

# absolute india

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## SC refuses stay on HC order on MP anti-conversion law

# 'ALL CONVERSIONS CAN'T BE ILLEGAL'

The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued a notice on the Madhya Pradesh's government plea against a high court order restraining it from prosecuting interfaith couples, who get married without informing the District Magistrate.

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**  
A bench comprising Justices M.R. Shah and C.T. Ravikumar, during the hearing, noted that all conversions cannot be said to be illegal. The top court issued notice on the state government's plea and scheduled the matter for hearing on February 7.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the state government, said it cannot turn a blind eye if marriage is used for illegal conversion and added that there was no prohibition for marriage or conversion, but it was only required to intimate the District Magistrate. Mehta sought a stay on the high court order, however the apex court declined to pass any direction.

The state government, in its plea, contended that the high court order has mixed up Section 10(1) with Section 10(2) of the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 2021. It further added that the provision that applies to a citizen who is desirous of conversion is Section 10(1) and the violation of this provision has no penal consequences and there is no prosecution.



The state government said it is Section 10(2) which has penal consequences, which applies to a priest or person who is desirous to convert others by mass conversion. It added the validity of Section 10(2) cannot be tested in violation of any fundamental right as there is no fundamental right to convert others.

### The Madhya Pradesh High Court Decision

In its decision in November 2022, had restrained the state government from prosecuting "adult citizens if they solemnise marriage on their own volition" and violate Section 10 of the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act (MPFRA), 2021. The provision required individuals, who intend to convert, and the priest, who would carry out the conversion, to notify the District Magistrate of their intention 60 days in advance. The high court had found Section 10 of the Act prima facie unconstitutional. "Till further orders, respondent shall not prosecute the adult citizens if they solemnize marriage on their own volition and shall not take coercive action for violation of Section 10 of Act of 21," the high court had said.

### Cinema Hall Not A Gym

Cinema halls and multiplexes have the right to regulate movie goers from carrying food and beverage from outside, the Supreme Court ruled.

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said the cinema halls have the right to set terms and conditions for the sale of food and beverages inside the halls and bar carrying of food items from outside.

A bench, headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said a cinema hall owner has the right to regulate the entry of food and beverages into the movie hall.

The bench scrapped a Jammu and Kashmir High Court order that had removed the ban on the ground that people should not be forced to eat whatever the cinemas serve. "The cinema hall is not a gym that you need healthy food. It is a place of entertainment. A cinema hall is private property. It is for the owner to decide subject to statutory rules. Saying that arms are not allowed or that no discrimination on basis of caste or gender can be there, is fine. But how can the High Court say that they can bring any food inside cinema halls?"

The judges said the High Court had overstepped its brief and asserted that cinemas have already been directed to provide, especially for children, free food and clean water. "It is the viewer's right and discretion what theatre he picks to watch a film, so the management also has the right to make

### NO ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH OF LAWMAKERS

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Tuesday held that no additional restrictions other than those prescribed under Article 19(2) of the Constitution can be imposed on the right to free speech of a citizen, and emphasized that restrictions under Article 19(2) are exhaustive.

The top court said a minister's statement can't be vicariously attributed to the government and the minister is liable for the statement himself.

Justice Nagarathna said hate speech strikes at the root of equality and fraternity and added that fundamental duties could be used to check disparaging speeches and promote harmony among citizens.

The court cannot impose any greater/additional restrictions on the fundamental right of free speech of such public functionaries.

## UIDAI enables 'Head of Family' based online address update in Aadhaar

**Team Absolute | New Delhi**

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has put in place a facility to update address in Aadhaar online with the consent of the Head of Family (HoF).

Officials said that the HoF based online address update in Aadhaar will be of great help to the relative(s) of a resident-like children, spouse, parents, etc., who don't have supporting documents in their own name to update address in their Aadhaar.

It can be done by submitting Proof of Relationship documents like ration card, marksheet, marriage certificate, passport, etc., mentioning the name of both the applicant and HoF and the relationship between them and OTP based authentication by the HoF. In case even Proof of Relationship document is not available, UIDAI provides the resident to submit a self-declaration by the HoF in the UIDAI prescribed format. "With people moving cities and towns due to various reasons within the country, such a facility will be beneficial for millions of people. This choice would be in addition to the existing address update facility using any valid Proof of Address document prescribed by UIDAI. Any resident above the age of 18 can be an HoF for this purpose and can share his/her address with his/her relatives through this process," said the Ministry of Electronics and IT on Tuesday. In the 'My



Aadhaar' portal, a resident can choose this option while seeking to update their address online. Following which, the resident will be allowed to enter the Aadhaar number of the HoF, which will only be validated. No other information of the HoF's Aadhaar will be displayed on the screen to maintain adequate privacy of HoF. Post successful validation of Aadhaar number of HoF, the resident will be required to upload the Proof of Relationship document.

As per the UIDAI, residents have to pay the fee Rs 50/- for the service. On successful payment, a service request number (SRN) would be shared with the resident, and an SMS would be sent to the HoF about the address request. The HoF to approve the request and give his/her consent by logging into the My Aadhaar portal within 30 days from the date of receiving the notification and the request will be processed.

The resident, seeking address update through this option, will be informed about the closure of the request via an SMS. In case the request is closed or rejected due to non acceptance of the HoF or rejected during the process, the amount shall not be refunded to the applicant, said the UIDAI.

## Salman Khan's fan travels 1100 km to wish him on his birthday

**Team Absolute | Mumbai**

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan recently met one of his fans from Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, who travelled all the way to Mumbai on his bicycle to meet him on his birthday. He impressed the actor as he traversed about 1100 km.

His picture with the 'Dabangg' actor is going viral; there is a board on his cycle that reads: "Chalo unko duwaae dete chale. Jabalpur to Mumbai, deewana mai chala."

A Salman Khan fan page shared the picture and wrote: "Jabalpur-resident Sameer pedalled 1100 km from Mumbai to meet Megastar @beingsalmankhan."

The actor celebrated his 57th birthday on December 27. On his birthday, Salman shared a picture on his Instagram handle, waving at his fans. He wrote in the caption: "Thank you all..." The actor also hosted a birthday party for his family and friends. The party was attended by Shah Rukh Khan, Julia Vantur, Tabu, Pooja Hegde, Sangeeta Bijlani, Sonakshi Sinha, Kartik Aaryan, among others.



On the work front, Salman will next be seen in 'Tiger 3' with Katrina Kaif and 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan' with Pooja Hegde.

## Third Russian found dead in Odisha in less than 2 weeks

**Paradip | Agencies**

Another Russian was found dead in Odisha on Tuesday, the third such incident in a fortnight, police said.

The Russian, identified as Milyakov Sergey, was found dead in a ship anchored at Paradip Port in Jagatsinghpur district.

The 51-year-old man was the chief engineer of the vessel, M B Aldnah, which was on its way to Mumbai from Chittagong Port in Bangladesh via Paradip.

He was found dead in his ship chamber around 4.30 am.

Police could not immediately ascertain

the cause of the death.

Paradip Port Trust Chairman P L Haranand confirmed the death of the Russian engineer and said an investigation was underway.

Two Russian tourists, including a lawmaker, were found dead under mysterious circumstances in Rayagada town in southern Odisha in the latter half of December. Pavel Antov (65), a lawmaker in Russia, died after allegedly falling from a hotel's third floor on December 24, while his friend Vladimir Bidenov (61) was found dead in his room on December 22. Both cases are being investigated by the Odisha Police.

## Kanjhawala Shocker

### 'NO SEXUAL ASSAULT ON VICTIM', SAYS AUTOPSY REPORT

The last rites of Anjali, the 20-year-old woman who died a painful death after being dragged by a car for about 12 km in the early hours of Sunday, were performed at the Shiv Puri Mukti Dham crematorium on Tuesday evening. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday announced Rs 10 lakh compensation for the family of the victim. After talking to the victim's mother, Kejriwal also announced to bear the cost of her treatment.



**Team Absolute | New Delhi**

The initial post-mortem report of the 20-year-old woman, who died after being dragged by a car, has said that she was not raped, sources said on Tuesday.

The initial post-mortem

report was made by a panel of three panel doctors, the sources added. Sources also said that there were no injury marks on the private parts of the victim. The panel of three doctors on Monday conducted the post-mortem examination. The woman was killed in a hor-

rific accident on Delhi's outskirts late Saturday, being dragged 10 to 12 km from Sultanpuri to Kanjhawala under the vehicle. The autopsy was conducted by the panel at Maulana Azad Medical College on Monday evening.

**CAR DRIVER AT FAULT: VICTIM'S FRIEND**

**New Delhi:** In her statement before a magistrate, Nidhi, a friend of the 20-year-old woman who died after being dragged by a car here, said on Tuesday that the driver of the vehicle was at fault. Nidhi, who was riding with the victim on the latter's scooter at the time of the accident on Sunday, told the magistrate that she had fled the spot and did not tell anyone out of fear. In the statement, she claimed that the driver of the car was at fault and after being hit, Anjali fell in front of the car while Nidhi fell on the other side and escaped without getting hurt. However, the five arrested accused, identified as Deepak Khanna, Amit Khanna, Krishan, Mitthu and Manoj Mittal, told the police that the scooter was swerving which led to the accident.

## Ex-RAW chief AS Dulat joins Rahul's BJP



**Team Absolute | New Delhi**

Former Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) chief A.S. Dulat joined Congress MP Rahul Gandhi during Bharat Jodo Yatra in Delhi on Tuesday.

Dulat joined the Yatra and walked alongside Rahul Gandhi before he entered Uttar Pradesh.

Dulat was also the former Special Director of the Indian Intelligence Bureau. After retirement he served as an advisor on Jammu and Kashmir in the Prime

Minister's Office from January 2000 to May 2004. Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi also joined the Yatra in Delhi when it resumed after a break of nine days.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra entered Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday afternoon and Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra along with UP Congress workers were lined up at Loni Border to welcome the Yatra.

Bharat Jodo Yatra will end on January 30 in Srinagar with hoisting of flag.

## Boosters cut Omicron transmission in closed settings like jail: Study

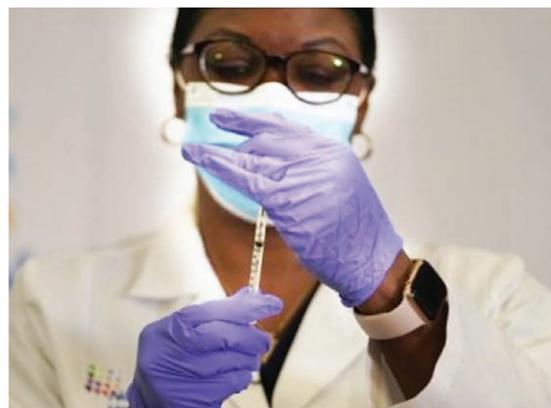
► In just over five months, there were 22,334 confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Omicron infections, 31 hospitalisations and no COVID-19 deaths.

► Vaccinated residents with breakthrough infections were significantly less likely to transmit them: 28 per cent versus 36 per cent for those who were unvaccinated.

► However, the likelihood of transmission grew by 6 per cent for every five weeks that passed since someone's last vaccine shot.

