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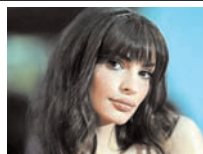
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'FALLACIOUS AND NON-SUBSTANTIATED'

RBI refused Swamy's claim of its staff involvement in bank scams

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The RBI has told the Supreme Court that BJP leader Subramanian Swamy's plea seeking a probe into the alleged role of its officials in various bank scams is "fallacious and non-substantiated".

The RBI, in an affidavit filed in the apex court, said: "The averments made by the petitioners trying to link the scams to the RBI officials is fallacious and non-substantiated in the absence of any prima facie evidence produced by the petitioners. It is submitted that the RBI has an internal mechanism/framework to examine an employee's conduct if there are any specific allegations, or prima facie evidence with respect to his actions or omissions." The apex court, in

October last year, had sought response from CBI and the RBI on the petition. The central bank further added that Swamy's plea is characteristically frivolous and based on a complete misunderstanding of facts as well as the applicable law and sought its



dismissal by the apex court. It said the petitioner has no locus standi to file the petition and it is riddled with factual and legal inaccuracies. "The petitioners have not presented any evidence or specific allegation in this regard and have merely made vague and ambiguous wild allegations against the entire institution of the answering respondent," the RBI's affidavit said.

It added that a bare

perusal of the petition reveals that it is bereft of the material particulars, and besides being gross abuse of process of law and waste of precious judicial time, it is also devoid of any merits or founded on substantial facts. The RBI's response came on a plea by Swamy seeking a probe into the alleged role of RBI officials in various banking scams. The apex court on Wednesday granted three weeks to Swamy to file his rejoinder to the affidavit.

SC judge recuses from hearing Bilkis Bano case, again

New Delhi: Supreme Court judge Justice Bela M. Trivedi on Wednesday recused herself from hearing a clutch of petitions against the release of 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case.

Bilkis Bano was gang-raped and multiple members of her family were killed during the 2002 Gujarat riots. Advocate Shobha Gupta, representing Bilkis Bano, contended that earlier Justice Trivedi had recused herself from hearing her client's plea against the release of convicts. At this juncture, the judges on the bench had a brief conversation. Justice Rastogi said that if Justice Trivedi had already recused from hearing the victim's plea, she would like to recuse from hearing this matter also.

ED attaches Shiv Sena (UT) leader Anil Parab's Rs 10.20cr assets

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a huge jolt to Shiv Sena (UBT), the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached properties worth Rs 10.20 crore belonging to former minister Anil D. Parab, here on Wednesday.



In a statement, the ED said that the provisional attachments were slapped in connection with the alleged money-laundering case probe against Parab, Sai Resorts NX and others in Ratnagiri. The attachments comprise lands of one acre at Murud world around Rs 2,73,91,000 and the resort constructed on it valued at Rs 7,46,47,000. Following a complaint by the Ministry of Environmental Forest and Climate change under the PMLA, the ED has launched a probe against Parab, Sai Resorts NX, Sea Conch Resorts and others last year, and a complaint was lodged against them with Dapoli Police Station for deceit and causing loss to the Maharashtra government.

No Development Zone and then he built the Sai Resorts NX with ground+two floors.

The ED said that in order to hide his identity as the owner, Parab obtained the permissions from the revenue department in the name of the previous owner Vibhas Sathe by forging his signatures on the application.

Parab is also accused of deliberately suppressing the fact that the land came under the CRZ-III with the Gram Panchayat, and later pressuring the GP to transfer the lands and buildings in his name though there was no mention of any construction in the original deed.

Later, the ex-minister cheated the GP by making an application for taxation purposes before completing the resort/building constructions. The ED said that the payments for the construction of the resort was deliberately made in cash and the building work started before the registration of the land in Parab's name though payments were made and the property was in his physical possession.

Covid scare: Govts should listen to advice of experts, says IATA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Following the imposition of travel restrictions for travellers from China, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has expressed disappointment over the "knee-jerk reinstatement of measures that have proven ineffective over the last three years".

"Several countries are introducing Covid-19 testing and other measures for travellers from China, even though the virus is already circulating widely within their borders. It is extremely disappointing to see this knee-jerk reinstatement of measures that have proven ineffective over the last three years," said Willie Walsh, Director General, IATA.

IATA said that the research undertaken around the arrival of the Omicron variant concluded that putting barriers in the way of travel made no difference to the peak spread of infections. At most, restrictions delayed that peak by a few days. If a new variant emerges in any part of the world, the same situation would be expected, it added.



"That's why governments should listen to the advice of experts, including the WHO, that advise against travel restrictions. We have the tools to manage Covid-19 without resorting to ineffective measures that cut off international connectivity, damage economies and destroy jobs. Governments must base their decisions on 'science facts'," Walsh said.

IATA (International Air Transport Association) represents some 300 airlines comprising 83 per cent of global air traffic.

ARMS, AMMUNITION RECOVERED FROM J&K'S KUPWARA

Srinagar: Arms and ammunition were recovered from Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district in a joint cordon and search operation by police, along with other security forces, on Wednesday, official said.

"Acting on specific information, police alongwith Army (03/08GR) launched a joint cordon and search operation in village Sathpora Taad area of Karnah, Kupwara.

"During the search operation, the joint team recovered arms and ammunition including three pistols, three pistol magazines, 22 pistol rounds, and three Chinese grenades from a house belonging to Shameem Ahmad Shiekh, son of Suderdin Sheikh, resident of Sudhpora Taad," a police official said.

Police have registered a case and investigations are in progress.

Delivery agent dies as car drags him after hitting his 2-wheeler in Noida

Team Absolute | Noida

The incident comes close on the heels of similar mishaps reported from Delhi and Greater Noida in the last three days.

A 20-year-old woman died a painful death in Delhi after her two-wheeler was hit in the early hours of January 1 by a car beneath which she got stuck and was dragged for around 12 km.

In Greater Noida, a 21-year-old woman, an engineering student, is reported to be battling for life at a hospital after she was hit by a speeding car on December 31 evening. Two of her friends who were also hit by the car, sustained minor injuries.

A man working with a food company as a delivery agent died after his two-wheeler was hit by a speeding car that went on to drag him for around one kilometre. The accident took place in the early hours of January 1 at around 1 a.m. near the flyover at Sector 14-A in Noida.

The deceased has been identified as Kaushal Yadav, a resident of Etawah in Uttar Pradesh.

Sources said that when Kaushal's cousin brother Amit Kumar called him around the same time when the mishap took place, the phone call was answered by an Ola cab driver.

The driver informed Amit that Kaushal was hit by a car that dragged him for around one km towards the road leading to Shani



Mandir, and then sped off. Immediately, Amit, along with others rushed to the spot and took Kaushal to the hospital. However, he had by then succumbed to his injuries.

Kaushal's family members have filed an FIR at a police station.

Woman forced to strip for security check at B'loru airport



Bengaluru | Agencies

An incident of a woman passenger being asked to take off her shirt during the security check has come to light at the Kempe Gowda International Airport (KIAL) in Bengaluru.

However, the authorities have responded that they deeply regret the hassle and would pursue the matter with the operations team.

The victim identified as Krishani Gadhi narrated her ordeal on her social media handle on Tuesday evening.

"I was asked to remove my shirt at the Bengaluru airport during a security check. It was really humiliating to stand there at the security checkpoint wearing just a camisole and getting the kind of attention

you'd never want as a woman. Why would you need a woman to strip?" Krishani questioned the authorities. However, Krishani had not mentioned any details about her travel destination. She claimed herself as a student and performing musician. Bengaluru airport authorities, while responding to her, apologised for the incident. "We deeply regret the hassle caused and this should not have happened. We have highlighted this to our operations team and also escalated it to the security team managed by the CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) a Government Sovereign." However, the sources questioned the motive of the victim on making statements on social media rather than complaining to the CISF or the police.

30% increase in respiratory patients amid excessive pollution in India in New Year

For people suffering from old respiratory illnesses, this winter has been super harmful amid a steep rise in air pollution and the Air Quality Index only going worse after Diwali, further deteriorating as we enter New Year.

BAD AIR QUALITY DAYS CONTINUE TO HAUNT THE INDO-GANGETIC PLAINS WITH THE AIR QUALITY INDEX (AQI) OSCILLATING BETWEEN 'POOR' AND 'SEVERE' CATEGORIES.

HOWEVER, WEATHER CONDITIONS IN THE FORM OF RAIN WOULD BRING SOME IMMEDIATE RELIEF BUT WITH INCREASING CLIMATE CHANGE THESE SYSTEMS HAVE ALSO BECOME INCONSISTENT.

ACCORDING TO METEOROLOGISTS, THERE HAS BEEN AN ABSOLUTE ABSENCE OF WINTER RAIN ACROSS THE PLAINS. IN THE WAKE OF THIS, A STABLE WIND PATTERN CAN BE SEEN OVER THE REGION AND SPEED IS ALSO VERY SLOW.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Health experts on Wednesday said there has been at least a 30 per cent increase in the num-



ber of respiratory patients this New Year, as some are even being admitted to the ICU because of low oxygen in blood and respiratory distress due to excessive pollution. "There has been a significant increase in number of respiratory diseases like bronchitis, chest infections, Pneumonia, asthma and COPD exacerbation, both in OPD and also needing hospital admission," Dr Manoj Goel, Director, Pulmonology, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, told reporter. People are coming with cough, breathing difficulty, chest pain and blood in sputum to hospitals.

increase in the number of respiratory patients. Mostly patients are suffering due to viral and atypical infections. We have not detected any new cases of COVID-19. This surge is because of the winter season and excessive pollution," Dr Goel added.

Patients with respiratory symptoms are very prone to a steep rise in air pollution and sometimes, it may require hospitalisation or an aggressive course of medication.

"Also sometimes patients may require ICU and very intensive support as we are now witnessing AQI levels at 400 which is severe," said Dr Mayank Saxena, Senior Consultant and Unit Head Pulmonology, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Vaishali.

Respiratory illnesses increase during the winter season due to air pollutants settling down in the atmosphere.

"Also, respiratory infections increase with viruses and bacteria in the environment," said Dr Ravindra Gupta Head of Department, Internal Medicine, C K Birla Hospital, Gurgaon.

Terror incidents down by 54% in J&K, has become a hotspot for tourists: MHA



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Union Home Ministry has claimed that Jammu and Kashmir has become a hotspot for tourists, instead of terrorists in 2022, with a reduction of 54 per cent in terror incidents.

In its year-end review report, released on Tuesday, the MHA stated that around 22 lakh tourists visited the union territory in 2022.

