges. Azam Khan might not go even with a tacit alliance with the BJP but this option is open with Shivpal Singh Yadav. If Azam Khan doesn't go anywhere but remains silent, it will harm the Samajwadi Party.

What does it mean? It clearly means that people like Om Prakash Rajbhar, Shivpal Singh Yadav and Azam Khan may harm the prospects of the Samajwadi Party in 2024 Lok Sabha elections. When Mulayam Singh Yadav was at the helm of affairs of the SP, matters related to the organisation including appointment of office bearers at the district level were being looked upon by Shivpal Singh Yadav. There was perfect coordination and understanding between the two brothers and Mulayam Singh was also managing things well with his cousin Prof Ram Gopal Yadav. Prof Yadav and Shivpal Singh don't get along but Shivpal is still in a good control over the



grass root workers of the Samajwadi Party. This can well be understood from the fact that it was confusion in the Yadav voters during 2017 Assembly elections that brought to SP's assembly tally to 47. But the message that Chacha Shivpal Singh Yadav is being given some importance and after elections something positive will come for him and other SP workers has taken the tally of the Samajwadi Party to Nelson number that is 111 but with Shivpal Yadav forming Yadau Kul Punahjagan Mission who already has Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia) is a potent threat to damage the Samajwadi Party significantly in 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The newly constituted organisation will approach all former Samajwadi Party leaders unhappy with Akhilesh Yadav obviously these are Yadav leaders. But is the mastermind behind this move Bharatiya Janata Party who is not only looking to divide Yadav votes voting for it and a split between Akhilesh Yadav and Shivpal Yadav as well for its electoral benefits? The BJP may help Shivpal Yadav on Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat to send him in Parliament and on the Jaswantnagar Assembly seat to send his son to the Assembly.

Another Chacha Azam Khan is angry with Akhilesh as he did not visit him in jail and the party did not support him when he was in jail. This is being looked upon by him as use

and throw attitude of political parties including the SP towards Muslim community and his view is in consonance with AIMIM leader Assaduddin Owaisi who wants Muslim leadership for Muslims. This is the reason that despite Azam Khan being made in charge of Azamgarh and Rampur Lok Sabha by-elections, the SP faced drubbing on both the seats. The Samajwadi Party chief is trying to play OBC card by offering CMs post to Maurya but this will alienate the Yadav community which is the staunch supporter of the Samajwadi Party. It will be difficult for the community to stomach a non-Yadav as CM with the support of the Samajwadi Party. This will also be a redux Kalyan Singh moment for the party vis a vis Muslims. They may go away from the party.

Muslims did not welcome even the outside support or alliance with former chief minister Kalyan Singh who parted ways with the BJP. Mulayam Singh tried to make an OBC alliance with him. Nothing has changed for Muslims and they would not accept the SP supporting Keshav Prasad Maurya. This will be a self-inflicting injury for the Samajwadi Party which managed to get over 90 per cent votes of Muslims in 2022 Assembly elections. Not only national political parties but some regional outfits are waiting to lap Muslim votes if they fall apart from the SP

fold due to any misadventure by the party. The BJP has already made it clear to Jats that the party is for them by nominating a Jat Jagdeep Dhankhar as Vice President of India and another Jat Bhupendra Singh Choudhary as UP BJP president. These will clear every confusion whatever was left among the Jat voters after the Samajwadi Party and Rashtriya Lok Dal alliance in the state joined hands for 2022 Assembly elections. The Samajwadi Party cadre felt that it did not get any benefit out of the alliance rather lost a Rajya Sabha seat to Jayant Choudhary. The other was lost to former Congress leader Kapil Sibal. So the SP not only failed in Assembly elections but lost two valuable Rajya Sabha seats to others.

On the other hand the BJP is working on its strategy to woo Jat voters and divide Yadav voters, a daunting task as far as Yadav votes are concerned, not only in Uttar Pradesh but also in Bihar. The BJP brought former Lok Sabha member and Haryana leader Sudha Yadav in its Central Election Committee and the highest body Parliamentary Board. Nityanand Rai is Union minister of state for home, a Yadav leader from Bihar. Bhupendra Yadav is part of the Central Election Committee of the party. The hammering is done by its ideological mentor the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) by inviting Mountainair Santosh Yadav, who is a woman as well, as chief guest on its annual Dussera programme. This will send a message all across.

The Samajwadi Party does not have any answer to counter moves of the BJP rather tweets of Akhilesh Yadav are making him a subject of ridicule. The initiative that should have been taken by Akhilesh Yadav to unite opposition parties as the former chief minister of the biggest state of the country in terms of electorate but he is nowhere in the scene. This is giving a wrong message to his electorates in UP. The recent meeting of Shivpal Singh Yadav and Azam Khan too will cause further confusions to a section of the SP voters but Akhilesh Yadav seems to be doing nothing rather he is of the attitude of 'I don't care', which doesn't work in politics.

(Vinod Kumar Shukla is a freelance journalist based in Delhi. Views expressed are personal.)

international

2 DEAD, 9 MN ASKED TO EVACUATE AFTER SUPER TYPHOON HITS JAPAN

Tokyo | Agencies

At least two people were killed in Japan and some nine million others asked to evacuate from their homes after super typhoon Nanmadol, deemed to be one of the worst, made landfall in the region of Kyushu, bringing heavy rain and gales, local media reported on Monday.

In Fukuoka prefecture, a man who was believed to be on his way to find shelter from the typhoon was found collapsed and later confirmed dead, reports Xinhua news agency. Another man was declared dead after being pulled out of a car submerged in a flooded farmland in Miyazaki prefecture, according to local authorities.

According to a Miyazaki prefectural official, a man in his 40s was reported missing after his cabin was destroyed by a landslide.

The 14th typhoon of the year was moving near Hagi, Yamaguchi prefecture on Monday afternoon, at a speed of some 20 km per hour. It had an atmospheric pressure of 975 hectopascals at its centre, packing winds up to 108 kph with maximum gusts of 162 kph.

More than 70 people were injured amid the extreme weather, with bullet trains suspended in Kyushu on Monday and around 600 flights



cancelled by the country's two main airlines ANA and Japan Airlines, the local media reports said. The typhoon is expected to travel across Japan's largest island, Honshu through Tuesday, with the Japan Meteorological Agency continuing to issue warnings for strong winds, high tides and mudslides. Tens

of thousands of people spent Sunday night in emergency shelters, and almost 350,000 homes are without power. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has delayed a visit to New York, where he is due to give speech at the UN General Assembly, until Tuesday, to monitor the impact of the storm.

MASSIVE POWER OUTAGE IN PUERTO RICO DUE TO HURRICANE

San Juan: Puerto Rico has suffered a massive power outage following the arrival of the powerful hurricane Fiona, the media reported on Monday.

The Caribbean island's electricity operator Luma Energy said on Sunday that the system lost power as winds reached 140 km per hour, the BBC reported.

As Puerto Rico is a US territory, President Joe Biden has declared a state of emergency for the island, allowing authorities to provide disaster relief as forecasters have warned of as much as 2 ft of rain and catastrophic flooding due to the hurricane.