► Those with hybrid immunity, from both infection and vaccination, were 40 per cent less likely to transmit the virus.

► Half of that protection came from the immunity that one acquires from fighting an infection and the other half came from being vaccinated.



**NEW YORK | Agencies**

Covid boosters helped limit the spread of virus in California prisons during the first Omicron wave, according to an analysis by researchers at University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) that examined transmission between

people living in the same cell.

The study, published in the journal Nature Medicine, demonstrated the benefits of vaccination and boosting, even in settings where many people are still getting infected, in reducing transmission. It also showed the cumulative effects from boosting and the additional pro

## Ist Woman Army Officer On Operational Duty At Siachen Glacier



**Team Absolute | New Delhi**

Fire and Fury Corps officer Captain Shiva Chauhan became the first woman officer to be operationally deployed at the highest battleground in Kumar Post on the Siachen glacier.

"Capt Shiva Chauhan of Fire and Fury Sappers became the first woman officer to be operationally deployed in Kumar Post, at the highest battlefield of the world," tweeted the official account of Fire and Fury

Corps of the Indian Army.

The Twitter post has added the caption, 'Breaking the Glass Ceiling', celebrating Shiva's feat. Shiva had to undergo arduous training before her posting in Kumar Post. The Siachen Glacier is the highest battleground on earth, where India and Pakistan have fought intermittently since 1984.

A team of eight specially-abled people created a world record when they reached Kumar Post at 15,632 feet on the Siachen glacier in September 2021.



## MODI SPEAKS TO KING CHARLES, DISCUSSES ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday had a telephonic conversation with the UK's King Charles III for the first time since he assumed the throne.

Modi conveyed his best wishes to King Charles for a very successful reign.

They discussed a number of subjects of mutual interest, including climate action, conservation of biodiversity, and innovative solutions for financing energy-transition, among others. The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation for the King's abiding interest and advocacy on

these issues. Modi briefed him on India's priorities for its G20 presidency, including propagation of digital public goods. He also explained the relevance of Mission LIFE - Lifestyle for Environment, through which India seeks to promote environmentally sustainable lifestyles.

The leaders exchanged views on the Commonwealth of Nations and how to further strengthen its functioning, official sources said.

They also appreciated the role of the Indian community in the UK in acting as a "living bridge" between both countries and enriching bilateral relations.

## Guj HC asks govt to submit action taken report on banned Chinese thread



Ahmedabad | Agencies

The Gujarat High Court on Tuesday asked the state government to file an affidavit on an action taken report on how it is implementing the ban on Chinese thread 'Manja', as justifying a notification banning it is not enough.

The Chinese thread, used to fly kites in Gujarat, is a proven killer, with birds getting injured and even killed, while even humans get injured and sometimes it proving fatal too. The bench pointed out that it is not acceptable that because of Chinese thread, people

are getting killed or suffering severe injuries. Posting the next hearing on January 6, it asked the state to file a reply before it.

A public interest litigation was filed in the high Court, in which the petitioner has sought directions to the state government, police, and the Forest Department to initiate special drive for stopping the manufacture, sale, and use of nylon thread or synthetic thread coated with glass.

Petitioner has cited that in during the Uttaryan festival in 2019, 15 people died and 206 suffered injuries because of use of such threads.

## Priyanka welcomes BJK into UP, calls elder brother Rahul a 'fighter'

Loni (UP) | Agencies

As the Bharat Jodo Yatra entered Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday, AICC General Secretary in-charge of UP, Priyanka Gandhi, welcomed the Yatra at the Loni border and called his elder brother Rahul Gandhi a 'fighter'.

Addressing the Yatra, Priyanka Gandhi said, "I'm proud of my elder brother. People are raising questions about his security, but God will keep him safe as he is fighting for the country and is on the path of truth."

She said that as the Yatra moves towards Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, people should remember that unity is key to development. "The BJP spent crores of rupees to tarnish his (Rahul Gandhi's) image, but nobody can buy my brother," she said.

From Uttar Pradesh, the Yatra will be proceed to Haryana (January 6-10), Punjab (January 11-20), spend a day in between in Himachal Pradesh (January 19), before moving towards its last leg in Jammu and Kashmir on the evening of January 20.



The Yatra will culminate in Srinagar on January 30 with the hoisting of the national flag.

The Yatra has covered 3,122 km so far, from Gandhi Mandapam in Kanyakumari to the Red Fort in Delhi.

Over the course of 108 days, the Yatra has covered 49 districts in nine states and one Union Territory -- Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi.

## Confiscate property of drug peddlers, orders Punjab CM

Chandigarh | Agencies

Launching a direct offensive against the drug menace in the state, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Tuesday directed the officers to confiscate the property of those involved in the heinous crime of drug peddling.

Chairing a meeting here to review law and order situation in the state, he reiterated the firm commitment of the state government to wipe out the scourge of drugs from the state.

Noting that the government has already put the big fish involved in drug peddling behind bars, Mann said that to ensure further stern action, the property of these drug peddlers must be seized with immediate effect.

The Chief Minister said necessary amendments, if any required, in the requisite laws will be duly made. He said the officer, in whose jurisdiction drugs are being sold will be held accountable for this lapse. He said severest of severe action will be taken against the officers found indulging in drug trade.



Mann also asked the officers to ensure that the villagers unanimously pass resolutions for making their villages drug free. These villages are incentivised by giving grants under the Rural Development Fund and others.

He also said the security of these villages passing the resolution will also be ensured by all means.

## DISSATISFIED WITH SUGAR QUANTITY, CUSTOMER STABS KERALA TEA SHOP OWNER

Thiruvananthapuram: In a shocking incident, a tea shop owner in Kerala's Malapurram district was severely injured - and is fighting for his life - after a customer, irate over the quality of the tea, stabbed him on Tuesday, police said.

In the incident, which occurred at Malapurram's Tanur, where Munaf ran a small tea shop, customer Subair was upset because the tea had less sugar and started to argue with Munaf and ended up stabbing him. As per an employee, Subair came for a cup of tea in the morning.

"After the tea was served to him, first he raised complaints that the sugar was less. Then he started to get angry and Munaf tried to pacify him, but he continued to be angry. Then the two of them were seen pushing and shoving each other. After a while, Subair went away.

But later, he returned, stabbed Munaf with a knife he was carrying and fled," the tea shop employee said. A bleeding Munaf was taken to a nearby hospital and after first aid, moved to another hospital.

But seeing his condition, he was then moved to the Kozhikode Medical College hospital, where his condition is stated to be serious. Subair was later taken into custody by the police.

## Could have used harsher words to describe Pakistan: Jaishankar

Team Absolute | New Delhi

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar who has often described Pakistan as the "epicentre of terrorism", has said that considering the neighbouring country's role in promoting cross-border terrorism, he could have used "much harsher words than epicentre" for it.

"Because you are a diplomat, does not mean you are untruthful. I could use much harsher words than epicentre. So believe me, considering what has been happening to us, I think epicentre is a very diplomatic word," he said while responding to a question on using the word "epicentre of terrorism" for Pakistan, according to reports.

As per reports quoting him



in an interview to an Austrian channel on Monday, Jaishankar was critical of European nations for not condemning terror practices that have been going on for several years.

"So, when we speak about judgments and principles, why don't I hear sharp European condemnation of these practices which have been going on for multiple decades?" he said in response to a question. He said that

Pakistan is a country which attacked India's Parliament and also the city of Mumbai, and which everyday sends terrorists across borders, reports said.

On being asked whether the world should be concerned about a possible war between India and Pakistan, Jaishankar, as per reports, told the channel: "I think the world needs to be concerned about terrorism. I think the world has to be concerned that there is terrorism going on and the world often looks away. The world often feels it's not my problem because it's happening to some other country. I think the world needs to be concerned about how sincerely and strongly it takes up the challenge of terrorists."

## Delhi AQI turns 'severe' at many places, overall index 'very poor'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The overall Air Quality Index (AQI) of the national capital Delhi was in "very poor" category on Tuesday morning.

According to the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR), the city's overall AQI was recorded at 348 in the "very poor" category.

However, the air quality at many places across the city plunged to the "severe" category. As per the data from Central Pollution Control Board, the AQI at city's busiest ITO cross-section has plunged to "severe" category at 416.

The major pollutants PM 2.5 was recorded at 416 average, while PM 10 was at 299 "poor category" and CO level was 42 at ITO.

In India, the daily average CO levels of up to 2 mg/m3 are considered satisfactory.



As per CPCB data, the AQI has been recorded on the verge of becoming severe at 395 under "very poor" category. On Lodhi Road, the air quality continues in the "very poor" category with AQI level at 343. The major pollutants PM 2.5 was at 343, while PM 10 was at 242 and the CO level at

102. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

According to the early air quality warning system for Delhi-

NCR, used by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) for its forecasts, air quality is likely to remain in the "very poor" category on Tuesday.

The CAQM has said that Stage III measures of the Graded Response Action Plan (Grap) will continue till AQI improves.

## Guj teacher appeals on social media to donate woollen clothes for poor tribal students

Narmada (Gujarat) | Agencies

A primary teacher from Narmada district has appealed to people to donate woollen clothes for the poor tribal students.

"Around 84 students of the government primary school are so poor that they don't have woollen clothes to protect them from the chilling winter," the teacher has said in his appeal.

Vinubhai Gujaraya, one of the two school teachers of the Chopdi village of the Dediapada Taluka told IANS, "I was transferred to this school a few months ago. There are 84 students from Class 1 to 8, all students coming from very poor families, none of them have a single woollen cloth. So I made this appeal to the people of Gujarat to donate clothes."

Gujaraya was equally concerned that his appeal should not backfire on him and the government should not take any action against



him or the second teacher for appealing to the public to donate woollen clothes. This appeal is only to protect children from winter, he said.

When IANS took up the matter with District Primary Education Officer Jayesh Patel, he said that under the government scheme, for each academic year, the students are provided one pair of uniforms for which money is transferred to the children's accounts.

"There is no other scheme under which children can be provided woollen clothes, but still he will look into the matter and try to help students," said Patel.

The school teacher said bank accounts are in children's parents' names. "They are using the fund meant for school uniforms. He has complained that 50 per cent of 84 students have only one pair of clothes, other than one pair of school uniform," said Gujaraya.

## Rahul Gandhi 'perpetually confused', wants India to bow down to China: BJP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The BJP on Tuesday mocked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for being "perpetually confused" and accused him of wanting India to bow down to China over his recent remarks on the border tensions.

Addressing a press conference here, BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi took a dig at Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra, saying: "The Congress leader has become a victim of confusion during his travels. India cannot be understood only by travelling across the country, one needs to understand Indianess."

Referring to Gandhi's remarks on the border tensions in his interview with actor Kamal Hasan, Trivedi said, "Rahul Gandhi has made his intention clear that India should surrender before China in the same way



it used to happen during his party's government."

"The interview was an interaction between a 'perpetually confused and tensed leader' and a 'confused film star. But he has dispelled India's illusion... His statement on China is indicating that India should bow down to China," Trivedi added.

## Dense fog covers Rajasthan; Churu freezes at minus 0.9 deg C

Jaipur | Agencies

Dense fog and cold wave conditions gripped Rajasthan on Tuesday with Churu recording the coldest temperature in the desert state.