In 2018, 417 terror incidents were reported, which was reduced to 229 in 2021. While 91 deaths of security forces were registered in 2018, the toll came down to 42 in 2021. According to the report, there has been a decrease of about 54 per cent in terrorist incidents, 84 per cent in the

deaths of security forces and about 22 per cent in the recruitment of terrorists in J&K. The Ministry stated that earlier six lakh tourists visited J&K annually, which has increased to 22 lakh, resulting in more employment opportunities for the locals.

The MHA claimed that no incidents of stone pelting were recorded as the Narendra Modi-led government moved on the path of development with determination. The Home Ministry had earlier said that democracy in the valley was limited to only three families, 87 MLAs and 6 MPs, but Modi linked 30,000 people to democracy and made it reach village sarpanches, BDC members and district panchayats.



SC TO HEAR ON THURSDAY PLEA AGAINST EVICTION OF PEOPLE FROM RAILWAYS LAND IN HALDWANI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to examine on January 5 a plea connected with proposed eviction of more than 4,000 families from railways land at Haldwani.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan mentioned the matter for urgent hearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and comprising Justices S.Abdul Nazeer and P.S. Narasimha. The bench agreed to hear the matter on Thursday.

Bhushan said a connected matter is scheduled for hearing Thursday and asked the court to tag his plea along with it.

Bhushan's plea said: "The petitioners are poor people who have been lawful residents of Mohalla Nai Basti and Line N 17 & 18, Banbhulpura (Azad Nagar), Haldwani District Nainital, Uttarakhand for more than 70 years. As a result of a series of injustices that have resulted in an order for demolition of their houses



vide the impugned order, the petitioners are left with no remedy other than the present SLP." According to reports, more than 4,000 families face eviction from railways land in Banbhulpura area in Uttarakhand's Haldwani district, after the high court ordered demolition of constructions on the railway land.

The plea contended that the Uttarakhand High Court ordered the

summary eviction of more than 20,000 people residing in more than 4,000 houses even though proceedings regarding the title of the residents were pending before the district magistrate. The plea has been filed by Bhupendra Arya and others, challenging Uttarakhand High Court order on December 20, 2022, which directed petitioners be evicted within a week and their houses be demol-

ished. According to reports, encroachments around Haldwani Railway Station included around 20 mosques and nine temples and schools.

"It is submitted that the high court, in complete disregard of settled principles of title and occupation, collectively rejected all documents placed by the petitioners, said the plea.

The petitioners contended that the names of the local residents have been recorded in the municipal records in the house tax register and they are paying the house tax regularly. "Further there are five government schools, one hospital, and two overhead water tanks in the area. Thus, the long physical existence of the petitioners, some even prior to Independence, has been recognized by the state government and its agencies by providing the petitioners with electricity and gas connections, enrolling the petitioners on voters list and providing them with Aadhaar cards," said the plea.

Victim had 40 external injuries, skull fractured & ribs exposed, says autopsy report

Team Absolute | New Delhi

There were at least 40 external injuries, ribs exposed from back as skin had peeled away, the base of skull was fractured and some brain matter was missing, said sources citing the autopsy report of the woman, who died after being dragged by a car for 12 kms on January 1.

"The provisional cause of death is due to shock and haemorrhage as a result of ante mortem injury to the head, spine, left femur, both



lower limbs. All injuries produced by blunt force impact and possible with vehicular accident and dragging," stated

the report. Also, the report indicates that there was no injury suggestive of sexual assault.

No sign of her having alcohol in autopsy report, claims Anjali's family

New Delhi: The family members of Anjali, who died after being dragged by a car, said on Wednesday that it was not an accident but a murder.

"It is not an accident but a planned murder," said the family members of Anjali, who was dragged for about 12 km from Sultanpuri to Kanjhawala under the car. Talking to media, Bhupendra Singh Chaurasia, a family member of the deceased, who had Anjali's autopsy report in hand said that the post-mortem report showed no signs of her having alcohol. The family's statement comes after Nidhi, a friend of Anjali's who was with her during the January 1 night, said that Anjali was drunk and not in her senses. However, the official confirmation on the findings and final opinion of the post-mortem is still awaited.

Chaurasia said that the autopsy report has suggested that no abnormality has been detected and no alcohol was found in the abdomen region.

Mopa greenfield airport to be named after Parrikar

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday gave ex-post facto approval for naming the greenfield international airport at Goa's Mopa as Manohar International Airport, after former Defence Minister and Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar.

"To fulfil the cherished aspirations of the people of Goa, Chief Minister of Goa conveyed unanimous decision of the Cabinet of state government to name the greenfield international airport, Mopa, Goa as Manohar International Airport - Mopa, Goa," an official statement said.



The airport at Mopa had been inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in December 2022, and named

after late Parrikar in recognition of his contribution in building modern Goa, the statement added.

Huge amount of cash recovered in raids in Bengal clashes probe: NIA

Kolkata | Agencies

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) said that it conducted raids at 17 locations in and around Kolkata on Wednesday in connection with the Ekbalpur-Mominpur clashes that took place on October 9 last year, and recovered huge cash from certain residences where the clashes broke out.

Although the exact amount of cash recovered is yet to be known, an amount of Rs 33 lakh were recovered from four residences at Bhukailash Road in the first two hours of raid conducted by the NIA team, which was escorted by the central armed forces personnel.

It is further learnt that the NIA team, at certain places at Bhukailash Road and Mayurbhanj Road in the area, faced resistance from local people during their operations. People surrounded the vehicles of the investigating team and started agitating.

However, the escorting central armed forces personnel removed the agitators crowd, following



which the NIA officials conducted their raids smoothly. The clashes broke out on the occasion of

Laxmi Puja and in the process of dispersing the violent mob, one officer in the rank of Deputy Commissioner of Police was also injured. Police later detained 30 persons.

On October 19, the NIA took over the investigation in the matter from the special investigation team (SIT) of Kolkata police which was formed following a directive of a division bench of the Calcutta High Court.

On November 10, addressing an administrative review meeting in Nadia, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee accused the NIA of fuelling communal tensions in the state. "There are certain communal groups in Murshidabad who are troublemakers. The NIA then enters the scene to fuel tension further. All the public representatives in such communal pockets have to be careful that a small incident does not snowball into a major crisis.

Whenever you hear of such incidents, you immediately intervene with the district and police administration and bring the situation under control," she said then.

RLD and farmer organisations join Bharat Jodo Yatra in western UP



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and farmer organisations extended their support to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and participated in his Bharat Jodo Yatra in western Uttar Pradesh on

Wednesday. Wednesday marked the second day of the Yatra's UP leg. The Yatra entered from Ghaziabad's Baghpat district and was welcomed by the people. The western region of Uttar Pradesh is mainly home to farmers

and youths preparing for army recruitment. The youths walked with the Yatra and discussed the army's Agniveer recruitment scheme with Gandhi. Comedian Rajeev Nigam, during the Yatra, said that everyone has been trying to unite the country in their own way and extended support to Gandhi's campaign.

RLD workers and local leaders welcomed the Yatra by hoisting their flags. Earlier on Tuesday, RLD Chief Jayant Chaudhary had shown his support by terming the campaign as a means to unite people.

Professors, doctors from various universities and social organisations also participated in the campaign. According to the Congress, the Yatra is slated to continue in Uttar Pradesh from January 3 to January 5, following which it will enter Haryana and proceed towards Srinagar.

SONIA IN HOSPITAL FOR TREATMENT OF VIRAL RESPIRATORY INFECTION



New Delhi: UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi was admitted to Sir Ganga Ram Hospital here on Wednesday for "observation and treatment of a viral respiratory infection", doctors said.

As per a hospital bulletin, quoting it Chairman, Board of Management, Dr Ajay Swaroop, Gandhi has been "admitted in the Department of Chest Medicine under the care of Dr. Arup Basu and his team".

"Mrs Gandhi has been admitted for observation and treatment of a viral respiratory infection," the bulletin said.

The former Congress chief was last seen in public on the Congress Foundation Day on December 28. Prior to that, she participated in the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Delhi on December 24.

8 CPI Maoist cadres surrender before J'khand police

Ranchi | Agencies

Eight prominent Maoists, including three women who were part of the CPI Maoist organisation led by Misir Besra, surrendered before the Jharkhand police on Wednesday.

The police has declared a reward of Rs 1 crore on Besra.

This marked a first in the last five years, where such a large number of Maoists surrendered together.

Jairam Bodra, Martam Angaria, Sarita Sardar, Tungri Puri, Patar Koda, Kusnu Sirka aka Kartik Sirka and others, surrendered at a programme organised by the state police. Many cases have been registered against them in different police stations of Chaibasa, Jamshedpur, Seraikela-Kharsawan districts. The



Maoists alleged that rampant discrimination and exploitation existed within the organisation and it no longer followed any policy or principle.

They added that they could return to the mainstream through the state police's scheme called 'Operation Nai Disha'.

Jharkhand's IG Operation Amol V. Homkar, Zonal IG Pankaj Kamboj, Special Task Force IG Anup Birthare and Chaibasa SP Ashutosh Shekhar were present on the

occasion. Homkar said that the surrender policy of the state government had proved to be effective and gave the Maoists a chance for a new life, away from violence.

Earlier, 14 Maoists surrendered before the state police and security forces in 2022. The government had declared a reward on most of them. Eleven Maoists were killed in police encounters in the state last year and 416 were arrested from different areas.

BIKRU MASSACRE: SC GRANTS BAIL TO KHUSHI DUBEY

Lucknow | Agencies

The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted bail to Khushi Dubey, the wife of Amar Dubey a co-accused in the Bikru massacre and a close aide of slain gangster Vikas Dubey.

Eight police personnel who had gone to arrest Vikas Dubey on July 3, 2020, were killed when the gangster and his men opened fire at them.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices S. Abdul Nazeer and P.S. Narasimha took note of the submissions of senior lawyer Vivek Tankha that Khushi Dubey was a minor at the time of offence and regular bail be granted to her as the charge sheet has also been filed in the case.

Khushi Dubey was accused of exhorting the armed co-accused of gangster Vikas Dubey to kill the policemen.

The bench said one of the conditions will be that the accused will have to appear before the station house officer (SHO) of the police station concerned once a week besides cooperating in the trial and probe, if any.

Khushi had been married for just seven days when the incident took place and was arrested immediately after by the police.

She is accused of pointing out the presence of policemen who had gone to arrest Vikas Dubey to her co-accused and that allegedly



led to the massacre of the men in uniform.

Khushi Dubey's counsel said it is a case of an innocent person at a wrong place at the wrong time as she was married to Amar Dubey only seven days before the incident. Vikas Dubey was killed in an encounter on July 10 when a police vehicle carrying him from Ujjain to Kanpur met with an accident and he tried to escape, police had said. Amar Dubey and five others were also killed in back to back encounters.