Ports have been closed and flights out of the island's main airport have been cancelled. Puerto Rico's Governor Pedro Pierluisi said public schools and government agencies would remain closed on Monday and urged residents to seek shelter as soon as possible. Hurricane Fiona made downfall in Puerto Rico five years after Hurricane Maria, the worst in the island's history.

US will defend Taiwan if China attacks: Biden

Washington | Agencies

US President Joe Biden has reiterated that Washington will defend Taiwan in the event of an "unprecedented attack" by China.

During a CBS News interview on Sunday, Biden was asked "what should Chinese President Xi know about your commitment to Taiwan?", to which the President replied: "We agree with what we signed onto a long time ago... And that there's one China policy, and Taiwan makes their own judgments about their independence."

"We are not moving, we're not encouraging their being independent. We're not... That's their decision."

To the next query if US forces would defend the island, Biden said: "Yes, if in fact there was an unprecedented attack..."

Shortly after Biden made the remarks, the White House said that "our Taiwan policy hasn't changed", clearing the notion that the US policy since 1979 to recognise Taiwan as part of China



remained unchanged.

"The President has said this before, including in Tokyo earlier this year. He also made clear then that our Taiwan policy hasn't changed. That remains true," the BBC quoted the White House as saying on Sunday evening.

Under the policy, the US does not recognise it as a separate state and has no diplomatic ties with the island. But it maintains close relations and sells arms to Taiwan under the Taiwan Relations Act, which states that Washington must provide the island with the means to defend itself.

Tensions flared between the US and China after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi made an unannounced visit to Taiwan on August 2.

WHO warns of 'second disaster' in flood-hit Pakistan

Islamabad | Agencies

The World Health Organization (WHO) has expressed grave fears and serious concerns over what it termed to be a "second disaster" in the flood-hit Pakistan, where massive areas are left with standing water triggering water-borne diseases which are infecting thousands of the displaced people.

Referring to the grave situation in Sindh province, where the flood water still continues to flow through villages, towns and cities, destroying everything that comes in its way, the WHO has called for donations to save lives and prevent more suffering as a potential wave of diseases and deaths awaited the country already

trying to grapple with the destruction caused by the calamity.

"Consumption of contaminated water in flood-hit areas was leading to a surge in diseases including cholera, malaria, dengue and diarrhoea," said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

"Health centres have been flooded, their supplies damaged, and people have moved away from home, which makes it harder for them to access their normal health services. All this means more unsafe births, more untreated diabetes or heart diseases and more children missing vaccination, to name but a few of the impacts on health," he added.

LARGE-SCALE DISORDER BREAKS OUT IN LEICESTER

London | Agencies

Large-scale disorder broke out in Leicester amid tensions involving mainly young men from sections of the Muslim and Hindu communities, with police and community leaders calling for calm, the media reported.

Police said two arrests had been made, and that the trouble flared up after "an unplanned protest" on Saturday night, reports the BBC.

Saturday's incident is the latest of several incidents, including violence after an India and Pakistan cricket match on August 28. A significant police operation will remain in the area in the coming days.

Suleman Nagdi, of the Leicester-based Federation of Muslim Organisations told the BBC: "What we have seen on the streets is very alarming. There have been problems in the community since the India and Pakistan cricket match and while that game often sparks gatherings they have not in the past turned this ugly."



"We need calm, the disorder has to stop and it has to stop now. There are some very dissatisfied young men who have been causing havoc."

"We need to get the message out that this must end and try to do this through parents and grandparents talking to their sons." Sanjiv Patel, who represents Hindu and

Jain temples across Leicester, said he was deeply saddened and shocked by Saturday night's disorder. "We have lived in harmony in the city for many decades but over the past few weeks it is clear there are things that need to be discussed around the table to get out what people are unhappy about," the BBC quoted Patel as saying. "Resorting to violence is not the way to deal with this."

"We are horrified and deplore what was going on (yesterday) and across the last two weeks. Across the Hindu and Jain community and with our Muslim brothers and sisters and leaders we are consistently saying 'calm minds, calm heads'," he said, but also warned people to be wary of disinformation on social media.

"Violence is not a solution to anything. This has to be a time for peace, calm and engagement." Police said one man was detained on suspicion of conspiracy to commit violent disorder and another on suspicion of possession of a bladed article. They remain in police custody.

THAILAND EXPECTS TO EARN \$64 BN IN TOURISM REVENUE NEXT YR

Bangkok: The Thai government expects to achieve up to 2.38 trillion baht (\$64 billion) in tourism revenue next year, an official said on Monday.

As the tourism sector, a key driver of the Southeast Asian country's economic growth, has continued to recover, the Thai government has set a target of bringing the revenue back to 80 per cent of its 2019 level in 2023, Xinhua news agency quoted acting government spokesperson Anucha Burapachaisri as saying. In the best-case scenario, the Thai government expects to see a tourism revenue of 1.5 trillion baht from foreign tourists while 880 billion baht from domestic travels in 2023, Anucha said.

The country expects to welcome 1.5 million tourists per month during the last quarter of this year, the spokesperson said, adding that the number has reached over 1 million so far this month. The country aims to receive 10 million tourists this year.





# MAHA FARMER ENDS LIFE OVER DEBTS, GOVERNMENT FAILURE TO ENSURE MSP

In a shocking incident, penniless and frustrated Maharashtra farmer Dashrath L. Kedari jumped into a village pond to end his life after penning a note in which he mentioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi while spelling his plight, his grieving family said here on Monday.

Quaid Najmi | Pune

According to Kedari's brother-in-law Arvind Waghmare, the incident took place in Bankarpata village on Saturday where Kedari worked as a farmer for the past eight years.

"That day, he seemed very depressed, but he conveyed his wishes for a long life to the PM, and then jumped into the nearby pond and killed himself. A suicide note was recovered later," Waghmare told correspondents.

The opposition Shiv Sena has slammed the state government for its failure to protect farmers reeling under a severe agrarian crisis with a record number of farmland suicides clocked this year.

In his suicide note, Kedari said that it was due to the government's failure on ensuring Minimum Support Price that he was compelled to end his life as he was hounded by debtors.

He rued how the state was not giving MSP to onion, tomato and other cultivators who were ravaged by the recent floods and the losses of the pandemic.

"What should we do... Modi Saheb. We are not begging for alms, but what is rightly due to us. MSP must be given to us as the money-lenders are threatening us. Nobody takes risks like the farmers... where do we go with our grievances," Kedari said.

Shiv Sena spokespersons Kishore Tiwari and Manisha Kayande slammed the government for its failure on tackling the agrarian crisis in the state which has resulted in despair with a spate of suicides. Shooting a letter to the Prime Minister, Tiwari, who is also the President of Vasantao Naik Shetkari Swavlamban Mission (VNSSM), urged Modi to immediately come and visit the Kedari family as the state government has failed to solve the problems of farmers.

He recalled how Modi - during his 'Chai Pe Charcha' with farmers during his visit to Yavatmal (March 2014) - had assured to address the core issues like MSP, marketing, input costs, easy credit from public sector banks, change in crop patterns, risk management by way of crop insurance, etc.

However, despite the PM's best efforts, nothing has materialised owing to a hostile administration and corrupt implementation agencies, leading to tragedies like Kedari's suicide for precisely similar reasons, Tiwari added.