Churu registered minus 0.9 degree Celsius, the lowest temperature of the season.

Dense fog enveloped Jaipur due to which visibility dropped to less than 50 metres in the Pink City, Alwar, Dausa, Bharatpur, Ganganagar, Hanumangarh and Jhunjhunu.

The Meteorological Centre Jaipur has issued an orange alert for the districts of Jaipur, Bharatpur and Bikaner divisions while issuing a warning of severe cold for the next three days. There is a possibility of dense fog till January 4, while there is a possibility of strong cold-wave till January 6, the MeT Centre has forecast.



The Orange alert has been issued for Hanumangarh, Churu, Jhunjhunu, Sikar districts till January 5. A Yellow alert has been issued for Ganganagar, Bikaner, Nagaur, Jaipur, Alwar, Dausa,

Karauli, Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh and Bundi districts. In all these districts, the Meteorological Department has issued a warning of cold wave till January 6 and has expressed the

possibility of frost in the standing rabi crops in these areas. In view of this, experts have advised farmers to irrigate crops in the morning and evening, so that mustard and wheat crops can be protected from frost.

## RS 10L REWARD FOR INFORMATION ON RAJOURI TERROR ATTACK PERPETRATORS

Jammu: J&K Police on Tuesday announced a cash reward of Rs 10 for anyone giving information about the terrorists involved in the Rajouri attack. Police said, "Anybody sharing specific information regarding the terrorists involved in the gruesome terror attack at Dhangri Rajouri shall be rewarded Rs 10 lakhs.

"The details of the informer shall be kept secret." Terrorists on Sunday killed four civilians and injured six others in the Dhangri village of Rajouri district.

On Monday, two minor children were killed and six other persons injured when an IED planted by the terrorists at the site of the attack went off.

The UT government has already announced an ex-gratia cash compensation of Rs 10 lakh and a government job to the next of kin of the terror attack victims.



# INDIA'S FIRST, MUMBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE WINS TOP WTCA RECOGNITION



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The MVIRDC World Trade Center, here - India's first - has been accorded the premier accreditation from the World Trade Centers Association (WTCA), New York "for providing and setting up highest standards" of various kinds of business-related services, an official said here on Tuesday. Founded in 1970, the MVIRDC WTC has been recognised for its contributions to trade development, real estate services, conferences and exhibition services, said its Chairman Dr. Vijay Kalantri. Lauding the development, WTCA Board of Directors Chairman John E. Drew said that they had crafted the rigorous accreditation programme to recognise its member-WTCs who adhere to the WTCA standards for exceptional facilities and services that significantly enrich the local communities.

"The WTCA Premier Accreditation is a testimony of our continuous efforts to provide all facets of trade infrastructure and business services to members of trade and industry. It comes at an opportune time when MVIRDC WTC Mumbai has completed 50

years," said a pleased Dr. Kalantri. The MVIRDC WTC offered state-of-the-art trade infrastructure like multi-specialty conference and expo areas, supported by business and membership services to help MSMEs and women entrepreneurs to support their business growth internationally, and has earned distinction to become an acclaimed global trade promoting body in India, Dr. Kalantri explained.

The MVIRDC WTC will receive a special accreditation plaque and digital logo from WTCA New York to showcase its achievements that have met or exceeded industry standards on a global scale. The MVIRDC WTC Mumbai is the realisation of the vision of the legendary Bharat Ratna Sir Dr. Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya (1861-1962), who dreamt of an international trade promotion and industrial research centre in the country's commercial capital.

The iconic 53-year-old MVIRDC WTC Mumbai -- the first in India -- is situated in Cuffe Parade with the landmark twin towers, and were the tallest pair of buildings in south Asia till 2009.

# BJP PUNE MLA LAXMAN JAGTAP SUCCUMBS TO CANCER

Team Absolute | Pune

Bharatiya Janata Party MLA from Pimpri-Chinchwad Laxman Jagtap passed away after a long fight with cancer at a private hospital on Tuesday, party officials said here. A three-time legislator was synonymous with the progress of the Pimpri-Chinchwad, the twin city of Pune and popular among his constituents.

In 11 days, Jagtap is the second BJP MLA from Pune to die, after the late Mukta Tilak, 57, passed away following cancer on December 22, 2022.

Ailing with cancer for over two years, Jagtap, a fitness enthusiast, had been admitted to the hospital in November and since the past few days was on a ventilator till he breathed his last today.

His mortal remains will be brought to his residence at Pimple-gurav this afternoon to enable people pay their last respects and the funeral rites shall be performed later this evening, said his family.

Top leaders across the political spectrum paid rich tributes to Jagtap and his legacy over the past three decades of his public life.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde described him as "popular political leader, noted for his developmental



works in his constituency" and his death marked a loss of a loyalist and strong leader for the BJP. Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said he was anguished by the demise of his "close friend and associate" and offered deep condolences to the Jagtap family.

Nationalist Congress Party's Leader of Opposition Ajit Pawar expressed grief over the death of his close associate and said "Jagtap's contributions to the progress of Pimpri-Chinchwad will be remembered forever by the people".

Congress state President Nana Patole said the state will never forget Jagtap for his immense services to the people of his constituency and consoled the bereaved family.

# In unique protest, farmer buries himself in mud

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A farmer buried himself partially in the mud in protest against the non-possession of land allotted to him under a welfare scheme in Maharashtra over three years ago. Sunil Jadhav, a resident of Jalna district, was allotted the land in 2019 under the Karmaveer Dadasaheb Gaikwad Sablikaran Swabhiman Scheme.

"We were allotted two acres of land in 2019 under the Dadasaheb Gaikwad Scheme. But we don't have the papers in our hands yet. Therefore, I have buried myself," said the farmer. He also refused to end his protest until he gets the possession of the land. Protesters often resort to such innovative acts to put their demands in front of the authorities and the people.

During the protest against the Centre's now-withdrawn farm laws at Delhi's borders two years ago, the farmers made a strong



statement by organizing a blood donation camp. Earlier this year, a man took a bath in a ditch filled with water on the road in Kerala to protest against potholes. He was also filmed washing his clothes.

Last year, in a symbolic protest, junior doctors wore helmets on duty after a ceiling fan fell on one of their colleagues at a hospital in Hyderabad.

# TUNISHA SHARMA CASE COURT ALLOWS SHEEZAN KHAN TO KEEP HAIRSTYLE, BEARD

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Vasai Sessions Court on Tuesday, allowed Sheezan Khan, the accused in the Tunisha Sharma death case, to maintain his hairstyle and beard, as was requested by his lawyer.

The two applications filed by Sheezan's lawyer sought permission for Sheezan to maintain his physical appearance (hairstyle and beard) as it is and sought him to be kept under special protection and counselling, citing his "depressed" condition. Sheezan Khan is reportedly the former boyfriend and co-star of Tunisha, who was allegedly found hanging at a TV serial set on December 24, a fortnight after the two broke up their months-long relationship. Within hours of the actress' death, Sheezan Khan, who worked with the 20-year-old actor in 'Ali Baba Dastaan-E-Kabul', was arrested on charges of abetment to suicide. So far, the police have recorded the statements of 27 people in the matter.



# Two held for gunning down labour contractor

Team Absolute | Thane

Two persons were arrested on Tuesday in connection with the death of a labour contractor who was gunned down in Maharashtra's Thane district, police said. The victim Ganesh Duryodhan Kokate, was shot dead by some persons when he was travelling in his car near Kasheli arch on December 8, 2022, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Shivraj Patil said. An offence under section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code and Arms Act was registered at Narpoli police station of Bhiwandi division, he said. Based on a tip-off, the police laid a trap at Indira Nagar Naka in the city around 9 am and nabbed the accused, who are natives of Sultanpur in Uttar Pradesh, the official said. As per preliminary probe, one of the arrested accused is involved in three other serious offences registered at Srinagar police station, he said. The victim had earlier escaped a similar attempted killing in September 2022, and the police had arrested four accused in connection with the shooting, it was stated.

# PRO-PAKISTAN SLOGAN RAISED DURING PROTEST OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Team Absolute | Bhiwandi

A pro-Pakistan slogan was raised during a protest outside a school in Bhiwandi city in Thane district of Maharashtra, police said on Tuesday.

Prima facie, a student of the school who joined the protest along with other people on Monday raised the slogan hailing Pakistan, a police officer said. He said police arrested 17 persons, including five women, for staging the protest without permission under section 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the Indian Penal Code and the Maharashtra Police Act.

Protesters alleged the school abruptly hiked fees and restricted some students from studies.

# SONY TV CLARIFIES ON 'CRIME PATROL' EPISODE SIMILAR TO SHRADDHA WALKAR CASE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After facing massive backlash over a recent episode of 'Crime Patrol' that depicted a story similar to that of Shradha Walkar's case, Sony TV has issued a statement denying any connection with the case.

Sony TV issued a statement via their Twitter handle SonyLiv and wrote that the said episode was a "work of fiction" and that the episode was based on an incident dating back to 2011.

"Some viewers have commented on social media about a recent episode of 'Crime Patrol' on SET resembling a recent incident reported in the media. We wish to clarify that while the episode is a work of fiction, it is based on certain events that occurred in 2011 and not



connected to any recent case." They further wrote, "We take every care to ensure our content meets broadcasting standards laid down by the regulatory bodies. However, in this case, respecting the sentiments expressed by our viewers, we have discontinued the airing of the episode. If the telecast has hurt the sentiments of any of our viewers, we wish to express our sincere regrets." Makers of the show recently aired an episode wherein people noticed a stark resemblance in the storyline with Shradha Walkar's murder case. But things got a bit controversial over the fact that the makers changed the religion of the main leads - they showed the girl as a Christian girl while the boy accused of chopping her into pieces was shown as a Hindu boy (Mihir).

# Employees of three state-owned power companies to go on 72-hour strike from today

Team Absolute | Thane

Unions of three state-owned power companies in Maharashtra have warned of a 72-hour strike from Wednesday to protest against privatisation of power companies, an official said on Tuesday.

The strike has been called by Maharashtra Rajya Karmachari, Adhikari and Abhiyanta Sangharsh Samiti, an action committee of power company unions.

"More than 30 unions of drivers, wiremen, engineers and other employees have come together to thwart the attempt of privatisation in the state-owned power companies," Krushan Bhoir, general secretary of Maharashtra State Electricity Workers' Federation said.

The Maharashtra State



Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd (Mahavitran), Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co Ltd (Mahapareshan) and Maharashtra State Electricity Generation Co Ltd (Mahanimiti) are the state-owned power companies. Employees of these companies have been staging agi-

guards will go on a 72-hour strike starting Wednesday to protest against privatisation," Bhoir said.

One of the major demands of the protesting employees is that Adani Group's power subsidiary should not be given a parallel distribution licence to make profit in Bhandup in eastern Mumbai, Thane and Navi Mumbai, he said. "There are no financial demands in this agitation, but we want these power companies owned by people of the state to survive. These should not be sold to private capitalists who intend to only make profit," Bhoir said.

In the strike notice given to the state government last month, the action committee has also warned of an indefinite strike from January 18, if the demands are not met, he added.