Khushi Dubey's lawyer told the court that more than 100 witnesses were to be examined in the case and it was a fit matter for the grant of bail keeping in mind the allegations against her.

Not even single drop of water to share with Haryana: Punjab CM

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Strongly presenting the case of Punjab before the Central government on the Satluj Yamuna Link (SYL) canal, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Wednesday said the state does not have even a single drop of water to share with Haryana.

"More than 78 per cent of our 150 blocks are in extreme dark zone due to depletion of groundwater table, so Punjab can't afford to share its water with any other state," said the Chief Minister after a meeting with his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal Khatar in the presence of Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.

The Chief Minister said at a time when this anti-Punjab agreement for the canal was inked, the state was getting 18.56 MAF of water which has now been reduced to 12.63 MAF.

He said now "we don't have any



surplus water to share with any state".

Mann said Haryana is currently getting 14.10 MAF of water from the Satluj, Yamuna and other rivulets, whereas Punjab is getting only 12.63 MAF. Batting for changing the nomenclature and proposal of the project, the Chief Minister said that instead of Satluj Yamuna Link (SYL) canal, the project should be now conceived as Yamuna Satluj Link

(YSL).

He said the Satluj river has already dried up and there is no question of sharing even a single drop of water from it. Rather, Mann said that water from the Ganga and Yamuna rivers should be supplied to Punjab through the Satluj river.

The Chief Minister said this is the only viable alternative which can be considered in wake of the alarming situation of water scarcity in the state.

He said despite being smaller in area, Haryana is getting more water than Punjab and ironically it is demanding more water at the cost of Punjab. In wake of this fact, Mann said how can "we give water to Haryana if our own fields are starving for it". The Chief Minister said the state has a centuries-old canal system due to which the district even at the centre of the state falls on the tail end of canal water.

He bemoaned that the Union government has not issued even a single penny for the rejuvenation of the canal system due to which farmers are suffering. There are 14 lakh tube-wells in the state which are pumping water regularly to fulfill the irrigation needs of the state and make the country self-sufficient in food production. The Chief Minister said it is ironic that due to availability of surplus water, Haryana is today encouraging the sowing of paddy in its districts.



DEVEN BHARTI APPOINTED AS SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF MUMBAI POLICE

The special Mumbai Police commissioner post has been created for the first time by the state government.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra Home Department on Wednesday appointed 1994 batch IPS officer Deven Bharti as a special commissioner of Mumbai Police.



Bharti was replaced by joint commissioner (traffic) Rajvardhan on December 13. Bharti was also part of some of the top investigations in the city including some of the high-profile cases in Mumbai.

YOGI TO INTERACT WITH INDIA INC IN MUMBAI TODAY

Team Absolute | Mumbai/Lucknow:

Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath will interact with the top names of India Inc. when he leads the first domestic roadshow in Mumbai on Thursday (January 5) ahead of the Global Investors' Summit 2023 to be held in Lucknow from February 10 to 12.



ministers and bureaucrats will interact with persons from Uttar Pradesh who are now settled in Maharashtra. The team is also scheduled to meet actors, directors, producers from Bollywood during which they will hold discussions on the upcoming Film City in

Greater Noida. During these events, the chief minister will present a picture of emerging Uttar Pradesh, which has evolved from the BIMARU state into a developing state, the spokesperson said.

RPI Kawade faction joins hands with CM Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Eknath Shinde faction of the Shiv Sena and the People's Republican Party of India (Jogendra Kawade) announced an alliance, a boost to the Shinde camp ahead of the civic and local bodies polls in Maharashtra.

in the Dalit votes for the Shinde-led faction of Shiv Sena, which is seeking to consolidate its base. Addressing a joint news conference with Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Kawade said the alliance is only with the 'Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena'.

ment of everyone. We are very impressed by him, the Dalit leader said. Notably, the tie-up was forged at a time when talks are on between the Uddhav Thackeray-led faction of Shiv Sena and Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) led by Dalit leader Prakash Ambedkar.

EX-MAHA MINISTER DHANANJAY MUNDE SUFFERS MINOR INJURY IN CAR ACCIDENT

Mumbai:

Nationalist Congress Party leader and former Maharashtra minister Dhananjay Munde received a minor chest injury when his car met with an accident near Parli city after midnight on Wednesday, his office said.



Man kidnapped for Rs 7 lakh ransom, rescued: police

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai police rescued a man who was kidnapped a month ago for a ransom of Rs 7 lakh and arrested one of the accused involved in the crime. The accused identified as Arjun was arrested from Karnataka's NM Joshi Marg police station, the police official said on Tuesday.



"Based on technical information, police teams were sent to Sangli and neighbouring Karnataka, and a victim was rescued after a month-long hunt," DCP Pathan said.

under sections 363 (kidnapping), 384 (extortion), and other relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code. "The accused took the victim Ramesh Kale to Sangli district of Maharashtra and from there to another state Karnataka, after which NM Joshi Marg police interrogated about 1200 people, then arrested the accused," DCP said.

1.25 LAKH MSEB EMPLOYEES WITHDRAW STRIKE AFTER GOVT INTERVENES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Over 86,000 employees of the Maharashtra State Electricity Board's three companies and 40,000 contract workers, who launched a 72-hour strike from Wednesday, called off the agitation after the state government's intervention, top leaders said.



Working President Rakesh Jadhav. "The state government is not interested in privatising any of these companies. In fact, the government will invest over Rs 50,000 crore towards infrastructure assets in these companies in the next three years," said Fadnavis.

and why the government was not contesting it, he said that the administration will contest it as per the laws after the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC) issues its notification. "The unions wanted it to be challenged as the private companies' entry would hit the government and the electricity consumers. I have cat-

egorically assured that we shall contest it within the available legal framework," Fadnavis said. MSEB Workers Federation President Mohan Sharma has said that the areas eyed by Adani Group are currently served by the MSEDCL and the move would raise fears of privatisation. The unions' main demands were: no to ATL's entry to distribute power in more areas of Mumbai and surroundings, regularisation of the 40,000 contract workers through a special recruitment drive, no to privatisation of hydro and thermal power plants and stopping private players from laying transmission lines and setting up new sub-stations.

Videocan loan case CBI TO FILE REPLY TO KOCHHARS' PLEA BY FRIDAY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday granted the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) time till Friday to file its reply to the plea of former ICICI Bank Chief Executive Officer and MD Chanda Kochhar and her businessman-husband Deepak Kochhar, challenging their arrest in an alleged loan fraud case.



arrest, the central agency sought time to file its response. Deepak Kochhar's lawyer Vikram Chaudhary submitted that the wedding of his client's son is scheduled for later this month and invitation cards have been distributed. The businessman was called to record his statement in the case, but was instead arrested, said the lawyer. Chanda Kochhar's lawyer told the court that the prosecution in a

case against her under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) had made a statement that her arrest was not required. But the CBI arrested the former ICICI Bank CEO citing non-cooperation in investigation of the loan fraud case, said her lawyer. The Kochhars have been named accused in a separate case filed under the PMLA against them by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Case against couple for manhandling lawyer, taking his laptop, registered



Team Absolute | Thane

Police have registered a case against a couple and another person for allegedly barging into the office of an advocate in Maharashtra's Thane district, manhandling him and taking away his laptop and files, an official said on Wednesday.

place on Tuesday afternoon, he said, adding that no arrest has been made so far. The couple, from Dhokali in Thane city, reached the office of advocate Aniruddha Nandkumar Jadhav in Bhiwandi area in a car, inspector (crime) Vikram Mohite of Shanti Nagar police station said. They allegedly forced their way into the advocate's office and manhandled him before taking away some files and

his laptop, said the official. Based on a complaint by the victim, the police registered a case against the couple and the car driver under Indian Penal Code Sections 506 (criminal intimidation), 394 (voluntarily causing hurt in committing or attempting to commit robbery), 452 (house-trespass after preparation for hurt, assault or wrongful restraint) and 34 (common intention), he said.

Courts have not been set up to validate gov't illegal decisions: Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) on Wednesday said the courts have not been set up to validate "illegal decisions" of the government, and to declare demonetisation as valid was tantamount to defending "economic massacre".



"The courts have not been set up to validate illegal decisions of the government," the editorial said, listing the recent decisions including the Pegasus spyware and Rafale fighter jet cases which went in the government's favour. "To say that demonetisation was valid is to defend the economic massacre in the country," the editorial said. The Supreme Court in a 4:1 verdict on Monday gave its stamp of approval to the Centre's 2016 decision to demonetise Rs 1,000 and Rs 500 denomination currency notes, saying the decision-making process was neither flawed nor hasty. There was consultation between the Reserve Bank of India and Union government for six months before the notification was

issued, it noted. The Saamana editorial, meanwhile, also said that none of the stated goals of demonetisation were achieved, and it only helped those who were close to the government convert black money into white. It was told that the decision was taken to stop circulation of fake notes and hurt the finances of terrorists in Kashmir, it said. Black money, terrorism, narcotics trade are still happening, and drugs worth several lakh crore have been seized from a Gujarat port, it said. Hundreds of people died standing in queues outside banks (to withdraw money) while the decision also hit businesses and rendered lakhs of people jobless, the editorial said.

Two major hospitals in city set to get smoke filtration systems

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Two major civic hospitals in the city are set to get smoke extraction systems soon. After the fire in Bhandara civil hospital in January last year in which 10 newborns died, the civic body has decided to set up smoke filtration systems in the intensive care units of major hospitals. BMC chief Iqbal Singh Chahal last week approved a proposal for the same for BYL Nair Hospital in Mumbai Central and Lokmanya Tilak hospital in Sion. The civic body, however, has no plans to set up the system in peripheral hospitals yet. It will cost the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation R13.66 crore to install the system at these two hospitals. Another major civic-run hospital, KEM, already has the systems. As per the proposal, the smoke during a fire hinders the fire-fighting process and is also toxic. With the installation of a smoke extraction system, the civic body aims to reduce harmful gases in the air which could prove hazardous and also increase visibility, thus helping the process to

evacuate people. It also mentions that as it is not possible to install a duct flue, the civic body has decided on a ductless smoke filtration mechanism. A civic official said that as ICUs are completely closed and have more equipment than other wards, the risk of short-circuit is higher. In view of this, the system will be installed in the ICUs and neonatal intensive care units. When asked about plans to set up the system in peripheral hospitals, a BMC official said, "We do not have such a plan now. Currently, some of the hospitals are undergoing redevelopment and one new hospital is being constructed in the suburbs. We will consider installing a similar system there later." Additional Municipal Commissioner Dr Sanjeev Kumar did not respond to mid-day's calls and messages. As per reports, the expansion works of Shatabdi hospital in Govandi, Bhabha hospital in Kurla and M T Agarwal hospital in Mulund are in process. The BMC is also working on a proposal to redevelop its old hospital in Kannamwar Nagar in Vikhroli.