He called upon Modi to visit the Kedari family or direct Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to go and console the deceased farmers' kin during her visit to Pune next week.

"A farmer greets the PM and then goes on his 'chita' (funeral pyre), but the PM is busy bringing cheat to the country. This is the sad state of affairs in the country," said Kayande.

Tiwari added that this year, over 1,080 farmers have ended lives in



Vidarbha alone and the state has created a new record with around 2,600 peasants' suicides in the first nine months of 2022.

Kedari, 42, is survived by his wife Shanta and two college-going children - son Shubham, 20, and daughter Shravani, 18.

Waghmare said his brother-in-law hailed from Wadgaon-Anand village and a team from Alaphata police station visited the family and registered a case after making inquiries.

# Sanjay Raut's judicial custody extended till October Third

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Special Prevention of Money Laundering Act Court extended the judicial custody of Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut by 14 days till October 3 here on Monday.

Raut was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on August 1 in connection with the alleged Patra Chawl redevelopment scam case, and has been in custody since.

The ED had recorded the Sena MP's statement and later raided his home on July 31, detained and then arrested him early on August 1 in the Patra Chawl, Goregaon case. The issue pertains to the stalled redevelopment project of the Patra Chawl for 672 tenants which was taken up by Guru Ashish Constructions Pvt. Ltd. in which Sanjay Raut's close associate Pravin Raut was one of the Directors.

The ED has claimed that Pravin Raut benefitted to the tune of Rs 112 crore by illegal sale of the FSI from the project and he had allegedly



passed on a certain portion of the proceeds to Sanjay Raut and his wife.

Last Wednesday, Raut had applied for bail before the Special Court contending that he was arrested and being victimised by the change of power (in Maharashtra) to crush the Opposition.

In his bail plea, he pointed how the ED had shown the Rs 112 crore as proceeds of crime in the Patra Chawl case and again in the Punjab & Maharashtra Cooperative Bank (PMC) case where Pravin Raut is one of the accused.

According to Raut, the ED has claimed that the Rs 112 crore was tainted money earned from the PMC Bank fraud, and in the Patra Chawl matter it was from the illegal sale of FSI. He argued that the ED cannot be allowed to show the same amount in two different cases and take action against different persons for it.

Furthermore, the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) had conducted a forensic audit which concluded that Pravin Raut had not received any money from the Patra Chawl project fraud, said Sanjay Raut.

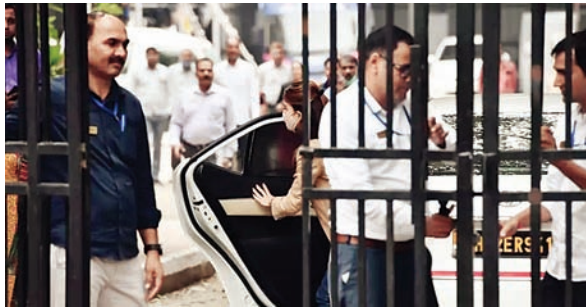
# Jacqueline Fernandez again being quizzed in Rs 200 cr extortion case

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Mumbai

Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez on Monday reached the office of the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Delhi Police to join the investigation in connection with the Rs 200 crore extortion case involving multimillionaire conman Sukesh Chandrashekar.

She will be confronted with the testimonies of Bollywood actress Nora Fatehi and Pinky Irani, who was an aide of Chandrashekar.

The EOW had earlier recorded Fernandez's statement, but they found contradictions. To clear the contradictions they quizzed Fatehi and Pinky Irani following



which the EOW decided to record Fernandez's statement once again.

Now, EOW will question Jacqueline Fernandez regarding the contradictions.

Chandrashekar was arrested for allegedly cheating and extorting money from some high-profile people, including former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Mohan Singh's

wife Aditi Singh. Many Bollywood actors and models have been questioned by the Enforcement Directorate for their alleged links to Chandrashekar. In April last year Chandrashekar was arrested in another money laundering case linked to the 2017 Election Commission bribery case, which allegedly involved a former AIADMK leader, among others.

# TEEN BOOKED FOR CUTTING CAKES WITH SWORD

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai: A case has been registered under the Arms Act against a 17-year-old youth for cutting cakes with a sword, said the police on Monday.

As per reports, the young man was celebrating his birthday with his friends on Friday night. A video of the incident has gone viral where the young man is seen cutting 21 cakes with a sword. "The video is from the Borivali area of Mumbai. A case has been registered against the 17-year-old youth under the Arms Act," said Mumbai Police. The accused has been on the run while the search for the youth is still on. Further investigations are underway.

# Maharashtra Congress wants Rahul Gandhi as party president, passes resolution

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With the notification of the Congress president polls just days away, the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) on Monday passed a resolution for appointing Rahul Gandhi as the national president of the party.

The resolution was passed in a meeting of 553 delegates of the MPCC held at the YB Chavan centre in South Mumbai.

The Congress units in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the only two states where the party is in government on its own, have passed resolutions that Rahul Gandhi be made the party's president. Also, the Gujarat Congress on Sunday demanded that



Rahul Gandhi be made the party chief.

The resolution was moved by former Maharashtra chief minister Ashok Chavan and

seconded by senior leaders including Naseem Khan and Chandrakant Handore, which was unanimously passed, a Congress state-

ment said. Notably, Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole moved a resolution authorising the Congress president to appoint a state unit chief, office-bearers and AICC delegates. This resolution was seconded by Congress Legislature Party leader Balasaheb Thorat and was unanimously passed.

The meeting took place in the presence of the state returning officer for the organizational polls Pallam Raju, state in-charge HK Patil, former CMs Ashok Chavan, Prithviraj Chavan, and Patole.

The nomination process for the Congress president's election will begin on September 24. The election will be held on October 17, if necessary.

# RUPEE ENDS ALMOST FLAT, AT 79.77, AGAINST THE US DOLLAR

THE INDIAN RUPEE ENDED ALMOST FLAT AGAINST THE US DOLLAR ON MONDAY, WITH JUST 3 PAISE FALL, AT 79.77.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

At the interbank foreign exchange market, rupee ended at 79.77, against 79.74 on the previous trading session against the US dollar.

Dollar index, which gauges the strength of greenback against the basket of six major currencies, was at 109.870. Brent crude oil prices were at \$90.02 a barrel by the



closing of Indian market hours.

Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst,

HDFC Securities, said that the rupee becomes an outlier among the Asian currencies amid the foreign fund inflows, lower crude oil prices and risk-on sentiments.

On the overseas front, risk assets extend declines and the dollar rallies against major trading partners ahead of a busy week for global central banks. Meanwhile, benchmark indices ended up on Monday with Sensex rising more than 300 points and Nifty by over 90.

At close, Sensex ended 300.44 points, or 0.51 per cent, up at 59,141.23, and Nifty closed up 91.40 points, or 0.52 per cent, up at 17,622.45. Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, State Bank of India, and Nestle were major gainers on the Sensex.

# Man leaves woman after marriage, jailed for rape on false promise

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A Thane court has sentenced a 37-year-old man from neighbouring Mumbai to seven years' rigorous imprisonment for raping a woman. The order was passed on September 14 and a copy of it was made available on Monday.