# In freezing Kupwara, Pune medico leads women's march to 'Save the Girl Child'

Team Absolute | Kupwara (J&K)/Pune

Over 2,000 people, mostly women, led by Pune gynaecologist Dr Ganesh Rakh, trooped onto the streets of Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara town for a march in the freezing temperature, raising slogans of 'Beti Bachao', the organisers said on Tuesday.

The event - which saw the first of its kind biggest procession in Kupwara - marked the 11th year of Rakh's 'Beti Bachao Janandolan' (BBJ) and the 192nd birth anniversary of Savitribai J. Phule, the legendary social reformer of Maharashtra who inspired the unique campaign.

The marchers, with more than 90 per cent women in the age group of 18-40 marched down the Kupwara road with Rakh at the helm, carrying banners, placards and posters to save the girl child and raising slogans, in the town with a population of around 100,000.

Citing shocking figures, Rakh said that as per the 2001 Census, the male:female ratio of J&K was 1000:892, but in 2011, it fell to an abysmal 1000:889 well below the national average of 1000:940.

"The figures of the 2021 Census are not available, but there are indications that the situation may become more alarming this time all over," warned Rakh. Doifode appreciated the efforts of BBJ and Rakh in creating awareness and the importance of "celebrating the girl child" and said that in the coming days, similar programmes shall be organised in the entire Jammu & Kashmir.



Lulabi fervently called upon the people and parents to "treat all daughters with dignity and equal as the sons," and emphasised that this was imperative to protect the girl child for a better future.

"The girl child is our tomorrow. She is not a burden on the family, without her the family, the community and society cannot flourish or progress," she said. Bhat pointed out how people say that Islam allows more than one marriage, "but if the current trend persists, boys will find it difficult to get a girl for even one marriage in the near future", and urged the need to protect girls.

The Pune medico launched the BBJ at his small Medicare Hospital, a maternity hospital on January

3, 2012, by waiving all bills if a female infant was born.

Initially labelled as the 'Mad Doctor', the trend soon caught on and till date, Medicare Hospital has notched 2,450 free deliveries of baby girls, along with celebrations, cutting cake, distributing sweets and merry-making for all, in the past 11 years.

"In the past 11 years, the BBJ has attracted over half-million medicos, 13,000 social organisations, and 2.50 million volunteers who are working in their own ways to save the girl all over India, and we have conducted over 1,000 marches/rallies in the country and abroad for the humanitarian cause," he said with a tinge of pride.

# CBFC must expel Deepika's saffron bikini from SRK's disputed movie: Mukesh Khanna

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), according to actor Mukesh Khanna, must take strict measures against Pathaan's "Besharam Rang" song video because it allegedly "attacked" religious sentiments with the use of a saffron bikini top in the track.

Pathaan faced boycotts in various parts of the country as a result of the uproar. People set fire to Deepika and Shah Rukh effigies during a protest in Indore. Pathaan may be banned in Madhya Pradesh if some objectionable scenes and costumes are not replaced, according to Madhya Pradesh minister Narottam Mishra.

Mukesh Khanna, known for his controversial, orthodox views, slammed Hindi film producers in a video uploaded to his YouTube channel, alleging they use Hindu religion as a "soft target," which the CBFC must take note of.

"I have heard that the CBFC is considering removing objectionable bits from the song. I would urge the censor board to be more aware. If any producer intends to attack Hindu religion, then you are censor board. Someone told me, 'Sir, CBFC has passed it, what is your objection to it?' I said, is the censor board Supreme Court? If they



don't have knowledge of Hindu religion, then they don't have the right to be in censor board. We will protest... This is too much now," he said.

The actor stated that the CBFC should remove Deepika's saffron bikini from the song in order to send a larger message to filmmakers.

"If the censor board decides to change the words (of the song), that wouldn't suffice. The entire dress has to be changed. I am with this movement (to boycott the song), so that no producer dares to do this in the future. They will suffer losses and eventually no producer will do this."



EDITOR'S SPECS

RAHUL TO HOIST NATIONAL FLAG IN SRINAGAR ON JAN 30

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' will end in Srinagar on January 30 with hoisting of the national flag after it resumes on January 3 after covering 9 states and a Union Territory in its first leg, party leaders said on Monday. The Bharat Jodo Yatra has covered 3,122 km so far from Gandhi Mandapam in Tamil Nadu's Kanniyakumari to the Red Fort in Delhi. Over 108 days, it has covered 49 districts in 9 states and a Union Territory - Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Delhi. To convey the message of the Yatra, there have been 95 corner meetings, where Rahul Gandhi makes a short speech about the message of the Yatra at the end of the day. In addition, 10 large public meetings have been held, to which lakhs of people have attended. There have also been 9 press conferences, one in each state, where media, especially local media, have freely asked questions. The spirit of Bharat Jodo has also been celebrated with visits to several important religious and spiritual centres, interactions and performances by numerous artistes, and two Bharat Jodo concerts. The Congress said through these range of mass contact efforts, the Yatra is a significant milestone in the Congress's rich tradition of representing the voice of all Indians. Resuming from Delhi on Tuesday, it will enter Uttar Pradesh on the same day, and move till there till January 5, will be in Haryana from January 6 to 10, in Punjab from January 11 to 20, and also spending a day in Himachal Pradesh on January 19. The Yatra will enter Jammu and Kashmir on the evening of January 20.

FILMS AND STARS FAIL TO DELIVER: A DISMAL YEAR 2022

Vinod Mirani

It is the time of the year to look back on the one gone by, 2022. A great deal of hopes were riding on 2022 after the disastrous pandemic-hit two years - 2020 and 2021.

The countrywide lockdowns of all activities, be they personal or commercial, brought the world to a standstill. Like all others, the entertainment industry also came to a stop. No shootings for films or television, no film releases, no television serials or stage shows. Just nothing.

Things started to ease midway through 2021 with a hiccup here and there. Businesses and the entertainment industry as well were opening up gradually with controls being eased. It was a phased process, but it offered hope.

Just when the first total lockdown came into effect, people missing out on cinema and television took to the OTT platforms. These came to India 2016 onwards and are subscription-based, which few could afford or cared to subscribe. The lockdown worked wonders for OTT. Especially after these platforms started showing films; no one in India would pay to watch serials on OTT.

That too changed soon when episodic content was made especially for OTT streaming and because people also started discovering international productions. Besides, one thing the OTT platforms did was to provide work to actors who were talented but not used by filmmakers.

The film industry, which considered even a circus in town as an opposition, and later learnt to brave the onset of television, video piracy and CDs, now had the OTT platforms to contend with. Because OTT did not depend entirely on filmmakers for content; it also created its own.

The OTT platforms are a revolution and have affected the theatrical business all over. Especially since the flow of feature films had been greatly affected because of an 18-month lockdown, not only in India but all over the world. Besides, a lot of filmmakers have taken to creating content for these OTT platforms solely and not for regular theatrical release. It makes their job easier.

The OTT platforms made people also realise that subscribing to them made much



more economic sense than a single visit to a multiplex. This, besides the realisation that what hits a cinema today is bound to surface on the OTT platform in a matter of weeks.

The most affected branch of the entertainment industry is the exhibition trade, the cinemas, mostly the single screens. Already suffering and struggling for existence, a lot of them had to down shutters.

In Bihar, for instance, there used to be 200 single-screen cinemas, but only 70 remain now. The story is the same all over. And, in the Hindi belt, when it comes to multiplexes and single-screen cinemas, they manage to survive on the strength of films from Hollywood and dubbed films from the South. Not Hindi films, which have been their mainstay!

The cinemas tried to wean their audience back with gimmicks such as the National Cinema Day, when all tickets were sold for Rs 75. They also held an Amitabh Bachchan retrospective to coincide with his 80th birthday. In some countries, the exhibitors filled the cinema seats during the FIFA World Cup. But these were stopgap measures.

The biggest Hindi films were failing. Bigger the film, louder the thud. No actor could draw the initial viewers.

For the Hindi film industry, the year was an unmitigated disaster.

Just three films had managed to sail safe and earn profits. 'Bhool Bhulaiya 2', 'Drishyam 2' and 'The Kashmir Files' were the ones. 'Drishyam 2' and 'Bhool Bhulaiya 2' were sequels to successful films, so both got the benefit. 'The Kashmir Files' was an

unconventional film, not a commercial one.

And guess what, even among these three successful films, 'The Kashmir Files' remains the biggest grosser at Rs 240 crore! 'Drishyam 2' collected Rs 220 crore (the film is still running). 'Bhool Bhulaiya 2' made Rs 179 crore.

The Hindi films in between - all the 96 which released in 2022 - have collected Rs 1,800 crore. This is less than the 2019 figures. It must hurt the Hindi filmmakers that all the releases together this year have collected less than what just five dubbed South Indian films, which made a whopping Rs 2,400 crore between them!

And the point to note is that none of these figures are inflated, which Hindi filmmakers are suspected to be doing most of the time.

For Hindi films and its biggest stars, the days of Rs 200 crore and 300 crore are a thing of the past and not likely to happen any time soon. Who is to be blamed? The makers as well as the stars. The makers, for taking their audience for granted and dishing out unpalatable and least entertaining films - utter rubbish. The stars are known to accept any and every project with money being the only consideration. And just about every big actor, moreover, is overexposing him/herself spread across every media and on television ads.

Akshay Kumar had four releases - 'Bachchan Pandey', 'Ram Setu', 'Raksha Bandhan' and 'Samrat Prithviraj'. None worked. Ranbir Kapoor did two high-end films, 'Shamsher' and 'Brahmastra'; both disappointed. Ranveer Singh seems

to be closer to the end of his run, having delivered duds like 'Jayeshbhai Jordaar' and 'Cirkus', making it a hat-trick of flops with his last year's release, '83'.

Shah Rukh Khan had a guest role in 'Rocketry' to account for this year; his major new film, 'Pathaan', is due later this month. Salman Khan had no release this past year. The Hindi superstars and stars have all failed. Amir Khan's solo release, 'Laal Singh Chaddha', was a disaster. Shahid Kapoor had one release, 'Jersey', which was again a failure.

Kartik Aryan's career would seem to be on the rise after 'Bhool Bhulaiya 2'. Tiger Shroff has been the victim of sequels where the makers just want to exploit his action proficiency. Among female actors, Kriti Shanon was the most in demand along with Kiara Advani. Others offered little competition.

The cinemas, the multiplexes, which had taken to calling the shots, and deciding how a film would be released and on how many screens, are in an unenviable situation. Ironically, Hindi films, on which the cinemas thrived, are now a second choice for them. Take the example of the latest release, 'Cirkus', released last Friday. Most cinemas were screening 'Avatar' and were not willing to cede playtime to 'Cirkus'.

Why, one would wonder?

That is because the cinemas are now surviving on the flow of Hollywood films and dubbed South Indian films. The Hindi film industry has been delivering only duds. Hindi stars hold a grudge against the South-dubbed films capturing the Hindi-belt audience. Ajay Devgn even aired his resentment openly. He should understand that the South took over the Hindi audience when Hindi filmmakers and stars failed to deliver. And Devgn's own major hits are South remakes (which includes his latest success, 'Drishyam2')!