EDITOR'S SPECS

AKHILESH, MAYAWATI, JAYANT SKIP BHARAT JODO YATRA IN UP

A day after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra entered Uttar Pradesh, none of the prominent opposition leaders joined the Yatra on Wednesday.

The Yatra was pulling big crowds, but despite invitations none of the opposition leaders have joined the Yatra so far.

The western UP was the epicentre and driving force of the farm agitation. But farmer leaders have skipped the Yatra. Neither Rakesh Tikait nor any representative of the farmers' union have joined the Yatra. The Congress leaders, however, are saying that the Yatra has managed to pull a massive crowd and it was spreading the message of unity.

The Congress had invited Akhilesh Yadav, Mayawati and Jayant Chaudhary of the RLD to join the Yatra. All the leaders have given their good wishes to Rahul Gandhi, but have not joined him. The Bharat Jodo Yatra entered Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday, AICC General Secretary in-charge of UP, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, welcomed the Yatra at the Loni border and called his elder brother Rahul Gandhi a 'warrior'.

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

CRIME PREVENTION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN INVESTIGATION

D.C. Pathak

The ghastly incident of a young lady being dragged under the wheels of a car for miles in India's capital - resulting in a most painful death of the woman - by a group of drunken vagabonds out to 'enjoy' a late New Year night, raises, above everything else, the question of the systemic decline of policing in this country over years. The car had hit the woman driving a scooter on her way back home from a late night party and the young men - inebriated and totally oblivious of any kind of social responsibility - did not pause to respond to the fact that something untoward had happened in their knowledge.

The entire stretch of road on which the car moved after the incident covered more than one police station area but not one policeman or PCR vehicle, if present on duty, swung into action. A public spirited witness reportedly rang up the Control Room but there was no immediate response of the kind that an emergency call should have evoked. It has taken a most tragic death of a citizen - a hardworking girl of a poor background who was somehow managing to feed her large family including an ailing mother that was totally dependent on her - to wake up the nation about what was not working on the law and order front.

While the case was being 'investigated' for whatever was the crime content of the incident, an inquiry committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) might go into the systemic and individual failures brought out by the episode for the purpose of defining the learnings that would upgrade the Delhi Police working and get it to serve as an example in future for the law and order management anywhere in the country.

After all there has to be a uniform level of efficiency that policing must maintain through the length and breadth of the nation even as state governments had been made autonomous in handling the most important duty of a democratic country - of ensuring the safety and security of citizens against the assaults of criminals, anti-social elements and influence-wielding individuals.

It is known for very long that there was a breakdown of supervision by senior officers over that ground level establishment of law and order management called the Police Station that worked closest to the citizens.

Once upon a time officers at the level of SP and above made surprise visits to police stations at night to ensure that the staff was not all 'sleeping' it off and becoming inaccessible to people reporting an emergency.

On special occasions like New Year eve when special law and order arrangements had to be made in a metropolitan city, duty would be taken by turns and even senior officers - they are mostly from IPS - would in the midst of their personal engagements find some time to 'take a round' in some part of their jurisdiction or the other to keep to the mandate of supervision in place.

Police leadership is not identifying itself with police station - one reason for this 'aloofness' could be the reality that those wielding political power in some places directly dealt with



Station House Officers at the back of their seniors.

In parts of Delhi, the police arrangements for the New Year eve apparently remained only on paper - this would not have been the case if any senior officer would have made a mid-night supervisory trip to any of the police stations concerned.

IPS officers need to be reminded that they were in law, supposed to have the power of the Station House Officer in respect of all the police stations in their jurisdiction and asked to demonstrate this through surprise inspections of some police stations or the other once in a while. The subject of supervision of police stations should receive special emphasis during the main course for IPS run by the National Police Academy, Hyderabad.

Another healthy legacy of Policing of the times gone by, which seemed to have been given up, is the recognition of 'beats' that the PS had for the purpose of specially earmarking staff for their coverage - in terms of keeping an eye on the quiet and ascertaining discreetly from the conscientious citizens if everything about crime and order was satisfactory there.

Sections 107 and 108 of Cr PC and Section 34 of Police Act together enable a Police Officer to stop and check an individual - for a valid reason like loitering - to ascertain what was he doing at that particular place at that point of time. This will work with public acceptance if Policemen were deemed to be upright and honest which unfortunately was not the case always.

At the same time police leadership has to make it a part of its responsibility to identify a 'rogue cop' and take effective action against him.

In the case of Delhi incident, a police officer if present on duty, would have had sufficient grounds to stop the Baleno car of the rowdy looking New Year revellers on that fateful night and catch them in time for drunken driving if nothing else.

A colossal Police deficiency of this kind should serve the purpose of quickly reviving police management practices that had been given up possibly because of a collusion of convenience between political leaders, administration and police leadership itself, among other things.

Under the present Union Home Minister, the MHA is more emphatically pursuing the Police Modernisation Scheme and improving the mobility, communications and Police housing situation in particular.

Apart from providing equipment and manpower to the Police, the country needs to move in the direction of putting police stations in the charge of gazetted officers and giving the Centre a role in the appointment of DGP of the state by stipulating that this selection will be done out of a panel of three officers drawn up by UPSC on the basis of seniority-cum-merit in consultation with the state government. Also, it will help the larger national objective if inter-state transfer of IPS officers are made a little more common with special recognition being given to the fact that the officer had served at least for one tenure in any state other than the 'cadre state'.

Further, there should be a revival of District Armed Police (DAP) and its contingents should be placed at selected police stations for rapid deployment in potential law and order situations. A district force would know the territory and people better compared to the State Armed Police or Central Para Military forces.

Measures that provide a level playing field to police in all parts of the country make for internal cohesion and grater uniformity about the management of law and order as a task that did not have any political tint.

Structural improvements can not however hide the flaws in the professional handling of the police force, effective deployment of men and evaluation of performance of individuals. Army establishes a bench mark in the practice of officers identifying themselves with their men.

A civil police force is widely dispersed and the control of seniors is somewhat remote. However, it is a question of evolving practices that remove the functional gulf between the police station and the hierarchy of senior officers above.

Friendly surprise visits to police stations, formal inspections and participation in an occasional 'Bara Khana' at one of the Police Lines are the means by which IPS officers can strengthen their supervision - these practices were well recognised but seemed to be fading out.

The IPS officers should ensure that credit was given to subordinates where due and deterrent punishment was also awarded to individuals guilty of an indefensible serious dereliction of duty.

In the annual evaluation of SPs and Range DIGs mention should be made of the visits to PS the officer had made during the year. There is a lurking doubt about the extent to which the Indian Police Service (IPS) had - over the decades of its existence - really upgraded the working of Police Stations in India. It is not late to do this in mission mode even today.

(The writer is a former Director of Intelligence Bureau. Views expressed are personal)

international

CANADA ADMITS RECORD 431,645 NEW IMMIGRANTS IN 2022

Toronto | Agencies

Canada has set a new record in immigration by admitting 431,645 new permanent residents in 2022, the largest number of people ever welcomed in a year in the country's history.

In a statement on Tuesday, Immigration Minister Sean Fraser said: "Today marks an important milestone for Canada, setting a new record for newcomers welcomed in a single year."

Newcomers play an essential role in filling labour shortages, bringing new perspectives and talents to our communities, and enriching our society as a whole."

The Minister hinted that even more newcomers could be admitted in 2023.

"I am excited to see what the future holds and look forward to another historic year in 2023 as we continue to welcome newcomers."

Canada had set a new record in 2021 by welcoming 401,000 new immigrants.

The last time it admitted more than



400,000 new immigrants was in 1913 to settle the lands in western parts of the country.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the department dealing with immigration, also processed a record 5.2 million applications for permanent residence, temporary residence and citizenship in 2022.

That's double the number of applications processed in 2021, according to the statement.

Currently, immigration accounts for

almost 100 per cent of Canada's labour force growth.

Roughly 75 per cent of Canada's population growth came from immigration, mostly in the economic category.

By 2036, immigrants will represent up to 30 per cent of Canada's population, compared with 20.7 per cent in 2011.

During the 2021 census, nearly one in four people counted were or had been a landed immigrant or permanent resident in Canada, the largest proportion among G7 countries.

New York | Agencies

An Indian-American man has been charged with attempted murder and child abuse after he intentionally drove a sedan, with his wife and two children inside, off a 250-foot California cliff.

Dharmesh Arvind Patel, 40, of Pasadena, has been arrested, and will be booked into San Mateo County jail after his release from the hospital, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) said in a release on Tuesday.

The car was traveling south on State Route 1 when it went over the cliff at Devil's Slide, south of the Tom Lantos Tunnels, and landed near the water's edge.

It flipped and landed on its wheels, the NBC News reported.



The CHP said in a statement that it was alerted to "a vehicle over the side of the cliff on State Route-1" at around 10.50 a.m. on Monday.

Once the CHP and other responding agencies got to the scene, they saw a white Tesla that had plunged 250-300 feet off the cliff, the release said.

Authorities managed to reach the vehicle and recover two adults and two children, aged seven and four, who were rushed "to a local hospital with serious injuries".

US HOUSE ADJOURNS AFTER FAILING TO ELECT SPEAKER IN HISTORIC POLITICAL STALEMATE

Washington | Agencies

The US House of Representatives has adjourned after its members failed to elect a speaker for the lower chamber, leading to a historic political stalemate.

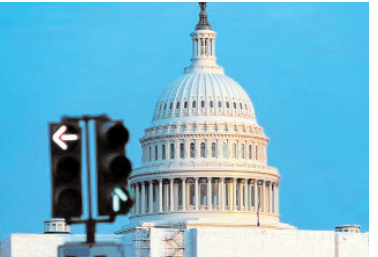
Republican Congressman from California, Kevin McCarthy failed to secure enough votes in three ballots earlier on Tuesday after a group of House Republicans voted against him, reports Xinhua news agency.

There will be at least a fourth vote as House members agreed to adjourn until Wednesday noon.

McCarthy had reportedly negotiated with fellow Republicans on Tuesday night. The political drama came nearly two months after the November 8, 2022 midterm elections, in which Republicans flipped the House and Democrats held onto their majority in the Senate. This was the first time in a century that the US House speaker was not elected on the first ballot.

The House will have to vote on and on until a speaker is elected with a majority of votes.

A candidate needs 218 votes to



become speaker if no lawmaker skips the vote or votes "present".

All House Democrats voted for Congressman Hakeem Jeffries from New York to lead the party minority in the three rounds of voting on the speakership. It also followed the convening of the new and divided Congress on Tuesday noon.

Jemele Hill, a contributing writer for The Atlantic, tweeted on Tuesday afternoon that "what we're witnessing today in American politics is just another brutal indictment of this dysfunctional political system".