Thane Additional Sessions Judge Rachna R Tehra also imposed a fine of Rs 15,000 on the accused- Shankar Kisan Gurav. Additional Public Prosecutor E B Dhamal told the court that in 2010, the woman while studying in a college in

Mumbai got acquainted with the accused, a resident of Govandi in Mumbai, and they had an affair. The accused promised to marry her and took her on a couple of occasions to lodges in Thane district and raped her. He initially did not fulfil his promise.

The accused also warned the woman against marrying someone else, the prosecutor said. The woman told him that if he fails to marry her, she would file a police complaint.

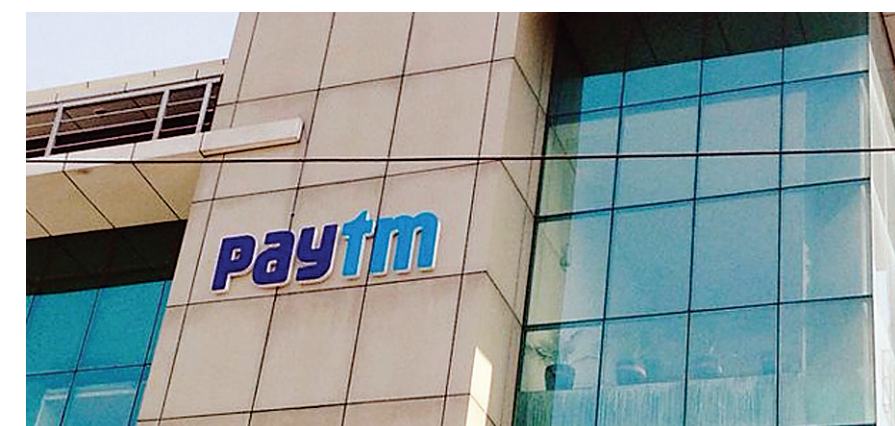
On May 23, 2015, the accused married the woman at a marriage bureau in

Thane city. The couple then rented a room in a hotel, and the accused then left her there and did not return, the prosecution said.

The woman filed a police complaint following which a case was registered against the accused on charges of rape and cheating. The court said the evidence of the prosecution witnesses is natural, trustworthy and corroborated by circumstantial evidence.

The prosecution has established the case of rape on a false promise of marriage, the court said while convicting the accused.

# Paytm tokenizes over 52 mn cards across VISA, Mastercard & RuPay



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Paytm, One97 Communications brand has announced that the company has now tokenized over 93 per cent of the monthly active cards on their application.

The company has tokenized 52.3 million cards across VISA, Mastercard and RuPay in its effort to make card transactions safer and drive convenience for consumers. "We have made

great progress in card-on-file tokenization, with over 93 per cent of monthly active cards on Paytm app tokenized. Being a leader in digital payments, we are aligned with RBI's initiative to make online card transactions safe and secure for consumers," Paytm spokesperson said.

With this, the company has made significant progress in the card-on-file tokenization initiative by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The company remains on

track to meet RBI's deadline to purge saved card data ahead of the RBI deadline.

RBI's Card-on-file tokenization mandate requires all online platforms to comply with the new initiative and make digital payments secure for citizens.

As per the RBI's guidelines, all online merchants/e-commerce stores have to comply with the card-on-file tokenization feature by September 30.

# Millions of film buffs ready to celebrate National Cinema Day on Sep 23

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Millions of moviegoers are expected to join the first-ever National Cinema Day scheduled this Friday, in over 4,000 silver screens across India, at special discounted rates, top officials said here.

An initiative of the Multiplex Association of India (MAI), on September 23, film-buffs can pay just Rs 75 per ticket and walk into any cinema of their choice along with other "special surprises" lined up for them to mark the NCD.

MAI President Kamal Gianchandani, who is also the CEO of PVR Pictures Ltd, said of the approximately 11,000 screens -- in multiplexes and single -- in India, around 4,000 will participate in the first ever NCD to welcome patrons back to the cinema halls.

"On average, there are 400 seats per auditorium, which makes around four million seats available in the country for filmgoers. From this, nearly 16,000 seats shall participate in the NCD," Gianchandani told reporter.

The participating cinema chains/screens include PVR, INOX, Cinepolis, Carnival, Miraj, City Pride, Asian, Mukta A2, Movietime, Wave, M2K, Delite and even some single-screen operators, all over India, he



added. Some of the major films likely to be exhibited during the NCD will be 'KGF: Chapter 2', 'RRR', 'Vikram', 'Bhool Bhulaiya 2', or Hollywood big films like 'Doctor Strange', 'Top Gun: Maverick', and other films.

"The multiplexes may also make their own special offers, for people of all age-groups, exclusions to welcome the people to the cinemas that day, but we can't reveal the details now," said Gianchandani.

He said that the NCD is intended to be a 'Thank You' to the filmgoers who made it happen by returning to the cinemas after the two years of Coronavirus Pandemic closure, and a warm invite to those who have still not made it to the local neighbourhood movie-halls yet. According to MAI, the first quarter of the current fiscal notched an impressive recovery for cinema operators in India and the NCD -- which shall become an annual feature -- will be a step forward in the direction. Citing official statistics, Gianchandani said China has around 70,000 screens, the US has nearly 40,000 screens while India has a little more than 11,000 screens. India, where the era of film-making dawned with the historic film, 'Raja Harishchandra' (1913), made by Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, alias Dadasaheb Phalke. Today, the country has become the world's largest filmmaker with around 3,000 films in multiple languages produced annually.

Established in 2002, the MAI works under the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) representing more than a dozen cinema chains operating over 500 multiplexes with over 4,000 screens, representing around three-fourths of the multiplex industry.