Why begrudge only South films, even Hollywood films are dubbed in various Indian languages and nobody has ever questioned that! And the truth is that television and OTT platforms today boast of bigger stars with bigger fan bases than the Hindi film industry stars!

international

RUSSIA PLANS PROLONGED ATTACKS WITH IRAN-MADE DRONES: ZELENSKY

Kiev | Agencies

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that Russia is planning prolonged attacks with Iran-made "Shahed" drones in a bid to "exhaust" the war-torn nation.

In his nightly video address to the nation on Monday, the President said that since the beginning of 2023, the Ukrainian Armed Forces have shot down over 80 Russian drones, reports Ukrayinska Pravda.

"Only two days have passed since the beginning of the year, and the number of downed Iranian drones over Ukraine is now over 80. This number may increase in the near future. Because the nights can be quite restless these weeks."

"We have information that



Russia is planning a prolonged attack with Shahed drones. Their bet may be on our exhaustion. The exhaustion of our people, our air defence, our electricity," he added. He went to say that "the Russian regime needs sentiments that would lead to

higher support of mobilisation. Something that they can demonstrate to their country in order to lie further, as if everything is going according to plan".

Meanwhile, Russian drone strikes on Ukraine appear to have increased in recent

days, with Moscow launching attacks on cities and power stations across the country over the past three nights. Continued Russian attacks Ukraine's energy infrastructure have destroyed power stations and plunged millions into darkness amidst the country's freezing winter. Zelensky's remarks also came hours after Ukraine confirmed that it carried out a strike in the occupied region of Donetsk, that killed hundreds of Russian troops, the BBC reported. In an extremely rare admission of battlefield losses, Russia said the attack killed 63 of its troops -- the highest number of deaths acknowledged by Moscow since the war began on February 24, 2022. The claims have not been verified as access to the attack area is restricted.

8 BODIES RECOVERED FROM MASS GRAVE IN LIBYA

Tripoli: The Libyan authorities have said that eight unidentified bodies were discovered in the city of Tarhuna, some 90 km south of the capital Tripoli. "The field teams from the Excavation Department recovered 8 unidentified bodies from a dump site in Tarhuna," said the General Authority for Research and Identification in a statement. The recovered bodies will be transferred to the forensic laboratory for identification and determination of the cause of death, Xinhua news agency reported, citing the statement.

Tarhuna was once the eastern-based army's main military operation center during the war against the former UN-backed Government of National Accord in and around Tripoli.

BIRD FLU CASES IN JAPAN REACH RECORD HIGH THIS SEASON

Tokyo | Agencies

Bird flu cases in Japan hit 54 this season, a record high after new infections were confirmed in Chiba and Fukuoka prefectures, the government said on Tuesday.

As of Tuesday, the number of outbreaks of avian influenza reached 54 across 23 prefectures in Japan this season, topping the previous record of 52 logged in the 2020-2021 season, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

On the day, an emu farm in Fukuoka reported a bird flu outbreak, with about 430 of the birds being culled, reports Xinhua news agency.

Meanwhile, at a poultry farm in Chiba, an avian flu case was also confirmed the same day, resulting in the culling of around 10,000



chickens at the location. This season's first case of bird flu was confirmed in October 2022, with the highly deadly H5N1 strain detected from samples of the infected chickens.

The total number of birds destroyed due to this season's outbreaks is expected to reach roughly 7.75 million.

Egypt retrieves ancient 'green coffin' from US

Cairo | Agencies

Egyptian authorities have announced that a significant ancient cover of a coffin known as the "Green Coffin" was returned from the US. The artefact belongs to a priest named Ankh In Maat, which dates from the Late Period (664-332 BC), the Tourism and Antiquities Ministry said in a statement.

The green coffin cover, made of wood, is nearly 3 metres long and carved with gilded decorations and hieroglyphic writings, Xinhua news agency quoted the Ministry as saying. It will be deposited in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo to be examined and maintained, it added.

Sixteen other artefacts were also recovered from the US along with the coffin, according to the Ministry.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Shoukry and the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Ahmed Issa witnessed



the ceremony of handing over the artefacts at the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry in Cairo.

Issa said Egypt attaches great importance to recovering smuggled antiquities and signed many cooperation agreements with other countries, including an agreement signed between the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and its US counterpart in 2016.

Under the agreement, many important artefacts were recovered, including the golden coffin of Nejm Ankh in 2019, and more than 5,000 pieces of artefacts in 2021, he added.

SYRIA DEVALUES LOCAL CURRENCY AMID WORSENING ECONOMIC SITUATION

Damascus | Agencies

Amid a worsening economic situation, the Central Bank of Syria has lowered the official Syrian pound's exchange rate against the US dollar for the second time since September 2022, reflecting a loss of about 50 per cent.

According to the bank's bulletin on Monday, the official exchange rate dropped to 4,522 Syrian pounds against 1 USD from the previous 3,015, reports Xinhua news agency.

Analysts believe the central bank's move aims at controlling the transactions from abroad and keeping the exchange process within banks instead of the black market. Monday's devaluation was the second in less than four months after the Central Bank weakened the national currency from 2,814 pounds to 3,015 pounds against the dollar in September. The latest decision came as the Syrian currency has



continued to crash in the war-torn country, plunging more Syrians into poverty.

Syria has been wracked by civil war since early 2011 when Bashar Assad's regime cracked down on pro-democracy demonstrators. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and over 10 million displaced, according to estimates from the UN.

Meanwhile, the currency has been hit hard by war, corruption,

Western sanctions and financial and economic collapse in neighbouring Lebanon.

IRAN SEES 'NO PROBLEM' WITH BUILDING TIES WITH EGYPT

Tehran | Agencies

Iranian Foreign Ministry's spokesman Nasser Kanaani has said that Iran sees no problem with building relations with Egypt. At a weekly press conference, Kanaani hailed the talks between the Iranian Foreign Minister and his Egyptian counterpart on the sidelines of a recent regional conference in Jordan's capital Amman as "positive". Xinhua news agency reported. More talks are being held to resolve consular issues between the two countries, he added. Speaking of the Iraqi prime minister's recent proposal to facilitate talks between Iran and Egypt, Kanaani said Iran "welcomes any positive steps taken for Iran-Egypt relations", reaffirming Tehran's rapprochement regional policy. In recent years, Iran has announced readiness to mend ties with Egypt by settling differences on certain issues.



6 KILLED, 5 INJURED IN TEXAS ROAD ACCIDENT

Houston: An investigation is underway after six people were killed and five others injured in a road accident involving three vehicles in Texas, local authorities said.

The accident occurred near George West, Xinhua news agency quoted the Texas Department of Public Safety as saying in a statement on Monday. Local media reported that a minivan travelling south on Highway 59 tried to overtake a vehicle in a no-passing zone and crashed head-on into a northbound SUV, which was then rear-ended by a sedan.



## 244 PATIENTS ADMITTED IN GWALIOR BECAUSE OF BRAIN ATTACK

### 28 died in 12 days

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The number of brain attack patients is increasing due to increasing winter. The beds in the neurology department of Jayarogya Hospital are full. In the major hospitals of the city, it was found that from December 21 to



January 1, along with neurology, 224 brain attack patients were admitted in RJN Apollo Spectra, BIMR, Kalyan Multispeciality and Sims Hospital.

Out of which 28 patients either died before reaching the hospital or they died shortly after the treatment started. Patients are being admitted in OPD of Neurology Department of Jayarogya Hospital even on holidays. The first day of the New Year was a holiday because it was a Sunday. Still 8 patients were admitted here. In a week, 64 patients have

been admitted to JAH's Neurology, out of which 10 patients died before

coming to the hospital or shortly after the start of treatment.

### Holidays declared in Shivpuri schools from January 4-7

Shivpuri: Schools, both primary and secondary, have declared holidays for the next four days in the Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh due to prevailing cold conditions. The holidays from January 4 to 7 were declared after the orders of Collector Akshay Kumar Singh who directed the school officials to close institutions for the next four days due to an increase in fog and cold conditions. Meanwhile, the meteorological department has forecasted an increase in the cold weather in the Gwalior Chambal region. A further dip in temperature, which is 5 degree Celsius now, has been predicted by the weather department.

## Cabinet decisions under chairmanship of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In a meeting of the Council of Ministers in Mantralaya held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Rs 1807 crore 57 lakh was approved for 45 CM Rise schools. In the first phase of the CM Rise Yojana, 275 schools are being developed by the School Education Department in the state. Out of these, DPRs were prepared for the construction of 45 schools and presented before the Project Testing Committee on December 7, 2022. In this sequence of departmental proposals, decision was taken for the



construction of 45 well-equipped schools on the recommendation of the Project Testing Committee. A total of 9 thousand 200 CM Rise schools are to be constructed in the state. Its in-principle approval from the Council of Ministers has been issued in July, 2021. Out of this, 370 schools are being constructed

in the first phase, of which 275 schools are being constructed under the Education Department and the remaining 95 schools under the Tribal Affairs Department. Earlier, approval has already been given by the Cabinet for construction of 73 schools costing Rs 2 thousand 660 crore.

### More decisions taken in Cabinet were regarding

- 433 new PG seats to be increased in medical colleges Rs 438 crore 40 lakh approved
- Approval and continuation of new form of Akanksha Yojana
- Approval for consensus in the election of panchayat representatives and increase in prize money for promoting unopposed elction
- Increase in honorarium of sarpanch of more than 23 thousand gram panchayats
- Decision to make CM Helpline 181 effective
- Creation of posts for Gyanodaya Vidyalayas
- Write-off of Rs. 15 crore 75 lakh in the interest of tribal families
- Approval of Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana 2.0
- Approval of operation of Shaurya Dal
- Disposal of properties

### COLLECTOR CHANGES SCHOOL TIMING AFTER MINISTERS INSTRUCTION

Bhopal: After instruction of District in-charge and UAD minister Bhupendra Singh, on Tuesday, Bhopal collector Avinash Lawania has issued an order to change school timing. Now school's timing will be 9:30am. At present, school timing is 8:30am and bus timing is 7:30am in Bhopal. Minister had instructed them to either close the schools or change the timing after seeing this biting cold. Bhopal recorded a night temperature of 8.0 degree Celsius on the intervening night of Monday-Tuesday.

## AIRTEL 5G PLUS GOES LIVE IN INDORE

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Bharti Airtel on Tuesday announced the launch of its cutting-edge 5G services in Indore.

The Airtel 5G services are currently operational at Vijay Nagar, Rasoma chowk, Bombay Hospital Square, Radisson square, Khajrana area, Sadar Bazaar, Gita Bhawan, Panchsheel Nagar, Abhinandan Nagar, Patrakar colony, Yeshwant road, Phoenix Citadel mall and few other select locations.

Airtel said it will augment its network making its services available across the city in due course of time.

"Airtel customers can now experience ultrafast network and enjoy speeds up to 20-30 times faster than the current 4G speeds. We are in the process of lighting up the entire city which will allow customers to enjoy superfast access to High-definition video streaming, gaming, multiple chatting, instant uploading of photos and more," Sujay Chakrabarti CEO, Bharti Airtel, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, said in a statement. Airtel 5G Plus services will be available to customers in a phased manner as the



company continues to construct its network and complete the rollout. The company says that it promises to offer massive speeds, the best voice experience, will work on all 5G smartphones and be kinder to the environment.