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters that President Joe Biden, a former six-term senator from Delaware, "will not insert himself in that process".

FORENSIC REPORT REVEALS IMRAN WAS HIT BY 'FRAGMENTS, NOT BULLETS'

Islamabad | Agencies

A forensic report has revealed that former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan was hit by three

bullet fragments and a metal piece during an assassination attempt last year when he was leading a PTI rally to the federal capital.

The PTI chairman was injured by gunfire aimed at his open-top container truck as he led a convoy through thick crowds in Wazirabad on November 3, 2022, reports The Express Tribune.

One person died while several members of Khan's close circle were injured in the incident. The forensic report of the attack, has now revealed that the former premier was hit by three bullet fragments and a metal fragment. "One sealed parcel containing four plastic containers, two deformed bullets (items B8 and B11), one small metallic piece (item B9), and one bullet jacket (item B10) were recov-



ered from the body of Imran Khan," stated the report, issued by the Punjab Forensic Science Agency.

According to the report, shots were fired from the left side of the truck in Wazirabad when the march was heading towards Islamabad, reports The Express Tribune.

Ten bullet shells fired at Khan's truck were found at the crime scene and had also been sent for investigation.

The report had been sent for forensics by the medico-legal of Jinnah Hospital.

A total of 33 pieces of evidence were sent in a parcel to the Forensic Science Laboratory.

The report states that evidences were submitted by the Capital City Police Office (CCPO) Lahore, the District Police Office (DPO) Wazirabad, and members of the joint investigation team (JIT) conducting the inquiry.

FLOODS IN AUSTRALIAN TOWN EQUAL TO FILL SYDNEY HARBOUR IN 6 DAYS

Sydney | Agencies

A major flooding continued across the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW), the state's emergency service agency on Wednesday said that Menindee, a small town with around 500 people, is currently releasing 75,000 megalitres of flood water per day.

"This is the equivalent of 30,000 Olympic Pools and would fill Sydney Harbour in six days," the NSW State Emergency Service said in a statement. As the Darling River level is steady near 10.20 meters, the agency voiced its concern that further rises to 10.70 meters are possible at Menindee town gauge from around Thursday, which will surpass the 1976 flood record of 10.47 meters, reports Xinhua news agency.

"The situation at Menindee is being closely monitored by the Bureau of Metrology, who have reported river levels are likely to remain above major (9.70 meters) through to mid-January," said NSW State Emergency Service Assistant Commissioner Dean Storey.

According to the statement, 10 properties have been evacuated in the Menindee community, while 20 other property owners have decided to shelter in place. Earlier in the day, the Bureau of Meteorology issued a moderate-to-major flood warning for the Darling River, noting that river levels are likely to remain elevated above the major flood level (9.70 meters) at Menindee through to mid-January. "Subject to inflows to Menindee Lakes, release levels may be extended further or increased during this week," the weather bureau added.





EVERY POOR WILL HAVE A PUCCA HOUSE IN THE STATE: CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that a new social revolution has started in the state from Tikamgarh today. Now no person will live in grass-thatched or kutchha houses in the state. The government will provide residential land pattas to all the poor homeless people. Under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Chief Minister Jan-Awas Yojana, pucca houses will be constructed on these leases. This is not just a lease, but the respect of the poor, their honour. Now no one will be able to tell them to leave their place. They are getting real estate.

Chief Minister Chouhan formally inaugurated the Chief Minister's Residential Plot Scheme from Tikamgarh today by distributing residential plots to the selected beneficiaries. Initially, he reached the allotted plots to the selected beneficiaries and distributed the acceptance letters to them there.

He interacted with the beneficiaries and also had food with them sitting on the ground. Chief Minister Chouhan instructed the officers there that all basic facilities like road, electricity, water, sewage line etc should be made available around the allotted



plots. Land plots of worth Rs 129 crore 37 lakh were distributed to 10 thousand 918 beneficiaries of the district. Along with this, he also laid the foundation stone of development works worth Rs 255 crores.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that along with housing, every poor is being given benefits under the Ayushman Yojana. For good education, a CM Rise school is being opened in every 20-25 villages. The poor are getting free ration. Now Mama is giving the fees of higher education. Now the pilgrimage for the elderly will also be done by airplane. In the coming time, there will be recruitment on 1.25 lakh government jobs in the state. A target has been set to provide self-employment to 2.5

lakh youth every month. He said that the earner will eat - the looter will go - a new era will come. Medical Education Minister Vishwas Kailash Sarang delivered the welcome address. CM Chouhan inaugurated the program with Kanya Pujan. He also visited the exhibition put up by self-help groups at the venue.

Man acquitted in rape case seeks Rs 10,000crore damage for 2-year jail

Team Absolute | Ratlam

After being acquitted of gang rape charges, a man from Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam has sought compensation of more than Rs 10,000 crore from the state government citing "suffering and mental agony" caused to him as his incarceration sent his family to the brink of starvation.

Of the Rs 10,006.02 crore compensation, the man has sought Rs 2 lakh towards the "loss of God's gift to humans e.g. sexual pleasure", as per his petition.

Kantu, alias Kantilal Bheel, moved the district and sessions court after a local court on October 20, 2022, dropped the gang rape charges, said his lawyer Vijay Singh Yadav. His case against the Madhya



Pradesh government and the investigators will be heard on January 10. Asked about the whopping recompense, Mr Yadav said Rs 10,000 crore has been sought on the grounds that "human life is precious", while the remaining Rs 6.02 crore is for various reasons, including legal expenses of Rs 2 lakh, mental agony and suffering by his family. In his petition, Bheel said he was the sole breadwinner for his family when the police arrested him in the gang rape case on December

23, 2020. Yadav said Bheel supported his ageing mother, wife and their three children. Yadav said his client has sought Rs 10,006.02 crore citing suffering and mental agony to him and his family due to the fake charges of gang rape. In his absence, Bheel's family was on the verge of starvation, he said.

According to Yadav, a woman filed a complaint on July 20, 2018, against Bheel at Manasa police station, accusing him of raping her on the pretext of dropping her at her brother's home. She alleged Bheel handed her over to another person who she claimed raped her for six months before allowing her to go, said the lawyer. The complaint led to Bheel's arrest and incarceration for nearly two years.

OBSCENE VIDEOS OF BJP, SANGH LEADERS ARE WITH CONGRESS, SAYS LEADER OF OPPOSITION GOVIND SINGH

Team Absolute | Bhopal

At a time when January has taken the people of the state into its icy grip, leader of opposition Govind Singh has issued a statement that has lit a political bonfire. At press conference on Tuesday, Singh said that the Congress had possessed the obscene video clips of the leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party and those of the Sangh.

Singh made the statement in connection with an FIR against Sunil Saraf whose video of firing in the air on New Year's Day went viral on social media.

Reacting to the statement, BJP's state president VD Sharma has dared Singh to make those video clips public.

Singh said although he had those obscene video clips, he would not make them public, since the Congress never believed in making allegations against anyone.

Singh further said that Saraf had done nothing wrong. Reacting to Singh's remark,



Sharma said the Congress had survived only on CDs and barely thought anything beyond that.

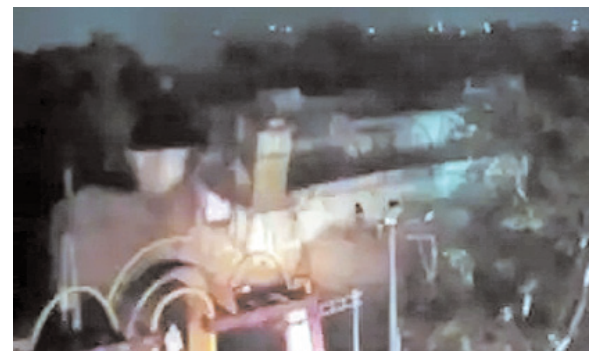
If the leader of opposition has the guts, he should bring those CDs to public instead of telling lies, Sharma said.

Singh, who is the leader of opposition, is a responsible person, and if he has such CDs he should make them public or tender an unconditional apology, he said.

The Congress is doing the politics of deception and lies, so the BJP does not bother about it, the BJP's state president said.

Nath, too, claimed to have pen drive of honey trap

Former chief minister Kamal Nath claimed that he had the pen drive of the honey-trap case. Immediately after that, the Special Investigation Team, inquiring into the honey-trap case, sent a notice to Nath, asking him to give information about it. Nevertheless, the SIT did not question Nath about it. Nath also did not give any statement after that.



HOTEL OF BJP LEADER, ACCUSED OF MURDER, RAZED

Team Absolute | Sagar

District administration on Tuesday razed the illegal hotel of suspended Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Mishri Chand Gupta in Sagar amid public outrage over Jagdish Yadav murder case. The BJP leader was accused of killing Jagdish Yadav by running his SUV over him on December 22. A special team from Indore blasted 60 dynamites on Tuesday evening to demolish the hotel. The building turned into rubble within seconds. Sagar District Collector Deepak Arya, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Tarun Nayak and other senior officers were present during the demolition. The Hotel Jairam Palace of Mishri Chand Gupta was situated near Makaronia intersection in Sagar.

"In the safety view, traffic was stopped by placing barricades around the intersec-

tion. People living in the buildings around the hotel were also alerted. There has been no loss of any kind. Only the building was demolished," said District Collector Deepak Arya.

Jagdish Yadav, resident of Koregaon was crushed to death by an SUV on December 22. The allegation was levelled against BJP leader Mishri Chand Gupta and his family members.

Police registered a case of murder against eight accused in this case. Out of these, five were arrested. Mishri Chand Gupta is still missing. Jagdish Yadav was the nephew of independent Councillor Kiran Yadav. Kiran Yadav defeated Mishri Chand Gupta's wife Meena by 83 votes in the civic body polls.

It is alleged that Jagdish was murdered in this enmity. He was a resident of Koregaon in Makronia and worked at a dairy farm located at Makronia intersection.

Sportsmanship necessary in all activities: CM Chouhan

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that sports are very important for a healthy life and healthy relations with each other. Sports are wonderful and integral part of our life. Sportsmanship is essential in all activities of life. CM Chouhan was addressing the inauguration programme of 28th IES Digiana Inter Press Cricket Tournament 2023 at Old Campion Cricket Ground, Arera Colony, Bhopal. Medical Education Minister Vishwas Kailash Sarang, officials of Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association and Bhopal Divisional Cricket Association along with senior journalists of the capital were present in the program organised by Sports Journalist Association of Bhopal. CM Chouhan inaugurated the tourna-

ment by batting on the bowling of Tejinder Singh Ghuman, Chairman, Digiana Group. CM Chouhan also released the souvenir of IES Group. Chief Minister Chouhan said that due to the outbreak of Covid, the tournament could not be held in previous years. The year 2023 is starting with this tournament. Along with this, we are fortunate that the Khelo India Youth Game are also being organised in the state this year. Journalists finding time for sports in the midst of their tough and struggling lives is a symbol of their positivity. CM Chouhan also honored Abhilash Khandekar, president of Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association, who made his mark in cricket at the international level in the Under-19 age group.