# Cameron Diaz says acting feels 'different' after taking a break



Los Angeles | Agencies

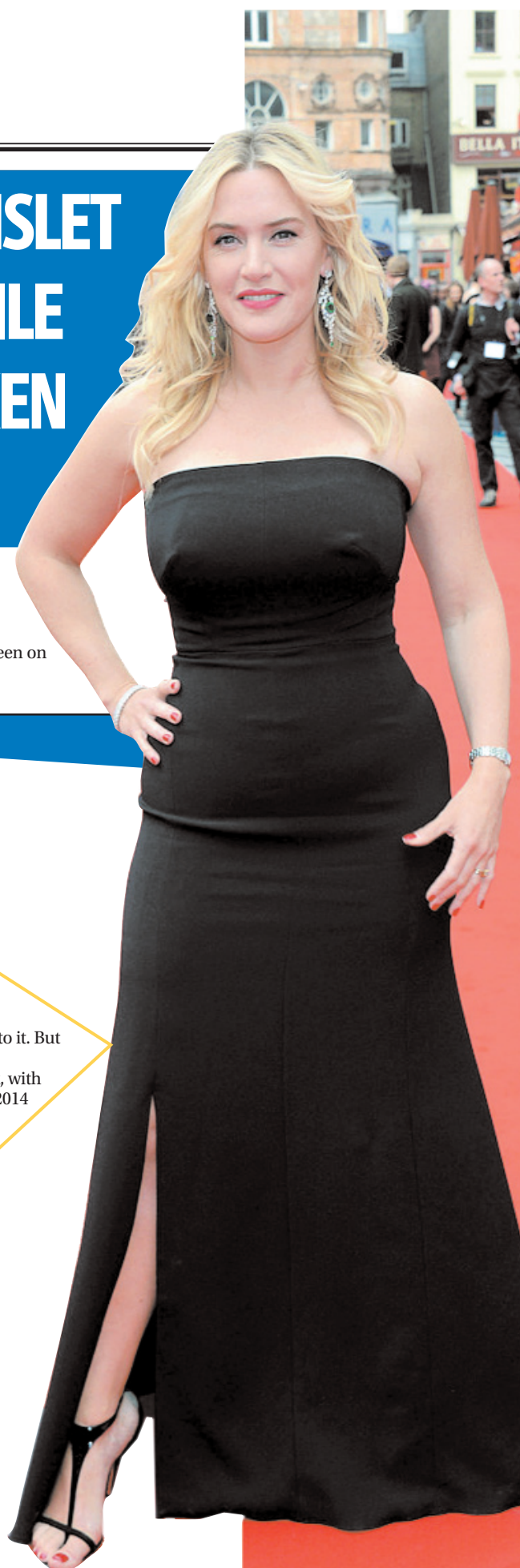
Actress Kate Winslet is ready to get back to work after a hospital visit post she slipped while filming an upcoming project in Croatia. The actress was shooting her role in the historical drama film 'Lee' when an on-set accident led to her being taken to a nearby hospital to ensure that she was OK, her representatives confirmed. Winslet will resume filming this week as scheduled.

"Kate slipped and was taken to hospital as a precautionary measure required by the production," her team said. "She is fine and will be filming, as planned, this week." The Oscar winner will portray photographer Lee Miller in the film that focuses on her life, including her work as a war correspondent for Vogue during World War II.

The cast for director Ellen Kuras' movie includes Marion Cotillard, Jude Law, Andrea Riseborough and Josh O'Connor.

Winslet, who has a role in the upcoming Avatar: The Way of Water, was most recently seen on the small screen with Mare of Easttown, which earned her an Emmy Award last year. Recent film credits include 'Ammonite', 'Blackbird' and 'The Mountain Between Us'.

# KATE WINSLET FALLS WHILE FILMING, TAKEN TO HOSPITAL



Los Angeles | Agencies

After eight years away from Hollywood, actress Cameron Diaz opened up about her upcoming Netflix movie 'Back in Action', saying that she was "both" nervous and excited about getting back in front of the camera.

"It's a little bit of muscle memory, you know what I mean?" she explained during appearance on 'The Tonight Show' starring Jimmy Fallon.

"I did that for so long, it's kind of like the process, and I kind of just fell back into it. But it feels a little bit different."

She also gushed how it was "amazing" to return to acting alongside Jamie Foxx, with whom she previously appeared in the 1999 sports drama Any Given Sunday and the 2014 remake of the musical 'Annie'.

"The last movie I made was Annie with Jamie, and so the first movie back is this film with Jamie," she said. "He's so great, he's so easy, he's so professional, he's so talented, and just being able to work with him." She added, "It will be so much fun." Jamie, who Cameron describes "like a racehorse" -- serves as both her co-star and executive producer on Back in Action, which begins production later this year.

Last month, the Oscar winner revealed how he convinced the actress to come out of retirement for the film, saying it involved some good old-fashioned begging.

"We just begged and pleaded on my knees, like, 'Just give the people one more again,'" Jamie said in August. "We love her, we've been waiting on her and this is just gonna be fantastic."

In an episode of In Goop Health: The Sessions, the Charlie's Angels star opened up about her decision to retire at what was seemingly the height of her career, explaining to host Gwyneth Paltrow that she never made "any space for (her) personal life." Moreover, Cameron said that her life in the spotlight was draining, something that Gwyneth said she could "understand." When Gwyneth asked what it felt like to leave that past behind, Cameron responded, "Like peace. A peace in my soul because I was finally taking care of myself."

# PETE DAVIDSON IS 'HAVING THE TIME OF HIS LIFE'

After splitting with Kim Kardashian

Los Angeles | Agencies

Comedian Pete Davidson is enjoying his life after breaking up with reality TV personality Kim Kardashian earlier this year. Giving an update of the comedian's current life was Martha Stewart, who previously found herself in a bizarre rumour that she's dating him. In a new interview, the lifestyle guru said Pete is busy with several film productions.

"He's doing two movies at the present time," she said while promoting her Green Mountain Coffee Roasters partnership. Stewart also shared that the 'Saturday Night Live' alum's "agreed to do my podcast," though they haven't locked in a date for the podcast.

Stewart went on to share that Pete is currently living the best of his life despite splitting from 'The Kardashians' star.

"He's having the time of his life," Stewart claimed. "This guy is a talented actor (and) comedian, and who is a bon vivant at the same time. He's fun."

Stewart's comment arrived after she addressed viral memes that suggested that she and the comedian were hooking up after they were spotted together shortly post it became public that Pete had broken up with Kim.

"Pete Davidson is like the son I never had," the 81-year-old said. She went on to explain, "He is a charming boy who is finding his way. I've invited him to come on my podcast and I look forward to hearing what he has to say."



# Enrique shares passionate kiss with fan during meet

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Enrique Iglesias shared a passionate kiss with an enthusiastic female fan during a meet and greet in Las Vegas. The 47-year-old himself posted a clip from the PDA-filled moment on his Instagram account. The footage initially showed the musician kissing the woman on the cheek as she took a selfie.

However, things got more passionate after she turned her head to kiss Enrique on the lips. She continues to try to film the smooch but he pushes the woman away gently before leaving the spot. The post which he wrote on Instagram, has been filled with mixed reactions. Some people were jealous, as one commented, "She is so lucky." Another individual then wrote, "My dream hahaha."

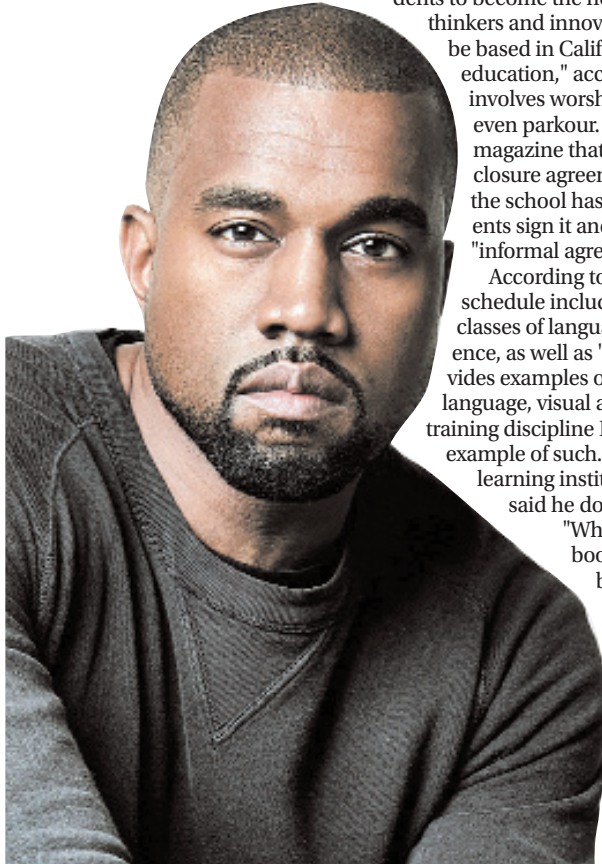
Others, however, were not impressed by the encounter. One person in particular replied in Spanish: "I don't like it when other girls kiss you! Your kisses should only be for Anna," referring to the singer's wife, Anna Kournikova, with whom he shares twins 4-year-old twins Nicholas and Lucy and 2-year-old daughter Mary.