5G services have also kicked off in Delhi, Mumbai, Gurugram, Pune, Jammu, Srinagar, Shimla, Guwahati, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Patna, Siliguri, Nagpur and Varanasi. There will be no need to change the SIM as the existing Airtel 4G SIM is 5G enabled.

## THREE KILLED AS MINI-TRUCK CARRYING VEGETABLES OVERTURNS IN BURHANPUR

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Burhanpur: Three persons, including two farmers, were killed and four others injured when their mini-truck loaded with vegetables overturned in Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh in the early hours of Tuesday, a police official said. The accident took place around 3 am near Chouda Nala when the vehicle was going to Burhanpur town from Chamati village, the official said.

Seven occupants of the mini-truck were injured, of which two were declared brought dead, both farmers, at a local hospital, while the vehicle's driver died during treatment, he said. Four injured persons were undergoing treatment, said the official. Nimnola police station in-charge Hansraj Kumar said a probe was underway to ascertain the cause of the accident.



## 12-Year-Old Girl Raped In Betul , Accused's Vehicles Torched

Team Absolute | Betul

A 12-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a flour mill owner in Madhya Pradesh's Betul city, triggering tension in the locality as the victim's relatives and locals set ablaze two vehicles of the accused, police said on Tuesday. The 58-year-old accused, a former member of the local civic body, has not yet been arrested.

The incident took place in Azad Ward area on Monday evening following which the girl informed her parents about it, a police official said.

Later, angry relatives of the victim and locals set ablaze a car and a motorcycle of the accused, Ramesh Gulhane, parked outside his house, Kotwali police station in-charge Ajay Soni said.



Police rushed to the spot and had to use "mild force" to control the situation, he said. A case was registered against the accused under Indian Penal Code Section 376 (rape) and provisions of the Protection Of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, the official said. Madhya Pradesh

Home Minister Narottam Mishra told reporters in Bhopal that the situation is now under control and Gulhane will be arrested soon.

He said cases have been registered against the accused as well as those who indulged in violence after the incident.

## Speed up the repairing work of bad roads: CM Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the Public Works Department should speed up the repair work of bad roads in the state. Repair of all bad roads should be completed before the monsoon. Let the work of the department go on continuously. Chief Minister Chouhan was reviewing the works of Public Works Department in Mantralaya. Public Works

Minister Gopal Bhargava, Minister of State Suresh Dhakad, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains and senior officers were present. Chief Minister Chouhan said that the work worth Rs 18 thousand crore presently conducted by the Public Works Department in the state should be continued without any hindrance. Along with this, an action plan should also be prepared for starting new works worth Rs 14 thousand 800 crore. He said that 306 kilometer road

will be constructed in the state under Atal Pragati Path, Rs 9 thousand 502 crore will be spent on this. Chief Minister Chouhan said that the construction work of Atal Pragati Path should be completed within the stipulated time. Chief Minister Chouhan also discussed about the works and budget for the current and next financial year. It was informed that the land acquisition process for Atal Pragati Path will be completed by May 2023.

## CM to distribute joining certificate to newly recruited police constable

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will give away the joining certificate to the newly recruited police constables on January 5th, said the officials here on Tuesday.

The police constable recruitment batch 2020 has completed the recruitment process and has also completed their training. They are waiting to get the 'joining certificate' after which they will be eligible to wear the uniform and can perform their law and order duties. The DGP, Sudhir Saxena and other police department officials



are busy in finalising the programme. For the first time the CM will be going to distribute the certificate in a grand programme going to be held at Lal Parade ground. Sources informed that the CM will also be going to take lunch with the newly recruited police personnel. He will be going to give the tips of good and modern policing and also going to share the glorious history of policing of the state.

## Collector conducts public hearing, resolves disputes in Ratlam

Team Absolute | Ratlam

A district-level public hearing was held in the collector's hall on Tuesday. Along with collector Narendra Kumar Suryavanshi, district panchayat CEO Jamuna Bhide, SDM Sanjeev Pandey and deputy collector Trilochan Gaur heard 71 cases. Collector Suryavanshi made a phone call to the concerned tehsildars, naib tehsildars on several applications related to revenue and enquired about the situation. Suryavanshi expressed displeasure over receiving more complaints from the areas of Piploda and Dhodhar villages. He also warned all revenue officers that if he finds any complaint on the roads, then he will take strict action against the department. Two applications regarding Ratlam Municipal Corporation (RMC) area



were immediately redressed by executive engineer Jaiswal. Similarly, the collector demanded an immediate investigation of complaints against Dhodhar sarpanch who was alleged for partially distributing the land. Problems regarding encroachment, clean drinking water and others were also redressed.

## 3 YOUTHS KILLED AFTER BIKE COLLIDES WITH STATIONARY TRACTOR-TROLLEY IN CHHATARPUR

Chhatarpur: Three youths were killed after the speeding bike they were riding collided with a stationary tractor-trolley on the roadside in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district, the police said on Tuesday.

The accident occurred near Melwar village under Badamlehra police station limits in the district on Monday late night. Those who died were identified as Bhupendra Singh, Surendra Sahu and Ankul Namdev, residents of Nayagaon village, Tikamgarh district.

According to the reports, the youths were returning from Bhimkund and in the meantime, the rider lost control and the bike collided with the trolley loaded with dust parked on the road side near Melwar village of the district. One youth had died on the spot while two others died on the way to the hospital. Member of Parliament (MP) from Bhopal Constituency, Pragya Singh Thakur was passing from the area and she saw the youths lying on the road. After that she informed the police about the accident and called the ambulance. On getting the information about the accident, the police rushed to the spot and took them to the hospital. The police registered a case and started further investigation into the matter.

## Student groups clash in the middle of the road in Gwalior; attack each other with swords, belts, knives

Team Absolute | Gwalior

A video of a bloody fight involving swords between two groups of students in the middle of the road in Gwalior has surfaced on social media on Tuesday. In the video, both the groups can be seen fighting with each other. Swords, allegedly soaked in blood are also visible in the hands of the students which they are using to attack each other. The video is said to be shot at the city's Tansen Nagar intersection. Gwalior police has taken cognisance of the matter after the video went viral on social media. At the start of the video, some youth can be seen surrounding a boy and beating him mercilessly with a belt. After some time, the boy also brings along his companions with weapons in their hands and both the sides start fighting fiercely. Along with this, a sword is seen in the hands of a student which is allegedly soaked in blood.



sight of such a bloody fight in broad daylight.

Judging from the manner in which the groups of students are attacking each other with swords and knives, it can be inferred that

many of them were seriously injured in the fight. However, all the accused immediately fled the scene. After receiving information, the police are collecting information from the local peo-

ple. Speaking on the matter, ASP crime Rajesh Dandotia said, "The video has reached us and we are investigating it. After proper investigation, strict action will be taken in the matter."

## 12 South African Cheetahs Likely At Kuno National Park This Month: Report

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A second batch of 12 cheetahs is likely to arrive in India from South Africa in January, sources said on Tuesday. Discussions with South African authorities to translocate 12 cheetahs to Kuno are at an advanced stage and the animals are likely to arrive in January, a Union Environment ministry source said.

According to the 'Action Plan for Reintroduction of Cheetah in India' prepared by the Wildlife Institute of India, around 12-14 wild cheetahs (8-10 males and 4-6 females) that are ideal for establishing a new cheetah population would be imported from South Africa, Namibia and other African countries as a founder stock for five years initially and then as required by the pro-



gramme. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had released the first batch of eight cheetahs -- five females and three males -- from Namibia into a quarantine enclosure at the Kuno National Park on his birthday on September 17. The cheetah has come back to India 70 years after the species was declared extinct in the country in 1952.

The large carnivore got completely wiped out from the country due to over-hunting and habitat loss.



# JENNIFER LOPEZ SHARES NEVER-SEEN-BEFORE IMAGES FROM HER WEDDING

looks back on 'one of the best years' of her life

Los Angeles | Agencies

Jennifer Lopez was looking back on her spectacular 2022. The Jenny from the Block singer took to Instagram on Monday to post images from every month of the year with a special focus on the month of August which is when she wed Ben Affleck.

To celebrate the 53-year-old dynamo posted never-before-seen photos from her wedding where she had on a Ralph Lauren gown and he was in a dashing white tuxedo. 2022 was one of the best years yet!!! I cannot wait for all that's to come next year,' wrote the Hustlers actress in her caption. She followed with hash tags for 'Happy New Year, I'm Just Getting Started, Waiting For Tonight and This Is Me Now,' which

is the name of her new album. In the month of January the siren was seen on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles in front of her poster for the rom com movie Marry Me.

She was also seen modeling for her JLO Beauty line and also kissing Ben. In February the Bronx native was seen enjoying dinner with Ben in a kitchen as she was makeup free.

In March she was in overalls as she had her arm around Ben while on vacation. In April the star showed off her green diamond engagement ring from Ben.

In May, Jennifer was looking at sketches of her wedding dress for when she wed Affleck months later. June saw her promoting her docu Halftime and at more photo shoots.

July gave another look at her quickie Las Vegas wedding to Ben as she sat on the back of a convertible car with her veil fling. In August, it was wedding time as she was seen staring into a mirror in one of her RL gowns.

Then there was a photo of her in her keyhole satin wedding gown as she stood next to Ben who had a car door open. September was about being on vacation in a bikini. October saw her in a shirt and khaki slacks with wet hair while in a dressing room. She was also seen in black lingerie with a white shirt on. For November, she was posing in a floral outfit at her home.

And December saw her modeling a long pink gown with heels on. Her Vogue cover was also flashed. Next were her photos for Tis Is Me Now. The biggest reveal from the flashback was her wedding looks.



'The Conjuring 4' may be the final film in the horror franchise: James Wan

Mumbai | Agencies

Filmmaker James Wan says that the fourth installment of the "Conjuring" franchise may be the ultimate movie in it. Back in October, it was announced that a fourth "The Conjuring" film was in the works, with David Leslie Johnson-McGoldrick returning to pen the script. Johnson-McGoldrick previously wrote the script for "The Conjuring 2" as well as "The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It".

While promoting his new killer doll horror movie "M3GAN", Wan spoke to Collider. During their conversation, the host made sure to ask about the next

'Conjuring' movie and what future plans Wan has for the franchise.

Wan was quick to assure fans that this is a franchise near and dear to his heart and that the creative team is very mindful when they begin crafting a story about Ed and Lorraine Warren.

"Yeah, we are working on it right now.

With the 'Conjuring' films, we are very precious about (them). And so we kind of want to just take our time to make sure we get it right and to make sure the emotion of the Warren stories that we want to tell, and moving into, and potentially wrapping up, we just want to

make sure that it's the right thing, the right story that we're telling."

At the mention of "potentially wrapping up" the Conjuring movies, the host asked Wan if this next film would indeed be the last. "We never know. You never know. We'll see," he said.