MEMBERS OF HINDU ORGANISATIONS FORCEFULLY ENTER DARGAH-E-HAKIMI COMPLEX, CHANT HANUMAN CHALISA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A huge controversy broke out after members of Hindu organisations forcefully entered the Hanuman temple in the Dargah-e-Hakimi complex located in Lodhipura village of Burhanpur district in Madhya Pradesh. On January 3, 2023, several members of Hindu organisations forcefully entered the dargah by breaking the gate and offered prayers inside the premises.

The members of Hindu organisations chanted Hanuman Chalisa inside the premises and breaking the gate of the dargah and also applied vermilion to the statue of Lord Hanuman, Times Now's Makarand Kale reported. The Hindu organisations have accused the dargah management of demolishing temple. They have also alleged that the dargah management were not allowing them to construct a way to the temple. In order to maintain law and order situation, the



SDM reached the spot with heavy police force and settled the matter by persuading both the sides. Hinduist organisations have demanded that the dargah management should give way for the temple. The workers of the organisations recited Hanuman Chalisa outside the gate of the dargah and also performed

some rituals before breaking the lock of the gate and entering the premises. SDM Deepak Chauhan has warned everyone, saying it was illegal to enter someone's private property. If a complaint is made by the dargah management, action will be taken by registering a case against the concerned people, the SDM said.

STUDENT COMMITTED SUICIDE, LEAVES NOTE OF BEING HUMILIATED BY SCHOOL TEACHER

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh: A student of class 8 who had to go through public humiliation in a classroom full of students took a drastic step and died by suicide. The shocking incident came from Padkhuri village of Sidhi district after a teacher, identified as Ajeet Pandey, insulted the minor in front of fellow classmates and friends. The deceased left a suicide note which was found during the police investigation. The writing revealed the reason behind the unnatural death of the student and hinted that the ward was scolded aloud in front of the class. The note was found next to the student's dead body and was addressed narrating the case to the father. It read, Is it wrong to make mistakes? Teacher insulted me in front of entire class." The victim studied in Navodaya Vidyalaya Churhat. The crucial write-up claimed that his teacher Ajeet Pandey use to show disgrace towards him and once also told him to "consume poison and end life." This affected the mental wellbeing of the boy and as a result made him die by suicide. "I am committing suicide because of my teacher Ajeet Pandey, please arrest him and take strict action against him," wrote the victim. Rampur Naikin Police Station in-charge Sudhanshu Tiwari told media that the student was found hanging on January 2 in his residence, leaving behind a heart-breaking suicide note.

State govt determined to ensure no illegal conversions: Mishra

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra on Wednesday said that the government is determined to ensure there are "no illegal conversions" in the state. "The subject of conversion is under consideration in the Supreme Court. The state government is determined to ensure that there is no illegal conversion in the state. We will present our case in the Supreme Court strongly," Mishra said.

In Monday's hearing, the Supreme Court adjourned for two weeks the hearing of a batch of pleas challenging state laws regulating religious conversions due to interfaith marriage. The top court will hear the matter on January 16. The bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud asked the political parties to file written notes regarding the status of the hearing in the High Courts in their respective states and also asked them to apprise it about how many such petitions are pending in High Courts.

Several Public interest litigations (PILs) have been filed challenging anti-conversion laws passed by some state governments. Some of the petitions were filed by advocates Vishal Thakre, AS Yadav, researcher Pranvesh and an NGO, 'Citizens for Justice and Peace.' The top court on January 6, 2021, had agreed to examine the constitutional validity of a spate of laws enacted by



state governments -- in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand -- criminalising religious conversion via marriage and mandate prior official clearance before marrying into another faith.

The apex court had, however, not stayed the implementation of the Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020 and the Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act, 2018. It had also permitted the NGO to make Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh parties to its pending petition by which it had challenged some controversial state laws regulating conversions due to interfaith marriages.

The apex court, while hearing pleas challenging the laws, issued notices to the Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh governments.

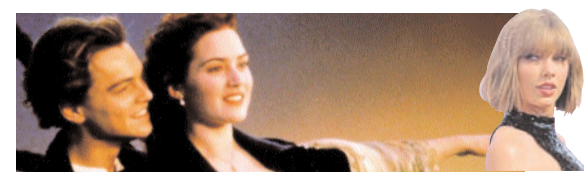
The pleas in the apex court stated that "rampaging mobs are lifting off people in the middle of wedding ceremonies", buoyed by the enactment of the laws.

The laws were against public policy and society at large, they added.

The Jamiat-Ulama-I-Hind has sought to be made a party to the case, saying the Uttar Pradesh law violates the fundamental rights of Muslim youth, who are being 'targeted and demonised'.

The pleas, filed by advocates and the NGO, had challenged the Constitutional validity of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020 and the Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act, 2018, which regulate the religious conversions of people in interfaith marriages.

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'Let's not discredit my years of working out'

Khloe Kardashian slams claims she used diabetes drug for weight loss

Los Angeles | Agencies

Khloe Kardashian has hit back at claims she uses a controversial diabetes medication to lose weight. Last year, fans speculated that her sister Kim had used the drug in order to quickly drop 16lbs in time for the Met Gala - inadvertently sparking a stampede for the pioneering obesity drug and resulting in a global shortage.

Kim later insisted that she had lost the weight healthily - crediting diet, a sauna suit and running twice a day with the change - and now Khloe has also hit back at rumours that she used the drug.

The mother-of-two showcased her incredible abs in an Instagram post on Tuesday as she posed for Sorbet magazine - prompting one fan to claim it was the

result of taking semaglutide, known by brand names Ozempic and Wegovy, which has helped people who take it shed almost a fifth of their weight by suppressing the appetite. A follower commented: 'The fact that she uses diabetic medicine to get this skinny is disturbing [sic]'.

Khloe then clapped back: 'let's not discredit my years of working out. I get up 5 days a week at 6am to train. Please stop with your assumptions. I guess New Year still means mean people.'

Khloe also hit back at fans who claimed that she'd 'changed her face' after she tried out clip-on bangs for the shoot. The reality star shared a snap of her new look in an Instagram post on Tuesday as she credited the hairstyle with changing the 'shape' of her visage. 'Fun fact: I wore clip on bangs for this shoot,' she penned. 'It was fun to give a different look and not be committed. I am surprised with how much I liked the bangs even though they changed the shape of my face.'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Jacqueline Jossa has shut down

rumours that claimed she is set to come back to EastEnders full time.

Earlier this month, the actress returned to Albert Square to reprise her role as Lauren Branning for the first time since leaving the soap in 2017. Penning a lengthy message to Instagram on Wednesday, Jac made it clear that she is 'not coming back to the square full time' as she thanked fans for their support.

'I am not coming back to the square'

She explained: 'Just been inundated with people being lovely, but thinking I'm coming back to EastEnders full time, I don't know if something has been taken out of an interview or been completely made up but either way I'm just shutting down any rumours or stories.'

'I am not on the way back to the square full time, it's not in talks, I 100 have not confirmed a return.'

'That's also not me saying I would never go back, when and if the time is right, I would love to.'

Jac continued: 'Hope you're all okay. Like I have said many times and continue to say, EastEnders is the best job ever and was an honour for the 8 years.'

'As of right now, I am not going back atm thanks so much for all the excited DM's and phone calls and texts.. Sorry lol.'

The actress was said to be set for a return to EastEnders after reportedly approaching bosses about a comeback following her feature at Dot Cotton's funeral.

Her seven years in Walford could be extended, sources claimed, after reportedly having a conversation with executive producer Chris Clenshaw.

Jac made it clear she is 'not coming back to the square full time'



ANA DE ARMAS, BILLY PORTER, TARANTINO TO PRESENT AT '2023 GOLDEN GLOBES'

Los Angeles | Agencies

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association has announced presenters for the 80th Golden Globes.

The line-up for the January 10 festivities includes nominees Ana de Armas, Jamie Lee Curtis and Niecy Nash-Betts as well as Ana Gasteyer, Billy Porter, Colman Domingo, Natasha Lyonne, Michaela Jae Rodriguez, Nicole Byer, Quentin Tarantino and Tracy Morgan, reports Variety.

As Variety was first to report, other nominees expected to appear at the ceremony include Austin Butler ('Elvis'); 'The Fabelmans' team of Steven Spielberg, Michelle Williams and Tony Kushner; and, most likely, Daniel Craig ('Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery').

The team behind animated film nominee 'Turning Red', including director Domee Shi, is expected, as is 'Decision to Leave' director Park Chan-wook, whose film is up for best non-English language film. 'All Quiet on the Western Front' stars Felix Kammerer and Daniel Brahl are also on the list. TV nominees who will be in the room include Kevin Costner, Sheryl Lee Ralph, double-nominee Julia Garner, Niecy Nash, Elizabeth Debicki, 'Hacks' co-stars Jean Smart and Hannah Einbinder, Jenna Ortega, Kaley Cuoco, Jessica Chastain and Jeremy Allen White. Andrew Garfield is likely to attend.

'The Whale' star Brendan Fraser is the only nominee who has publicly said that he would not attend because of his past experience with



HFFPA. There will be other no-shows, but not necessarily because of issues with the organization. Hugh Jackman will be in New York, where he is starring on Broadway in 'The Music Man'.

The three-hour telecast, airing live on NBC and Peacock from the Beverly Hilton, will be hosted by Emmy winner Jerrod Carmichael. The evening will include tributes to Ryan Murphy, who will receive the fourth Carol Burnett Award, and Eddie Murphy, who is being honoured with the Cecil B. DeMille Award.

Ratajkowski slams men who 'don't know how to handle' independent women

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Emily Ratajkowski is sick of dating men who "don't know how to handle" strong and independent women and sees

the appeal of dating another female instead. The 'Gone Girl' actress, who has been romantically linked to Brad Pitt, Pete Davidson, DJ Orazio Rispo and Jack Greer since filing for divorce from Sebastian Bear-McClard in September, believes that some guys "truly think they want" an independent partner but ultimately don't enjoy feeling "emasculated" and the relationship then goes down hill, reports femalefirst.co.uk. Speaking to guest Olivia Ponton on her 'High Low with EmRata' podcast, she said: "They're like, 'You're special. You've done it.'" "Then (they) slowly get emasculated, and they don't know what to do with those feelings, and they resent you, and then they start to tear you down. And then you're just back to square one."