"How on earth does Anna endure this?" a different user argued. Someone else chimed in, "Omg he's married lady." Anna herself is yet to react to the clip.

# Seems from the post that Kanye compared himself to Moses

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Kanye West has compared himself to Moses after deleting all his Instagram posts. The rapper took to his Instagram Stories on Sunday to seemingly compare himself to the Bible's Moses. "No one asked Moses how much he slept," he wrote in white text over a black background. He first shared the text with a typo before deleting it and resharing it with the corrected text. It comes after Ye launched his own private school which aims to "prepare students to become the next generation of leaders, thinkers and innovators".



The institution, said to be based in California, promises a "world-class education," according to its website, which involves worship, science classes, choir and even parkour. Sources told Rolling Stone magazine that families have to sign non-disclosure agreements, though a consultant for the school has told the outlet that only parents sign it and they described such as an "informal agreement".

According to the school's website, the daily schedule includes "full school worship," core classes of language arts, mathematics and science, as well as "enrichment courses". It provides examples of such courses, including world language, visual art, film and choir. The athletic training discipline Parkour is listed as another example of such. However, despite opening a learning institution, the Runaway rapper said he doesn't like reading books.

"When you said I hadn't read this book, I actually haven't read any book," he explained in an interview with the Alo Mind Full podcast. "Reading is like eating Brussels sprouts for me. And talking is like getting the Giorgio Baldi corn ravioli."

The star, who is known for his endless rants, recently admitted that his former-wife Kim Kardashian raises their children '80 percent of the time'.

# ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Rebecca Ferguson





# Kapil Dev launches unique pro-golf tournament with PGTI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

**C**ricket legend Kapil Dev on Monday announced the launch of a new annual golf tournament, in association with the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) and Grant Thornton. The tournament, called the Kapil Dev-Grant Thornton Invitational, will see professionals play along with amateurs, corporates and celebrity golfers.

The tournament, slated to be played from September 27-30, will be the first-ever full-field PGTI event to be played at the Gary Player-designed Course of the DLF Golf and Country Club in Gurugram. The tournament will carry total prize money of Rs 1 crore and will feature 126 professional golfers, to begin with. After two days, the top 50 players and ties will advance to the final rounds. The tournament will give amateur teams, consisting of golfers, celebrities

and corporate leaders, a chance to partner with the pros in Rounds 3 and 4 to compete for separate team prizes. This gives club golfers a unique opportunity to experience what the pro golfers go through in the final two days of a tournament, the organisers said in a release on Monday. Kapil Dev, who captained India to World Cup glory in 1983, is a board member of the PGTI and an active ambassador for the development of golf in the country.

*"I am really excited about the tournament and would like to thank Vishesh Chandiook for sharing my vision of creating a truly landmark event in India's golfing history. I also extend my gratitude to DLF for agreeing to host the event. The event has been created keeping in mind other global standout events, such as the Annual Pebble Beach Pro-Am on the US PGA Tour and the European Tour's Dunhill Championship at St. Andrews, the home of golf."*

Kapil Dev



# Sunil Chhetri melts hearts with tweet after lifting Durand Cup

Kolkata | Agencies

**T**alismanic India footballer Sunil Chhetri has said it would have been a "shame" had an Army kid like him not been able to win the Durand Cup in his professional life, adding that while a two-decade long wait for the prestigious trophy was a long one, it was worth it in the end. Chhetri's side Bengaluru FC won their first-ever Durand Cup title, overcoming Mumbai City FC 2-1 in the final at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan (VYBK) here on Sunday. Siva Sakthi and Brazilian Alan Costa scored for Bengaluru FC (BFC) while Apuia got the lone goal for Mumbai City FC (MCF) in what was a fine display of end-to-end football. Chhetri took to social media to express his joy on winning the trophy, posting images and tweeting that winning with the Bengaluru FC side was extra special. "Two decades is a bit of a



wait, but if it meant doing it in the blue of Bengaluru, then it was worth every season of trying. Durand Cup Champions -- would have been a shame if an Army kid playing football professionally never had the chance to say this. Come on, BFC!" tweeted Chhetri, 38. According to Wikipedia, Chhetri was born to KB Chhetri, an officer in the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers of the Indian Army, and Sushila Chhetri. His father played

football for the Indian Army's team while his mother and her twin sisters played for the Nepal women's national team. Captain Chhetri also had a couple of golden opportunities to score on Sunday, once in the 69th minute, when his left-footed strike missed the target and then again in the 87th when he was one-on-one with the goalkeeper, but the custodian brought off a great save. Chhetri's tweet has since gone viral getting thousands of likes and re-tweets.



# I WANT TO ENTERTAIN FANS ONCE AGAIN WITH MY BATTING: VIRENDER SEHWAG

Lucknow | Agencies

**W**ith the global cricketing legends turning the clock back with their return to the field, one of India's greatest openers Sehwag is keen to impress his fans once again by scoring runs for his side, Gujarat Giants, in the ongoing league. "It was a great start. Kevin scored a century and our bowlers also played well. With this opportunity to return to the cricketing field, I would try to entertain fans once again with my batting. And I hope our team keeps playing well and wins the trophy," Sehwag said while addressing the media during the Gujarat Giants' press conference here on Monday. Skipper Sehwag was accompanied by the former India pacer and Gujarat Giants' coach, Venkatesh Prasad along with the players, Parthiv Patel and O'Brien.

# Indian youth boxers clinch 19 medals at Golden Glove of Vojvodina tournament



New Delhi | Agencies

**I**ndian boxers bagged 10 gold on the final day to conclude a successful campaign with 19 medals in the 40th Golden Glove of Vojvodina Youth Boxing Tournament in Serbia on Monday. Bhawna Sharma (48 kg), Devika Ghorpade (52 kg), Kunjarani Devi (60 kg), Ravina (63 kg) and Kirti (+81 kg) finished on top of the podium as all 12 participating boxers returned with a medal in the women's category. Kunjarani, Ravina and Kirti out-punched their opponents by

unanimous decisions whereas Bhawna and Devika earned 4-1 wins in the finals. Muskan (75 kg) and Pranjal Yadav (81 kg) secured silver medals after losing in the finals. Kashish (50 kg), Neeru (54 kg), Aarya (57 kg), Priyanka (66 kg) and Lashu (70 kg) were the other five Indian medallists in the women's section, who signed off with bronze medals each. Country's men boxers also had an impressive outing as all the five boxers fighting in the final emerged victorious. Vishwanath (48 kg), Ashish (54 kg) and Sahil (71 kg) notched up dominating 5-

0 wins over their respective opponents in the final. On the other hand, Jadumani (51 kg) and Bharat Joon (92 kg) bagged gold medals after winning by 4-1 margins. Nikhil (57 kg) and Deepak (75 kg) claimed bronze medals. Jadumani was adjudged the 'Best Boxer of the Tournament' for his power-packed show while Ravina won the 'Best Boxer' award in the youth women's category. The tournament saw the participation of top boxing nations such as Kazakhstan, Thailand and Ukraine.