## James Cameron explains 'game plan' for 'Avatar' sequels

Los Angeles | Agencies

Filmmaker James Cameron has compared the 'Avatar' sequels to "episodic television." The 68-year-old filmmaker has directed the long-awaited blockbuster 'Avatar: The Way of Water' and confirmed that a number of sequels are planned for the coming years to make sure that the sci-fi franchise stays fresh in the memories of audiences, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"We know exactly what we're doing. We know what these movies are gonna be. We just have to go through the process of getting them done. So ideally, two years from now, ('Avatar 3') comes out, ideally maybe three years after that ('Avatar 4') comes out, and then ideally maybe a couple years after that ('Avatar 5') comes out," James told TheWrap. The "Titanic" filmmaker continued: "If they're gonna invest in these characters, if they're gonna invest in this world, we want to give it to them at a regular cadence. That was the game plan. (The collective films are) really one big story, but it's like episodic television. Each one has its own proximal resolution. The character problems continue across the cut."

Cameron admits that he does "mourn some of the stories" that he has not been able to put on the big screen as he has devoted years to the 'Avatar' series. He told Empire magazine: "Two thoughts in answer to your question: the first is that the world of Avatar is so sprawling that I can tell most of the stories I want to tell within it and try many of the stylistic techniques that I hope to explore." "And secondly, yes... our time as artists is finite. I will always mourn some of the stories that I don't get to make. But I feel a great satisfaction when other directors want to explore some of my ideas, like Kathryn Bigelow did with 'Strange Days', and Robert Rodriguez did when I passed him the baton on 'Alita: Battle Angel'. I look forward to more collaborations in the future with directors I admire."



## 'BLINDING LIGHTS' BECOMES SPOTIFY'S MOST STREAMED SONG

Los Angeles | Agencies

Canadian singer The Weeknd was left shocked after his 2019 track 'Blinding Lights' became the most streamed song on Spotify of all time. The 32-year-old star, born Abel Makonnen Tesfaye, celebrated the news on his Twitter account on New Year's Eve, reports aceshowbiz.com. Reacting to the news that his track successfully surpassed Ed Sheeran's 'Shape of You', he wrote: "FOR NEW YEARS???" adding a trio of face with party horn and party hat emojis.

Later, The Weeknd turned to Instagram to post photos from 'Blinding Lights' music video, including snapshots of him, clad in a blood-red suit, laughing with blood covering his mouth. In the caption, he wrote: "Happy new years to blinding lights. The most streamed song of all time tonight."

The Weeknd first shared 'Blinding Lights' back on November 29, 2019 as the second single from his fourth studio album, 'After Hours'.

The track debuted at number 11 on the Billboard Hot 100 but went on to spend four weeks at the top spot. It eventually became the first song to hold a spot in the top 10 on the chart for an entire year.

According to Spotify's Daily Global chart, The Weeknd's 'Blinding Lights' dethroned Ed's 'Shape of You' by 918,000 filtered streams. Back in October, Ed discussed the possibility of 'Blinding Lights' passing his song on The Breakfast Club.

In addition to 'Blinding Lights', The Weeknd ended 2022 as Spotify's most-streamed artist of the year. He dropped his latest album, 'Dawn FM', back in January.



## Vick shows off her incredible figure in a bikini, on Australia tour with fiancé Calvin Harris

Los Angeles | Agencies

Vick Hope sizzled in her latest Instagram, showed off her incredible figure. The radio presenter, wowed in a very skimpy bandeau bikini while soaking up the sun on a beach in Australia. Vick, who is in the country supporting fiancé Calvin Harris, on tour, slipped into the tiny multicoloured two piece from Rat and Boa, to pose for the sandy snaps. The strapless top fastened in the centre with shell embellished ties and included oversized knots on the bottoms. Vick opted to go makeup free to display her flawless complexion, with her long curly locks swept over one shoulder. Posing for a second photo, the sun set behind her as she offered a sultry stare to the camera. It comes after Vick took to Instagram to share a slew of sizzling snaps as she soaked up the sun in Bali. The radio presenter showed off her incredible figure in a selection of skimpy swimwear as she explored the exotic location.

Vick was spotted wearing her diamond engagement ring at the Chelsea Flower Show in May after Calvin popped the question at his Ibiza farm, Terra Masia. A source told MailOnline at the time: 'Calvin and Vick's relationship has moved quickly but they're smitten with each other.'

'They could not be happier and are already planning their wedding, which is set to take place in Ibiza, where they grew close during Vick's secret visits to the White Isle. 'After keeping their relationship private, they decided to go public at the Chelsea Flower Show, they want everyone to now know their happy news.'

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Tasha Ghouri



## India vs Sri Lanka 1st T20I

# DEEPAK HOODA, AXAR PATEL GUIDE INDIA TO 162/5

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Deepak Hooda and Axar Patel came together to raise a quick-fire unbeaten half-century partnership in fine rearguard action as India managed to reach 162/5 in 20 overs against Sri Lanka in the first T20I of the three-match series at the Wankhede Stadium, here on Tuesday.

After the Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka won the toss and elected to field, his bowlers justified his decision as they struck at regular intervals, making full use of the pitch that played a bit slow but was still good for batting.

India looked in deep trouble with half the side inside the dugout with 94 runs on the board but Hooda and Patel came together and raised 68 runs for the unfinished 6th wicket partnership to help India to a decent score.

Hooda hammered 41 not out off 23



deliveries, hitting one boundary and four sixes while Patel struck 31 not out off 20 balls (three fours and one six) as India recovered from a precarious 94/5 in the 15th over. Their sensible batting took India to a decent total and they can defend it if the bowlers manage to strike some early blows and put the Sri Lankans in early trouble.

The match started in whirlwind fashion as Ishan Kishan blasted 17

runs off the first over bowled by Kasun Rajitha, hitting the right-arm medium pacer for six and two fours as the bowler struggled for direction, even bowling a wide delivery.

Ishan Kishan (37, 29 b, 3x4, 2x6) and skipper Hardik Pandya (29, 27b, 4x4) added 31 runs for the fourth wicket but once both of them departed in quick succession, India were down to 94/6 in 15th over and looking down the barrel. Hooda and Patel then came together to give them a fighting total.

### Brief scores

**India:** 162/5 in 20 overs (Deepak Hooda 41 not out, Axar Patel 31 not out, Ishan Kishan 37, Hardik Pandya 29; Chamika Karunaratne 1-22, Maheesh Theekshana 1-29) vs India.

### SHUBMAN GILL, SHIVAM MAVI MAKE T20I DEBUT FOR INDIA

**Mumbai:** Shubman Gill and Shivam Mavi, who were part of the India colts team that won the 2018 Under-19 Cricket Cup in New Zealand, on Tuesday made their debut for senior men's team of the country, in the first T20I against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium here.

Gill opened the India innings with Ishan Kishan while medium pacer Mavi came in place of Arshdeep Singh, who was unavailable, as the selectors continued to test youngsters after resting seasoned players Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, K.L.Rahul and Rishabh Pant. On Tuesday, Mavi was handed

## Premier League

# Brentford up to seventh with historic win over Liverpool

Brentford | Agencies

Brentford moved up to within six points of the top four with a 3-1 win against Liverpool, their first victory over the Reds since 1938.

Brentford had two goals ruled out for offside before they doubled their lead three minutes before the break when Yoane Wissa's downward header from Mathias Jensen's delivery beat Alisson.

There was to be no way back, however, and Mbeumo made the points safe for the Bees with a crisp finish four minutes from time.

Liverpool remain sixth with 28 points, two points ahead of Brentford, who are now in seventh.

The Matchweek 19 action continues on Tuesday when leaders Arsenal host third-placed Newcastle United at Emirates Stadium.

Victory for Mikel Arteta's side would move Arsenal 10 points clear of Manchester City, currently in second



spot. However a win for Newcastle, who have lost their last 11 matches at Arsenal, would see them leapfrog City and close the gap at the top to six points.

Eddie Howe's side beat the Gunners 2-0 when the two teams last met in Premier League action in May.

Manchester United are looking for a fourth consecutive win to consolidate their top four spot when they entertain AFC Bournemouth.

United, fresh from a 1-0 win at Wolverhampton

Wanderers, have won seven of their 10 Premier League meetings with the Cherries and are unbeaten against them at Old Trafford.

Further down the table, both Everton and Leicester City will be hoping for home comfort when they entertain Brighton & Hove Albion and Fulham respectively.

Everton sit only one point and two places clear of the bottom three while Leicester are three points ahead of 18th-placed Nottingham Forest.

## Men's National Boxing Championships

# Manish, Hussamuddin and Gaurav advance to quarters



2018 Commonwealth Games silver medalist showcased his exceptional technical ability to outperform his opponent and won the bout after the referee stopped the contest (RSC) in the second round.

He will face the winner of the bout between Manipur's Rohit Ningehougan Singh and Jharkhand's Neeraj Kumar Singh in the last 8.

Hussamuddin (57kg) who is also representing SSCB was squaring off against Lallawmawma of Mizoram. The two time Commonwealth Games bronze medalist was at the top of his game and dominated proceedings to blank his opponent and win by unanimous decision. He will face Uttar Pradesh's Manish Rathod in the quarter finals.

champion Gaurav Solanki advanced to the quarter finals of the 6th Elite Men's National Boxing Championships, here on Tuesday. Going up against Sandeep Doni of Andhra Pradesh, Manish Kaushik (63.5kg) who is representing the Sports Services Control Board (SSCB) put on a show of immaculate strength. The

Hisar | Agencies

Riding on exceptional performances, the 2019 World Championships bronze medalist Manish Kaushik, 2022 Asian Championships bronze medalist Mohammad Hussamuddin and the 2018 Commonwealth Games

## United Cup

# GARCIA KEEPS FRENCH HOPES ALIVE WITH WIN OVER MARTIC

Perth | Agencies

WTA Finals champion Caroline Garcia delivered the goods under pressure, defeating Petra Martic 7-6(9), 6-4 in a must-win United Cup rubber to keep France's hopes of advancing to the City Finals alive, here on Tuesday. Croatia had led 2-0 overnight after wins for



Donna Vekic and Borna Coric, but Garcia came into her clash with Martic with a promising 4-1 head-to-head record. The WTA Finals champion backed that up, extending it to 5-1 as she denied Martic the chance to clinch for her team.

### Berrettini powers past Ruud, sends Italy to Brisbane City Final

**Brisbane:** Italy is through to the Brisbane City Final at the United Cup after Matteo Berrettini guaranteed his country's place atop Group E on Tuesday morning.

Berrettini won a heavyweight clash against World No. 3 Casper Ruud 6-4, 6-4 to clinch Italy's tie victory against Norway, earning an insurmountable 3-0 lead. Italy will face Poland or Switzerland in the City Final on Wednesday, reports unitedcup.com. The World No. 16 hit 10 aces and won 88 per cent of his first-serve points (35/40) to move to 2-0 on the season having also defeated Brazilian Thiago Monteiro. Lucia followed Berrettini's lead to hold off Ulrikke Eikeri in a one-hour-and-48-minute duel. The Italian improved to 2-0 on the season, having defeated Brazil's Laura Pigossi in her season debut.

### Pegula, Tiafoe claim victories for United States

**Brisbane:** World No. 3 Jessica Pegula tallied her first win of the season with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Germany's Laura Siegemund on Day 6 of the United Cup.