The beauty - who has 21-month-old son Sylvester with her estranged husband - branded the situation "f***** up and unfair" and can "understand dating women" instead. She said: "There might be competition a but it doesn't feel like somebody's taking something away from someone else. Weirdly with heteronormative relationships, I feel like that happens." The strength and the power is associated with the masculine, and once the woman has that, the man doesn't know what else he has. "But I'm like, 'How about you just be better at expressing your emotions and being there emotionally? That would be great.'" The actress recently revealed she had joined a dating app but feared it was "too white" and wasn't convinced it would result in her meeting a "lady crush".



HARRY STYLES BEATS ED SHEERAN ON 'UK'S TOP HITS OF 2022' CHART

Los Angeles | Agencies

Former One Direction singer Harry Styles successfully beat Ed Sheeran on The UK's Top Hits of 2022 chart with his best-selling track 'As It Was'. 'As It Was' became the most listened-to single of the year in the UK, according to the British Phonographic Industry (BPI), based on its analysis of Official Charts Company data. It was streamed 180.9 million times and spent ten consecutive weeks at No.1 in the U.K. and 15 weeks at the top spot on the Billboard Hot 100, a new record for a British artist, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Official Charts' website also stated that Styles "leads an all-British takeover of the Top 10 biggest tracks of the year in the U.K., marking the



first time in 50 years that all ten of the year's most successful singles were released by British artists.'

In the meantime, Ed bagged the

second and third spots on the list with his singles 'Bad Habits' and 'Peru', collaboration with Nigerian artist Fireboy DML. He also secured

the fifth spot with his song 'Shivers'.

This success by British artists comes as the UK recorded music consumption increased for the eighth consecutive year in 2022, with annual audio streaming figures breaking through the 150 billion mark for the first time in the UK.

"At a time when streaming has created unprecedented competition coming from every corner of the globe, it is astonishing that in 2022 British artists were involved in all of the Top 10 calendar year's biggest hits in the U.K.," said BPI's Leon Neville.

"This outstanding achievement is a testament to the rich music talent that continues to emerge from across the U.K.'s nations and regions, fuelled by the passion, investment and skills of U.K. record labels."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Tallia Storm



IND v SL 2nd T20I

CHANCE FOR BOTH TEAMS TO RECTIFY MISTAKES; INDIA LOOK TO SEAL SERIES

Pune | Agencies

On the eve of the first T20I against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, India skipper Hardik Pandya promised to back the young players in his new-look squad. And he did that by handing debuts to Shubman Gill and Shivam Mavi and the latter made a brilliant start to claim 4-22 and helped India to a two-run win in a last-ball thriller.

Mavi made great use of the slow-paced Wankhede pitch to claim his maiden four-fer, becoming only the third Indian to do so on debut. But Gill could score only seven runs and left India and Hardik Pandya to solve another opening conundrum.

Gill will expect Pandya to give him another opportunity in the second T20 match at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium.

India on their part will expect a better performance from the top order as Gill, Suryakumar Yadav and Sanju Samson failed to fire at the Wankhede, getting out while trying



forcing the pace against the Sri

Lankan slow bowlers.

Their shot selection was not up to their usual standard and the team management will expect better efforts from them here as that will help India take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

While the Indian top-order failed, Deepak Hooda and Axar Patel came up with brilliant rear-guard efforts to help the team post something the bowlers can defend.

For Sri Lanka, top-order batting is an issue to tackle for them. Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Mendis, Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Dhananjaya de Silva and Charith Asalanka all failed to fire.

It was only due to a brilliant effort by skipper Dasun Shanaka, who, too, scored with 45, and Chamika Karunaratne, who landed some lusty blows including a couple of sixes, to propel Sri Lanka to the verge of victory. But in the end, they fell agonisingly close, two run outs in the final over resulting in the fine efforts of the lower-order going in vain.

Pune provides both teams another chance to rectify their mistakes and decide the fate of the series.

Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships

HS Prannoy, PV Sindhu to lead Indian team



Team Absolute | New Delhi

World No. 8 HS Prannoy and Commonwealth Games gold medallist PV Sindhu would lead a strong Indian contingent for the Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships to be played in Dubai from February 14-19.

Badminton Association of India had once again followed the system of picking the top players directly and

conducting trials for the rest of the squad to pick a team that is capable of challenging for a medal in the prestigious continental competition.

The last edition of the event in 2021 had to be cancelled due to the Covid pandemic and the Indian contingent would be keen to show how far they have come since 2019. Lakshya Sen would be the second men's singles player in the squad while Aakrushi Kashyap would provide backup to Sindhu in

women's singles.

French Open champions Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty would have to shoulder the men's doubles burden with Krishna Prasad G and Vishnuvardhan Goud making it to the team as the second pair. All England semi-finalists Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly will be the main women's doubles pair with Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Castro expected to pick the mixed doubles responsibility.

Premier League

Newcastle frustrate Arsenal, Lampard faces sack as Everton crash again

London | Agencies

Arsenal were held to a 0-0 draw at home to Newcastle United on Tuesday night as Mikel Arteta's side missed the chance to go ten points clear of Manchester City at the top of the Premier League.

The result means City can close the gap at the top to five points if they win away to Chelsea on Thursday, while Newcastle have still suffered just one defeat all season.

Manchester United continued to impress as they won 3-0 at home to Bournemouth, with goals from Casemiro, Luke Shaw and another from Marcus Rashford. Casemiro opened the scoring with a first-half volley, and United have now won their last four home matches without conceding a goal, reports



Xinhua. Aleksandar Mitrovic's 17th-minute goal and an excellent second-half display from goalkeeper Bernd Leno gave Fulham a 1-0 win away to Leicester City, who threw everything at Marco Silva's side after the break, but couldn't find a way through.

Everton coach Frank Lampard looks odds-on to lose his job after his side's abject dis-

play saw them lose 4-1 at home to Brighton.

Kaoru Mitoma opened the scoring in the 14th minute, before a second-half blitz of three goals in six minutes from Ewan Ferguson, Solly March and Pascal Gross left Everton out for the count, and it will take more than Demarai Gray's injury-time penalty to save Lampard's job.

2022 Men's National Boxing

SHIVA THAPA, MANISH KAUSHIK STORM INTO SEMIS

Hisar | Agencies

The record six-time Asian medalist Shiva Thapa and 2019 World Championships bronze winner Manish Kaushik produced power packed performances on the fifth day and will face each other in the semi-finals of the 6th Elite Men's National Boxing Championships.

Thapa (63.5kg) who is representing Assam hardly had to break a sweat in his quarter's bout against Ashutosh Kumar of Punjab. The pugilist who also has the 2015 World Championships bronze to his name was at his attacking best and put up a sensational display of skill and strength to secure a 5:0 victory by unanimous decision against his opponent. Kaushik (63.5kg) on the other hand, is representing Services Sports Control Board (SSCB) and was facing Rohit Ningehougan Singh of Manipur in his bout. Thapa, the 2018 Commonwealth Games silver medal-



ist also portrayed his attacking dominance by blanking his opponent to win by unanimous decision.

Thapa and Kaushik will take to the ring against each other in a highly anticipated semi-final encounter and

give it their all to secure their berth in the final.

The 2022 Asian Championships bronze medalist duo of Govind Sahani (48kg) and Sumit (75kg) also cruised through to the semi-finals.

While Govind defeated Vikash Singh of Uttar Pradesh with a 5-0 scoreline, Sumit secured a comfortable victory against Gourav Dabas of Delhi after the referee stopped the contest (RSC) in the first round.

Copa del Rey

CACERENO PUSHED REAL MADRID ALL THE WAY IN THEIR THIRD-ROUND



Fourth-tier Cacereno pushed Real Madrid all the way in their third-round Copa del Rey tie.

Madrid | Agencies

It needed a moment of magic from Madrid's Brazilian forward Rodrygo to give Real Madrid a 1-0 win on Tuesday night in a match that was much more complicated than most would have expected.

The first half was an even affair with Cacereno by no means inferior to their illustrious rivals, and little changed after the break as the home side continued to dig deep.

Rodrygo's individual goal decided the game, but the

home side are out of the tournament with their pride intact on a night of surprises in Spain's knockout competition, reports Xinhua.

Ceuta, who is bottom of the third-tier RFEF I, beat La Liga's bottom side Elche 1-0 thanks to Rodri's 44th-minute penalty. To make matters worse for Elche, Ezequiel Ponce was sent off 15 minutes into the second half in a disastrous result for a side that has only four points in La Liga.

Second division Sporting Gijon beat top-flight Rayo

Vallecano 2-0 with two second-half goals from Serbian striker Uros Milovanovic, while fellow second division outfit Levante won a thriller 3-2 against Getafe. Valencia had no such problems as they cruised past third-tier La Nucia with goals from Justin Kluijver, Ilaix Moriba and Hugo Duro, while Villarreal recovered from a goal down to thrash second division Cartagena 5-1, with Alex Baena, Arnaut Danjuma, Jose Luis Morales, Samuel Chukwueze and Etienne Capoue all scoring second-half goals.

Adelaide International 1

Medvedev advances to quarters, Sabalenka overcomes Samsonova

Adelaide | Agencies

World No 7 Daniil Medvedev breezed past Serbian Miomir Kecmanovic 6-0, 6-3 to reach the Adelaide International 1 quarterfinal.

The third seed saved the only break point he faced to triumph after 67 minutes. Medvedev now leads the pair's ATP Head-to-Head record 3-0, winning all seven sets they have played.

The player will next play Karen Khachanov for a place in the semifinals. In his opening match of 2023 on Tuesday, Medvedev toiled for more than one hour to snatch the opening-set tiebreak before his



Italian opponent Lorenzo Sonego retired hurt after three games. In the women's singles, Aryna Sabalenka edged Liudmila Samsonova 7-6(8), 7-6(3), in her first official singles match of the 2023 season to seal the Adelaide International

1 quarterfinal berth. She will take on the 2019 Roland Garros finalist Marketa Vondrousova, who dropped just four games in a dominant 6-0, 6-4 win over the former Top-20 player Kaia Kanepi of Estonia in the second-round match.

Shivam Mavi becomes third Indian player to take four wickets on T20I debut

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Young medium pacer Shivam Mavi claimed 4-22 and became the third Indian men's cricketer to take four wickets on T20I debut during the first match of the three-match series against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium.

Riding on Mavi's four-wicket haul, India held their nerve to sneak in a two-run win over Sri Lanka in the first T20I in Mumbai on Tuesday night. The young pacer picked up two wickets in the Powerplay, sending back Pathum Nissanka and Dhananjaya de Silva to start his debut on a fine note. Alongside skipper Hardik Pandya, Mavi gave India a good start with the ball as the visitors managed just 35 runs in the first six overs. The right-arm quick returned to



break a crucial 40-run stand, dismissing Wanindu Hasaranga (21 off 10 balls) in the 15th over to leave Dasun Shanaka with a huge task on his hand.