# MANDHANA DISAPPOINTED WITH MISSING CENTURY IN ODI WIN AGAINST ENGLAND

**Hove (England):** India batter Smriti Mandhana indicated she was disappointed at missing out on a One-day International century against England Women in the opening match win here, saying remaining unbeaten at the end of the game would have been great. Mandhana, who was adjudged 'Player of the Match' for her brilliant 91 off 99 balls as India chased down the hosts' 227/7 in 44.2 overs for the loss of just three wickets to begin the ODI series on a winning note, said following the victory that batting in the 50-over format came naturally to her, while in T20s she had to "put effort" to take care of the strike rate. "I would've enjoyed it better with a not-out at the end. Thanks to the supporters for coming out, happy to put out a show for them," said Mandhana. "ODIs are natural for me, T20s I have to put effort to take care of the strike rate. In ODIs I can just react. But I'm happy to lay the platform," said Mandhana, adding that winning the toss and electing to field first was the right decision taken by skipper Harmanpreet Kaur. "I'm happy that Harman won the toss. I saw the pitch in the first innings and told myself to cut down on the back-foot play. But (I) didn't hold back too much. I want to say that this series for Jhulu di (Jhulan Goswami), her bowling was amazing. All our efforts in this series will be for Jhulu di." The last match of the three-match ODI series here will be Jhulan's last for India. Harmanpreet also added that winning the toss was important, given the conditions.

# Siniakova outlasts Rybakina in Portoroz for third singles title

Portoroz (Slovenia) | Agencies

**K**aterina Siniakova prevailed in one of the longest finals of the year to claim the Portoroz title here on Sunday, topping reigning Wimbledon champion and No.3 seed Elena Rybakina 6-7(4), 7-6(5), 6-4. Siniakova of the Czech Republic took 3 hours and 6 minutes to squeak past Kazakhstan's Rybakina, fighting back from a set and a break down to claim her third career singles title. It is Siniakova's first singles title in five years. She won her previous two singles crowns in 2017, at Shenzhen and Bastad. The clash was the second-longest final of the 2022 season thus far, trailing only Angelique Kerber's 3-hour and 16-minute, 7-6(5), 6-7(0), 7-6(5) victory over Kaja Juvan in the Strasbourg final



in May. As usual, it has been a standout year for Siniakova in doubles. Siniakova reclaimed the World No.1 ranking just this week after she and Barbora Krejickova completed the Career Golden Slam at the US Open. The pair are a perfect 18-0 at Grand Slam events this year, also winning the

Australian Open and Wimbledon. Rybakina came into the match with a 4-2 head-to-head lead over Siniakova, but despite her massive winner count, this year's Wimbledon champion was undone by 66 unforced errors as she was unable to finish off the match in two tiebreak sets.

# ABU DHABI T10

# Siniakova outlasts Rybakina in Portoroz for third singles title

Abu Dhabi | Agencies

**U**S's Skky Strikers announced on Monday that they have acquired a franchise in the Abu Dhabi T10 league, which will be called the New York Strikers. The enigmatic left-hander Yuvraj Singh has been brought on board as the Team Mentor. He was previously part of the Abu Dhabi T10 league in 2019. The franchise has brought in Kieron Pollard as their Icon player and also signed England's 2019 ODI World Cup-winning captain Eoin Morgan as their Platinum player. Azam Khan, from Pakistan, and Ireland's Paul Stirling are the two Category A players signed by the franchise.

The addition of the New York Strikers to the tournament makes it an 8-team competition, with two teams joining the bandwagon from the USA. The Strikers franchise has had a successful stint as a cricket franchise in the USA, and hope to spread its wings in other parts of the world as well with well-known leagues such as the Abu Dhabi T10. Elated to be part of the Abu Dhabi T10, the Strikers franchise owner Sagar Khanna said, "It is an extremely exciting time for our franchise as the Abu Dhabi T10 is unique and highly competitive, bringing together elite players from across the globe. It gives us the perfect opportunity to compete against the elites of cricket and test ourselves out."

# THEEGALA FINISHES SIXTH, COMES CLOSE TO 50TH IN WORLD RANKINGS

California (US) | Agencies

**I**ndian-American golf star Sahith Theegala, whose family is originally from Andhra, shot 2-under 70 after being 3-over in the first seven holes of the Fortinet Championship. He made a fine rally on the back nine and finished the week at 11-under. He finish T-6 in the opening event. It will take him to 51st position in the official world golf rankings, up from 55th the week before. Defending champion, Max Homa retained the Fortinet Championship as he chipped in from 33 feet. His rival, Danny Willett, who led by one-shot coming to the 18th hole, three-putted from inside four feet on the 18th and lost by one. Willett had a one-shot lead coming into the 18th and his bogey on the par-5 18th coupled with Homa's chip-in for



birdie meant a two-shot swing that gave Homa a great start to the new season. Theegala, who made the Tour Championship in his rookie year, had a disappointing start with bogeys on third and fourth and yet another bogey on seventh to go 3-over. Birdies on eighth and ninth helped him cover some ground, but he dropped another bogey on 11th. Then came a fine patch with birdies on 14th, 16th and 18th. The putt on 14th was from 33 feet and on the 18th he holed a 24-footer.

Avinash Kr Atish | Mohali

**T**he Indian cricket team will continue their search for an ideal playing XI before the all-important Men's T20 World Cup when they take on a well-balanced Australian side in the first T20I of the three-match series at the Punjab Cricket Association IS Bindra Stadium, here on Tuesday. India's lacklustre campaign at the recently concluded Asia Cup 2022 had raised some serious questions but the selectors have picked up almost the same squad for the T20 World Cup in Australia. The continuity of similar faces shows that skipper Rohit Sharma, head coach Rahul Dravid and selectors have not pressed the panic button yet and trusting the boys to come good in upcoming matches. However, the team management will still look to fix some issues and try out a few more things in order to finalise their best possible eleven. As far as the batting is concerned, the top four consisting of Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul, Virat Kohli and

Suryakumar Yadav pick themselves up automatically, and Hardik Pandya with his valuable all-round ability, is also a sure-shot starter. The biggest question is who will play as the wicket-keeper -- Rishabh Pant or Dinesh Karthik? Despite being a like-for-like replacement for Jadeja, Axar Patel didn't get a game at the Asia Cup. Deepak Hooda, who can bowl a few overs and gives captain an extra option, got the opportunity to play but he wasn't used in the bowling at all. India's bowling attack will be bolstered by the return of Jasprit Bumrah and Harshal Patel. Both Bumrah and Harshal had missed the Asia Cup 2022 due to injuries and they will be keen to make their mark and get into the groove during the three-match series. Team India also might give a chance to Umesh Yadav, who has replaced Md Shami in the squad. The likes of Yuzvendra Chahal and Ravichandran Ashwin are the spin options apart from Axar. Overall, India's playing XI in the first match will give a bit of clarity



on their thinking and approach for the World Cup. Meanwhile, the Aaron Finch-led Australia will miss the services of Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis and Mitchell Marsh for the entire three-match T20I series in India. Despite missing their key players, T20 World Cup defending champions Australia have a well-balanced squad. The five specialist batsmen, five all-rounders and five specialist bowlers have the look of a balanced

and winner side. However, the run drought of Australian skipper Aaron Finch is a big concern for them and India will look to exploit that. Players like skipper Aaron Finch, Steve Smith, Glenn Maxwell, Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, and Kane Richardson, among others, have spent enough time in India to know what it takes to succeed at the top-level. So, overall, the stage is set for a mouth-watering clash in Mohali.