After wins from Taylor Fritz and Madison Keys on Day 5, Pegula's dominant victory delivered the Americans an insurmountable 3-0 lead over Germany, reports unitedcup.com. World No. 19 Frances Tiafoe then followed Pegula onto court and moved his nation 4-0 ahead, defeating Oscar Otte 7-5, 6-4. Having defeated the Czech Republic in their opening tie, the USA will finish Group C undefeated and advance to the City Finals where it will face Great Britain.

## Ranji Trophy

# Unadkat wreaks havoc against Delhi, claims hat-trick in first over

Rajkot | Agencies

Saurashtra captain Jaydev Unadkat scripted history on his return to Ranji Trophy as the left-arm pacer claimed a hat-trick in the first over of the Group B match to wreak havoc on Delhi's top-order here at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium on Tuesday.

This was the first-ever first-over hat-trick in the history of Ranji Trophy.

Unadkat picked up a hat-trick in the first over of the match by dismissing Dhruv Shorey, Vaibhav Rawal, and Yash Dhull off the third, fourth and fifth deliveries.

He then added two more wickets to his kitty in the form of Lalit Yadav and Lakshay Thareja by the end of his second over to complete his 21st five-



wicket haul in first-class cricket. Overall, Unadkat picked up 6 wickets after con-

ceding 29 runs in 9 overs as Delhi were reduced to 10 for 7 after a dramatic start.

Last month, Unadkat was the leading wicket-taker during Saurashtra's run to the Vijay Hazare Trophy title. He picked up 19 wickets in 10 matches at an economy of 3.33.

The 31-year-old also earned a Test recall in Mirpur. He claimed three scalps as India recorded a 2-0 series win in Bangladesh. Saurashtra are in their quest to make the knockouts. After three games, they are currently placed third in Group B with 12 points, including one win and two draws.

On the other hand, Delhi are reeling with 2 points in the ongoing season after a 9-wicket loss against Maharashtra and a draw against Assam and Tamil Nadu. Mumbai and Maharashtra are currently placed first and second.

## National Championship

# Speedskater Anoli Shah bags multiple bronze medals

Bengaluru | Agencies

International speedskater Anoli Shah bagged three bronze medals at the 60th National Roller Skating Championship, here.

She won one bronze in track point to point + elimination race, one in track elimination race, and one bronze in mixed relay race in the Championship.

"Happy to have won 3 bronze medals at the national championship. The level of speed skating in India is getting better every year and we're getting closer and closer to hitting medals at the



international level. "I'm going back home with

some good racing experience and a better idea and understanding of all the areas I need to work on. Looking forward to carrying the experience ahead and doing my best to qualify for the Asian Games," said the ENGN backed speedskater, Anoli.

ENGN is an athlete representation company that works with Indian sports-women. Anoli also previously won 4 gold medals and was acclaimed as the 'Overall Champion' at the 42nd Gujarat State Roller Skating championship held in November, 2022 at Ahmedabad.

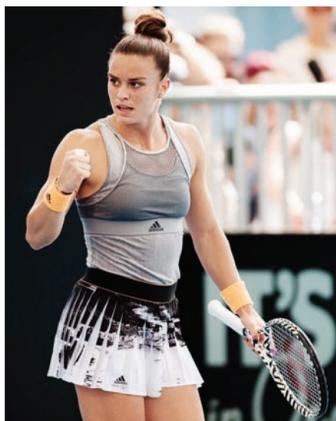
# Sakkari holds off Mertens to clinch Perth City Finals spot for Greece

Brisbane | Agencies

Maria Sakkari sealed a Perth City Finals place for Greece at the United Cup a 6-1, 7-5 defeat of Elise Mertens in one hour and 23 minutes.

Greece required only two points from the final tie of Group A to advance, and Sakkari's win backed up compatriot Stefanos Tsitsipas' defeat of David Goffin on the previous day, reports nitedcup.com.

Sakkari and Mertens brought one of the longest-standing rivalries of the competition into this pivotal match. The two 1995-born peers have been



squaring off since their days in ITF 10Ks back in 2014, and

this was the 10th time they had met in pro action. It's a head-to-head that has been swinging Sakkari's way in recent years, and the WTA No.6 underlined that with her most straightforward scoreline of the series so far the first time that she has required neither a third set nor a tiebreak to defeat Mertens.

The result is Sakkari's third win in a row over the Belgian and extends her overall lead to 6-4.

# All-India Snooker Open: Shaikh downs Yelve 4-3 in a thrilling encounter

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Amanullah Shaikh of Andhra Pradesh showed steely nerves as he recorded to score a nail-biting 4-3 victory against home challenger Ajinkya Yelve in a second-round match of the Rs 13 lakh prize-money NSCI All India Snooker Open 2023, here on Tuesday.

In a tournament that has the likes of Asian Games medallist Rafat Habib and Devendra Joshi, Shaikh took the spotlight on Tuesday as he hit form at the opportune moment to win 58-45, 9-85, 72-38, 62-49, 9-61, 29-58, 62-58 against Yelve at the NSCI billiards hall in the afternoon.

Later, in the evening, Nikhil Saigal, after a hesitant start, came into his own and pulled off a 4-2 (45-35, 55-22, 29-64, 61-45, 67-11, 59-7) win against Sukeel



Venkatramani in a second round qualifying match.

Both Shaikh and Saigal have now qualified among the 32- players for the main draw and will be joined by 32 leading Indian players who have received direct entries to the final round of the tournament.

In first-round encounters, seasoned cueist Mahesh Jagdale blanked Mitesh Thakkar coasting to a 3-0 (73-51, 54-50, 61-23) win and home cueist Shubhojit 'Tobu' Roy also enjoyed an easy outing defeating Anil Sagar by an identical 3-0 (51-5, 63-60, 61-22) frame scores.

In a keenly-contest match, Gaurav Prabhu worked hard to overcome Vivek Narayan 3-2 (8-74, 19-68, 40-35, 59-45, 59-56) and Anant Mehta defeated Karan Chugh 3-1 (66-2, 4-51, 69-22, 65-37) to advance to the second round.



# IN NEXT 3 YRS, INDIAN NON-FILM MUSIC WILL BE A FORCE TO RECKON WITH: BADSHAH

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular singer and rapper Badshah feels that in the coming three years, the Indian non-film music will become a prominent domain and a force to reckon with. Badshah, whose real name is Aditya Prateek Singh Sisodia, took to Twitter, where he shared his thought. He also shared that independent music artists will be super big.

"Within the next 3 years, the Indian non-film music scene will become extremely big and a force to reckon with. The live performance industry will flourish and independent music artists will be super big. Some super efficient artist management outfits will also come into being," Badshah tweeted.

Badshah started his career in 2006 and released his independent Haryana song 'Kar Gayi Chull', which was later adopted into the 2016 Bollywood movie, 'Kapoor & Sons'.

His music has featured in Bollywood soundtracks for films such as 2014 films 'Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania' and 'Khoobsurat'. He is also considered one of the highest-paid artistes of India, for his songs like 'Genda Phool' and 'Pagal'.

His debut single, 'DJ Waley Babu' featuring Aastha Gill, was ranked number one on the Indian iTunes charts within 24 hours of the release. His work, 'Genda Phool' and 'Jugnu' came out to be one of the most successful numbers.



# Arjun Kanungo to appear in cameo in Alaya F's upcoming

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer Arjun Kanungo is set to make a cameo in Alaya F and debutant Karan Mehta's upcoming film 'Almost Pyaar with DJ Mohabbat', a romantic musical Anurag Kashyap and Amit Trivedi.

Arjun said: "What a fun project to be part of! Anurag sir called me out of the blue and asked me if I want to come to London to shoot something with him." "I didn't even ask what and jumped onto it! Next thing I know I'm in Amit Trivedi's studio dubbing songs and packing for London! 'Almost Pyaar with DJ Mohabbat' is a very different concept and it was an honour to work with Amit, who has been a long time inspiration for me. A big thank you to Anurag Sir for giving me this opportunity."

'Almost Love with DJ Mohabbat', starring Alaya F and Karan Mehta who marks his debut, was recently presented at Marrakech's Jemaa El Fna Square this year.

The film was screened along with other spectacular films by stalwarts like Guillermo Del Toro, Paul Schrader and James Gray. The film is touted to be Anurag Kashyap's ode to modern love.

Presented by Zee Studios under the Good Bad Films production is slated to release on 3rd February 2023.



# Feel blessed to see myself in a Khaki uniform: Regina Cassandra

Team Absolute | New Delhi

'Yeh Hai Mohabbatein' actress Ruhaanika Dhawan has all the reasons to celebrate as she purchased a flat at the age of 15, for which she wrote a long note expressing gratitude towards her parents. But she has no plans to shift right now as she is preparing for her class 10 Board exams.

Moreover, the family needs more expenditure for doing the interiors of the house and thus they will wait for a year at least. Ruhaanika said: "Right now, I have to crack my board exams and so I am concerned about my studies and classes. For my academics only, I have taken a break from acting as well and focusing on my academics. Apart from that, certain interiors and other things also need to be done. So, we will wait for the funds, save money and maybe rent it out for a year and then plan to shift to the new house."

The actress, gave credit to the way her mother saved the money and invested it methodically for making this happened and purchasing a 3 BHK flat at such an early stage of her life. She added that it took years to have the financial arrangement for buying her new house: "It took 7 or 8 years to happen and it won't be possible without the support of my parents and especially my mother. Although, I started with 'Mrs. Kaushik Ki Paanch Bahuein' but that role was just for 15 or 20 days. The regular thing was 'Yeh Hai Mohabbatein' and I still remember I used to shoot on weekends for the show. Just three days, Friday, Saturday and Sunday."

**Ruhaanika Dhawan wants to focus on board exams, no plans to shift to new flat yet**

"Every penny of my earnings was saved by my mother and she invested it properly. God has been so kind that we got good returns out of the savings and everything. My father has invested in funds. So, I got a lot of support and motivation from my parents and thus it finally happened."

So, what is Ruhaanika planning to do after her studies? She said: "Post my studies, I want to focus on my acting career and would love to join a performing arts school in India or abroad and make a comeback on screen."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Regina Cassandra, who is known for her work in Tamil and Telugu films, will be next seen in web series 'Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke' and she is quite excited about portraying a woman IPS officer, Kavya on screen.

Regina says: "Putting rumours to rest, I am thrilled to be a part of 'Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke', helmed by Srijit Mukherji. It's been three months since we shot this crime thriller in four breathtakingly beautiful Indian states that gave it the rawness it needs."

The actress made her Kannada debut with "Suryakaanti" and her Hindi debut with "Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga". She was also seen in "Siva Manasulo Sruthi", "Kedi Billa Killadi Ranga", "Kotha Janta", "Power, Rajathandhiram", "Subramanyam for Sale", and many more. She made her web debut with the 2022 series "Rocket Boys".

On how she feels about playing uniform on-screen, she says: "Wearing the IPS officer's uniform was a surreal experience for me. This is up there with the most empowering characters I have essayed so far. Officers wear multiple hats and I believe that 'Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke' truly captures that. I feel blessed to see myself in a Khaki uniform."

Produced by Juggernaut and helmed by director Srijit Mukherji, 'Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke' focuses on the life of a woman IPS officer, Kavya played by Regina. The series will be streaming on ZEE5.



sophie chaudhary