He went on to add a fourth scalp in his final over with the wicket of Maheesh Theekshana to become one of the only three bowlers for India to take four wickets on men's T20I debut.

Players like Virat Kohli, Rohit will play a massive role in ODI WC: Gautam Gambhir

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former opener Gautam Gambhir believes highly experienced Indian cricketers like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma will be playing a huge role in the side's fortunes in the Men's ODI World Cup, to be held in October-November later in the year.

"I always feel that when we talk about this new approach, which India always talks about, the template and stuff, you've got to identify players who can adapt those roles or that template very easily. Some people just cannot adapt to that template so why push them to play in a certain way which doesn't come naturally to them." "So, for me, I think identi-



fying players and at the same time getting the right mix is very important, rather than thinking that we have to play at a certain template so we got to select all the 15 with a similar mind-set or with a similar template. I feel peo-

ple like Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and all those guys who can anchor their innings, who probably can play the spin really well will play a massive role in the coming World Cup," said Gambhir.

Swiatek pulls Poland level with Italy in City Final

Brisbane | Agencies

World No.1 Iga Swiatek delivered a comprehensive win for Team Poland in the United Cup City Final, defeating Italy's Martina Trevisan 6-2, 6-4 to level the tie between two countries at 1-1.

Swiatek's victory came after Italy's Lorenzo Musetti gave his team a perfect start when he cruised past Poland's Daniel Michalski to open the tie.

Swiatek played a sharp opening set to roll to after just 34 minutes. Landing 90 per cent of her first serves, she kept Trevisan at bay and broke the Italian on each of her two break-point chances.

Trevisan tightened up the match in the second set, as Swiatek's level also took a dip.

The first five games of the second set lasted longer than the entirety of the first, as the Italian grew in confidence with each Swiatek miss. Swiatek hit just nine unforced errors in the first set but fired 23 in the second.

Trevisan kept the pressure on Swiatek until the very end. Serving for the win at 5-4, Swiatek was forced to save three break points from 15-40 down, the last wiped out by a clutch ace. On her first match point, Swiatek dug in to out-rally Trevisan and closed out the 1 hour and 51-minute match. The Brisbane City Final will continue with the No.1 men's singles match between 2021 ATP Finals competitors Hubert Hurkacz and Matteo Berrettini and Magda Linette facing Lucia Bronzetti in the fourth singles match.



'PEOPLE WILL GET TO SEE SIX DIFFERENT BHUMI'S ON SCREEN'

Bhumi Pednekar will exhibit her versatility as an actor this year

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Bhumi Pednekar has six releases in 2023 including 'Bheed', 'The Ladykiller', 'Afwaa', 'Bhakshak', 'Mere Husband Ki Biwi', and says that this year will be hers as an artist. Bhumi said: "With six films releasing this year, I'm putting it out in the universe that 2023 will be my year in cinema as an actor! Given the diversity of these films and the powerful women that I will essay in the film, I don't think I could push myself any further to showcase the variety of roles that I can play as an artist." "People will get to see six different Bhumi's on screen in one year which is what is most exciting for me. I live to play out different lives on screen. It excites me, challenges me and stimulates me as an artist. I'm fortunate that I'm an actor living out my dream every single day. I couldn't have manifested anything better to happen to me," she added.

Bhumi said that her wish for 2023 is very simple. "I want to entertain everyone with these six films and move a few notches higher to realising my personal goal, which is to be regarded as one of the best actors that India has ever seen. I know it's a lot of hard work and I'm prepared to put in everything for this because I'm in it to be amongst the best. This has driven me so far and I hope this fuels what future has in store for me."



I WAS NEVER KEEN ON DOING FILMS: RIDHI DOGRA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

From TV to OTT, actress Ridhi Dogra has been entertaining us with some outstanding work of hers. Be it The Married Woman, Asur, and recently pitchers, the actress has never ceased to prove her mettle. She will soon be marking her film debut with Lakadbagha.

The film revolves around a vigilante and a dog lover, who breaks bones of those who trouble animals.

Talking about working across different mediums, the actress shared, "I've always been inquisitive about the work I do. Mediums don't really matter to me as long as I am a part of good work, character, and team."

Shedding light on whether she had aspirations to do films, the actress said, "I just have gone with the flow all my life. Films happened in my career when they had to. It's not about sooner or later. I was never keen to do films. I was not chasing them. But I was happy exploring myself wherever I was. Overall, my journey has been full of experiences." The flick is all set to release on 13 January 2023. Apart from this, the actress has projects like Jawan, Tiger 3, and Asur 2 in her pipeline.



Suneeta Rao shares how she lost a role to Archana Puran Singh

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Pop singer Suneeta Rao, who is famous for her track 'Paree Hoon Main', 'Ab Ke Baras', 'Vaada Karo', 'Talaash', and many more, revealed about her love for acting and how she couldn't be part of the 1987 film 'Jalwa'. She shared: "I was bitten by the acting bug because I just loved acting ever since I was a teenager. I was around 15-16 years old when I gave my first screen test but unfortunately, I lost the role to none other than Archana ji. I don't know if Archana ji remembers it was for 'Jalwa'. I was not a model but I thoroughly enjoyed the process."

After hearing this, Archana responded: "There were a lot of models who had auditioned for the role but little did I know that Suneeta was also one of them." Suneeta is coming along with Shabbir Kumar, Altaf Raja, and Shweta Shetty as a celebrity guest on 'The Kapil Sharma Show'.



'More and more travel'

Kartik Aaryan reveals his New Year resolution

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Kartik Aaryan has revealed his 2023 resolution - a lot of travelling. Kartik took to Instagram, where he shared a slew of pictures from all the travels he has done. "More and More Travel... that's my 2023 resolution," he captioned the image.

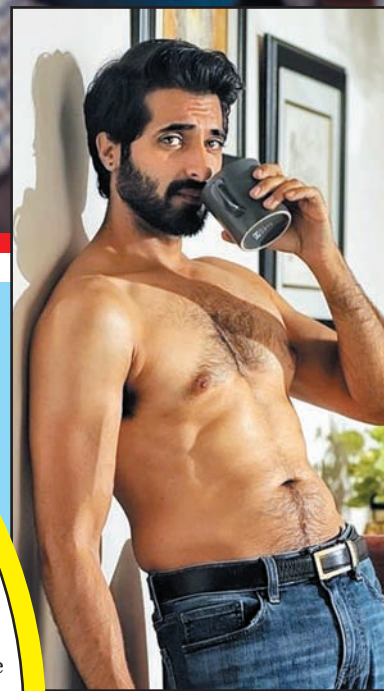
As soon as the actor dropped his pictures, his fans and friends took to the comment section.

Filmmaker Kabir Khan wrote: "Nothing better than travel."

A fan wrote: "The heartthrob of Bollywood, winning hearts of fans with his humbleness on the streets of London. Your fancceptions from London will be always the most emotional and special one!"

In 2022, Kartik delivered two blockbusters - one horror comedy 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2', which raked in Rs 200 crores, and 'Freddy' which was widely appreciated after its release on OTT.

He is currently busy shooting for 'Satyaprem Ki Katha' with Kiara Advani. Kartik will also be seen in 'Shehzada', which also stars Kriti Sanon. He has 'Captain India' and Kabir Khan's yet-untitled next.



MY CHARACTER IS A TRIBUTE TO REAL-LIFE HEROES: AKSHAY OBEROI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

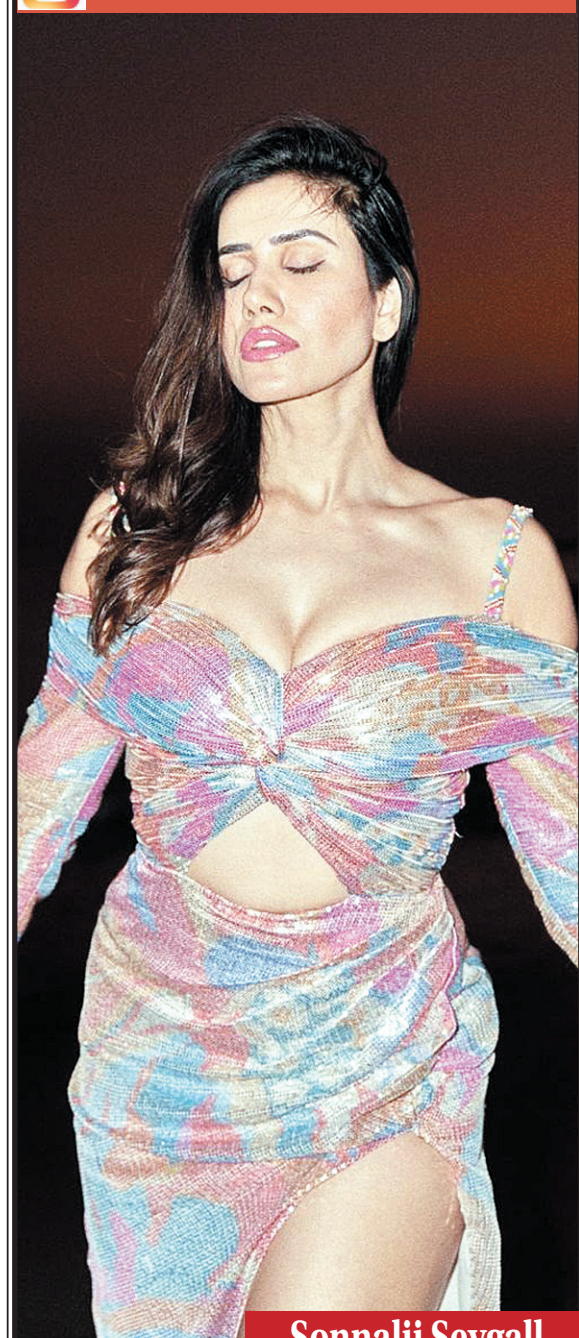
Actor Akshay Oberoi, who will be seen in the upcoming Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone-starrer 'Fighter', said that his character in the film is a tribute to real life heroes.

Akshay, who will be seen playing the role of an Air Force officer, said that it's an honour for him to play his part.

He said: "It's an honour to be playing the part of someone who has served the nation. My character is a tribute to all those real life heroes who have fought for their country. As actors, we might imitate their actions, but the grit and courage that they would have shown in real life situations are unfathomable. All thanks to the director Siddharth and Mamta Anand for picking me for the part."

Recently Akshay posted on Instagram, a picture of himself along with the director Siddharth Anand and co-star Karan Singh Grover to announce his association with the film. 'Fighter', which sees Hrithik and Deepika as Air Force pilots, is slated for release on January 25, 2024. The film is said to be shot across the world and will pay tribute to the sacrifice of the country's armed forces.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sonalii Seygall