Squads:

**India:** Rohit Sharma (Captain), KL Rahul (vice-captain), Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Deepak Hooda, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Dinesh Karthik (wicket-keeper), Hardik Pandya, R. Ashwin, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Umesh Yadav, Harshal Patel, Deepak Chahar, Jasprit Bumrah.

**Australia:** Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar, Pat Cummins, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Aaron Finch (c), Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Kane Richardson, Daniel Sams, Steve Smith, Matthew Wade, Adam Zampa

# 1st T20 Experimental India face well-balanced Australia before T20 World Cup





'It cannot stop a good film from working'

## Pooja Bhatt on boycott culture

Aakruti Bagla | Mumbai

Actress Pooja Bhatt who made her OTT debut with Bombay Begums is all set to return to the big screens after a hiatus of 10 years with R Balki's Chup: The Revenge of Artist. Ahead of the release of the film, the actress shared how Bombay Begums provoked her to take on more projects and the dry spell in Bollywood.

On the desire to act more post-Bombay Begums Her series Bombay Begums received an overwhelming response. Talking about it, it reignited the urge in her to act more, the actress said, "It's not glowing reviews, it was during a scene of mine the director suggested close-up shot. I have been a filmmaker. And I am a realistic astute woman. I am aware of the fact that, anywhere in the world, the older the woman gets, the further the camera goes. Because people do not have problems with ageing men but they have issues with ageing women. Here is a filmmaker who is coming closer, which is very liberating for a woman. Because people first perceive you in regards to how you look."

On a dry spell in Bollywood

Talking about the current phase in Bollywood and highlighting Boycott culture, the actress quipped, "It's expensive to go to a theatre today and watching a movie is not the priority for families today. Because if they are spending that money, they need bang for their buck. On the whole, it's a combination of an economic slump with average content."

She further added, "If the movie is good, it will find its takers. I don't think any criticism or boycott or any other thing can stop a good film from working. And it cannot make a bad film work. The point is it's a bad phase for entertainment globally."

About Chup: The revenge of Artist It is an R Balki thriller based on the revenge of a filmmaker on the critics that review his film. The psychological thriller also starring Sunny Deol, Dulquer Salmaan, and Shreya Dhanwanthary in the lead.



I saw Nila in her, the moment I met her: R Balki on casting Shreya Dhanwanthary

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Filmmaker R. Balki has talked about casting actress Shreya Dhanwanthary in his upcoming psychological thriller film. Shreya is well-known for her Amazon Prime Video web series 'The Family Man' and 'Scam 1992'. "Shreya is a volcanic talent. I had seen her per-

form in 'Scam 1992' and 'The Family Man' and was hugely impressed."

"When I met her for the first time, within five minutes of the conversation, I asked her whether she'd like to read a script and that's how I offered her 'Chup'. I saw Nila in her the moment I met her."

Others headlining the power-packed cast of the

film are Sunny Deol and Pooja Bhatt. The film is written by R Balki himself based on the story he started working on a few years ago.

The Director of Photography is Vishal Sinha and Music Director is Amit Trivedi, Sneha Khanvilkar and Aman Pant. Pranab Kapadia and Anirudh Sharma are Co-Producers of the film.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Parineeti Chopra, who is gearing up for the release of her next 'Code Name Tiranga', says she is back again to present herself in a new avatar that no one has seen her doing.

The actress, who gained appreciation for her performance in film such as 'The Girl On The Train', said, "I am back again to present myself in a whole new avatar that no one has seen me do before! It is my attempt to keep doing disruptive content as I have been and to push my limits to bring something new on the table for the audiences."

"The bruises and me holding the gun in the poster is just a teaser of all the things that is in store for the audiences. This is just a sneak peek into my character and I can assure you that we intend to shock and awe with this film," she added.

An espionage action thriller, 'Code Name: Tiranga' is the story of a spy on an unfaltering and fearless mission for her nation in a race against time where sacrifice is her only choice.

Parineeti will play a RAW agent who is on an exhilarating journey across many countries. Harry Sandhu, who is an established and sought-after singer, will surprise the audience by his acting prowess in the film.

I am back with whole new avatar

## Parineeti Chopra

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Saiyami Kher's new look from an upcoming film is inspired by late veteran star Nargis Dutt.

In the monochrome pictures of Saiyami, which are from an upcoming film, her look is inspired by the legendary Nargis Dutt. She is seen wearing a simple cotton saree, with a bindi and plaited hair. The look is inspired by Nargis' character from her 1958 film 'Lajwanti'.

Saiyami says, "Nargis Dutt is a legend and just mere comparison with her is the biggest compliment I have got

and the comparison feels like such an honour. She was just perfect in any form, be it acting, beauty, grace."

"I have loved most of her movies, 'Shree 420', 'Aag' and 'Mother India' are my favourite. I always wonder how it would have been to live in that era and do films then. I love black and white pictures and films. It's actually a dream for me to do a film which will be black and white!"

Saiyami will soon start working on a project opposite Gulshan Devaiah. She is also teaming with 'Scam 1992' fame Pratik Gandhi, for Rahul Dholakia's 'Agni'. The film is based on firefighters.

Apart from that, she will soon be seen in 'Breathe Into the Shadow' Season 3 and 'Ghoomer', both opposite Abhishek Bachchan.'

'It's a dream for me to do a film in black and white': Saiyami Kher



I WANTED TO MAKE A COMEDY AND A SLICE-OF-LIFE FILM: MADHUR BHANDARKAR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

National Award-winning director Madhur Bhandarkar says he wanted to make a comedy and a slice-of-life film and that is how 'Babli Bouncer' happened to him. Talking about directing a subject like this, Bhandarkar says: "I am a very humorous person in real life. It's just that after 'Chandni Bar', people assumed that I love to do dark cinema. But when I got 'Babli Bouncer', I wanted to make a comedy, slice of life film." He added: "I felt I wanted to showcase a world of bouncers. It's an interesting world and how these people come from their villages. On top of that, after the first pandemic hit us so badly, I felt we really need a comedy film that people can watch with their family."

Produced by Star Studios and Jungle Pictures, 'Babli Bouncer' is directed by Madhur Bhandarkar and stars Tamannaah Bhatia, in the lead along with Saurabh Shukla, Abhishek Bajaj and Sahil Vaid in pivotal roles.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sayani Gupta